See photos from yesterday’s visit by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon in today’s ‘Special Court Supplement’.

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:
Tuesday, 15 June 2010

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

Remarks by Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon at the Special Court  

…My Husband Was Beaten Before His Death / Premier News  

Taylor Ordered the Death of Vice President / Sierra Express Media

# International News

Ban Wraps up Africa Trip With Stop in Sierra Leone / UN News  

Former Liberian Vice President’s Wife Ends Testimony / Charlestaylortrial.org  

Nobody Told Me My Husband Was Beaten Before He Died / Daily Observer  

How Foreign Agents Fought Taylor? / Daily Observer  

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / UNMIL  

Former Rwandan Baptist Pastor Convicted of Genocide / Associated Baptist Press  

Africa: We'll Get Bashir, Kony Soon, Says ICC / The East African  

Norms of Global Criminal Law / The Hindu  

No Bed of Roses for International Criminal Court / IND-InDepth News

# Special Court Supplement

Visit to the Special Court by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, in Pictures
Remarks by Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon at the Special Court
Monday, 14 June 2010

First of all, thank you very much for your warm welcome. We regard this meeting and exchange of views meeting as very useful. And first of all I thank Your Honour Justice Kamanda, President of Special Court for Sierra Leone, and Honourable Registrar Binta Mansaray, and Honourable Deputy Prosecutor Joseph Kamara for your commitment and concerted efforts to bring justice and peace and security to this country. And again thank you to Lt. Col. Davaa and his contingent for professional and very competent protection for these facilities as well as [indistinct] detained people.

Now I regard this process as very important and you have made a great contribution to the establishment of peace and stability and, most importantly, to bring an end to impunity through sending out a strong message of the principle that no perpetrators will go unpunished whenever, wherever and whoever, it may be. This is a firm principle of the United Nations, and I’m very glad that despite very difficult economic and financial conditions that your court, under the leadership of president, has been making a great contribution.

I know that you are now heading toward the exit strategy and the United Nations legal advisor, legal counsel, has been working closely with your court and the Government of Sierra Leone for a residual mechanism. I understand that the position of the Sierra Leone government is very positive to our proposed agreement text, and I hope that by the end of July with my visit there will be a follow-up agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone.

This is a very smooth transition, and I hope this will give a good example to other courts, ICTY and ICTR, they are also going through this exit strategy, depending on how these accused at large will be arrested, but we will see how this will continue.

Through its judicial work and outreach activities, you have contributed significantly to the restoration and maintenance of peace and security. In this age of accountability, your work has been very important, together with other tribunals. We have, more importantly, a permanent ICC as a permanent court. I attended the first review conference of the ICC in Kampala. I decided to participate myself, not because I am asked by this Rome Statute that I convene this first review conference after ten years, but because of my firm belief that this is a principle which we must uphold.

Now we have all ad hoc tribunals like yours and even in Cambodia, and Lebanon, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. All these are important frameworks of keeping our principles, of keeping rule and law order.

Often these principles have been not much given attention, ignored and disregarded by imminent peace, political compromise, but I believe that peace without justice can be just only a temporary peace. It cannot be a sustainable peace. Of course, without peace and security you may not be able to protect human rights or you may not be able to pursue [the cause of] justice. But the justice principle will always be there. It’s a matter of time. It’s a matter of time. It may not be today or tomorrow. It may be the case that [indistinct], or all this physical power may remain for the time being, but we should know that the message should be clear: one day, any time, any where, the perpetrators will never go unpunished. This is a firm principle. We have seen, we have made good progress, and we appreciate your strong, principled contribution to the United Nations Charter. I wish you all the best. I am very much grateful for this opportunity [indistinct]. Thank you very much.
Charles Taylor's Trial

In Taylor's Trial...
My Husband Was Beaten Before His Death

The widow of Charles Taylor's former Vice President today testified that she was never told that her husband died from torture administered by Liberian security forces on Mr. Taylor's orders. Her husband's serious illness, the witness said, was instead the cause of his death.

Enoch Dogolea was Mr. Taylor's Vice President when he (Taylor) became President of Liberia in 1997. In 2000, Mr. Dogolea died in neighboring Ivory Coast while there for medical treatment. After his death, reports emerged that his sickness was as a result of being beaten by Mr. Taylor's security forces based on the orders of the former Liberian President. In March 2008, Joseph “Zig Zag” Marzah, a former member of Mr. Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) who testified against Mr. Taylor in The Hague told the Special Court for Sierra Leone that Mr. Dogolea had been beaten to the point of death.

“He was beaten up almost to the point of death…he died as a result of the beatings. I also took part in those beatings,” Mr. Marzah had said.

Today, Mr. Dogolea's surviving wife, Reginald Mehn Dogolea, took the witness stand as Mr. Taylor's 17th witness, telling the court that as far as she knew, her husband had died because he was seriously ill. She said that neither her husband, nor any other person, had ever told her that Mr. Dogolea had been beaten on Mr. Taylor's orders.

“Myself I am surprised to hear this because since my husband died ten years ago, nobody has come out to tell me this. Within Monrovia, my husband never slept out for a day or two and later to come and tell me that someone had beaten him up,” Mrs. Dogolea told the court.

“I was bathing him and I never saw anything wrong with him, no marks. I did not see any marks on his body,” she added.

Mrs. Dogolea explained to the court that when her husband became ill, he had called his brothers who took him to a nearby bush and had offered traditional medicines to him. She said that as a woman, they did not allow her to be present where the traditional treatment was offered to her husband.

“They said it was a traditional thing, a woman cannot be there so they took him to the bush,” she said.

After three hours, Mrs. Dogolea said they sent to call her. When she got there, her husband was vomiting and she asked that he be taken to the house. At this point, Mr. Taylor sent a helicopter to take Mr. Dogolea to the hospital, the witness said.

While at the hospital in the Ivorian capital Abidjan, Mrs. Dogolea said the doctor informed her that her husband's liver had been damaged.

“Then he died now,” she told the court.
As defense lawyers concluded her direct-examination, prosecutors questioned the witness about a press release she issued in Liberia relating to evidence at the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court for Sierra Leone relating to the circumstances surrounding her husband's death.

In the press release, Mrs. Dogolea questioned witnesses' accounts at both the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague about the circumstances surrounding her husband's death, saying that as far as she knew, her husband was sick and that was the cause of his death. Prosecutors in cross-examining the witness questioned her whether she had received any assistance in writing the press release or whether she had written it only after meeting with defense lawyers. The witness insisted that she had issued the release only with the help of her 21-year-old step-daughter, who at that time was in the twelfth grade.

