Case No. SCSL-2003-01-T

THE PROSECUTOR OF
THE SPECIAL COURT
V.
CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR

MONDAY, 10 AUGUST 2009
9.30 A.M.
TRIAL

TRIAL CHAMBER II

Before the Judges: Justice Richard Lussick, Presiding
Justice Teresa Doherty
Justice Julia Sebutinde
Justice El Hadji Malick Sow, Alternate

For Chambers: Mr Simon Meisenberg
Ms Sidney Thompson

For the Registry: Ms Rachel Irura
Mr Benedict Williams

For the Prosecution: Ms Brenda J Hollis
Mr Mohamed A Bangura
Ms Maja Dimitrova

For the accused Charles Ghankay Taylor:
Mr Courtenay Griffiths QC
Mr Morris Anyah
Mr Silas Chekera
Ms Salla Moilanen
Monday, 10 August 2009
[Open session]
[The accused present]
[Upon commencing at 9.30 a.m.]

PRESIDING JUDGE: Good morning. We'll take appearances, please.

MS HOLLIS: Good morning, Mr President, your Honours, opposing counsel. This morning for the Prosecution Mohamed A Bangura, Brenda J Hollis and our case manager, Maja Dimitrova.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you. Yes, Mr Griffiths.

MR GRIFFITHS: Good morning, Mr President, your Honours, counsel opposite. For the Defence today, myself, Courtenay Griffiths, assisted by my learned friends, Mr Morris Anyah and Mr Silas Chekera. Also with us today is our case manager, Ms Salla Moilanen, and we're also joined by one of our interns, Amelia Montgomery, who has not been with us before.

PRESIDING JUDGE: All right. Welcome to the Court.

Mr Taylor, before you're asked any further questions, I'll remind you that you are still on your declaration to tell the truth.

DANKPANNAH DR CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR:
[On former affirmation]

EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR GRIFFITHS: [Continued]

Q. Mr Taylor, on Thursday last we were looking at events in the immediate aftermath of the Freetown invasion. Do you recall that?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. And we had looked at, amongst other things, a letter which
you had written to the President of the Security Council.
A. Yes.
Q. Is that right?
A. That is correct.
Q. We'd also examined the newspaper article published in the Washington Post, written by one James Rupert, making certain allegations about Liberia's involvement in the Sierra Leonean crisis, yes? Do you recall that?
A. Yes, I do.
Q. That article being dated 10 January 1999. Now, by the end of January, Mr Taylor, would it be fair to say that your government was under enormous pressure in terms of allegations about your involvement in Sierra Leone?
A. That is correct. We were by that time under enormous pressure, but some of the principal things that we had done was not being stated. It was very sad, but we were under pressure to continue to demonstrate - and this is, you know, it's typical in diplomatic circles where - that's where courtrooms and diplomacy - I think courts and diplomacy are two separate things because you hear accusations, you see we are acting, because if I recall very well what is still not stated is that by 7 January, the day right after the so-called Freetown invasion, what is not still stated in the records is that there are discussions. In fact, as I recall now, I had to speak to President Kabbah around the 6th or 7th because the committee responsible for Sierra Leone at that time, I being very key on that, there was a meeting between President Kabbah and Foday Sankoh, if my recollection is correct, about 7 January. There was a meeting with Sankoh and Kabbah right after the Freetown invasion.
In fact, that meeting - we were briefed of that meeting. I don't know why it has not come out in the records yet. And our participation continued up until around about 12 January, I had successfully negotiated a ceasefire with the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone, and that's not even reflected. So there is an ongoing situation at this particular time where Kabbah has met with Foday Sankoh, Foday Sankoh has met with senior members of the RUF right after that Freetown invasion, the committee is working, we secure a ceasefire, I announce publicly to the world that we had secured a ceasefire by 12 January.

There's constant communication between President Kabbah and myself and other members of - now it's the Committee of Six. And so I don't understand why there is all this pressure going on, but there is pressure going on constantly right after this time, yes.

Q. Now, when you say "we were briefed", who is "we"?

A. Members of the Committee of Six. I mean, everybody was aware that President Kabbah met Foday Sankoh right after the Freetown invasion on 7 January or thereabout. We were all - I was told. I'm sure Eyadema was told that a meeting had been successful. And Kabbah, in that meeting from briefings that the committee received, had agreed that Foday Sankoh, if things got to a point where discussions could be held, could travel to wherever there would be a peace process.

And, in fact, we were looking at two areas. We were looking at Togo and we were looking at Accra at that time. So between that 6 January and going on there were massive communication, consultations across the board, and we were all kept in the loop on it including the agreement to permit Foday
Sankoh to travel. That happened immediately after the 6 January. I don't know how it got lost in all of these discussions, but there were meetings and we secured a ceasefire on the 12th. And I announced it personally from Monrovia that we had obtained a ceasefire. So all was left now was where. And after we accepted that Togo would be the place, we started the whole process now of putting it together and putting the final touches to it.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, you accept that your government was under enormous pressure.

A. Yes.

Q. Now, did you feel as a consequent move to respond to that pressure?

A. Definitely. We could see - a situation had developed where no matter what we said, it didn't make any difference. I had even some pressure myself on the special representative of the Secretary-General in Monrovia.

