Ambassador Stephen Rapp met on Friday with members of the Special Court Interactive Forum

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, 9 October 2012

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact Martin Royston-Wright Ext 7217
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Decision 2012: RUF Candidate Speaks Out

POLITICO: What is your answer to that—has Sierra Leone changed?
Collins: It is my duty to contribute towards the total change of the system in Sierra Leone and that is why I am going to the presidency for the sake of you all, we have democracy, we have welfare, and we believe in peace, we believe the people of this country should be respected by those who represent them. They are not masters of the people, they are servants of the people. I am a servant of the people, I have given up my life in making sure that what belongs to the people gets to the people.

POLITICO: I ask you this again with the benefit of hindsight, do you regret leaving the RUF rebel movement and taking part in the orgy that was unleashed on this country and its people, do you regret that at all?
Collins: There are so many revolutions in the world, there are many wars in the world, I do believe that most of those leaders in Iraq, in many, many more that were destroyed by war, and I am asking if they have regretted or not? As I told you before, my mission is to make sure that everybody and the welfare of the people of this country are met and I have taken the census. You are talking aboutileged, the government of the day at that particular time, was it a violent government or a non-violent one? Even you the press, we do not have press freedom there was so many things under the one party system you can now and how we have mistaken, but the awareness of the people is now in the minds of the people of this country:

POLITICO: You are talking about the government of the 1960s to 1990s, you say you led up to you and so was that a government led by the APC party. There is a ram representation that you have associated yourself with the APC party which is in government, is that true?
Collins: The APC of the 1960s to 1992 was a one party government that was a composition of all political parties that come together under Sierra Leone’s democrats or a one party system. So there was nothing like minority parties.

POLITICO: Are you saying the APC of that time is different in the sense therefore you are comfortably associated with it?
Collins: My association with it is political parties because we are promoting political tolerance. It doesn’t mean we are allies to any political party. Let me tell you, the RUF was more of an independent political party and we have ideology behind our cause:

POLITICO: So it is not true that you have any sympathy with the APC party—the government right now?
Collins: They are a party on their own and the RUF is a party on its own.

POLITICO: Is it true that the government now is bankrupting your party in any way?
Collins: That is correct! That is correct.

It is misleading. It is done by those who are against the system to make sure that we pursue political tolerance in the country. We are not on any one party political party and we are warning those people who are spreading those ugly messages of the RUPC aligning itself with the APC or any other political party that they have to be very careful with the security of our country and yet not time to be pointing fingers at political parties. We do believe it is time for us to share ideas because at the end of the day this is our country. After election we will all have to come together and build this nation irrespective of party. Parliament is where we come to pass any bill that is good for ourselves and we have no alliance with any political party, we are going for the presidency, we are going for the presidency, we are going for parliament and councils and make the coming election decision.

POLITICO: Have you changed? You say things have changed, have you changed?
Collins: My opinion is that Sierra Leone has changed, because I’m a Sierra Leonean. Sierra Leone has changed when I will be voted.
Detective arrested over bribery charge in Charles Taylor trial

FREETOWN (Reuters) - Police in Sierra Leone have arrested an investigator employed by former Liberian President Charles Taylor's defense team on charges he attempted to bribe prosecution witnesses to recant their testimony during Taylor's war crimes trial.

A United Nations-backed court in April convicted Taylor of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role supporting rebels during Sierra Leone's civil war, a conflict that killed more than 50,000 people. He was sentenced to 50 years in prison but is appealing his conviction.

Prince Taylor, who is not related to the former president, was arrested in the town of Bo on Saturday on an arrest warrant issued by the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

"Four counts ... allege that Prince Taylor offered a bribe to a witness to recant testimony given before the court and four counts ... allege that he otherwise interfered with a witness to recant testimony," a statement issued by the court on Saturday read.

Prince Taylor's initial arraignment was due to take place in the capital Freetown on Monday. His lawyer declined to comment on the charges.

Charles Taylor's conviction was the first time a head of state has been found guilty by an international tribunal since the Nazi trials at Nuremburg following the end of World War Two.

The court ruled that Taylor had received "blood diamonds" - as the stones from Sierra Leone's conflict zones were known - in exchange for providing arms and ammunition to the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels.

The rebels often used drugged up child soldiers they had abducted from their families to commit atrocities including rape, enslavement, beheading, disembowelment and maiming.

The U.N.-backed court was established to try those deemed to bear "greatest responsibility" for crimes committed in the West African state's civil war, which ended in 2002.

(Reporting by Simon Akam; Editing by Joe Bavier and Andrew Osborn)
International Criminal Court Faces Funding Crisis

By Judie Kaberia

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has admitted that the court is facing serious funding challenges which have politically affected the operations of the court.

During a four day International Justice Conference that started on Tuesday in Nuremberg, Germany, ICC President Judge Sang-Hyung Song complained that the under funding challenges have also affected the court's independence, which should solely be controlled by the Rome Statute.

Citing Sudan's referral by the UN Security Council, Song said it was also important for the court to redefine its boundaries with such partners to ensure the court doesn't raise any questions especially when dealing with countries that are not members of the court.

The President also expressed concerns over non cooperation by member states especially in making arrests where warrants have been issued and also freezing assets as requested by the court.

He used the opportunity to urge the United States, India, China, Russia and Indonesia to become members of the court to strengthen its work of looking for justice where member countries have failed to do so.

He further pointed that the court was also grappling with managing high expectations especially to the victims of situations before the ICC.

Judge Hans Peter Kaul commonly identified as the dissenting judge in the Kenyan cases was recognised for his committed role in international justice especially during the 1990s when the ICC was established.

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The conference organised by Wayamo Communication Foundation and Academy of Nuremberg Principles hosted the conference under the theme through the Lens of Nuremberg to discuss the progress of the court in its tenth anniversary.

Kenya's Attorney General Githu Muigai was among the speakers, who included among others ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda.

Kenya became a subject of the ICC when the court moved to investigate the 2008 post election violence. Four Kenyans - William Ruto, Joshua arap Sang, Amb. Francis Muthaura and Uhuru Kenyatta are expected to begin their trials at the Hague based court in April next year.

They are accused of crimes against humanity following the deaths of over 1,000 people and displacement of about 650,000 others.