"Are you saying that your 21-year-old step-daughter who was in the twelfth grade drafted this statement?" Justice Sebutinde asked, wanting to be more certain.

In response, the witness said "yes."

Prosecution counsel, Katherine Howarth, read from a January 2008 Liberian newspaper which quoted an account given at the TRC regarding Mr. Dogolea's death. "Bodyguards of Charles Taylor laid the former Vice President into mattresses and tortured him on the orders of Charles Taylor. He [Taylor] said the strategy of laying somebody in mattresses was to cover up any evidence of torture and not to see any body marks," the January 2008 newspaper stated.

Ms. Howarth also read from a June 2000 article in a Sierra Leonean newspaper titled "Liberia's VP killed for Sa Lone." The article indicated that Mr. Dogolea had been killed because he had policy disagreements with Mr. Taylor about the Liberian government's support for Sierra Leonean rebels.

Asked whether it was true that her husband was opposed to Mr. Taylor's support for rebel forces in Sierra Leone, Mrs. Dogolea said: "I told you I do not know anything about it."

"You know the man was going for peace talks and conferences and I was not behind him wherever he went and he did not tell me," she said.

"You yourself know that in Africa, women do not really control their husbands, so any where they go you do not go with them, if they do not tell you their thing, you will not know about it," she added.

The witness insisted that she could not tell whether her husband was beaten because the former Vice President had never told her so.

Defense lawyers indicated their readiness to re-examine the witness after she concluded her cross-examination but as the court was ready to adjourn for the day, the re-examination of the witness is set for Monday.

Credit: charlestaylortrial.org
On direct examination, Madam Dogolea testified that her husband refused to attend hospital, so three of his brothers took him to a bush near Gbarnga, Bong County for treatment. The Former Liberian Second Lady is giving her testimonies in Liberian English, so she’s being interpreted. Madam Dogolea, the Defence 17th witness, said when the herbalists could not revive the former Vice President’s health, Charles Taylor sent an airplane that took him to a clinic in Abidjan, the Ivory Coast. She said her husband died in the Abidjan Clinic after receiving treatments for two weeks.

But Prosecution Witness, Zigzag Marzah testified in 2008 that Mr. Dogolea was placed in a mattress and flogged severely with a young banana tree on the orders of former President, Charles Taylor. Mr. Marzah said Mr. Taylor accused the former Vice President of conniving with the Americans who were allegedly opposed to his Presidency. But the former Vice President’s wife, Regina Dogolea said she’s shocked by the prosecution’s evidence.

Mrs. Dogolea told the court that before her husband lost consciousness, he gave her a Holy Bible and told her to read it whenever she was bothered with a problem. The former Liberian second lady broke down in tears and stopped the court proceedings when she explained that her husband’s kidneys were damaged.
Ban wraps up Africa trip with stop in Sierra Leone

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon met with the leader of Sierra Leone and survivors of the country’s brutal civil war today, capping off his five-country tour of Africa.

In the capital, Freetown, he met with President Ernest Bai Koroma and attended a soccer game between amputees from the West African nation’s decade-long conflict.

He also visited the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), the United Nations-backed war crimes tribunal set up to deal with the worst acts committed during civil war which ended in 2002.

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by Sierra Leone’s Government and the UN in 2002. It is mandated to try those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in the country after 30 November 1996.

Mr. Ban arrived in Sierra Leone from Benin, where over the weekend, he held extensive talks with President Boni Yayi on the country’s upcoming elections, climate change and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), eight anti-poverty targets with a 2015 deadline.

Visiting a seaside site which has been particularly hard-hit by coastal erosion, he told reporters the scene was both strike and alarming.

Before departing for Sierra Leone today, the Secretary-General told the people of Benin in a televised address in the southern city of Cotonou that next year’s presidential and parliamentary polls will be a test of the country’s well-established democratic tradition.

Mr. Ban’s latest trip to Africa – the second of three to the continent this month alone – also took him to South Africa, Burundi and Cameroon.

Early this month, he visited Malawi and Uganda, and later in June he will travel to Gabon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where a UN peacekeeping mission – known as MONUC – has been in operation for 11 years.

In May, the Security Council agreed to transform the operation into a stabilization mission in the coming weeks, authorizing the withdrawal of up to 2,000 UN military personnel by 30 June this year from areas where security has improved enough to allow their removal.
Charlestaylortrial.org  
Monday, 14 June 2010

**Former Liberian Vice President’s Wife Ends Testimony**

Daily Summary

By Alpha Sesay

The wife of Liberia’s former vice president today maintained her testimony that her husband’s death was from illness, not from torture at the hands of Charles Taylor’s security forces as prosecutors have alleged. She told the Special Court for Sierra Leone today that her husband’s illness got worse after he was treated with traditional medicines by relatives before he died.

On Friday, Regina Dogolea, wife of Charles Taylor’s former vice president Enoch Dogolea, responded to suggestions that her husband had died in 2000 after being severely beaten on the orders of Mr. Taylor. Prosecution witness, Joseph “Zig Zag” Maazah told the court in 2008 that Mr. Taylor had ordered that Mr. Dogolea be beaten – an action which he said had caused Mr. Dogolea’s death. Mrs. Dogolea on Friday denied such claims, telling the court that her husband died because he was seriously ill.

In her testimony today, Mrs. Dogolea explained that after falling ill, Mr. Dogolea had called his relatives who took him to a nearby bush in Gbarngha and offered him traditional medications. This, she said, was done in her absence and had the effect of making her husband’s condition worse. Today, this account drew questions from Special Court for Sierra Leone judges.

Presiding judge, Justice Julia Sebutinde, sought to know the relationship that existed between Mr. Dogolea and the men who took him to the bush for traditional treatment.

“Now, were any of these three people your husband’s security?” Justice Sebutinde asked the witness.

“No, they were his own people,” Mrs. Dogolea said.

Asked what she meant by “they were his own people,” Mrs. Dogolea said that “they were his relatives, he sent for them to do the treatment.”

“So when they were administering the treatment, none of your bodyguards or his bodyguards was present, were they?” Justice Sebutinde asked further.

“I was not in the bush,” Mrs. Dogolea responded, prompting Justice Sebutinde to seek a more direct answer from the witness.

“Were any of his bodyguards or your bodyguards, did they escort him to the bush, to the best of your knowledge?” Justice Sebutinde asked again.

“No,” the witness said.

“It was his own relatives who took him to the bush, that’s what I saw,” she added.