Q. Who is that?

A. Mr Felix Downes-Thomas. I was - I had pressure on my colleagues in ECOWAS. I said, "Well, listen, you guys, you know what's happening. You've got to help to get this, you know, story corrected." So I put a lot of pressure. I wrote a letter to the Secretary-General stating that there were all these issues that no one had presented any evidence to and that, you know - and demanding that something be done about it. So later on in January I can remember there was a report done by the special representative of the Secretary-General in Liberia, Downes-Thomas, that noted to the Secretary-General that he was under pressure in Monrovia to provide evidence as to what they were talking about, and it still was not forthcoming.
Q. Well, let's take things in stages. Let us, first of all, look at a document which we briefly introduced last Thursday but didn't examine in detail. It's behind divider 4 in the disclosure for week 32. Do you have the document, Mr. Taylor?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Now, do you recall this document?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Now, taking things slowly, we see that the document is headed "Liberia's response to allegations of her involvement in the Sierra Leone civil war and dismisses such accusations as an international conspiracy spearheaded by the United States and Britain in an attempt to internationally isolate, economically destroy and politically destabilise the government of the Republic of Liberia". Let's pause there. That title suggests a note of defiance, doesn't it, Mr. Taylor?

A. Well, defiance maybe, but also frustration, anger.

Q. But, Mr. Taylor, did you think it was wise for you, David, to be adopting such a tone against Goliath?

A. Well, there are times in life that things may not appear wise but they may be prudent, and what do you expect from a little country that is attacked so seriously by major nations of the world without presenting an iota of evidence? I mean, it is frustrating. We are coming from a war. Our people are hungry. We still have hundreds of thousands of internally displaced. We are getting all of these accusations. First I'm about to attack Sierra Leone with 5,000 troops. It's investigated, it's not true. We come forward. Early in January there is an attack on Freetown. A major US paper, the Washington Post, that is really a signal of - for those of us that have been in government, it's
a signal of what to expect from the United States government.

There are these phantom officials that are speaking out that you never get to know their names. There are phantom accounts of arms crossing the border. There are phantom accounts of Taylor doing things. No shred of evidence.

So at this particular time what do you expect from a President, who is desperate, is to challenge them for whatever it may mean, and that's what I did to really to begin to challenge these people to say "Well, listen, bring some evidence." You are speaking about this publicly. Here is this little general who gets thrown out of Liberia. In fact, he doesn't stay on the job in Sierra Leone even long. The people that are saying things - and this is the problem that I'm having with this case - where there's a lot of people saying, and nobody is bringing any physical evidence. The United States did not do it at that particular time. We challenged them. They haven't done it now. We are behind them. We go all the way now to Britain, to London, to the Foreign Office. Listen, we respect you. What do you have? So, yes, it may be unwise, but it is an act of anger and frustration.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, why choose to have this statement announced in London?

A. Well, look, let's - you know, when it comes to the very close cooperation between the British and the Americans, nobody will ever question that. This Sierra Leone was a British - this is a British operation, Sierra Leone. We are at a time in the world where this is that period of regime change. So America is busy with Iraq and helping Britain out, but this is a British operation and so we go to them, because we know that if and when
the British decide that there is nothing credible about this, they will do something about it. But this was their little pet project, Sierra Leone. That's why we went directly to them. Not to say that we had not confronted the United States also, but we decided to take it to them in London to challenge what they had, if they had anything at all, and we still did not get anything.

Q. Now, we need to pause and appreciate the date on which this statement was read. This was 26 January 1999?

A. That is correct.

Q. And in light of some of the content of what comes after, Mr Taylor, can I ask you this: When you authorised this statement to be announced in London, did you anticipate that you would be on trial before this document was taken seriously?

A. Oh, no, no. That was the last thing on my mind, trial, or being indicted and all of that. All I was doing as President of Liberia at that time, I was faced with a situation where, with these accusations out there and the war in Sierra Leone, the United States on the one side, the British on the other side slinging out these accusations, any little country in any part of this globe will know what that means. What does it mean? Don't even talk to the World Bank. Don't even talk to the IMF. Don't even talk to any Bretton Wood Institution. Don't talk to the European Union. Don't talk to anybody. You will get nowhere. So what I'm really thinking about now is what do I do to clear up this mess so that I can begin to bring relief to my people that are just coming from war. That's what I'm doing at this time.

Q. But did you anticipate at this time that you would have to be explaining yourself about your activities during this period in a court of law?
A. No, not at all. Never occurred to me. For me this was political, it was diplomatic, and if I got it cleared up at that time, as I'm saying, I would have had access to know some of our donors that wanted to give money that we were not going to get money from, including - when I talk about the Bretton Wood Institutions, World Bank, IMF, some of the major other financial institutions. You get nowhere with them with these two major countries. Who controls the World Bank? The World Bank is controlled by the United States. Who controls the International Monetary Fund? Europe controls the International Monetary Fund. When you're in trouble with Europe and the United States you're in trouble with the World Bank and IMF. It's as simple as that, and every present in the world knows this. If he doesn't know, then he's heard it. That's how it works.

Q. Let's move on, Mr Taylor, and have a look at the first paragraph of this document, please:

'The Government of the Republic of Liberia has, over the past few months, come under intense international pressure largely spearheaded by the governments of the United States and Britain asserting, inter alia, that Liberia is fuelling the Sierra Leonean crisis by supplying arms to the AFRC/RUF rebels fighting to overthrow the government of President Tejan Kabbah. Liberia has also been accused of secretly committing fighting forces on the side of the rebels and has allegedly granted safe haven to some top AFRC/RUF officials in Monrovia."

Let us pause. Now, do you see, Mr Taylor, that in effect you're setting out the allegations being made by certain countries about Liberia?

