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, 8 September 2010

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday. Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact Martin Royston-Wright Ext 7217
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The effects of our decade long brutal war are still with us as we struggle to reinstate the dignity and admiration this nation once enjoyed.
The effects of our decade long brutal rebel war are still with us as we struggle to reinstate the dignity and admiration this Nation once enjoyed!

Acted as the link between the group and President Monro. The group, which began meeting in March 1991, became known as the Liberian United Defense Forces (LUDF). At times went on, the depth of commitment of Kromah, Yoro, Karpeh and Johnson to the objective of liberating Liberia from the grip of the NPFL, made them the leading figures in the organization. When the war began in Sierra Leone, they offered to fight the rebels on the understanding that government would provide base facilities for the force they were training to fight the NPFL in Liberia afterwards. To this the government of President Monro agreed.

On 8th April 1991, following the training of the first 150 Liberians in Kenema, the LUDF, which later changed its name to the United Liberation Movement of Liberia (ULIMO), commenced operations. The first engagement was in Gohor, eleven miles from Kenema town, from whose government troops had retreated in the face of heavy rebel attacks. ULIMO troops engaged the rebels here in a three hour battle and succeeded in pushing them back to Juba, where another five hour battle was fought with rebels sustaining heavy casualties. ULIMO soldiers fighting under the command of Arma Yolu sustained no casualties. A second engagement between ULIMO and the rebels was in Garahun Turkia in Kenema district where 22 Ulimo soldiers under the command of the late Lieutenant Solomon Kamara, a Krahn from Kakata in Liberia, and the late Major Officer Freetakar successfully defeated the rebels.

Following these successful engagements, ULIMO became a significant factor in the war against the insurgents who had by this time spread their ranks with a considerable number of forcibly recruited Sierra Leoneans. Other engagements took place in several towns in Kaithaun and Kenema districts where ULIMO front line commanders like Dr. Diminvo Bawain or Cobia, a Krahn from Grand Gedeh county in Liberia, distinguished themselves.

In late May 1991, Cobia was summoned to Daru army base by Colonel Monrrow Coffie. At Daru it was decided that a combined force of Sierra Leoneans, Guinean and ULIMO troops was to be assembled for the recapture of Bunumbu, which was now a heavily fortified rebel base, and from where rebels had carried out several attacks over a wide area including Gandorun in the Kono district. The town of Bunumbu in Kalabu district hosting one of the oldest educational institutions in the country had developed as a small and prosperous rural community. Its growth as a commercial centre had largely depended on the Teacher Training College established in the 1930s. With funding from the International Development Agency (IDA) beginning in the 1970s, the institute established the Teacher Training Programme and its structural facilities to some of the best in the nation. Bunumbu College, with highly trained and competent teaching and administrative personnel was the pride of the nation. The town and the college fused in a harmonious, tranquil and prosperous relationship. Consequently became a prime target for rebel attack.

On 10th April, the town of Manowar, eight miles from Bunumbu fell to the rebels who had by-passed Daru army base.

The fall of Manowar was a blow to the military, and it sent shock waves to the Bunumbu community and nearby towns. The Principal of the college sought urgent military protection for the college from the army garrison in Kenema but to no avail. Security of Bunumbu was raised in cabinet as information reached Freetown of an imminent attack.

The town and the college possessed massive stocks of private and government property and thus a tempting target for bandits. The casual military response to the potential danger facing Bunumbu convinced the Principal of the urgent necessity to evacuate the staff, their families and students. On 22nd April, the military’s flight from Bunumbu began and completed on the 28th. Four days later on 2nd May, the rebels struck.

The attack on Bunumbu conform to a now familiar pattern. A small rebel group entered the town to reconnoiter for the presence of government troops and to preach the evils of the APC Party and their determination to rescue the people from oppression. Their fears calmed, the people relaxed and resisted the temptation to flee. Meanwhile some of the rebels made a complete study of the geography of the town.

Shortly after, about 100 robos descended...
The effects of our decade long brutal rebel war are still with us as we struggle to reinstate the dignity and admiration this Nation once enjoyed!

FROM PAGE 15

on Burumba and quickly and methodically surrounded the town and rounded up the entire population. All radios were confiscated and the rebels threatened to shoot anyone trying to escape. Machine gun emplacements were established at strategic points around the town. Burumba was now gripped in fear, but the nightmare had just begun.

For several days afterwards, the systematic looting of the town and the college was carried out. Everything that could be easily moved was taken away through jungle roads across to Liberia.

Harrowing reports by those who had braved death and successfully escaped through the jungle to other towns told of many inhabitants being put to death, and other used as porters to carry looted items to Liberia. The young women many of whom were carried off, succumbed to the inevitable indignities common in such circumstances. Many died on the way, and those who survived especially young males were given military training and sent back into the country as rebels.

Burumba was established as a base of operations with training facilities for Sierra Leoneans captured in other nearby towns. Rebel reinforcements were also sent to strengthen the defence of the town against a possible government counter-strike.

Finally, after a two-month delay the combined force of Sierra Leone, Guinea and Ulimo troops was galvanized into action. On 4th July, the joint force arrived on the outskirts of Burumba by 3.00am and took up assault positions. By 5.30am, Guinean troops equipped with the Russian built multiple rocket field artillery opened up with a deadly barrage of rocketfire. Forty-five minutes later, the bombardment ceased, and Sierra Leone and Ulimo troops moved in, in a single coordinated attack on the town. Then they beheld a sad sight.

As the town lay in smouldering ruins and the soldiers surveyed the comprehensive destruction wreaked by the bombardment, only a few scattered bodies were found. Faulty intelligence had robbed the joint force of a meaningful victory. As it turned out, the rebels and the entire populace with the exception of the old and infirm had abandoned the town the previous day. It transpired that the combined force moving from Daru based had first attacked the town of Kgalai on their way to Burumba.

That battle had been fierce and the rebels had lost.

Those among them who escaped went to Burumba three miles away to inform of the impending on the town. There a public meeting was hastily convened by rebel leaders, during which the decision to evacuate to Pendembe was made.

Burumba was finished. For almost sixty years the town had prospered. All too suddenly and so tragically, it joined the growing list of looted and devastated towns in Kailahun district.

For a while at least, and except for a military and a timid civilian presence Burumba would be little more than a ghost town, with the grim and visible reminders of the day history visited it.

As the war progressed, several towns in Kenema and Pujehun districts fell to the advancing insurgents. By April 1992, the rebels realized that they had penetrated too deep into Sierra Leone, and that their supply lines were becoming overstretched. In some areas they were being fought to a standstill, while in others they were being pushed back to the Liberian border. But the unpredictable nature of guerrilla warfare in jungle terrain made the attainment of victory a painstaking endeavour. And the war dragged on.

A definitive assessment by this period, of the full impact of the war, with statistical data was difficult to ascertain. By April 1992, few would have imagined that three years later in 1995 the insurgency would still be prosecuted on a greater dimension of time, space and intensity. However, if can be said with certainty even at this point, that the devastation in the theatres of combat, and in particular Kailahun and Pujehun districts, the massacre of innocents civilians and the destruction of private and public property have all have traumatizing effect on the survivors. This consequent refugee problem and of internally displaced people once unfamiliar with such tragedies compound the trauma. In the words of Sephtmus Kalai, "the war has thrown into chaos and disequilibrium, the population dynamics in the country."

The pillage of Kailahun and Kenema districts, centres of coffee and cocoa production considerably affected the commercial activity in these commodities. Educational and medical activities became virtually non-existent in the war zone.

With the government struggling to cope with the problems of a declining economy, and the need to establish an acceptable relationship with the IMF and the World Bank, the unforeseen expenditure on the war threatened these endeavours with severe consequences for the national economy, the social and, as it turned out, the political stability of the state.
"I HAVE RESIGNED MY JOB"

Bar Association President says

Mr. Joseph Kamara, President of the Sierra Leone Bar Association, a professional legal body has tendered his letter of resignation to the association's Secretary General at the Secretariat Office on Bathurst Street. Mr. Kamara, up to the time of his resignation was loved by the membership of the association. His letter of resignation from the association takes effect after four weeks and was submitted to the Secretary General on Monday 5th September, 2010.