Another judge of the Trial Chamber, Justice Richard Lussick, asked the witness to explain more details about how her husband returned from the bush after he got sick.
“You told us on Friday that when you wanted your husband to return, you sent your security to get him, you remember saying that?” Justice Lussick asked Mrs. Dogolean.

The witness agreed that she did say so.

“But I think you told Mr. Munyard (Mr. Taylor’s defense lawyer) when he was asking you questions on Friday that only the people who took your husband into the bush came out of the bush with him. You remember saying that?…now you are saying that apart from the people who took him into the bush, you security also came back with him?” Justice Lussick asked again.

“Yes, but I told you that the only thing they said that women were not allowed to go to the place but men could go there, so at last, he did say that he sent for me for someone to collect me but because I could not go there as a woman, I sent my security to go there and bring him,” Mrs. Dogolean said.

As the former Liberian second lady ended her testimony, defense lawyers explained that they would only be ready to present their next witness on Wednesday.

The court adjourned and will resume on Wednesday morning.
Nobody Told Me My Husband Was Beaten Before He Died

-Dogolea's Wife Tells Special Court

By: Alpha Sesay

The widow of Charles Taylor's former Vice President June 11, 2010 testified that she was never told that her husband died from torture administered by Liberian security forces on Mr. Taylor's orders.

Her husband's serious illness, the witness said, was instead the cause of his death.

Enoch Dogolea was Mr. Taylor's Vice President when he (Taylor) became President of Liberia in 1997.

In 2000, Mr. Dogolea died in neighboring Ivory Coast while there for medical treatment.

After his death, reports emerged that his sickness was as a result of beating by Mr. Taylor's security forces, based on the orders of the former Liberian President.

In March 2008, Joseph 'Zig Zag' Marzah, a former member of Mr. Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) who testified against Mr. Taylor in The Hague, told the Special Court for Sierra Leone that Mr. Dogolea had been beaten to the point of death.

“He was beaten up almost to the point of death…he died as a result of the beatings. I also took part in those beatings,” Mr. Marzah had said.

Mr. Dogolea's surviving wife, Regina Mehn Dogolea, took the witness stand as Mr. Taylor's 17th witness, telling the court that as far as she knew, her husband had died because he was seriously ill.

She said that neither her husband, nor any other person, had ever told her that Mr. Dogolea had been beaten on Mr. Taylor's orders.

“Myself I am surprised to hear this because since my husband died ten years ago, nobody has come out to tell me this. Within Monrovia, my husband never slept out for a day or two and later to come and tell me that someone had beaten him up,” Mrs. Dogolea told the court.

The widow of Charles Taylor's former Vice President testified that she was never told that her husband died from torture administered by Liberian security forces on Mr. Taylor's orders. Her husband's serious illness, the witness said, was instead the cause of his death.

“I was bathing him and I never saw anything wrong with him, no marks. I did not see any marks on his body,” she added.

Mrs. Dogolea explained to the court that when her husband became ill, he had called his brothers who took him to a nearby bush and had offered traditional medicines to him. She said that as a woman, they did not allow her to be present where the traditional treatment was being offered to her husband.

“They said it was a traditional thing, a woman cannot be there so they took him to the bush,” she said.
After three hours, Mrs. Dogolea said they sent to call her. When she got there, her husband was vomiting and she asked that he be taken to the house. At that point Mr. Taylor sent a helicopter to take Mr. Dogolea to the hospital, the witness said.

While at the hospital in the Ivorian capital Abidjan, Mrs. Dogolea said the doctor informed her that her husband's liver had been damaged.

“Then he died now,” she told the court.

Asked by Justice Julia Sebutinde whether she ever asked the hospital authorities to give her a report of what her husband died of, the witness said 'no'.

As defense lawyers concluded her direct-examination, prosecutors questioned the witness about a press release she issued in Liberia relating to evidence at the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Special Court for Sierra Leone relating to the circumstances surrounding her husband's death.

In the press release, Mrs. Dogolea questioned witnesses' accounts at both the TRC and the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague about the circumstances surrounding her husband's death, saying that as far as she knew, her husband was sick and that was the cause of his death. Prosecutors in cross-examining the witness questioned her whether she had received any assistance in writing the press release or whether she had written it only after meeting with defense lawyers. The witness insisted that she had issued the release only with the help of her 21-year-old step-daughter, who at that time was in the twelfth grade.

“Are you saying that your 21-year-old step-daughter who was in the twelfth grade drafted this statement?” Justice Sebutinde asked, wanting to be more certain.

In response, the witness said 'yes'.

Prosecution counsel, Katherine Howarth, read from a January 2008 Liberian newspaper which quoted an account given at the TRC regarding Mr. Dogolea's death.

“No bodyguards of Charles Taylor laid the former Vice President into mattresses and tortured him on the orders of Charles Taylor. He [Taylor] said the strategy of laying somebody in mattresses was to cover up any evidence of torture and not to see any body marks,” the January 2008 newspaper stated.

Ms. Howarth also read from a June 2000 article in a Sierra Leonean newspaper titled “Liberia's VP killed for Sa Lone.” The article indicated that Mr. Dogolea had been killed because he had policy disagreements with Mr. Taylor about the Liberian government's support for Sierra Leonean rebels.

Asked whether it was true that her husband was opposed to Mr. Taylor's support for rebel forces in Sierra Leone, Mrs. Dogolea said: “I told you I do not know anything about it.

“You know the man was going for peace talks and conferences and I was not behind him wherever he went and he did not tell me,” she said.

“You yourself know that in Africa, women do not really control their husbands, so anywhere they go you do not go with them, if they do not tell you their thing, you will not know about it,” she added.

The witness insisted that she could not tell whether her husband was beaten because the former Vice President had never told her so.

Defense lawyers indicated their readiness to re-examine the witness after she concluded her cross-examination but as the court was ready to adjourn for the day, the re-examination of the witness is set for today, Monday.
How Foreign Agents Fought Taylor?

Prosecutors Cross Examine Witness

War crimes court judges yesterday pushed back the cross-examination of a former Liberian fighter for another 11 days, as prosecutors prepare to challenge his account of the role foreign agents played in trying to bring down the government of former Liberian president, Charles Taylor, during the West African regional conflict in the 1990s.

Prosecutors started to question DCT-190, the fifteenth defense witness for Charles Taylor, yesterday about the establishment of the Liberians United Democratic Forces (LUDF) and the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia under the leadership of Roosevelt Johnson (ULIMO-J), both groups to which the witness belonged and said were set up in Sierra Leone to attack Mr. Taylor in Liberia.