A. That is correct.
Q. Now, let's just see what the allegations being made are in January 1999. One, that you're supplying arms to the AFRC/RUF rebels; do you see that?
A. Yes, I do.

Q. Secondly, that you've secretly committed fighting forces on the side of the rebels; do you see that?
A. I see that.

Q. And thirdly, that you've allegedly granted safe haven to some top RUF/AFRC officials in Monrovia. Those are the three allegations you identify as Liberia in January 1999. Is that correct?
A. That is correct.

Q. Now, let's examine each of those in turn. Bearing in mind this is January 1999, first of all, the allegation of supplying arms to the AFRC/RUF. Now, in terms of that allegation,

Mr Taylor, do you recall making a speech in late December 1998?
A. Oh, definitely. In fact, to be exact, at the end of that's about December 28, 29 I made that speech. It was a major policy speech dealing with this matter of arms, okay, and in that speech --

Q. And what was the information available to your government then as to United States research regarding the supply of arms?
A. Well, we had had at our disposal a report that had been done jointly by the United States, represented by a situation that came before us here, Colonel Dempsey, along with the United Nations and ECOMOG, that had stated in fact that there was some evidence of a little amount of arms going across the border, but that it was not an official transaction because it was just a trickle amount of arms going across the border. So to see this
same arms issue festering, I mean, we had to raise it here
because it just seemed not to go away. I thought it had gone
away after a senior army officer representing the American
government at the embassy had gone there and had written a report
saying, "Look, we haven't seen any evidence of this." The United
Nations personnel had gone there and said, "We see no evidence of
this." ECOMOG personnel had been there and said there is no
evidence. So to see this same thing festering and festering, I'm
shocked by it.

Q. But you recall that on 10 January, James Rupert had
suggested that the - Washington had solid evidence. Had you seen
any?
A. Nothing. Not even - nothing. Absolutely nothing, and
that's the problem when you hear me talking about phantom
reports. An official who decides that because of security reason
his name cannot be called, and you go from now until hell freezes
over, you never get to know the official because there is no such
thing. They write these things. You know, it's almost like,
your Honours, what happens in certain intelligence scenarios, you
know, people - intelligence experts sit down and they write
scenarios. It's almost like you write a script for a film. They
write these scenarios and then they're played out later. They
find the actors and they play it. This is what it is. I just
got burned in this process where this Rupert writes - and maybe
just as a mischief somebody said, "Well, put it out there and let
Taylor fight it out. You know, if he can clear himself, he will;
if he can't, he'll have to keel with this for several months and
years." That's what they do. This is what that Rupert did.
This is mischief. Pure mischief.
Q. Let's look at the second allegation which you'd identified:
That you'd been accused of secretly committing fighting forces on
the side of the rebels. Now, do you recall mention being made of
an allegation of 5,000 Liberians massing on the border to invade
Sierra Leone?
A. Yes.
Q. And we dealt with the fact that that had been investigated
by the United Nations, didn't we, Mr Taylor?
A. That is correct.
Q. And what was the upshot of that?
A. It ended up with there were no fighters, there is no such
thing. President Kabbah and I exchanged telephone conversations.
It lasted for about 48 hours, and then he announced that it was a
big mistake and it stopped right there.
Q. And again on the same topic, we have dealt more than once
with the role of the STF in Liberia, haven't we?
A. In Sierra Leone.
Q. In Sierra Leone, haven't we?
A. That is correct, yes.
Q. So had you, in line with this allegation, secretly
committed fighting forces on the side of the rebels?
A. Never. Never. They knew that there were Liberians, but
all they did was to attribute them to me. They knew that
Liberians were there. They had been dealing with them, but when
it came time to, quote unquote, put pressure - and quite frankly,
this case is a highly technical case. It's not just one of these
normal legal things, because there's a whole blend of diplomacy
in this whole situation here. This is what you call pressure.
We are putting pressure, and these pressures that come from
countries have nothing to do with fact. They have nothing to do with fact. In diplomacy, what you do, let's take two - or maybe one example happening in the world right now. Let's look at the - a typical example of the pressure that is on Iran right now about Iran's, quote unquote, desire, which is spiritual, to develop nuclear weapons. Now, for those of the world that are following this, the International Atomic Energy Agency is publishing reports that they have no evidence of Iran moving towards the production of a nuclear bomb, but that's the International Atomic Energy Agency. But the West - United States, Britain, are the major countries - are still saying what? That Iran harbours the desire to build a weapon. What you call this - this is what you call diplomatic pressure.

Now, if you took that case into a court of law, you would get nowhere because while the International Atomic Energy Agency is saying one thing, political pressure is dictating that pressure must be put that even if they harboured this issue, not have it - this is the type of situation that we have here with Liberia. They know that I do not have fighters in Sierra Leone.

They know that these people are STF.

Q. Just STF?

A. Well - and they know that these are Liberians that are coming from ULIMO-J and ULIMO-K and the AFL, but any attempt to so-call keep the pressure on Taylor, they repeat it, and they repeat it and repeat it. I'm only trying to give you an example of what's the difference between these diplomatic and other military pressures as we compare it to factual evidence. Where it does not exist, you put out these things as pressure. And at times, if you're not careful, they can be construed as fact if
they are repeated sufficiently over time.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, the third allegation identified was that you had allegedly granted safe haven to some top AFRC/RUF officials in Monrovia. Was there any truth to that?