It would be recalled that some four weeks back, His Excellency Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma nominated Mr. Kamara for the position of Commissioner of the Sierra Leone’s Anti Corruption Commission, following the resignation of Lawyer Abdul Tejan Cole. On Monday this week the nominee appeared before the Appointments Committee in Parliament where he was interviewed on a number of areas including the position for which he was nominated. The Committee, according to a member was pleased with his performance and will be forwarded anytime to the general body with a detailed report about his performance for a unanimous approval and endorsement to be made before taking up office.

Mr. Joseph Kamara is a professional lawyer with vast experience in prosecuting. He worked at the Law Officers Department and rose to the rank of Principal State Counsel and left to pursue an MA Programme in Law in the United States of America in addition to a long list of diplomas and other qualifications.

While in the United States of America, Mr. Kamara had made several presentations of legal papers in conferences held at the Washington District of Columbia and other states in the United States of America, United Kingdom and Canada.

With his experience, exposure and qualifications Mr. Kamara was offered a job at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and his outstanding performance left his superiors with no alternative but to promote him to the position of Deputy Prosecutor of the Special Court. On Monday 6th September, 2010 Mr. Kamara tendered his letter of resignation to the Sierra Leone Bar Association. Asked why he resigned his position as President of the Bar Association he said "I have to do that, not only on principles, but to prevent what could be seen as a "conflict of interest"
'Taylor's NPFL had no Small Boys Unit'
-Witness tells court

By Alpha Sesay

As his cross-examination moved into the second week, Charles Taylor's 20th defense witness has disagreed with prosecutors that the accused's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) rebel group had a Small Boys Unit (SBU) during Liberia's civil conflict.

Prosecutors allege that the SBU comprised of children who were forcefully conscripted and used for combat purposes by Taylor's rebel forces in Liberia. Those children did not only fight in frontlines, but were also used to man NPFL checkpoints and served as bodyguards to rebel commanders, prosecutors say.

It is also alleged that this practice was replicated by Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in Sierra Leone, who Taylor is alleged to have controlled and supported during the 11-year conflict in Sierra Leone. Taylor has denied those allegations.

In his testimony as a defense witness for Taylor, DCT-008 has told the court that the NPFL did not use children in combat or to man checkpoints. According to the witness, commanders only lived with their younger brothers, who helped them perform domestic chores, and those were the ones called SBUs. The defendant took part in combat nor were they made to man checkpoints or to serve as bodyguards to rebel commanders, the witness said.

Chief Prosecutor Brenda Hollis challenged the witness on the NPFL's use of SBUs. When asked whether "it is true that the NPFL did indeed have a unit called SBU," DCT-008 said "No."

When the prosecutor stated that "those SBUs were used at checkpoints," the witness said, "No."

"My testimony is that the NPFL did not have any unit called the SBU. The SBU was the name given to those young boys who were with their big brothers and sisters, but they were not part of the NPFL," DCT-008 said.

"They were not soldiers; they were not gun carriers," he added.

Ms. Hollis read a portion of the statement made to defense lawyers by Taylor's first witness, Yanks Smythe, a Gambian member of the NPFL who later attained Liberian citizenship and was appointed Liberian ambassador to Libya and Tunisia. In the statement, Smythe was quoted as saying to defense lawyers that the "SBUs were under aged but part of the NPFL, rank."

When this was presented to the witness with a suggestion that he also knew of the SBUs being part of the NPFL, DCT-008 said, "I don't know that; I don't know of a unit called SBU and there was no unit in the NPFL called SBU."

Putting to him again that "SBUs will bear arms to protect gates or checkpoints but not to go to the frontlines," the witness said, "I don't know that."

The witness also refuted allegations that Taylor personally had SBUs assigned to him, telling the court, "Taylor to my knowledge never had SBUs around him."

Ms. Hollis also quoted John T. Richardson, a former member of the NPFL and National Security Advisor to Taylor in a 1991 news interview as saying "The NPFL used children to fight for their own protection."

The witness still insisted, "I am not aware of that."

Earlier in the morning, the witness attempted to make corrections to certain aspects of his testimony given to the court last week about being present when RUF commander Sam Beckarie said that Vuminya Sherif, a previous prosecution witness and a member of Taylor's security apparatus, had sold arms and ammunition to the RUF. The witness also told the court last week that the Special Security Services (SSS) communications office was located on the 5th floor of the Executive Mansion, an account that is contrary to that given by Taylor himself.
The communications office was located on the 5th floor of the mansion.

As his cross-examination was about to recommence, the witness told the court, "I want to make a correction on my testimony regarding Yamunya Shenfand also some clarification concerning the 5th floor."

Both Ms. Hollis and the presiding judge of the Trial Chamber, Justice Julia Schumake, told the witness that any clarifications to his earlier testimony will be made during re-examination by defense lawyers.

Ms. Hollis took further steps to suggest that the witness had notes in his room which he uses to cross-check his daily testimony. A suggestion which the witness denied and to which defense lawyers objected.

"Do you have notes in your room? Because this is the second time you have said you want to clarify something...because when you go back and study your notes, you realize you have deviated from your notes and you come back and try to re-script your evidence."

Ms. Hollis questioned the witness.

"I do not have any notes in my room." the witness responded.

When defense lawyers objected to this line of questioning, the presiding judge upheld the defense objection and cautioned Ms. Hollis not to put such questions to the witness when there was no evidence to support suggestions that the witness did indeed have notes in his room.

DCT-008's cross-examination continues today.
Liberia: Prosecutors Conclude the Cross-Examination of DCT-008

Alpha Sesay

Prosecutors today concluded the cross-examination of Charles Taylor's 20th defense witness, a Liberian national who served as a radio operator in the Special Security Services (SSS) of Mr. Taylor's government in Liberia.

The witness, DCT-008, in his cross-examination disagreed with prosecutors on several issues, including the manner in which the disarmament of fighting forces was conducted in Liberia, allegations of Mr. Taylor's reliance on militias rather than the Liberian army, and the relationship that existed between Revolutionary United Front (RUF) commander Sam Bockarie and SSS Director Benjamin Yeaten.

Prosecutors allege that when the disarmament process started in Liberia in the mid 1990s, Mr. Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) rebel group did not turn in all their weapons, and the weapons they kept were part of those given to RUF rebels who used them to commit atrocities in Sierra Leone. Mr. Taylor has denied these allegations.

In his testimony today, DCT-008 insisted that the NPFL turned in all their weapons to Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) peacekeepers, who were coordinating the disarmament program in Liberia.

"I know that the NPFL disarmed. Even myself, I disarmed to ECOMOG," the witness told the court.

When noted by the Chief Prosecutor Brenda Hollis that the NPFL turned in only fractions of their weapons, the witness responded, "To my knowledge, the NPFL turned over every weapon...it was not a joke, it was real."

Ms. Hollis referenced a news article that quoted Mr. Taylor's former Defense Minister Daniel Chea that the disarmament process in Liberia was a fiasco.

When this was put to the witness, he responded thus: "I believe that the NPFL fully disarmed to the peacekeepers...so if he [Chea] went on to say it was a fiasco, that was his opinion."

"But what I know is that the disarmament went on very well, that is why we had elections."

Ms. Hollis also asserted that because Mr. Taylor did not trust the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), he relied on private militias, which were controlled from the Executive Mansion. These militias, Ms. Hollis said, were notorious for committing crimes against civilians. The witness denied these suggestions.

"He relied on the national security of the Republic of Liberia," the witness said, and "Charles Taylor to my knowledge never controlled any militia from the Executive Mansion," he added.

When noted that Mr. Taylor controlled his militia groups just like the SSS, the witness said, "He never ran the SSS. The SSS were security assigned to the Executive Mansion and the first family."

Ms. Hollis quoted Mr. Chea again, who in the same interview where he spoke about the disarmament process said, "Mr. Taylor had his own suspicions of the army, he transferred most of the duties of the army to his own militias. I thought that was a mistake."

"President Taylor had his own disjointed militia that he ran from the Executive Mansion. Who will be in a better position to know about Charles Taylor's militia, you or Mr. Chea," Ms. Hollis asked the witness.

In response, he said, "To my knowledge, the president did not control militia group or militia from the Executive Mansion."
The witness also insisted, like he has done right through his testimony, that Mr. Taylor and his government did not have any relationship with the RUF, but rather, it was SSS Director Mr. Yeaten who used his friendship with RUF commander Mr. Bockarie to trade arms and ammunition with Sierra Leonean rebels.