“We joined ULIMO for our own safety in Sierra Leone. The second aim, as I told you, was to overthrow Mr. Taylor,” the witness told the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Asked by prosecutor, Katherine Howarth, whether he had told defense lawyers that “once Charles Taylor became the president of Liberia, ULIMO-J became the target,” the witness said no.

“I told my team that ULIMO only became a target after the Njala House incident,” DCT-190 said.

Njala House was where ULIMO-J leader Mr. Johnson lived, and the incident relates to skirmishes between Mr. Johnson's forces and troops loyal to Mr. Taylor. West African peacekeepers based in Liberia provided support to ULIMO-J forces to ensure the safety of Mr. Johnson, to attack the Barclay Training Center to get arms and ammunition, and then to attack and capture Mr. Taylor, the witness said.

Earlier this week, prosecutors had asked Mr. Taylor's defense team to disclose all statements by DCT-190, the defense team had handed over more than 30 pages.

Prosecutors asked that they be given more time to investigate the content of the witness statements in Sierra Leone and asked for cross-examination to start in earnest on June 21. The judges agreed.

This witness had testified in chief with partial protective measures and spoken extensively about his involvement with various fighting forces in Sierra Leone and Liberia. When Mr. Taylor's rebel forces attacked Liberia in 1989, the witness became part of a team to start a rebel faction LUDF, a group which later morphed into ULIMO-J under the leadership of Mr. Johnson. The objective of ULIMO, the witness said was to fight against Mr. Taylor's forces.

The witness said he was later recruited into Sierra Leone's Civil Defense Forces (CDF) which aimed to forcefully remove from power, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and Revolutionary United Front (RUF) junta, which had overthrown the democratically elected government of Sierra Leone in 1997. Prosecutors allege that Mr. Taylor provided support for the AFRC/RUF junta through the supply of arms and ammunition in exchange for diamonds.

Mr. Taylor has denied the allegations. According to the witness, with support from Sierra Leonean and Guinean authorities, he was also recruited into the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) rebel group, a group which launched a rebel war against Mr. Taylor's government in Liberia around 1999/2000. Mr. Taylor who has denied sending fighters to Sierra Leone to assist the RUF has said
that the West African region had become volatile due to the conflicts in the region and so it became very easy to move fighters, arms and ammunition across borders. The former president accused foreign powers of helping dissident groups to bring his government down while he was president of Liberia.

This witness corroborates Mr. Taylor's account about the conflict in the West African region.
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary
14 June 2010

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

UN News in Liberia

UNDP Completes another Local Administrative Building
[Liberian Express]

- UNDP Deputy Resident Representative for Programmes, Maria-Threase Keating says the UN is pleased with Government’s development initiatives and will continue to render support where needed.
- Ms. Keating spoke Wednesday when she turned over to Government the second district administrative building in Number-3, Grand Bassa County, valued at US$200,000.
- The deputy UNDP boss said the United Nations’ policy now is to ensure that development assistance triggers down to the local level where it will impact the lives of the people.
- Receiving the keys to the new building, the Deputy Internal Affairs Minister for Urban Affairs Amadu Kiawu thanked the UN for the support especially to the rural masses.

Local News on Liberian issues

Liberia and Kuwait Renew Ties—President Sirleaf in Gulf State

- The Gulf State of Kuwait and Liberia have commenced a new chapter in bilateral relations as the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and senior Kuwaiti officials welcomed President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and delegation at the start of a three-day official visit that began on Sunday, 13 June 2010.
- President Sirleaf, who left the country Saturday, began the visit Sunday with bilateral discussions involving the Amir, and the Crown Prince, His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.
- According to an Executive Mansion release, the Liberian leader will also hold discussions with the Kuwaiti Speaker of the National Assembly, Jassim Mohammad Al-Khorafi; Prime Minister Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; and business entrepreneurs in Kuwait.
- Discussions involving the General Manager of the Kuwaiti Investment Authority, Mr. Bader Mohammed Al-Saad, and the Director-General of the Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development, are also scheduled to take place during the President’s visit.

Liberia, BHP Sign Agreement

- The BHP Billiton Mining Company has signed a framework with the Liberian Government to mine four iron ore leases.
- According to a Senior Executive of the Company, Ruban Yogarajah, the agreement will establish legal, tax, and fiscal perimeter for mining.
- He noted that the company has spent over US$50 million for exploration since 2005, and the leases are near a 250 kilometer-long rail corridor that runs from Liberia’s border with Guinea to the Liberia’s Coast.
- Combined with the nearby deposit in Guinea, Mr. Yogarajah said the leases have the potential to form the backbone of world-class cluster of mines around the integrated rail and port infrastructure.
- The estimated cost of the deal has not been officially disclosed by either the Liberian government or the company but the United Kingdom newspaper, Sunday Telegraph earlier reported that the deal is in the tune of US$3 billion.

Liberia Ranked Amongst World’s Worst Economies
[New Democrat, Liberian Express, Plain Truth]
• The internationally acclaimed Forbes Magazine has ranked Liberia 8th amongst the top ten countries with worse economy in the World.
• The magazine noted that the yard stick used to judge the country was based upon what it called “mismanagement of resources and incurable corruption” among many other factors that have engulfed the country.
• It said since 2005, Liberia has been to some extent calm, saying that it may experience a GDP growth of 6% growth this year.
• It observed that this is a GDP far less than US$900 million, with rubber exports, the single largest foreign exports of US$170 million, registration of foreign ship brings about US$18 million, something the magazine said is highly enough to make a dent in the country’s US$3.4 billion debt.
• The magazine noted that all of the ten countries rated have at least one trait in common, either the lack of transparency, corruption, more resource but extreme poverty and the lack of basic social services.

Lawmaker Wants Fresh Debate on Drug Bill
[Public Agenda]

• Bong County Representative George Mulbah is calling for a fresh debate of the drug bill in the national Legislature.
• Representative Mulbah said when the bill is introduced and passed; it will reduce the use of harmful drugs or other criminal offences.
• Explaining his frustration over the manner in which harmful drugs are used, the Bong lawmaker said he was disgusted to see a child as young as 12 years in possession of harmful drugs, something he said if not taken seriously, will kill the fabric of the Liberian society.
• The bill which was some time ago kicked out the House was earlier introduced by Representative Mulbah and sought death penalty.
• The lawmaker has earlier called on parents to guide their children against the friends they interact with as well as places they go and things they do.
• He further called on the Drug Enforcements Agency to intensify its surveillance on the import of harmful drugs at Liberia’s borders as well as communities and ghettos around the country.