A. None whatsoever. And if there were any truth, at least they would have said that X is there, Y is there, Z is there. I mean, you will just hear that people are there. No one has ever come up and said, "At this time, this accusation against Mr Taylor, John Brown is there, Peter Doe is there." No. Names, they would never come up with a name because no such individuals are there at this time.

Q. But, Mr Taylor, you had set up a guesthouse in Monrovia in November of the previous year, hadn't you?

A. That is correct.

Q. Yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. And you'd been visited by, amongst others, Sam Bockarie, hadn't you?

A. That is correct. But they were not living there, and they knew that they were coming and going.

Q. But what about any AFRC members coming to Monrovia. Did any come to Monrovia in that period, in the period we're talking about?

A. In this period, no. Let's not forget, there is no reason before this Court that I should deny if AFRC people came to Liberia. Number one, let me remind the Court, my government, along with la Cote d'Ivoire and others, were authorised to speak to the AFRC and the RUF. That evidence is before this Court. At this time we had not established any contact with the AFRC.
individuals. The contact before had been established with the RUF where the guesthouse had been set up.

Q. Now, let's move on:

"The Liberian government has categorically and repeatedly denied any military involvement in Sierra Leone. Liberia has also rejected and described as ridiculous the notion that she will be involved in attempts to destabilise any of her neighbours including Sierra Leone. The Liberian government has gone beyond mere denials and has proposed numerous options by which the allegations of her involvement could be disproved including, among other things, the constitution of a joint UN/ECOMOG border patrol contingent to monitor troops movements and the setting up of an international board of inquiry by the United Nations Secretary-General to investigate these accusations."

Now, Mr Taylor, for how long had you been asking for a joint UN/ECOMOG border patrol?

A. This goes back I would say as late as probably late '97. In fact, many of the reports of the Secretary-General that have come before this Court, the Secretary-General has mentioned several times that we've requested this. We've been very constant about this request to try to clear it up, and it doesn't go anywhere.

Q. Was that request ever acted upon?

A. No, never acted upon, and we did not cease requesting it again and again and again.

Q. What about an international board of inquiry, was such an investigation ever set up?

A. Never. No one wanted to set up one because they knew the results. The results would be in our favour, a negative, but the
whole point of this exercise was to make sure that there was no
objective results, because, like I say, this was not an issue of
law, this was an issue of pressure. And at that point, sometimes
at the end of the day an accusation would just fade away, so no
inquiry was ever set up. Not in ECOWAS, not in the OAU, not in
the United Nations, even though we had been pushing at all
levels. It was just not necessary, according to them.

Q. "At the core of the onslaught against Liberia by the
United States and Britain is the demonstrated failure and
unquestionable inability of the two countries to evidentially
prove their allegations against Liberia."

When you say "evidentially prove", Mr Taylor, what were you
talking about?

A. We were expecting—let's take arms. Arms were supposed to
be going across the border. We expected for maybe a truck number
or maybe a satellite photo, contacts, we expected radio
intercepts or telephone intercepts where they will say, "Here you
are, Mr Taylor. On this date, you said this, or an official of
the Liberian government said this. Here is the intercept. What
do you have to say about it?" And no one should tell me this
nonsense about secrecy because at this particular level, when it
comes to secrecy, this kind of information is not top secret,
because if you're talking about top secret, there were things
that were more sensitive than this that Presidents got to know in
dealing with these governments and dealing with intelligence,
there are certain things that you know.

So bring in an intercepted telephone conversation or a
radio conversation or a photo or an individual where you say,
"Well, look, Mr Taylor, this particular army officer or this
official has said this. What do you have to say?" There's
nothing secret about that, that it is so complicated that you
cannot expose it. That's what I'm talking about.
So what I was looking for from them was physical evidence
in terms of intercepts, in terms of photography, in terms of
documents. That's what I was looking for. There was none
forthcoming.
Q. Mr Taylor, you were requesting such proof 10 years ago?
A. That is correct.
Q. In the decade since, have you seen any?
A. I haven't and I'm still waiting for them.
Q. "Despite repeated challenges to authenticate their claims,
the British and Americans have only relied on rumours,
speculations and a massive disinformation campaign intended to
internationally isolate, economically strangulate and
diplomatically destroy Liberia and by so doing to successfully
disintegrate ECOMOG which has earned its success story of an
African capacity to solve an African military problem in Liberia,
culminating in the ushering in of a broad-based democratically
elected government headed by Charles Taylor as President."
What are you suggesting in those last few sentences?
A. Well, there are some catch things in here.
"Internationally isolate" is the first one. When you have these
issues globally where you have a war, a whole world is involved
in trying to bring peace. But you have the major players saying
in the news all of the time, "There is one country that is being
obstructionist to the process." That will internationally
isolate you because no one wants to do business with you because
that means that you are a warmonger.
Now, let's look at the other one, "economically strangulate". We are coming out of a seven-year war. Again, these accusations, especially by these two countries, will put us in a position where we will not get any assistance from anybody. Who wants to help Liberia when Liberia is supposed to be opposed to peace, Liberia is sending soldiers to fight in Sierra Leone, Liberia is causing the war in Sierra Leone to continue when everyone wants it stopped? So, well, if you have means to have perpetuate a war in Sierra Leone, then you don't need anything from us. So you can't talk to anybody. All of the donor countries just don't help you, and you've got billions of dollars owed to the international financial institutions, nobody's going to talk to you. So economically you are finished.

