Outreach Community Town Hall meetings in Moyamba, Bo and Kenema, and distribution of computer equipment refurbished with donations from SCSL staff, in pictures

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office as at:
Thursday, 15 September 2011

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

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## Special Court Supplement

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UNIPSIL MANDATE EXTENDED IN SIERRA LEONE

Shortly after the session, we conducted an interview with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hon. J.B. Dauda (who is presently in New York). We asked him to express how he felt about the successful extension of the mandate. In response, Minister Dauda said: “I feel satisfied and happy because we still need the presence of UNIPSIL in Sierra Leone to help to consolidate our peace process. We want them to stay up to the 2012 Presidential and Legislative Elections.”

“Asked about the nature of the relationship between the Foreign Ministry and UNIPSIL, Minister Dauda said that UNIPSIL is working in close collaboration with his ministry. He stated further, “We also have the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), which is a Sierra Leone Configuration responsible for the consolidation of peace. It is also the organization that raises funds for the implementation of the Joint Vision of Sierra Leone and the UN.”

We also sought the Minister’s comment on the call by the Security Council on the Government, political parties and stakeholders “to contribute to ensuring that next year’s elections are peaceful, transparent, free and fair.” Responding, Minister Dauda said: “That is our commitment to the International Community, including the UN, that we shall conduct the 2012 elections in a fair, free, transparent and credible manner and in accordance with international standards.”

We bring you a report on today’s session from the UN Information Service.

Mandate of UN peacebuilding office in Sierra Leone extended for another year

14 September 2011 – The Security Council today extended for another year the mandate of the United Nations office that is helping Sierra Leone on its journey towards becoming a stable, peaceful and democratic country.

In his most recent report on the activities of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL), Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon had requested that the Council extend the mission so that it can continue its assistance to the Government, including in relation to the preparations for the national and local elections in 2012.

“The renewal will also enable UNIPSIL to continue its peace consolidation and national reconciliation efforts, its support for good governance reforms, as well as tackling anti-corruption, drug trafficking and organized crime, addressing youth unemployment and building support for international donor assistance,” Mr. Ban wrote.

Acting unanimously, the Council adopted a resolution extending UNIPSIL’s mandate until 15 September 2012, and calling on the Government, political parties and all stakeholders to contribute to ensuring that next year’s elections are peaceful, transparent, free and fair.

Earlier this week, the head of UNIPSIL, Michael von der Schulenburg, told the Council that Sierra Leone – which emerged from a brutal civil war in 2002, with the assistance of a UN peacekeeping force – remains on track to become a stable democracy with a viable economy, but recent violent incidents between rival political groups have highlighted the potential for unrest.

Mr. von der Schulenburg, who is also the Secretary-General’s Executive Representative for Sierra Leone, urged the West African country’s politicians not to forget what the nation has achieved, build on those accomplishments and conduct their affairs responsibly.

“Elections are still one and a half years away and this must not start to erode the social and political climate in Sierra Leone,” he stated.
Cambodia: Phnom Penh: Vann Nath, who painted Khmer Rouge atrocities, dies

He is one of seven survivors of the S-21 detention centre where 15,000 people were exterminated. He survived by painting portraits of Pol Pot and other leaders of the Communist revolution. Today, his works are hanging on the walls of the former prison, a testimony to the Cambodian tragedy.

Wednesday, September 07, 2011

By Asia News

Vann Nath, a noted Cambodian artist who survived the Khmer Rouge's torture and execution center by painting portraits of its brutal leaders, died on Monday aged 66, his family said.

Vann Nath, whose paintings later exposed to the world the horrific torture committed by the hard-line communist movement between 1975 and 1979, had been battling kidney and lung ailments for several years.

He fell into a coma late last month after suffering a heart attack, his immediate family members said.

"He had been long suffering from kidney failure and lung disease," his son, Vann Chanarong, said. "My father died around 12.45pm [Cambodian time]."

"His death is going to be a huge loss for Cambodia's history," his son-in-law, Lon Nara, said.

Vann Nath's grieving widow, Kith Eng, said his chronic illnesses stemmed from the torture he suffered at Tuol Sleng or S-21 prison, where around 15,000 people were killed as the Khmer Rouge sought to eliminate perceived enemies of the revolution.

Vann Nath was the first of the survivors of the prison to testify before a U.N.-backed tribunal trying members of the Khmer Rouge regime on war crimes charges.

Eating beside corpses

He described at a hearing in 2009 how hunger drove him to eat insects, saying he and others at the prison also ate food beside corpses of starved fellow prisoners.

"The conditions were so inhumane and the food was so little," Vann Nath told the tribunal, as he broke down in tears. "I even thought eating human flesh would be a good meal."

Following his testimony, the tribunal sentenced the overseer of the Tuol Sleng prison, Kaing Guek Eav, also known as Comrade Duch, to 30 years in prison last July for crimes against humanity, torture, and premeditated murder.

Vann Nath survived Tuol Sleng prison due to his painting skills, as he was forced to produce portraits of Pol Pot and other Khmer Rouge leaders, escaping what was known as the "Killing Fields."

Vann Nath's death leaves only two surviving Tuol Sleng prison inmates.

"He should have waited to see if justice was done at the trial of the Khmer Rouge leaders," said Chum
Mey, 80, one of the two survivors. "He should not have passed away without knowing the truth yet."

“Van Nath had painted and drawn many pictures about the S-21 prison for the younger generation," Chum Mey said.

Timely reminder

Neth Pheaktra, spokesman for the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), as the tribunal is formally known, said Vann Nath's death was a "huge loss" to the tribunal as it forges ahead with its hearings.

"He was an important witness of the trial."

Hong Kim Soun, civil party lawyer of the ECCC, said Vann Nath's death is a timely reminder for the tribunal to speed up its hearings.

“The trial has been delayed and the victims are dying one by one," he said. "And by comparison, the accused persons have been receiving more support for health and security or safety than the victims.

"Even though there are so many victims that make the court impossible to provide such security support, a prolonged waiting for justice, to see that justice is done, is almost useless for those who died before the court get its job done."

Vann Nath, born in 1946, was trained as an artist but had to work at a cooperative farm after the Khmer Rouge seized power in April 1975. He was accused of being an enemy of the regime in 1978 and imprisoned at Tuol Sleng, and kept there until January 1979 when the regime fled ahead of invading Vietnamese troops, who found only seven inmates alive at the prison.

He later painted images of torture and wrote a memoir of his year spent there.

The Khmer Rouge's radical policies left up to two million people dead through overwork, disease, malnutrition and execution.