Archbishop Michael Francis Bill Criticized in Senate
[Heritage]

• The introduction of an annual national day observance bill in honor of ailing Archbishop Michael Francis has experienced a protest in the Senate.
• The protest followed concerns by Grand Bassa Senator Gbehzongar Findley against honoring such a bill.
• Senator Findley argued that those pushing for the passage of such a bill should rather forward their request to the Vatican in Rome, Italy in order to make the Archbishop a Saint rather than a national leader in Liberia.
• Senator Findley also objected to any move by Senators who are Catholics to form a part of the review of the Archbishop Michael Francis bill because of what he considers conflict of interest.
• But Nimba Senator Adolphus Dolo who declared himself as a proud Catholic said it was immaterial for any Senator to question the denomination of another person.
• The Senate has meanwhile forwarded the bill sponsored by Maryland Senator John Ballout for review by its appropriate committee.

Star Radio (News monitored today at 09:00 am)

Today is World Blood Donor Day

• President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has by proclamation declared today Monday June 14 World Blood Donor Day and it is to be observed as a working holiday.
• In the proclamation, President Sirleaf called on all citizens, foreign nationals and donor agencies to join the Health Ministry in executing programmes befitting the day.
• According to the proclamation, the day will be celebrated under the theme: Young donor with the slogan, new blood to the world.
• Programmes marking the day will focus on the creation of wider awareness on the need for safe blood transfusion and the importance of voluntary donation.

(Also reported Radio Veritas, Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)

Intensify Corruption Fight…US Government Tells Liberian Leader
The United States Government has called on President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to pay what it calls tremendous amount of attention to fighting corruption.

The call was contained in two key messages given President Sirleaf at the close of her recent visit with President Barack Obama.

USAID Mission Director Pamela White disclosed Madam Sirleaf was asked to intensify her fight on corruption because it was on everybody’s tongue and mind.

The USAID boss believes this is why the Liberian leader has returned home with new dynamism to fight corruption.

Ms. White also disclosed during President Sirleaf’s visit to the US, she received heap of congratulatory messages from several American officials including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Congressional officials among others.

According to Ms. White, the US officials believe Liberia has become one of the few examples of a post-conflict country that is on a very stable road.

The disclosure was contained in remarks delivered at a 15-year development forum organized by the Planning Ministry Friday.

Archbishop Michael Francis Bill Criticized in Senate

Tax Waiver Bill for Imported Drugs Introduced in House

A bill seeking a tax waiver on all essential drugs imported into the country for free distribution has been introduced in the House of Representatives.

The bill is under the sponsorship of Nimba County Representative Edwin Gaye.

Representative Gaye said the tax exemption bill on essential drugs would make it easier for more humanitarian interventions to the health sector.

According to him, it was not healthy for Liberian partners to pay taxes on drugs brought into the country for free distribution.

Representative Gaye said if the bill is enacted, the Health Ministry would supervise the entire process of free drugs brought into Liberia.

Meanwhile, the House has sent the tax waiver bill on free imported drugs into committee room for review within one month.

Planning Minister Speaks on AGOA's Prospects

Planning Minister Amara Konneh says in order for Liberia to achieve a stable microeconomic environment, it must adhere to the Agriculture and Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA).

Minister Konneh said AGOA will afford Liberia the opportunity to get its trade policy right and deal well with the sub-region and the international community.

He also believes in order to develop a stable microeconomic environment legislations on property right must be addressed.

The Planning Minister also spoke of the need to effectively combat corruption and put good monetary policies in place.

Minister Konneh spoke Friday during a one-day consultative meeting to draw up a 15-year development agenda for Liberia.

He said the consultation seeks to ensure that no development gap emerges between June 2011 and the time the next government takes over.

(Also reported Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)

Academic Constraints Hit Chinese-based Liberian Students, but...

Information Minister Cletus Sieh says Liberian medical students in China are facing serious academic challenges.

Minister Sieh said Liberian students who do not have first degrees in medicine are faced with serious challenges.

The Information Minister said having a first degree in biology, chemistry or other science courses other than medicine poses a serious challenge to Liberians.

He said Chinese medical instructors are teaching the students as if they have already earned their first degrees in medicine.

Minister Sieh however said that despite the challenges, the Liberian students are on the whole performing well.
University Lecturer Wants Water Transport Regulated

- A strategic management lecturer at the University of Liberia (UL) has called for a maritime legislation that would regulate water transport traffic in the country.
- Mr. William Towah said such legislation should take into consideration, sea and lake transport monitoring and surveillance unit, certification of boat builders and safety regulations.
- Mr. Towah noted the law would also enable authorities at the Transport Ministry and the Bureau of Maritime Affairs to institute effective traffic regulations.
- He named formal training in navigation and on-the-job training for crew members as some of the regulations.
- The UL lecturer believes when such mechanisms are in place, they would curb the increased wave of ship disasters in the country, resulting to the loss of lives and properties.
- He blamed the lack of regulatory mechanisms to the Maryland shipwreck.

(Also reported Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)

Radio Veritas (News monitored today at 09:45 am)

Liberia and Kuwait Renew Ties—President Sirleaf in Gulf State
(Also reported Truth FM, Sky FM, and ELBC)

Criminal Court Hears Arguments in Economic Sabotage Case

- Criminal Court ‘C’ is expected to listen to arguments this week in a motion for the change of venue in the economic sabotage case involving former chairman of the Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA).
- According to the court, lawyers representing Mr. Albert Bropleh filed the motion for change of venue on grounds that his client will not get a free trial in the First Judicial Circuit Court in Montserrado County.
- Mr. Bropleh is accused of stealing thousands of United States dollars from government’s coffers an allegation the former LTA boss has since denied.

International Clips on Liberia

Chinese peacekeeping squad leaves for Liberia
Xinhua

A Chinese police squad left Beijing early Sunday for Liberia to join the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the West African country. The 18-member squad included staff from the criminal investigation, public security, traffic control and special police departments of Zhejiang Province in east China. Two out of the 18 police personnel had previously participated in United Nations peacekeeping missions. With an average age of about 30, they form China's ninth police squad to Liberia, and will replace personnel from central China's Hubei Province, who are expected to return to China on June 16. According to the Ministry of Public Security, China has sent 1,615 police for UN peacekeeping missions to East Timor, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Liberia, Afghanistan, Haiti and Sudan since January 2000.

Liberian jailed for nine years for trafficking kilo of drugs
www.timesofmalta.com

Ibrahim Koroma, 30, a Liberian national, was today jailed for nine years and fined €23,000 after he admitted possession and complicity to traffic up to a kilo of heroin and cocaine. The admission was made just before the accused went on trial. Mr Koroma was arrested in 2007 in Qawra along with a Maltese man. Reports at the time alleged they were caught red-handed carrying out the deal. Police said they seized 400 grammes of cocaine and 600 grammes of heroin. Most of the drug was allegedly found in the Liberian's home in St Paul's Bay. Both the Liberian and his alleged Maltese client, 26-year-old Christian Grech, pleaded not guilty when they were charged. They were denied bail.