According to the witness, Samson Wai, a bodyguard to Mr. Yeaten was the person who coordinated efforts with Daniel Tamba (Jungle) on Mr. Yeaten's instructions to transport arms and ammunition to the RUF. The witness has stated that Jungle was a member of the RUF, a claim which goes contrary to prosecution claims that Jungle was a member of the SSS.

In response to a suggestion from Ms. Hollis that Jungle, Samson, Mr. Yeaten, and others "were members of the SSS carrying out security duties in relation to the rebels in Sierra Leone...at the instance of Charles Taylor," the witness said, "Jungle was not a member of the SSS. Samson was a member of the SSS and a bodyguard to Benjamin Yeaten...They did this at the instance of Benjamin Yeaten and Mr. Taylor did not know about this."

The witness spoke extensively about radio communications that took place between Mr. Yeaten's radio communications set in Liberia and those of RUF radio stations in Sierra Leone. When Ms. Hollis asked him whether there were no loyal radio operators who could have monitored these communications and made them known to Mr. Taylor, the witness said that such a thing never happened.

"And your story is that Benjamin Yeaten was able to do this without Mr. Taylor or anybody loyal to him knowing about it?" Ms. Hollis questioned the witness.

"I said this happened without Mr. Taylor's knowledge," the witness responded.

As his cross-examination was concluded, the witness denied suggestions that he has come to the court with an intention to lie and protect Mr. Taylor.

"This is not what I intended to do. This is the truth that I have come to explain to this court. It is not my version, it is reality," he said.

Earlier in the morning, the judges issued their oral decision on the defense motion that prosecutors be ordered to disclose statements made to Global Witness by defense witness DCT-097, which defense lawyers say contain exculpatory evidence pointing to Mr. Taylor's innocence, and that prosecutors also be made to disclose details of payments made to the witness when he was a potential prosecution witness, payments that defense lawyers say amounted to about 30,000 USD.

Delivering the judgment of the Trial Chamber, Presiding Judge Justice Julia Sebutinde ordered that the Chamber dismisses Part A of the defense application relating to the statement made by DCT-097 to Global Witness, and grants Part B of the motion regarding the payments that were made to the witness by prosecutors.

The prosecution was ordered to disclose to the defense:

a. All payments/benefits to DCT-097.

b. All documents relating to the payments.

c. Provide explanation for such payments.

As prosecutors concluded the cross-examination of DCT-008, defense lawyers commenced the re-examination of the witness few minutes before court adjourned for the day. The re-examination of the witness continues on Tuesday.
UNMIL News in Liberia

Top UN Envoy in Liberia Warns of Troop's Cutback
[New Democrat]

- The Special Representative of the Secretary General in Liberia, Ms. Ellen Margrethe Løj has warned that further cuts in the force of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) could ignite instability with the prospect to spill over in neighboring countries.
- Her warning comes as the UN Security Council prepares this week to vote on whether or not to maintain more than the current force on the ground.
- In an interview with Reuters, Ms. Løj was not specific but said there are fears that the country could get into another crises.
- The UN diplomat noted that the Security Council is definitely looking at the possibility of the force of the mission being reduced as soon as possible because it is a very costly operation.

UN Boss Comments on 2011 Elections
[Parrot]

- UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has told the UN Security Council that a smooth conduct of the 2011 elections depends on a well-equipped police.
- Mr. Ban said there is need to fully augment the capacity of the Emergency Response Unit (ERU) of the Liberia National Police in order to actively combat crime head-on.
- The UN boss spoke of progress being made in the work of the police and said the donor community is doing all it can to live up to its commitment to the police.
- He said the LNP has also embarked on institutional capacity building in a number of areas including the introduction of a performance appraisal system that will be utilized nationwide.

Other UN News

WFP Begins Purchasing Agriculture products
[Daily Observer]

- The World Food Programme (WFP) says it will begin purchasing agricultural products from women in Nimba, Bong, Lofa and Gbarpolu counties as part of its support to them.
- The WFP said it will also push for technical and moral support for the women.
- In support of the WFP's effort, Deputy Gender Minister for Development Rufus Kaine said government will continue to create a working and safe environment for women that will see their development.
- He said not only women but rather all citizens of Liberia need to engage in agriculture to make the Liberia food sufficient.

UNHCR Updates Statue of Liberian Refugees in The Gambia
[The Informer]

- A new registration process to update the status of Liberian refugees under the protection of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in The Gambia is currently underway at Gambia Food and Nutrition Association (GAFNA), an implementing partner of the UNHCR office in Bakoteh.
- The new process is to determine the status of Liberians as to whether to be integrated in The Gambia or to be repatriated.
The registration comes barely two weeks after the UNHCR Banjul office invited the refugees to a meeting to inform them about plans to integrate or repatriate them as the last chance as refugees.

**Local News on Liberian issues**

**Hearings to Begin Into Huge Investment Contracts**  
*[Heritage, The Inquirer]*

- A joint Legislative committee is to resume hearing into the US$120 million agreement for the Freeport of Monrovia.
- The hearing comes days after the managing director of the National Port Authority (NPA), Ms. Matilda Parker expressed concern over some components of the APM Terminals contract.
- The chairmen of the National Investment Commission and the Public Procurement and Concession Commission will address the hearing.
- Others are NPA's managing director and Board of Directors and the Ministers of Justice and Finance.
- Meanwhile, the House has announced another hearing into the agreement between government and the Putu Iron Ore Mining Incorporated.
- The hearing relates to iron ore mining in Grand Gedeh and other south eastern counties.
- The House has announced another hearing into the agreement between government and the Putu Iron Ore Mining Incorporated.
- Government negotiators and executives of the Putu Iron Ore Mining Incorporated are to address the hearing.

**First Commercial Court for Liberia**  
*[The Inquirer]*

- Legislation for the establishment of the first ever commercial court and a commercial code is being formulated for enactment into the law.
- The draft Bill was reversed and completed with the input of its stakeholders which included lawyers as well as judges of specialized courts in the country and banking experts.
- At the validation meeting on Friday outside Monrovia, stakeholders injected provisions into the draft document that when enacted would meet the standards of the legal system in Liberia and secure investments by inspiring greater confidence in Liberia.
- According to the draft Bill, when the commercial court is created and fully constituted, it shall be established as a specialized court with seat in Montserrado County like all other specialized courts in the country.
- The design and structure of the commercial court was developed and agreed upon through resolutions passed by attendees of a study tour in Accra, Ghana.

**Government Poised To Loose Millions, Global Witness Alarms**  

- Logging companies in Liberia are trying to get out of paying millions of dollars in tax to the country's cash-starved government through a dubious new law, Global Witness, an international campaign group has alarmed.
- The draft law in question which emerged from the House of Representatives is titled: ‘An Act to Abolish the Payment of Land Rental Bid Premium on Contract Area in the Forestry Sector of the Liberian Economy’.
- The bill is accompanied by a Report of the Joint Committee on Ways, Means and Finance, Judiciary and Agriculture on the Act to Abolish Land Rental Bid Premium.
- Global Witness, in a statement, said it has discovered that members of the House have drafted legislation to reduce the annual fees paid by timber concessionaries by 80 percent, which would rob the government of needed revenues.
- This according to the campaign group could cost Liberians US$10.3 million a year in much needed revenue.

**Montserrado Superintendent Ready for Street Kids**  
*[The Inquirer]*

- The Liberian government has constituted a special task force to begin confiscating goods from kids who are engaged in peddling on the streets of Monrovia.
- Montserrado County Superintendent Grace Kpaan said the idea behind the exercise is to get kids off the streets and make them children once again in keeping with the international convention for the right of the child.
Superintendent Kpaan said the exercise started Monday with the confiscation of goods from nearly 75 kids who were found trading in various street corners in the country.

According to her, when these goods are confiscated, the task force issues a special slip to the kids for them to take home and inform their parents or guardians that their goods have been confiscated.

The Montserrado Superintendent said in the case of goods that are perishable, they will be disposed of, while those that are not perishable will be turned over to the Finance Ministry for appropriate action.