To diplomatically destroy Liberia. Again, you know, you have a situation where you become a pariah state and nobody wants to deal with you. And this is the typical strategy that people deploy against little countries. It's very simple to destroy a small country. Very simple. Countries like ours that depend on the so-called international community for, really, what I will call sustenance, where 40 per cent - some little countries, 50 per cent of your budget is being financed by goodwill from them, you are in trouble. So any little problem that you have, you will run into difficulties. So diplomatically you are destroyed. And the last one dealing with disintegrate ECOMOG, look, I cannot and don't speak for any leader of West Africa at that time. That's what they're going to have to do for themselves. But I can tell you, from where I sat, there was frustration in our little discussions. First you had joy and people were elated that Liberia was a good example of ECOWAS and ECOMOG working.
Now, here we have a situation where everything that is happening in Sierra Leone is not going well.

First of all, when I talk about Britain, when President Kabbah went into exile, Britain spent a lot of money. Britain covertly built an FM station, financed it. So when President Kabbah was in Guinea, he had a broadcast in a radio station going that had been funded by Britain, so the entire budget spent on the Kabbah government in exile was paid by Britain. So Britain had her own interest, okay.

So if you look at what happened, I did mention to this Court that it was very clear to me and many other leaders that there was more - this tussle between Britain and the - and Nigeria, where Britain appeared determined not to permitting Nigeria to dominate Sierra Leone. And so, remember I had mentioned that they had made it very clear that a resolution to use force in Sierra Leone was not going to be forthcoming, and I've also mentioned to this Court that the intervention of 1998, February, was an ECOWAS intervention and it was not done under Chapter 7.

So when you put all of this together there was this fight going on and some of us were so frustrated, feeling that everything was being done to stop ECOMOG from making Sierra Leone the second success story. And if you go a little further to remind the Court, what happens, a Nigerian officer is put in charge of the Sierra Leonean armed forces. That eventually changes and then it is then controlled by what? A British officer. And then the police again is controlled by a British officer. So what I am saying here? I'm saying here that there is a lot of power play going on, so ECOMOG and the success of
ECOWAS is in trouble. So there is this power play going on. There are obstacles being placed here, obstacles being removed, and there was a lot of frustration on all of our parts who are determined to making sure that this was an ECOWAS programme and that whatever happened in Sierra Leone would be the success of ECOWAS through ECOMOG.

Q. "Interestingly, the Americans and the British have depended only on the unsubstantiated accounts of Sierra Leonean government officials, especially her finance minister James Jonah, a well-connected veteran of the United Nations system who meticulously uses his connections in the world body to scapegoat Liberia by deliberately ignoring the irrefutable evidence of American and British complicity calculated to destabilise Sierra Leone by the use of private firms and individuals."

Let's unpack that paragraph, please. Why is James Jonah being targeted in this way?

A. You know, I happen to know James Jonah very well. James Jonah served for a long time as Undersecretary-General of the United Nations, and then he comes back to Sierra Leone and he is just - and he becomes what, finance minister. So you know what James Jonah - I met James Jonah so many times. I know him very well even before he came to Sierra Leone while he was still Undersecretary-General of the United Nations. So he just - he was not someone that was constructive. And if you go back to the Okelo report - and who is Okelo? Remember that Okelo, Mr Okelo, the special representative of the Secretary-General assigned in Sierra Leone at that time was the individual, if I remind the Court, that wrote the first letter, a very good friend of Jonah, told the Security Council - telling them what? That most of the
individuals that were involved in Sierra Leone after the intervention that were caught, arrested, or killed, were Liberians.

So James Jonah, Okelo are then working together on something that probably Jonah doesn't know, because Jonah is not in Sierra Leone at the time to know who these Liberians are - or, may I say, were - neither can I say Okelo probably knew properly, but they have planted this first major seed of trouble. And that's why James Jonah is dealt with here, and he is very well known in UN circles and he knows his way around the United Nations circles. And so when we come down to private firms, what are we talking about? We're talking about Sandline. We're talking about other individuals that are involved in Sierra Leone at the time, even though they are in direct violation of Security Council resolutions. So that's what we're talking about here.

Q. Which Security Council resolution?
A. About an arms embargo on Sierra Leone. But they go ahead and Sandlines - and we get to see later that it's approved by the British government to provide arms. So I'm just trying to explain here that these are deliberate attempts on the part of these people to hide their hands, but try to put somebody else's in front that is not right.

Q. Now, let's go over the page, please. Now, we see this subheading, don't we, "Objectives of Document":

"Fundamentally the purpose of this document is to carefully provide a detailed account of Liberia's efforts, nationally and internationally, to bring peace to the government and people of Sierra Leone and remove the existing notion that Liberia is providing arms to the AFRC/RUF rebels. Further, the document
intends to undermine future efforts by western countries, especially Britain and the United States, aimed at playing one ECOWAS country against the other so that ECOWAS, as a sub-regional economic and political organisation, is substantially diminished in its future capacity to cohesively deal with subsequent political and/or military problem in any member state."

Now, we've dealt with that, haven't we?

A. Yes, we have.

Q. "Also, the document attempts to expose the extent to which international conspiracy of disinformation, lies and deceit, spearheaded by stronger powers, can destroy smaller and weaker countries, even in the face of the lack of material evidence of any kind to prove their allegations against the weaker and smaller nations."

Again, we've dealt with that, haven't we?

A. That is correct.

Q. "And finally, the document seeks to call the attention of some liberal and reasonable members of the international community to the need to pressure the countries accusing Liberia to go beyond empty, circumstantial and unsubstantiated accusations by providing material evidence in support of their allegations.

Who is supplying arms to the AFRC/RUF rebels in Sierra Leone?