Liberia, BHP sign £2 billion iron ore deal
Reuters

BHP Billiton has signed a $3 billion a deal with Liberia to develop a large-scale iron ore project, an official in the West African country said on Monday. The company is the latest in a string of mining firms that have signed deals for iron ore projects in West Africa -- a politically unstable region, home to some of the world's last great undeveloped minerals deposits  -- as prices of the steelmaking raw material rise after slumping in 2009. The mineral development agreement (MDA) will allow BHP Billiton to continue exploring for iron ore at Goe Fantro, Kintoma, St. John River South and the Tolo Range, National Investment Commission Chairman Richard Tolbert said. "We are
delighted to have reached this agreement with BHP Billiton following 18 months of discussions," Tolbert said, adding the MDA was subject to approval by parliament. BHP Billiton said the agreement sets out the legal and fiscal framework to develop the leases, including stabilisation of taxes, duties and other trade terms. "The Liberian leases are all proximate to the existing 250km long rail corridor that runs from the Guinean border to the Liberian coast," the company said in a statement. The deal comes as Liberia -- still recovering from a 1989-2003 civil war -- negotiates other potential mining accords after a flurry of deals in the past five years worth about $10 billion.

International Clips on West Africa

Guinea

Abuse of funds a link to Guinea arrests
AFP

The leader of Guinea's army, Colonel Nouhou Thiam, has stated that about a dozen army officers arrested since Friday must account for their use of funds and clarify "opaque management". Thiam, the chief of general staff, told AFP and Radio France Internationale (RFI), in an interview late on Sunday that the wave of "arrests has nothing to do with politics" in the West African country. He said that the senior officers arrested in recent days, who are all close to absent junta leader Moussa Dadis Camara, need to "clarify a certain number of money management issues we find opaque". "You know, when you're managing the funds of others, you have to keep and show accounts," he added. "In the Guinean army, we grew used to embezzlement, we have accused our elders of financial mismanagement, and now that transparency rules, we need to show accounts." The officers arrested include the former chief of general staff, Colonel Oumar Sanoh, and his deputy, Colonel Abdoulaye Keita. Since their arrests, no reasons have been given to them, said one of the detainees, reached by telephone. On Sunday, Colonel Mamadou Aliou Sow, the former coordinator of the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD) - as the junta called itself on taking power in December 2008 - was arrested, according to his family. The polls are due to take place on June 27.

Ivory Coast

Ivory Coast stampede kills 2 during reggae concert
Associated Press

A Red Cross official in Ivory Coast says two people were killed and 30 wounded in a stampede at a reggae concert in the rebel-controlled city of Bouake. Philippe Beauverd said Sunday that a team of local Red Cross workers treated 29 people at the stadium and sent one to the hospital with more serious injuries. A witness says the crowd surged toward the sole entrance to the municipal stadium when local reggae star Alpha Blondy started playing Saturday night, crushing people against the fences. The reggae singer organized the concert, held in the northern rebel capital of Bouake, to promote peace and reconciliation in the West African nation, which has been divided between the north and south since a failed coup attempt in 2002.

Sierra Leone

Ban Ki-Moon Assesses Post-War Progress in Freetown
www.allafrica.com

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon arrives in Sierra Leone on Monday on the last stage of the Secretary Generals African visit. In Freetown Ban is expected to monitor progress made so far in the country since the end of the war. The head of the UN operation in Sierra Leone Michael von der Schulenberg says the UN Secretary General is visiting to see for himself the progress made by the country. "We think that Sierra Leone is a success story," he told RFI. Ban first visited Sierra Leone in 2002 as part of a UN Security Council team when his country, South Korea, held the chair of the council. It will be important for him to compare what he saw then and what is on the ground now, his executive representative says. The Secretary General will be meeting President Ernest Bai Koroma and his cabinet, but will also hold talks with civil society members and opposition parties. Sulaiman Banja Tejan-Sie of the largest opposition party, the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), told RFI that party leaders want to discuss some serious governance issues with the UN Secretary-General. They include "the recent pronouncement by government to act contrary to the truth and reconciliation report and also the fact that recruitments into the police force are not done transparently these days - we see a lot of politicisation in that area and also we are not happy with the way we have been consulted on the appointment of the commissioner for the east and the chairlady of the National Electoral Commission". With Ban spending only one day in the country, it is doubtful he will be able to address all the issues Sierra Leoneans want him to focus on.

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Former Rwandan Baptist pastor convicted of genocide

By Bob Allen

HELSINKI, Finland (ABP) – A Finnish court has sentenced a former Baptist pastor to life in prison for participating in Rwanda’s 1994 genocide, according to the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Francois Bazaramba, 59, was a pastor of the Baptist church in Nyakizu, near the city of Butare. Approximately 5,000 members of the Tutsi ethnic group were slaughtered in April and May of 1994 in the Nyakizu area. Prosecutors claim he was an active member of an extremist group, comprising members of the rival Hutu tribe, that orchestrated the killings.

Supporters said they do not believe that Bazaramba, who had been director of the youth wing of the Union of Baptist Churches in Rwanda, was capable of the acts alleged against him. He moved to Finland in 2003.

Bazaramba, who sought asylum in Finland in 2003, has been in detention since 2007. Finnish authorities refused to extradite him to Rwanda, fearing he would not receive a fair trial and because Rwanda has the death penalty.

His attorney said Bazaramba was not in a position to have carried out the killings and claimed to have evidence that witnesses in Rwanda were tortured. Family and church friends in Finland discounted the charges, describing Bazaramba as a good man who helped other refugees fleeing Rwanda's civil war.

Matias Hellman, a liaison official of the International Criminal Court for the Former Yugoslavia, told Helsingin Sanomat, Finland's leading newspaper, that genocide cases are always difficult.

Hellman said the eyewitness testimony of surviving victims is extremely important in genocide trials but that statements by victims are not always reliable. Memories get distorted over the years, traumas change mental images and there are cases in which people have made up false accusations of war crimes. Still, Hellman said, eyewitness testimony carries weight, especially if backed up by hard evidence like written documents, video material and crime-scene investigations.