**Public Works Ministry, GTZ Capacitate 25 Local Project Engineers**

[The Informer]

- GTZ and the Public Works Ministry have completed five-day training seminar for engineers, road construction supervisors and project management staff in the areas of project management and capacity development of Liberia’s transport sector.
- The project management training seminar was aimed at enhancing the skills of 25 participants specifically relating to transport infrastructure policy, project planning and design, and management processes.
- Participants were further exposed to the nature and content of project proposals, site supervision, claim evaluation, dispute adjudication and project time planning.
- Project control, project cost management, project quality management, and project communication management were additional skills acquired by the participants.
- At the close of the training, Public Works Minister Samuel Kofi Woods, challenged participants to demonstrate what they have learnt in the discharge of their respective duties.
- For her part, GTZ project manager Claudia Hermes said the initiative is her organization’s continuous efforts in improving the capacities of engineers in the road and transport sector.

**14 Drugs “Smugglers” In Police Dragnet**

[Heritage]

- Police in Monrovia have charged two Sierra Leoneans and 14 Liberians with ‘illegal possession and sale of narcotic drugs and substances’ dangerous to human health and consumption.
- The Liberia National Police (LNP) spokesman George Bardue described the drugs as heavily unmixed cocaine, dugee, marijuana amongst other unhealthy substances.
- Health expert at the Health Ministry and the National Drugs Enforcement Agency say the narcotics are dangerous and can create a severe brain damage if injection into the body leaving victims half-crazy.
- LNP authorities said community dwellers assisted in carrying out a successful raid through the new community policing strategy.
- The two Sierra Leoneans expected to be trial at Criminal Court ‘E’ include Paling Bangura and Hassan Bangura.

**MAC Wants Government End Child Prostitution**

[The Inquirer]

- A local child rights media advocacy group is asking the Government of Liberia to take robust measures to quell child prostitution in the country.
- The Media in Advocacy for Children (MAC) says a publication in a local daily depicting a child prostitute trading sex for as low as five Liberian Dollars is insulting to Liberian womanhood and must not be ignored by the government and child rights related agencies.
- MAC in a press statement said it would be absolutely irresponsible on the part of the government if it does not promptly intervene to rescue teenage girls who because of poverty and abandonment are ruining their future only to eke a living.
- The child rights media advocacy group is also calling on Montserrado County Superintendent Grace Kpaan to extend her campaign to remove child peddlers to include teenage prostitutes from the streets of Montserrado County.

**Two-day Business Forum Gets Underway in Monrovia**

[Front Page Africa]

- A two-day major business forum on the theme “Investment Attraction and Job Creation for Economic Empowerment in Liberia” for both Ghanaian and Liberian entrepreneurs is underway in Monrovia.
- The Liberian Embassy in Accra and the National Investment Commission are collaborating with other Ghanaian Businesses to organize the forum.
- The Monrovia forum will address the issue of job creation in Liberia.
- It will also look at capacity building in the business sector.
Rape Suspect’s Family Raises Concern
[Heritage, National Chronicle, The Inquirer]

• The family of detained rape suspect, Caesar Freeman, has called for speedy trial in the case involving their relative.
• A spokesman of the family said they are worried over the continuous delay in trying Mr. Freeman.
• Mr. Beneditus Broderick said since the accused was arrested in April, he remains in detention without trial.
• He said the detention of Mr. Freeman for over five months now without trial was a blow to his family, claiming that the accused is innocent of the rape charge.
• Prior to his arrest, Mr. Freeman was director of Fleet of the General Services Agency.

Star Radio (News monitored today at 09:00 am)
Hearings to Begin Into Huge Investment Contracts
(Also reported Radio Veritas, Sky FM, and ELBC)

Election Officials Take Oath Ahead of 2011 Elections
• Election officials including magistrates, regional officers and county coordinators have taken oath to ensure the conduct of free and fair elections in 2011.
• Administering the oath, National Elections Commission (NEC) chairman James Fromayan informed the officials of their role in the pending elections describing them as critical to the process.
• Chairman Fromayan cautioned the officials against taking sides as such act would make them lose credibility.
• The NEC boss assured the Commission remains committed to the conduct of free, fair and transparent elections in 2011.
• Speaking for his newly inducted colleagues, Ameshia Wesseh vowed they would live up to the oath taken and protect the credibility of the country’s electoral body.

LPRC Announces New Measures
• The Liberia Petroleum Refinery Company (LPRC) has announced series of measures to curtail the rampant product loses it has sustained over the past years.
• LPRC managing director T. Nelson Williams said the fresh measures would track down any factor that has been affecting the system including theft.
• Mr. Williams told a news conference Monday major repair work has been done to the pipes to guarantee a complete enforcement of the plan.
• He said some of the initial measures have helped cut down loses the company suffered during the months of April and August.
• The LPRC boss disclosed a sharp decrease from 91,271 to 2,174 gallons of petroleum products.

MBA Partners with National Motorcycle Transport Union, Presents 600 Bikes
• The Mutual Benefit Assurance (MBA) Company has presented over 600 motorcycles to the National Motorcycle Transport Union of Liberia.
• MBA chief executive officer said the donation is a form of partnership aimed at addressing the transport needs of the country.
• Ambassador Dew Mayson said motorcyclists are to work and pay for the motorcycles through the union in two years.
• He promised to bring in a number of buses for public use as a way of helping to address the transportation needs of Liberians.
• He added that public transport has remained a major problem to Liberia’s development.

Fish Farming Starts in Klay, Bomi County
• A week-long fish farming training for locals is underway in Klay, Bomi County.
• According to the coordinator of the Bureau of National Fisheries, Yewewuo Subah the training is intended to help farmers improve their skills in fish reservation.
• Mr. Subah said the training will also give fish farmers technical understanding of fish farming.
• He said the training which brought together over 25 participants is being organized by the Bureau of National Fisheries as part of its decentralization activities.

Rape Suspect’s Family Raises Concern

Man, 30 Charged With Murder in Lofa
• Police in Kolahun District, Lofa County have charged a 30-year old man with murder.
Mohammed Kanneh is accused of killing one Jargba Dunor and wounding three others. The three including Blamo Dorwon, Musuma Dunor and Varney Dunor were allegedly stabbed several times by the accused. Reports say the wounded men are seeking treatment at the Bolahun Health Centre. Mohammed was arrested Saturday in Popalahun Town while trying to escape and has since admitted to the crime during police preliminary investigation.

**General Quiwonkpa’s Children Complain of Deep Division**
- Two children of fallen Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) Commanding General Thomas Quiwonkpa have complained of being left out of a reconciliation meeting held by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.
- President Sirleaf last week met with Quiwonkpa’s widow, Tarloh Quiwonkpa and former President Samuel Doe’s widow Nancy Doe urging them to unite.
- But Deddeh and Thomas Quiwonkpa said it was important for them to be part of such reconciliatory process.
- They claimed there was still deep division between the children of Quiwonkpa and their stepmother Tarloh as well as the former First Lady.
- The children of the late AFL Commanding General also called on President Sirleaf to reconcile with the Quiwonkpa family for peace to exist among them.

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

**LAC at Standstill**
- Reports say normal working activities at the Liberia Agricultural Company (LAC) are at a standstill.
- Violence erupted at LAC recently when talks broke down between employees and the management over better benefits.
- The rioters allegedly looted and set ablaze some properties of the company.
- Over 30 persons were arrested and sent to court for the violent action.
- LAC is the second largest rubber company in the country.

**Government Bans Scrapping Activities at Bong Mines**
- The Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy has ordered an immediate ban on all scrapping activities within the entire Bong Mines concession area.
- A release said China Union is the concessionaire that has taken over the former Bong Mining Company.
- The Lands, Mines and Energy Ministry in a statement said it has learned that there are illegal scrapping activities in the concession area.
- The Ministry is meanwhile calling on security personnel to arrest violators and turn them over to the Justice Ministry.

**Truth FM (News monitored today at 10:00 am)**

**Senate Confirms Presidential Nominee**
- The Senate has confirmed the nominee for the post of Assistant Minister for Public Affairs at the Defense Ministry.
- The Senate reached the decision to confirm Mr. David Dahn following a session in camera.
- The confirmation of Mr. Dahn was delayed by nearly two months due to the early rejection of Ambrose Nmah who once served in the post prior to his appointment as Director General of the Liberia Broadcasting System.