As far as physical evidence available to the international community is concerned, it is Britain, the former colonial master of Sierra Leone, that is supplying arms to the forces seeking the ouster of the Kabbah government through private British companies.
and individuals. Using plausible deniability, however, the British government has successfully disassociated itself from any involvement in the shipment of arms to the Sierra Leonean rebels. Specifically involved in the arms trade on behalf of the British government are two British firms owned and operated by retired British military generals who, it is alleged, have strong connections with the British foreign secretary Robin Cook. Sky Air Cargo of London and Occidental Airlines, partly owned by a British pilot, are at the centre of supplying arms to the AFRC/RUF rebels."

Let's pause and deal with this. First of all, are you suggesting in that paragraph that British companies were assisting the rebels to oust the Kabbah government?

A. Well, in a way, yes. They may not be aware of it, but yes, if they are supplying the arms - and this is based on British government reports, that these companies have supposedly been violating the law. I mean, Britain is too big a country to permit these things to happen right out of Britain so - but the very arms that they're supplying at the time to the AFRC, okay, are the very arms that are being used to fight Kabbah. So in a round about way they may be giving the arms for a different purpose, but it is working against Kabbah.

Q. Now, what do you mean by "plausible deniability"?

A. Well, that's - plausible deniability deals with another aspect of diplomacy also where you don't have to directly say no. You come up with an account, for example, that would not tie you to the issue. And what Britain is saying, "No, no, no, there may be some things going in, but the British government is not responsible." But Britain is a responsible member of the
international community and things flying in and out of Britain, especially with a major firm like Sandlines and others, Britain can hardly say that it cannot trace it.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, where did you get these particular companies from, Sky Air Cargo London and Occidental Airlines?

Where did that information come from?

A. There are reports published by the British government in dealing with this particular issue and Robin Cook's own involvement done by the British government.

Q. "It must be noted that Mr Robin Cook's involvement in arms trade has a history. Last year Robin Cook quickly came to the defence of Sky Air Cargo when that company was implicated in arms trafficking to government forces for the restoration of President Kabbah. Mr Cook has always been the first in the British government to put up defence for private arms dealers to the rebels in Sierra Leone whenever such practice became scandalous and publicly embarrassing. Is Liberia supporting the AFRC/RUF rebels?"

The Government of Liberia has consistently and categorically denied providing any form of support, military, political, or otherwise, to the AFRC/RUF rebels fighting the government of President Tejan Kabbah. As a matter of fact, Liberia, at many international forums, has repeatedly declared that it recognises the Kabbah administration as the sole legitimate and constitutional political authority of the Republic of Sierra Leone and, as such, would do nothing to thwart and/or overturn the democratic will of the Sierra Leonean people by subverting their choice of government. Additionally, except for colonial boundaries dividing
Liberia and Sierra Leone, Liberia has consistently maintained that the people of the two countries are one and identical, politically and culturally. The traditional relationship between Liberians and Sierra Leoneans was so vividly manifested by Sierra Leone's acceptance of thousands of Liberian refugees during the Liberian conflict, reciprocated by Liberia's acceptance of thousands of Sierra Leonean refugees over the past months."

Is that true, Mr Taylor?
A. That is true.

Q. "Have the Americans and British provided any evidence that Liberia supports the AFRC/RUF rebels? The governments of the United States and Britain, despite international pressure demanding material evidence to substantiate their allegations against Liberia, have been unable to back their charges. For the United States and Britain, providing material evidence to prove an allegation has been effectively replaced by misinformation, propaganda and war of words. They are attempting to reinvent the universal wheels of justice by replacing the provision of evidence to back allegations by the use of propaganda and disinformation. They believe that might makes right. Realistically, Liberia is being scapegoated by Britain and America, masking their involvement by using private British firms and secret American military advisers to fuel the war in Sierra Leone."

What evidence did you have of secret American military advisers, Mr Taylor?
A. When you see a few marines or special ops people, you know that they are on the ground.

Q. Now, let's pause for a moment, please, Mr Taylor, and can I
invite your attention to exhibit D-27. Do you recall this document, Mr Taylor?

A. I can't really - yes. Yes, I do.

Q. You remember this?

A. Yes.

Q. This is a New York Times article dated, note, 13 May 1998. So from the previous year.

A. Yeah.

Q. "A British mercenary force that helped carry out military operations in Sierra Leone this year kept the Clinton administration fully informed of its activities and had its tacit support, the military group and a senior administration official said.

The operation was successful from the perspective of Washington and London helping to restore to power an elected President of Sierra Leone, Ahmad Kabbah, who been ousted by a brutal group of army officers in a coup a year earlier.

But in accomplishing its mission, the private army, Sandline International, which was paid $10 million on behalf of Mr Kabbah to arm and train a force to return him to power, reportedly brought in planeloads of assault rifles, mortars and ammunition, more than a 100 tons altogether, all in violation of a United Nations arms embargo on Sierra Leone.

In Britain, the disclosure about Sandline which first came to light in March in Africa Confidential, a newsletter here, have become front page news, creating a political maelstrom. Foreign minister, Robin Cook, under attack by the press and the political opposition, has said he will resign if the arms embargo was knowingly violated.
On Monday, Prime Minister Tony Blair dismissed the
criticisms as a lot of hoo-ha and praised the British ambassador
in Sierra Leone, Peter Penfold, who reportedly coordinated the
Sandline operation, for helping restore the elected President.