The charges against Bazaramba were brought by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, a Tanzania-based court based formed in 1997 to try the masterminds of the massacres. The allegations stem largely from a report on the Rwanda genocide by the Human Rights Watch organization in 1999. Bazaramba's name was not on a 1999 list of genocide suspects, but his name was number 19 on a list of 93 Rwandans living abroad published by the government of Rwanda in 2006.

Rwanda claims that Bazaramba worked alongside Nyakizu's ruthless mayor, Ladislas Ntaganzwa, a hard-line ethnic Hutu wanted for genocide, to secure weapons and lead patrols hunting down Tutsis. The murders in Nyakizu came during a 10-day killing spree following the presumed assassination of Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana on April 6, 1994. Hutus slew Tutsis across Rwanda during the period, with anti-Tutsi sentiment inflamed by Hutu government officials and official broadcasts blaming Tutsis for the president's death.

Eyewitnesses told Helsingin Sanomat in 2007 that Bazaramba acquired weapons and led killers. One witness told the newspaper that he got weapons from Eleazar Ziherembere, at the time general secretary of the Union of Baptist Churches of Rwanda. Ziherembere fled Rwanda in 1994 and now works as area director for Africa at International Ministries of the American Baptist Churches USA.

Ziherembere told the newspaper in 2007 that the Human Rights Watch report's claim that Bazaramba was a good friend of Ntaganzwa is not true, because he was a close friend of the previous mayor, whom Ntaganzwa deposed violently.

The trial, which lasted nine months, was Finland’s first for genocide. Bazaramba’s lawyers said he plans to appeal.
Africa: We'll Get Bashir, Kony Soon, Says ICC

Julius Barigaba

Nairobi — It is just a matter of time before the International Criminal Court arrests its major indictees - Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir and leader of the Lord's Resistance Army Joseph Kony.

This is the view ICC Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo expressed at the Review Conference of the Rome Statute in Kampala. Mr Ocampo said the indictees are being increasingly isolated and will be nailed soon.

"Arresting Bashir is a matter of time," said Mr. Ocampo. "More and more, President Bashir is isolated," he added citing the case of Turkey, an Islamic country that has come out to warn the Sudanese leader that he will be arrested if he attends the Islamic Conference in Ankara in July.

Case of Kony

Similar sentiments were voiced over the arrest of LRA leader Kony and two of his top commanders.

Yet despite this optimism within the Court, a number of member states of the ICC, civil society and victims of war crimes expressed doubts over states resolve to arrest the two.

Considering that one is a sitting head of state, and the other a reclusive rebel leader who has been at large for over two decades, this is a daunting task.

"State parties need to do a good deal better than they have so far," says Richard Dicker of Human Rights Watch. "State parties should issue their position here on Bashir and Sudan's non co-operation.

Will Uganda invite an ICC indicted Bashir for the forthcoming AU Summit to be held in this very place?

"Will state and non state actors work together to bring this regional menace, the scourge of Joseph Kony to book so that we never have to see Christmas massacres as happened in the Congo last year? These are issues that state parties must resolve here."
On the 12th anniversary of the International Criminal Court, the United Nations Secretary-General urged that more countries should accede to the Rome statute so that an era of accountability could be ushered in. Both the institution (ICC) and the statute are important in themselves. Yet any serious discussion on international criminal law cannot be limited to the Roman statute. A collection of essays, the book under review provides a fair sample of the issues that require deliberation in the realm of international criminal law and human rights. While at one end of the spectrum there is an essay discussing the legitimacy of using torture to fight terrorism, at the other end there is another that wants an international legal response to the problem of domestic violence. The history and evaluation of international criminal law; the judicial exposition on serious violations of humanitarian law; and the norms of equity that should guide the ICC in the exercise of its powers are some of the other subjects discussed in the book.

Uneven

The product is singularly devoid of editorial scrutiny and judgment. The essays are of uneven length — it varies from five pages to 100 pages. There is no analytical sequence in their presentation. Thus a piece on India's nuclear policy is followed by one on the distinction between ‘civilians' and 'combatants.' And, the various issues related to war crimes are found scattered. The disparate nature of the collection is further compounded by the absence of an introduction by the editor.

Balanced

As for the essays, Bertrand G. Ramcharan's contribution on the challenges before the Human Rights Council offers an informed and balanced analysis that is characteristic of a piece by one who has had the benefit of watching the system from inside — he had been High Commissioner with the erstwhile Human Rights Commission. He wants the Council's operation to be above international politics because only an even-handed treatment of all countries would lend legitimacy to human rights enforcement and international law.

This plea for equality of treatment resonates through several of the articles. Thus, while Katerina Novotna questions the denial of head-of-state immunity to Charles Taylor by the Sierra Leone Special Tribunal,
Hans Kochler condemns the iniquitous manner in which the ICC addressed the infringement of International Criminal Law in Sudan.

Values

Notably, the contributors neither romanticise nor belittle the importance of international criminal law. Instead, by marshalling facts and adducing evidence, they speak about the kind of norms and values that should inform such law. To give an illustration, Almiro Rodrigues points out how fair-process norms applied to ordinary criminal trials cannot be extended to war crime trials. This is because the perpetrator, who is viewed as a villain by one side, is seen as a hero by the other.

Informed by this insight, Rodrigues examines the various ingredients of a fair trial — such as self-representation, protection of liberty, and personal presence at trial — to determine how these principles should operate in a trial of war crimes.

Considerable significance is accorded to the decisions of international courts. It is because judicial choices do not just impact the parties before the court but influence the behaviour of the larger international community. This is the very reason why Wattad strongly disapproves of the decision of the Supreme Court of Israel that allowed the defence of necessity to be pleaded for applying torture on alleged terrorists. He makes a fascinating distinction between ‘justification' and ‘excuse' and contends that while the defence of necessity should not be a justification for state officials, it may, in an individual case, be an excuse. This is because an excuse in no way condones the wrongfulness of the act, even as it allows for compassion to be shown to the wrongdoer. S.R. Bedi argues that India altered its policy of peaceful use of nuclear power only after the ICJ allowed for the possible use of nuclear weapons in self-defence.

Traditionally, the prosecution of crime and maintenance of peace and order have been regarded as the sole responsibility of national governments. As a corollary, a failure of national government and a failure in the enforcement of criminal law have come to be seen as inter-linked. Such perceptions of crime enforcement no longer hold good. The question what kind of behaviour merits what type of intervention by the international community is far from settled. This book makes an informed intervention in this vital area of contemporary concern.