**Two-day Business Forum Gets Underway in Monrovia**
(Also reported Radio Veritas, Sky FM, and ELBC)

**Flood Washes Logartuo Bridge Away**
- The Logartuo Bridge linking Liberia and neighboring Ivory Coast through Nimba County has been washed away by flood.
- Nimba County Superintendent Edith Gonglo Weh described the situation as serious.
- She said the collapse of the bridge is negatively imparting cross border trade between the two countries.
- She called on the Public Works Ministry, the United Nations Mission in Liberia and other relevant institutions to swiftly intervene to remedy the situation.
- The bridge served as a key crossing point between the two West African states.
Liberia needs US$1 Billion road overhaul: minister
Reuters

Liberia's road network, largely collapsed after 14 years of civil war, will cost at least $1 billion to overhaul, and the impoverished West African state is looking to miners and other investors to provide the funding. "We are talking about close to about a billion dollars to just improve the basic infrastructure in the various areas," Public Works Minister Samuel Kofi Woods told Reuters in an interview late on Monday. "That is just an initial investment to get us to where we want to go," he said. Mining firms such as ArcelorMittal, China Union and Severstal, as well as a $1.6 billion palm oil project involving Golden Agri Resources, were possible partners for funding, he added. Some 14 years of fighting in one of Africa's bloodiest civil wars crippled Liberia and roads remain in ruins despite the rebuilding efforts of donors and a United Nations peacekeeping force which has overseen the nation since the war ended in 2003. A lack of public funds and problems with corruption mean mining and agricultural companies investing in the country will be central to the rebuilding plans, Woods said.

Zimbabwe protests team's treatment in Liberia on eve of African cup qualifier
The Associated Press

Zimbabwe sports officials say they have complained to African soccer's governing body over the ill-treatment of their team in Liberia on the eve of an African Cup of Nations qualifying match. In a letter to the Confederation of African Football released on Tuesday, Zimbabwe accused its Liberian hosts of harassment it called "psychological frustration" ahead of Sunday's qualifier that ended in a 1-1 draw. It demanded "appropriate sanctions" against Liberia. The Zimbabweans were taken from one hotel without electricity or water to another where some players only got to sleep after midnight on mattresses on the floor. Earlier, they were delayed for three hours after a tire on the team bus was deliberately punctured.

Guinea

Guinea kicks off presidential run-off campaigns
Xinhua

Guinea's presidential run-off contenders Cellou Dalein Diallo and Alpha Conde are making their last-ditch efforts in the on-going campaigns ahead of the Sept. 19 duel. With the election campaign officially kicked off on Sunday, the candidate for the Union of Democratic Forces in Guinea (UFDG), Diallo, the front runner in the first round, went to the southern Forestiere Region with his main allies Sidy a Toure and Abe Sylla. Their itinerary includes a visit to Haute Guinea, a region which is traditionally a stronghold of Conde, the No. 2 in the first round, who is heading the Rally of Guinean People (RPG) in the campaign against Diallo. Diallo is also expected to visit his stronghold in Central Guinea, before touring the coastal region and the capital Conakry.

Ivory Coast

Cote d'Ivoire's final electoral list to be released this week
Xinhua

The final electoral list for Cote d'Ivoire's presidential elections scheduled for Oct. 31 could be released this week, Prime Minister Guillaume Soro announced here on Monday. "We have already agreed on the final electoral list and we are asking the president of the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) to do everything possible to ensure that the list is out within this week," Soro declared after a meeting of the permanent consultation forum (CPC). The CPC was created by the Ouagadougou Political Accord which was signed in March 2007. The peace accord brought together President Laurent Gbagbo and the ex-rebel New Forces leader Soro, as well as the main opposition leaders Henri Konan Bedie and Allasane Ouattara. CEI has developed a provisional electoral list with 5.7 million voters. The final electoral list is expected to take into account the results of a verification operation.

Ivorian leader orders armed forces to deal with troublemakers during elections
APA

The Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo, while making a working visit to Agneby (in south-eastern Côte d'Ivoire), ordered the defense and security forces (FDS) to "severely deal with trouble makers" likely to impede the holding of
the presidential poll in Côte d’Ivoire set for 31 October. Mr. Gbagbo who on Saturday evening completed a three-day visit to the Agneby region re-affirmed his determination to organize the presidential election on 31 October. According to him, the long-delayed presidential election was not due to the failure of the Ouagadougou political agreement he signed on 4 March 2007 with the ex-rebel New Forces.

UN appoints Turkish official as mission army head in Ivory Coast
www.worldbulletin.net

A Turkish security department chief was appointed as chief of staff at UN peacekeeping mission in Ivory Coast. Serafettin Bural was appointed to the mission which is comprised of police officers and soldiers from 23 countries. In 2005, Bural had worked in UN peacekeeping mission in Ivory Coast. He also worked in Igdir, Izmir, Mersin and Ankara provinces in Turkey. Having determined that the situation in Ivory Coast constituted a threat to international peace and security in the region, the UN Security Council set up, on May 13, 2003, a political mission -MINUCI- to facilitate the implementation by the Ivorian parties of an agreement signed by them (the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement) and to complement the operations of the peacekeeping force of the Economic Community of West African States and French troops. On April 4, 2004, MINUCI was replaced by a UN peacekeeping operation - the United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire (UNOCI).

Sierra Leone

New eye clinic to tackle blindness in Sierra Leone
www.irishtimes.com

An Irish development organisation has opened an eye clinic in Sierra Leone where people have been going needlessly blind because they can’t access a €15 operation. John Fleming, chief executive of Sightsavers Ireland, explains that the clinic, which is attached to a general hospital in Kenema in the eastern part of the country, will mean that cataract surgery will now be provided for people who otherwise would lose their sight without this relatively straightforward procedure. At the opening of the clinic, Sierra Leone’s vice-president and acting minister for health, Alhaji Samuel Sam-Sumana, said that while a blindness census had never been done in the country, the available statistics suggested that the “scourge” was having a devastating impact on the nation.

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Nigeria: Charles Taylor - a Man Betrayed

By Chief Fani-Kayode

Opinion

Lagos — FEMI FANI-KAYODE argues that it's all well and good to try Charles Taylor for war crime atrocities, but that Tony Blair and George W. Bush should get the same treatment

"AU leaders had an agreement that facilitated peace in Liberia. It's shameful how Obasanjo threw Charles Taylor under the bus after pressure from the Europeans and America (not a signatory to the so-called UN court).

For four years Iraq went through a wave of brutal ethnic cleansing, I don't see the UN Court going after the Iraqi Cleric, Muqtada al-Sadr and co as well as those brutal Afghan tribal war lords; all of whom the US States Department and other foreign powers struck deals. I believe African leaders need to grow more "spine", there will be more ridiculous demands by Western countries and the UN to change some part of our constitution in a few years." - Yele Odofin-Belo.

In many respects Mr Yele Odofin-Belo is absolutely right. This was the betrayal of the century. But I do not believe that President Olusegun Obasanjo was amongst those that betrayed anybody. To be fair to Obasanjo he was in fact the last man standing and he resisted the pressure until it all came to a head during a state visit to America when George W. Bush refused to see him until Taylor was produced.

Ironically, the real traitor was not Obasanjo but rather President Sirleaf-Johnson of Liberia. The agreement with Taylor was put in place before she was elected but she was fully aware of it it's terms. She was actually the American and Nigerian candidate for that election and she worked very closely indeed with the Americans, Obasanjo and Nigeria before she was elected to power.

The deal was simple and clear and the terms were as follows. Taylor would be persuaded to step down as President of Liberia by the ECOWAS leaders and the African Union and he was to be given a safe haven in Nigeria after doing so. He would not be harassed, he would not face prosecution in Liberia, Sierra Leone or at the International Court at The Hague, and Nigeria would not be pressured or harassed by anyone to extradite him anywhere.

On his part, Taylor was expected to live quietly in Calabar with his relatives, under the direct supervision and care of Donald Duke, the then Governor of Cross Rivers state and he was to stay out of Liberian politics. All went according to plan and once the African Union endorsed the whole thing no less than 7 African Heads of State went to Liberia and physically accompanied Taylor back to Nigeria and to what was to be his new home and final point of destination for many years.

As a consequence of this concession and sacrifice which was made by Taylor the civil war in Liberia came to an immediate end, peace returned to the land and eventually a free and fair election was conducted in which Mrs. Johnson Sirleaf emerged as the new President as had been planned all along. However after the lady came to power everything changed. She ditched Obasanjo and Nigeria, turned her back on ECOWAS leaders and the African Union and became even closer to Bush.