Today Mr Blare's office released an unprompted letter from
Mr Kabbah who said he neither had sought nor was offered arms
supported by the British government."

Now, given that you're a former President, what does it
mean released an "unprompted" letter from Mr Kabbah?

A. That's your plausible deniability. You needed - the
British needed something from Kabbah to clear them and once it
came from Kabbah, they will fall back and say, "Well, you see, we
told you. It didn't happen. You see what Kabbah is saying."
You asked me about plausible deniability. These are some of the
forms that they come in.

Q. "Mr Kabbah was restored in March with the help of a
Nigerian led African force that ousted the junta. Sandline said
it had been asked by Mr Penfold to assist the effort.

Last month, the British customs authorities opened an
investigation into whether Sandline broke the embargo with the
approval of Mr Cook's ministry. In parliament today, Mr Cook
vehemently denied that his office had ever received notice that
the embargo would be broken. 'I can flatly and firmly make it
clear that no papers suggesting the breach of the arms embargo by
Sandline or anybody else ever went to my office in March or any
time before that', he said.

Washington has also sought to play down the affair.
In his briefing on Monday, the State Department spokesman,
James P Rubin, described Sandline as merely a 'private security
firm that protected mining and construction interests in Sierra Leone'.

A few Sandline employees remained in Sierra Leone after the coup of last year, and they periodically contacted State Department officials and commented on the situation in Sierra Leone, Mr Rubin said. But we are not aware of - at least I am not aware of - any information provided on possible arms shipments.

But Sandline and senior American official tell a different story.

In a confidential letter sent to foreign minister Cook on April 24, Sandline's lawyers wrote that Sandline had kept the State Department informed at the highest level. Amongst those briefed, the lawyers said, were the American ambassador in Sierra Leone, John Hirsch, and senior State Department officers. The letter also says the operation which included both personnel and military equipment had the support of the defence department.

Speaking on the condition of anonymity, the senior administration official generally confirmed this. 'We were fully aware of what was going on,' he said. He said, 'Washington was pleased that Britain took the lead among western nations in helping oust the junta, and described American support for Sandline's operation as passive, rather than active.'

After the coup last May, as the generals turned more brutal and the killing mounted, Washington and other governments were despairing of what to do. The only people willing to do something was Sandline, the official said.

As for the State Department's assertion that it knew nothing about the arms shipment, the official said, 'If you
believe that, well, I've got some other information to sell you.'

In October, when all diplomatic attempts to oust the 
mutinous generals had failed, the United Nations Security Council 
imposed an arms embargo on Sierra Leone.

Press accounts said weapons for the Sandline operation were 
purchased in Bulgaria and flown from the airport at Burgas, 
Bulgaria.

President Kabbah agreed to pay Sandline $10,000,000 for 
weapons and training, Sierra Leone's information minister, Julius 
Spencer, said in Freetown on Monday.

Sandline was also awarded diamond concessions in the 
country.

In this regard, Sandline was acting on behalf of a mineral 
trader, Rakesh Saxena, who underwrote the Sandline operation in 
Sierra Leone, according to published reports here. The reports 
include faxes between the head of Sandline, Lieutenant Colonel 
Tim Spicer and Mr Saxena.

Mr Saxena is alleged to have embezzled more than $10 
million as an adviser to the Bangkok Bank of Commerce. He fled 
to Canada where he was arrested and released on $1 million bail.

He is now back in jail, but while on bail, made the arrangements 
to hire Colonel Spicer according to press accounts in Canada.

Sandline was founded in 1995 by Colonel Spicer, a Briton 
who fought in the Falklands, and was the spokesman for General 
Michael Rose, the United Nations commander in Bosnia.

This is not the first time that Sandline has been at the 
centre of controversy. Last year the Prime Minister in Papua New 
Guinea signed a $36 million contract with Sandline for its 
services in putting down a rebellion in Bougainville. When news
of the hiring of mercenaries became public in Papua New Guinea, rioting broke out, army officers mutinied and the Prime Minister was forced to resign."

Now, pausing there, Mr Taylor. Now, there we have an article setting out the activities of that company, Sandline, and appears to be some proof for the suggestions being made about their accusations. And were you aware of this New York Times article?

A. I was aware of this article, and I have also seen the letter referred to here that was written by the lawyers for Sandline. I have read that letter and I have copies - I have a copy of that letter that was provided amongst the papers that were included in the investigation of this particular thing. So I have seen more than this, but also the emphatic statement made by the lawyers of Sandline.

Q. So when you were making the allegation of United States and British collaboration with Sandline, was there a factual basis for that allegation, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, I would say there is a factual allegation, because when you look at the investigation that they conducted and you look at the lawyers that represented Sandline and the fact that the British government was not able to refute the direct and strong statement made by counsel in this incident, you must know that it's factual. It was tested and it was never overruled. So it is based on that that we made these direct allegations.

Q. Now, going back to the other document behind divider 4 - and you recall we were at page 3. Let's go to the penultimate paragraph on that page, please:

"Realistically, Liberia is being scapegoated by Britain and..."
America, masking their involvement by using private British firms and secret American military advisers to fuel the war in Sierra Leone. Liberia becomes blameworthy because the new political authority in Monrovia is not dancing to the dictates of Washington and London."

What do you mean by that?

A. Well, I had been warned that back in what appeared to be Nigeria's own move in the sub-region and backing Sani Abacha in his so-called adventure in Sierra Leone would not yield any good results for me. So I have been warned, and that's what I'm referring to here. I didn't take heed to it, and so I think that's what I'm talking about here.