Keywords: International Criminal Law, Rome statute, Human rights, Domestic violence, Fight against terrorism, Peace and Order
No Bed of Roses for International Criminal Court

KAMPALA (IDN) - All that glitters is not gold. This applies to the Rome Statute which set up the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 1998, against the staunch opposition of the United States, giving it jurisdiction over four categories of crimes: the crime of aggression, genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The amendment of the Rome Statute agreed at Kampala will not by itself usher in a new "age of accountability" replacing the "old era of impunity" as the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon would have the world believe.

The ICC is a lame duck because some of the world's largest and most powerful countries, including China, India, Russia and the United States, have not joined. And it will remain a lame duck until at least 2017.

This is partly because what constitutes the crime of aggression has been a long-running source of contention in international law. After nearly one decade of discussion, 111 countries that are parties to the Rome Statute have reached an agreement on the definition of the crime of aggression.

The resolution adopted at the end of the two-week-long ICC review conference in Kampala, Uganda, on June 11, defines the crime of aggression as “the planning, preparation, initiation or execution, by a person in a position effectively to exercise control over or to direct the political or military action of a State, of an act of aggression which, by its character, gravity and scale, constitutes a manifest violation of the Charter of the United Nations.”

It remains to be seen in how far this definition will prove its mettle. But it was agreed that blockades of ports or coasts of a State by armed forces of another State, as well as an invasion or attack by troops of one State on the territory of another, will be considered as acts of aggression under the statute.

Member countries also agreed that the ICC can exercise jurisdiction over crimes of aggression, but only over those committed one year after 30 States Parties have ratified the newly-made amendment.

According to the UN, this will not happen until at least 2017, when States meet against to review the amendment, according to the new resolution adopted in the Ugandan capital.

However, the Kampala resolution noted that if the ICC Prosecutor wishes to move forward with an investigation of possible cases, he or she will take the case to the UN Security Council. Once that body has determined that an act of aggression has taken place, the Prosecutor will move...
forward with a probe.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in a statement issued by his spokesperson on June 14, welcomed what he described as "the historic agreement" on the definition of aggression. At the start of the Kampala conference, Ban underlined that a new "age of accountability" is replacing the "old era of impunity".

The new "age of accountability", he noted, dawned with the Nuremberg and Tokyo Tribunals, gaining strength with tribunals for Rwanda, the former Yugoslavia, Sierra Leone, Cambodia and Lebanon. "Now we have the ICC -- permanent, increasingly powerful, casting a long shadow. There is no going back," Ban stressed.

"In this new age of accountability, those who commit the worst of human crimes" -- be they rank-and-file foot soldiers or top political leaders – "will be held responsible".

Former Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic and former Liberian leader Charles Taylor are among those who have already been called to justice. "Not long ago," he said, "this would have been unimaginable."

But for the ICC to have the reach it needs, the UN Secretary-General rightly pointed out, it must have universal support. "Only then will perpetrators have no place to hide," he said.

One example is Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir who already faces an arrest warrant on seven charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes. He is accused of having personally instructed his forces to annihilate three ethnic groups, the Fur, the Masalit and the Zaghawa.

As chance would have it, the very day the Kampala amendment was endorsed, the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court reported to the Security Council (on June 11) that the Sudanese Government-sponsored attacks against civilians continue in Darfur, with thousands of people freshly displaced from their villages and sexual violence against women also widespread.

DARFUR

Calling for tougher action to improve the situation in the war-wracked region, Luis Moreno-Ocampo said the facts show that war crimes are still taking place in Darfur, seven years after fighting between Government forces, allied militias known as the Janjaweed and rebel groups first flared.

"In February, immediately after the signing of a peace agreement and public commitments to peace, 100,000 civilians were forcibly displaced by Sudanese armed forces in the Jebel Marra," he said, referring to a mountainous area of central Darfur.

Moreno-Ocampo said the modus operandi was the same as that used earlier in the conflict -- "air bombardments followed by attacks of Sudanese armed forces integrating militia/Janjaweed".

He pointed out that gender crimes "remain unabated", with female internally displaced persons (IDPs) facing acts of sexual violence, often from groups of armed men dressed in military uniforms.

The ICC prosecutor said he was even more concerned that "victims are increasingly discouraged from reporting rape and sexual violence, because they known they won’t benefit
from remedial action”.

In 2007 the ICC indicted Ahmad Harun, a former national government minister of the interior, and the alleged Janjaweed leader Ali Kushayb for the alleged murder of civilians, rape and other outrages upon the personal dignity of women and girls, persecution, forcible transfers, imprisonment or severe deprivation of liberty, and attacks intentionally directed against civilians.

But the two men remain at large and Harun is now the Governor of South Kordofan state. The re-elected Sudanese President continues to face charges before the ICC of war crimes and crimes against humanity. In May 2010, the court's judges in The Hague referred Sudan's lack of cooperation in failing to arrest the indictees to the Security Council.

Although Sudan is not a State Party to the Rome Statute that set up the ICC, according to the UN, it is obliged to "cooperate fully with and provide any necessary assistance to the court and the prosecutor" in accordance with a Security Council resolution adopted in 2005.

"The impunity of Ahmad Harun and Ali Kushayb is one of the main problems," Moreno-Ocampo said. "It carries a price. Ali Kushayb is a tribal leader, still exercising power in his own area in South Darfur and a vivid example to other Janjaweed that they can continue committing crimes, (that) there is impunity."

The prosecutor later told journalists that it was critically important to arrest the men not just for past crimes, but to ensure that they do not carry out crimes in the future. He added that he wanted Council members to ensure that Member States consistently insist that Sudan arrest the two indictees.

An estimated 300,000 people have died in Darfur since 2003, either through fighting, disease, hunger or other consequences of conflict. Another 2.7 million people live as IDPs (internally displaced persons) or as refugees in neighbouring countries such as Chad.

Since the start of 2008 a joint UN-African Union peacekeeping operation (known as UNAMID) has been in place to try to quell the fighting and alleviate the humanitarian suffering.

Moreno-Ocampo said that "there is a need for an updated, comprehensive report of the UN Secretariat on the current situations in the camps and the villages. The fragmented information on the rapes (and) on the obstacles to humanitarian assistance must be put together to allow the international community to consider the current extent of the suffering of the civilians."

Sudanese ambassador Abdalmahmood Mohamad told journalists that the actions of Moreno-Ocampo were that of a "desperate" prosecutor, and that the situation in Darfur was actually improving for its inhabitants.

He also accused the court of being selective in pursuing cases and ignoring possible war crimes committed by other countries. Former U.S. President Bush, for example, has been accused by independent legal experts of having committed crimes of aggression and crimes against humanity in Iraq. (IDN-InDepthNews/15.06.2010)
Special Court Supplement
Visit to the Special Court by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon
Monday, 14 June 2010