Johnson Sirleaf forgot all about the sacrifices that Nigeria had made for her country in the past and started to talk only to the Americans. And of course the Americans wanted Taylor's blood. At the end of it all
everything boiled down to money. Johnson needed financial support, aid, grants, loans and funding from the international monetary institutions and from the United States directly for her small country and obviously she needed American support to get this. The Americans gave her one condition before any help could come her way.

She was to formally ask for Charles Taylor to be returned to Liberia by Nigeria in order to face allegations of genocide and funding the brutal civil war in Sierra Leone at the International Criminal Court at the Hague. Yes the Americans did a complete u-turn, broke their word, violated the previous agreement and sought to turn all the African leaders that had guaranteed it, including Nigeria, into a bunch of unreliable and spineless liars.

And sadly the lady called President Johnson Sirleaf, played along with the Americans, capitulated and did precisely what they wanted to the utter shock and chagrin of virtually every African leader of that day and in total violation of the agreement and understanding that had been originally entered into by all the parties concerned and by all the major players including the Americans. After the formal request was made to Nigeria by Liberia, America now picked up the gauntlet and turned on Obasanjo compelling and threatening us in initially very subtle and eventually very direct tones and ways. The message was simple and clear.

We were to release Taylor and send him back to Liberia or Nigeria was to be brought to her knees. President Obasanjo stood firm and resisted their threats for a very long time and took the matter to the other ECOWAS leaders and the AU who of course supported us wholeheartedly because they had been privy to and were indeed part of the original agreement and understanding that had been established between all the relevant parties and stakeholders.

After this there was a long stalemate and eventually the whole matter turned a little nasty and became the subject of a loud and acrimonious spat between our government and the administration of President George W. Bush. And of course I was deeply involved in that public spat as one of the Presidential spokespersons. Things eventually came to a head when Obasanjo went on a state visit to America and a final demand was made for Taylor. President Obasanjo's argument, and it was a good one, was that no one or no country would ever believe, trust or take Nigeria seriously again if we breached our word to Taylor and that this is not a Nigerian position but rather it is an African Union position. The old man fought the matter out long and hard and I assure you he did his very best.

When the pressure got too much and President Johnson Sirleaf made a final and public demand for Taylor to be returned to Liberia by Nigeria, Obasanjo ordered that he should be dropped at some border post and allowed to go wherever he wanted rather than for us to formally hand him over to anyone. He was on a state visit in America at the time and when it was announced to the world that Taylor had suddenly disappeared from the face of the earth and was no longer with the Nigerians all hell broke loose and everyone panicked.

It was at that point that George W.Bush point blank refused to see Obasanjo whilst he remained in Washington unless and until Taylor was traced, found and handed over to the Liberians.

In my view Obasanjo could have stood his ground, left America immediately and called their bluff, especially since by that time we were engaged in a full-scale verbal war on the international airwaves with the White House and the American government over this issue. Our hand was quite strong then because virtually the whole of Africa was fully behind us with the exception of President Johnson Sirleaf.

Anyway all of a sudden, and very mysteriously, Taylor resurfaced, was arrested and was handed over to the Liberians who I believe flew him to either Liberia or Sierra Leone, from where he was promptly and immediately flown to the International Court of Criminal Justice at The Hague to face charges of genocide and crimes against humanity.
The greatest irony of all of this is that the nation of America herself, who fought for and orchestrated all of this, is NOT a signatory to that Court and therefore no former or serving American President, leader, citizen or even soldier can ever be brought before it to face any charges of crimes against humanity. That tells you just how unfair and ridiculous the whole world system is.

My position is that if you want to try the likes of President Charles Taylor for committing atrocities that is fine and by all means go ahead. However it is only right and proper for you to then do the same to all the living American and Western leaders who have also done the same thing in various parts of the world. This is especially so given the fact that they, more than any other set of leaders in the history of mankind, have been responsible for the most barbaric crimes against humanity that have ever been committed.

The law is surely no respecter of persons. After all it was not an African leader that dropped nuclear bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima, with its attendant and horrific consequences, after the Second World War. It was not an African leader that committed terrible atrocities in Iraq by slaughtering hundreds of thousands of defenceless Iraqi women and children when bombing Baghdad, all in the name of regime change and the prosecution of an illegal and barbarous war.

It was not an African leader that killed the defenceless Arab women and children of Sabra and Chatilla in Southern Lebanon just a couple of decades ago. It was not an African leader that enslaved a whole continent and pillaged its resources and sold its people into slavery for hundreds of years. I could go on and on.

I have said this earlier and I repeat it here today, unless and until I see Tony Blair and George W. Bush being prosecuted by that same court at the Hague for their own undeniable and irrefutable acts of genocide and crimes against humanity, I cannot in any way be impressed with what they are doing to Charles Taylor or anyone else there.

*Chief Fani-Kayode, a former Minister, writes from Lagos*
Ndahimana shot at the church's clock to start off the killings (witness)

The second prosecution witness in the trial of former mayor of Kivumu Commune in Kibuye prefecture (Western Rwanda), Grégoire Ndahimana, Tuesday admitted before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) that he was among persons who attacked and killed Tutsis at Nyange Parish on April 15, 1994.

It is alleged that during the attack over 2000 Tutsis who had sought refuge at the parish were killed. The prosecution is accusing Ndahimana of planning the massacre jointly with others, including genocide-convict, Father Athanase Seromba, who has since been sentenced to life imprisonment and genocide-suspect still at large, Fulgence Kayishema.

The witness code named CBT to protect his identity, who was imprisoned for eight years, after pleading guilty of taking part in the massacre before a Gacaca court (a semi traditional court in Rwanda), narrated that on the material day he went to Nyange Church in response to a call by Kayishema, former inspector of judicial police in Kivumu Commune.

"On arrival I found all communal leaders were there giving instructions. Ndahimana was also present. He was addressing his subordinates. He was angry and furious," the witness told Trial Chamber III presided over by Cameroon Judge Florence Rita Arrey.

According to the witness, he saw Ndahimana taking a gun from a soldier and shot at the church's clock tower to give a signal to assailants to start off the killing spree. He said that the attackers killed the refugees using traditional weapons and grenades.

"One Theophile Rukara, a soldier, threw a grenade onto a group of refugees, killing several of them on the spot," he alleged, adding that as other survivors retreated to the church, the assailants followed them and attempted to blow up the building using petrol fuel and dynamite explosives, but failed.

The trial continues Wednesday. The prosecution alleges that Ndahimana was responsible for killing or causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the Tutsi population between April 6 and 20, 1994.

Born in 1952, Ndahimana was arrested on August 10, 2009 at Kachuga Camp in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). He was transferred to the United Nations Detention Facility in Arusha on August 21, 2009. He made his initial appearance on September 28, 2009 and pleaded not guilty to all the charges.

FK/NI/GF

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Former mayor claims Tutsis were killed by Burundian refugees

Arusha, September 07, 2010 (FH) - Ex-Rwandan Mayor and defence witness for genocide-accused Mathieu Ngirumpatse, Tuesday alleged before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) that Burundian refugees attacked and killed Tutsis hosted at Mugina parish in Gitarama prefecture (central Rwanda) in April, 1994.

"Burundian refugees launched the attack and killed Tutsi refugees at Mugina parish between April 25th and 26th," former mayor of Mugina commune Martin Ndamage told Trial Chamber III, presided by Judge Dennis Byron.

Led in his examination in chief by the accused lead defence counsel Chantal Hounkpatin, the witness claimed that Burundian refugees who had settled in Rwanda in 1993 allegedly attacked and killed Tutsis at the parish following information that their President Cyprien Ntaryamira together with his Rwandan counterpart Juvenal Habyarimana died on a plane crash on April 6, 1994 as they were about to land at Kigali Airport.

Burundian refugees, mostly Hutus, alleged that Tutsis might be behind the plane crash.

Ngirumpatse, former President of the Rwandan ruling party, MRND, in 1994 is jointly tried alongside his Vice President, Edouard Karemera. The later has already concluded his defence case.

The witness denied that he witnessed Interahamwe militiamen of the MRND party taking part in the attack, claiming that "it was not easy to identify them as there were no specific signs which could earmark them as Interahamwe."

Confronted by prosecution attorney Takeh Sendze that in his earlier testimony in the case of Ferdinand Nahimana (already a convicted), on December 5, 2002 he mentioned the attackers to include Interahamwe militias, Martin Ndamage was quick to respond: "When I said the area in my previous testimony it was not restricted to Mugina commune alone, it might be anywhere in the country."

The prosecutor indicted both senior leaders of the MRND for seven counts including genocide, complicity in genocide, incitement to commit genocide and crimes against humanity allegedly committed by members of their party and its youth wing, Interahamwe militiamen.

The trial continues on Wednesday with another defence witness.

NI/FK

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The Politics Of Genocide

Written by Rick Rozoff

In 1895 novelist Anatole France - who in the same decade took up cudgels in defense of persecuted Armenians in the Ottoman Empire while also entering the lists on behalf of Alfred Dreyfus - wrote an essay in which he maintained that words are like coins. When freshly minted the images and inscriptions on them are clear. But by dint of constant circulation they become effaced until the outlines are blurred and the words unintelligible.

As Edward S. Herman and David Peterson write in The Politics of Genocide, "During the past several decades, the word 'genocide' has increased in frequency of use and recklessness of application, so much so that the crime of the twentieth century for which the word was originally coined often appears debased. Unchanged, however, is the huge political bias in its usage...." With their painstaking efforts to compile information and analyze the self-serving misuse of this term by the government, media and establishment academic figures of the United States and its allies, the authors have performed a valuable service to the cause of truth and of peace.

The fact that combating "genocide" has replaced confronting communism in some notably left and liberal circles as a major intellectual and moral legitimation for an enduringly aggressive and interventionist U.S. foreign policy is not fortuitous. It has been adopted to further American and allied interests in Europe and Africa in particular but with international application.

Nowhere is this more explicit than in the U.S.-based Genocide Prevention Task Force's 2008 report Preventing Genocide, where the "Save Darfur" activism of the last decade is singled out as a model for how to "build a permanent constituency for the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities."

But this shows that "Darfur has been...successfully framed as 'genocide'," the authors counter, even as "the signature Nefarious bloodbath of the early twenty-first century," and we should take the Task Force's praise of "Save Darfur" activism to mean rather that the "U.S. establishment's handling of the western Sudan (ca. 2003-2010) should serve as a model for how best to propagandize a conflict as 'genocide', and thus to mobilize elite and public opinion for action against its alleged perpetrator."

During the past two decades, the post-Cold War era, Washington has employed and exploited the word genocide in furtherance of geopolitical objectives in several strategic parts of the world. As the foreword to the volume by Noam Chomsky warns, the one-sided, nakedly partisan and frequently fact-distorting genocide stratagem not only diverts attention from genuine acts of mass killing and targeting of ethnic and other demographic groups perpetrated by the U.S., its allies and client states, but runs the risk of producing a boy who cried wolf effect, one moreover with a retroactive component.

Chomsky characterizes the authors' work as indicting a practice that since "the end of the Cold War opened the way to an era of virtual Holocaust denial." That is, as facts such as those marshaled by Herman and Peterson demonstrate, the exaggeration, distortion and even outright fabrication of genocide accusations may produce as an unintended consequence a universal scepticism on the matter, even - most alarmingly - toward the genuine article. That leveling charges of genocide against nations and governments the White House and State Department are opposed to and in parts of the world where the Pentagon is bent on deploying troops and bases occurs as World War II revisionism, neo-Nazism, and the formal rehabilitation of Nazi collaborators and even SS troops plague much of Europe is the most alarming manifestation of that disturbing phenomenon.

The U.S. has rightly been accused of practicing double standards in relation to genocide charges, condemning mass killings (alleged as well as real) in nations whose governments are not viewed favorably by Washington and its allies while ignoring, minimizing and justifying it when perpetrated by an approved government.
But it is not, as defenders of American foreign policy often state, a question of not being able to respond to every crisis or of responding to the most egregious situation first. Nor as the rapidly deteriorating Christopher Hitchens wrote in 1993 in one of his many efforts to mobilize opinion in favor of the "Bosnian cause" (by which he never meant anything beyond the Sarajevo Muslims around Alija Izetbegovic, and Hitchens' own mythic land of multiculturalism overrun by "racist" Serbs) is it a case of "making the best the enemy of the good."

Instead, as Herman and Peterson meticulously detail, it is a fixed policy of assigning cases and charges of genocide to four distinct categories, the first two applicable to the U.S. and its allies and clients, the second two to adversaries or other governments whose nations occupy space or possess resources coveted by Washington's empire-builders and U.S.-based transnational corporations.

Drawing on years of observation and analysis of international events - in Herman's case efforts extending over five decades - the authors present a four-point model for examining how the issue of genocide is viewed by the American government, the mainstream news media and a veritable battalion of "engaged" academics and handsomely funded non-governmental organizations (the latter sometimes not so non-governmental).

As they explain:

"When we ourselves commit mass-atrocity crimes, the atrocities are Constructive, our victims are unworthy of our attention and indignation, and never suffer 'genocide' at our hands - like the Iraqi Untermenschen who have died in such grotesque numbers over the past two decades. But when the perpetrator of mass-atrocity crimes is our enemy or a state targeted by us for destabilization and attack, the converse is true. Then the atrocities are Nefarious and their victims worthy of our focus, sympathy, public displays of solidarity, and calls for inquiry and punishment. Nefarious atrocities even have their own proper names reserved for them, typically associated with the places where the events occur. We can all rattle off the most notorious: Cambodia (but only under the Khmer Rouge, not in the prior years of mass killing by the United States and its allies), Iraq (but only when attributable to Saddam Hussein, not the United States), and so on - Halabja, Bosnia, Srebrenica, Rwanda, Kosovo, Račak, Darfur. Indeed, receiving such a baptism is perhaps the hallmark of the Nefarious bloodbath."

To reiterate their point: When the killing, maiming, poisoning and displacement of millions of civilians are perpetrated by the U.S. directly and in collusion with a client regime it assists, arms and advises - Indochina in the 1960s and early 1970s, Central America in the 1980s, the deaths of as many as a million Iraqis resulting from sanctions and the deliberate and systematic destruction of civilian infrastructure in the 1990s - that form of indisputable genocide is never referred to as such and instead presented by the government-media-obedient academia triad as not abhorrent and criminal but as legitimate actions in pursuit of praiseworthy policies. Constructive genocide.

Similar systematic and large-scale atrocities carried out by U.S. clients armed by Washington - Indonesia against its own people from 1965-1966 and in East Timor from 1975-1999, Israel in the Palestinian Gaza Strip and West Bank from 1967 to the present day, Rwanda and Uganda in Congo (where over five and a half million people have perished over the last twelve years), Croatia and its Operation Storm onslaught in 1995 which caused the worst permanent ethnic cleansing in Europe since World War II and its immediate aftermath - are not condemned and not even deemed regrettable, but in fact are viewed by the U.S. political establishment as Benign.

Contrariwise, though, security and military actions taken by governments not aligned with the U.S., even against armed and cross-border separatist formations, are inevitably branded as gratuitous acts of what Samuel Coleridge called motiveless malignancy: Nefarious genocide.

Related to the last category, the U.S. government and its news and NGO camp followers are not averse to inflating numbers, misattributing the cause of death and outright inventing incidents to justify the charge of genocide and what are frequently pre-planned interventions, including sanctions, embargoes, travel bans on government officials, freezing governments' financial assets abroad, funding and advising assorted "color revolutions" and ultimately bombing from 25,000 feet, beyond the range of a targeted country's air defenses. What the authors call Mythic genocide, though with quite genuine - deadly - consequences. Aesop: The boys throw rocks in jest but the frogs die in earnest.
To illustrate these basic categories, Herman and Peterson conducted exhaustive database searches for usage of the word 'genocide' by some of the major English-language print media in reference to what they call "theaters of atrocities."

The three tables they have compiled for the book are something to behold. Table 1 is titled "Differential attributions of 'genocide' to different theaters of atrocities," and Table "Differential Use of 'Massacre' and 'Genocide' for Benign and Nefarious Atrocities;" Table 2 focuses on different aspects of Iraq specifically.

The various "theaters of atrocities" include but are not limited to Iraq, the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the ethnic Albanians of Kosovo, the Tutsi of Rwanda, the Hutu and other peoples of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the peoples of western Sudan (Darfur).

In one of the more impressive empirical confirmations of a hypothesis readers are likely to find anywhere, the results of Herman and Peterson's database research are both predictable and appalling: In case after case, major English-language newspapers such as the New York Times and The Guardian (as well as countless others) used the word 'genocide' in a manner that would have been approved of by the State Department, linking it consistently to toponyms like Rwanda, Bosnia, Kosovo and Darfur, but rarely if ever to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Palestine, Afghanistan, and Iraq, whether Iraq during the "sanctions of mass destruction" era (1990-2003) or since the U.S. invasion and military occupation (from 2003 onward).

There are, in the terms introduced by Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky years earlier, "worthy" and "unworthy" victims in the system of "atrocities management," and each and every victim's worthiness rises or falls depending on who's doing the killing - official enemies or we ourselves.

Again, to elaborate: The worthiness of a victim to elicit concern and support depends not on the victim himself but on the "worthiness" of the perpetrator. "Good" perpetrators - the U.S. and its allies - are eo ipso incapable of bad actions, therefore anyone on the receiving end of an American bomb or cruise missile is inherently unworthy.

Genocide, murder on a grand scale, is treated not with the urgency and gravity the subject warrants but as the theme of a near-comic book morality play. We and they, good and bad.

An analogous bias exists, the authors detail, in relation to the work of the International Criminal Court and even more so with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

The latter two are nothing other than the embodiment and institutionalization of great power victor's justice and the first is used by the U.S. against recalcitrant states on Washington's enemies list. (In the Foreword to The Politics of Genocide, Chomsky cites the Greek historian Thucydides, who placed in the mouth of an Athenian the immortal words: "you know as well as we do that right, as the world goes, is only in question between equals in power, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.")

International courts doing the bidding of the U.S. and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization cohorts do not, Herman and Peterson point out, address the greatest cause of suffering brought about through human agency: Wars of aggression. Although borrowing their lexicon from the Nuremberg Principles - for example, "war crimes" and "crimes of humanity" - while adding "genocide" and "ethnic cleansing" (with the last two used all but interchangeably), Western states are highly selective and equally self-serving in their interpretation of the Nuremberg Tribunal, the model for prosecuting international crimes of violence.

Principle VI, the gist of the Nuremberg indictments, states:

The crimes hereinafter set out are punishable as crimes under international law:

(a) Crimes against peace:

(i) Planning, preparation, initiation or waging of a war of aggression or a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances;
(ii) Participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the acts mentioned under (i).

(b) War crimes:

Violations of the laws or customs of war which include, but are not limited to, murder, ill-treatment or deportation of slave labor or for any other purpose of the civilian population of or in occupied territory; murder or ill-treatment of prisoners of war or persons on the Seas, killing of hostages, plunder of public or private property, wanton destruction of cities, towns, or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity.

(c) Crimes against humanity:

Murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation and other inhumane acts done against any civilian population, or persecutions on political, racial, or religious grounds, when such acts are done or such persecutions are carried on in execution of or in connection with any crime against peace or any war crime.

The U.S. and its Western allies, which launched three wars of aggression in less than four years (Yugoslavia in 1999, Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003) with the forced displacement of millions of civilians, have deliberately chosen to ignore the core proscription of the Nuremberg Trials, that against waging wars of aggression, "the supreme international crime, differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole."

Principle VII says that "Complicity in the commission of a crime against peace, a war crime, or a crime against humanity as set forth in Principle VI is a crime under international law."

To relentlessly prosecute lesser crimes while perpetrating and abetting greater ones is the prerogative of the "world's sole military superpower" (from Barack Obama's Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech) and its allies. Governments of small, weak countries not sufficiently toeing Washington's line are threatened with prosecution for actions occurring within and not outside their borders and the only "war crimes" trials conducted are also exclusively in response to strictly internal events. By design and selective enforcement, the new system of international law is what Balzac said of the law of his time, that it is a spider web through which the big flies pass and the little ones get caught.

Herman and Peterson have studied the above contrasts, what most often are an inversion of justice and not simply its distortion or selective implementation, in several locations: The Balkans, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Latin America, examining the most salient examples in each locale to demonstrate the unconscionable dichotomy of "good" and bad genocides.

In one of the most penetrating sections of the book, the authors study the differential approach of the U.S. in the contexts of both space and time; that is, how the suppression of the Kurdish movement has been treated in relation to Iraq as opposed to Turkey, and in Iraq from one decade to the next depending on whether the same head of state (Saddam Hussein) was a U.S. ally or adversary at the time.

Not a matter of what is right or wrong, not even of who does what to whom, but solely one of what advances America's narrow and cynical geopolitical agenda.

Their model, however, possesses relevance to developments in other nations beyond those studied in The Politics of Genocide. Colombia, for example, and Western Sahara.

Also to Kosovo after 50,000 U.S. and NATO troops marched in eleven years ago and hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Roma (Gypsies) and other ethnic minorities were forced to flee the Serbian province.

Onslaughts against the people of South Ossetia two years ago this August by preeminent U.S. client Mikheil Saakashvili in Georgia and against the Houthi minority community in northern Yemen with military backing from Saudi Arabia and the U.S. would be examples of Benign attempts to exterminate entire peoples, to commit genocide.
During the generation following the end of the Cold War and the triumph of global neoliberalism, enough genuine problems have weighed upon humanity. With the privatization of increasingly broad sectors of former state functions and the concomitant economic dislocation of a large percentage of the population, and with the penetration of rapacious transnational financial and corporate interests, tens of millions - perhaps hundreds of millions - of people in poor countries have fled the countryside to the large cities. Millions more have attempted the desperate and often deadly migration to the global North. The last twenty years have witnessed the largest Völkerwanderung in history.

In that context competition for natural and other resources takes on a drastic intensity, and conflicts based on residual ethnic, religious and regional suspicions and strife can be too easily revived and inflamed. The potential for communal, for inter-ethnic, violence is a power keg that must not be ignited.

The willful exacerbation and exploitation of such conflicts by outside powers to achieve broader geostrategic objectives add a greater degree of peril, one of regional conflicts that could expand into wider wars and even a showdown between the U.S. and nuclear powers like Russia and China.

The 78-day bombing war waged by the U.S. and NATO against Yugoslavia in 1999 in the name of "stopping genocide," the "worst genocide since Hitler," coincided with the induction of the first former Warsaw Pact member states into the Alliance (the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland) and resulted in the building of a mammoth U.S. military base, Camp Bondsteel, in Kosovo and NATO's absorption and penetration of all of Southeastern Europe. Every country in the region but Serbia (for the time being) now has troops serving under the military bloc in Afghanistan.

The crisis in Darfur in western Sudan gave rise to NATO's first operation in Africa, the airlifting of African Union troops from 2005-2007. At the end of 2007 the first U.S. military command established outside North America since the Cold War, Africa Command, was launched.

In the same year and in the name of opposing genocide, a self-styled "March for Darfur" was held in Berkeley, California - a birthplace of the anti-Vietnam War protest movement forty years before - in which participants adapted a standard anti-war chant - "What do we want? Peace! When do we want it? Now!" - to "What do we want? NATO! When do we want it? Now!"

At the end of the day military actions, including full-fledged wars, conducted by the U.S. and NATO in part or in whole to ostensibly "end genocide" will produce more deaths, more mass-scale displacement, and more expulsion and extermination of endangered minorities as has happened over the past eleven years in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan. More genocide. The genuine article.

Questions about the intentional and systematic extermination of a people are not to be taken lightly. Neither are they to be dealt with as yet another weapon in the arsenal of history's mightiest military power for use against defenseless adversaries. The U.S. government and its highly selective "genocide" echo chambers are adept at seeing the mote in their neighbor's eye, but are blind to the mountain of corpses produced by Washington and its proxies. Myopia passing into active complicity.

In documenting the diametrically opposite manner in which the subject of genocide is treated by the government of the United States and its apologists (acknowledged and otherwise) based on international political and economic motives, Herman and Peterson have provided a simultaneously concise and comprehensive guidebook to separating fact from fabrication. Truth is the first casualty of war and war is in turn the offspring of falsehood. Exposing the last contributes to eroding the foundation for U.S. armed aggression and global military expansion.

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