Q. "The British and American desperation was so clearly manifested when they, in a rather ridiculous manner, erroneously accused Liberia of making territorial claims against Sierra Leone territory."

When had that allegation been made?

A. That came - it was one of those slingshots. That came out, it had been said that - in fact, they even found someone to talk about it, even - that did not come before this Court, so it's not important. But it was even - I have read statements that have been presented to this Defence by the Prosecution of witnesses that don't really mean much to the Court because they did not come forward of even finding witnesses - and I don't know how they get to find them - that made these kinds of accusations that had been predesigned, that I want to create a Greater Liberia. This is what they said. I wanted to create a Greater Liberia, that certain territories in Sierra Leone I wanted to take back for Liberia. Yes, I had heard that before.
Q. "Furthermore intelligence reports from diplomatic quarters speak of a covert plan at foot to destabilise the Government of Guinea and subsequently blame the same on Liberia."

A. Yes. Long before any problems in Guinea it was being said that Taylor was planning along with some Guinean dissidents to destabilise Guinea. Yes, yes.

Q. So at this point in time it was being suggested that you had designs on Sierra Leone and on Guinea?

A. Definitely, yes. West Africa. I wanted to dominate West Africa, yes. That was the claim.

Q. "Evidently Liberia is a classic victim of a well-coordinated western contrived international conspiracy calculated to internationally and diplomatically isolate and economically stifle the country's national reconstruction programme, hoping that in the final analysis domestic political discontent will ensue which could lead to civil unrest and therefore make the country ungovernable."

Were you concerned about that happening, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes. Every third world or poor country must be concerned about that. No money coming to the country, economic development stifled, people are not getting their salaries, they are not getting paid. What's going to happen? The next step will be what? People are going to take to the streets. They're going to start demonstrating. They're going to ruin the country and then the next thing you hear is a failed state. The government has failed. That's how it all starts.

Most of these things are prompted by hamstringing the government to the point where the citizens can no longer take the
suffering and take to the streets and then they say, well, listen
- they come and say, "Look, the best thing we suggest is to step
down." That's what they do. This is the typical method that
they deploy to destabilise governments.

Q. But when we go back to this to complete this paragraph:

"The ultimate game plan of the British and the Americans is
to install a puppet regime in Liberia that would look after the
commercial interests of British and American companies operating
in the sub-region should their plan succeed."

What are you talking about there, Mr Taylor?

A. I am being very tough. My background is in economics, and
so by this time we are dealing with some agreements, we are
rewriting our laws, we are restructuring our programmes. I'll
give you an example. A major American outfit has been operating
in Liberia for a number of years. I will still say it's a very
good company. I'm referring to the Firestone rubber company that
had been operating in Liberia since 1925. That company in 1925
did an agreement with the Liberian government for 99 years, 99
months, 99 weeks, 99 days, 99 hours, 99 minutes and 99 seconds.

I come to office and I say that this is 99 sort of nonsense, and
we must renegotiate this agreement and that in fact Firestone
have really done nothing for Liberia, and we had renegotiated the
agreement to a point where Liberians that had been working for
this company would - eventually that Firestone would cede as much
as 40 per cent of the country to Liberian ownership.

We have a second incident that I was dealing with that gave
us a tough time. I was dealing with the Mobil oil company, and
docs will be presented in this Court in dealing with that.
The Mobil oil company imported jet fuel for Liberia, but Liberia
has what we call the Liberian National Petroleum Agency that by law is responsible to import or grant the rights to import all hydrocarbon materials into the country. But Mobil wanted to operate as a company unto itself. I put it a stop to it. In fact, Mobil got closed down until they abide by the laws. We had problems with that. I managed to try to seek the help of a retired United States lieutenant general by the time of General Yerks to talk to state and other American government officials on that particular matter. We in part got it resolved. Don’t forget I mentioned in my evidence, I think last week, my problems that we have with Halliburton where we were also negotiating also tracts with Halliburton. I was just one of those probably new breed of Liberians that I mentioned in my inaugural address that were prepared not to be dictated to and that if it made sense, it would go; if it didn’t make sense, it would not go, no matter who said. And this is what I’m referring to.

Q. And then you go on then to list practical steps by Liberia to bring peace to Sierra Leone:

"In the ECOWAS sub-region, Liberia is the immediate past beneficiary of collective sub-regional initiative politically and militarily after seven years of brutal civil war. A peace plan brokered by ECOWAS and supported by all parties in the then Liberian crisis used dialogue as the foundation for what later became a politically negotiate settlement of the Liberian problem. Drawing from this experience, Liberia has repeatedly and diplomatically encouraged President Tejan Kabbah to engage the AFRC/RUF rebels in a political dialogue since historically, political problems have been never resolved by military means.

SCSL - TRIAL CHAMBER II
In support of Liberia’s proposal for dialogue between the Government of Sierra Leone and the AFRC/RUF, the Liberian government proposed, supported, and subsequently participated in at least three regional summits attended by both Presidents Kabbah and Taylor. The first summit was held under the joint auspices of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and ECOWAS Chairman, Nigerian Head of State General Abubakar in Abuja, Nigeria."

We dealt with that, didn’t we, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, that was in July.

Q. Early July 1998?

A. That is correct.

Q. At that summit, both Presidents agreed to work together in finding a politically negotiated solution to the Sierra Leonean problem and signed a joint communique in respect of their collective disposition.

Following the Abuja summit, and based on Liberia’s urging for the second time, the government of the United States, represented by President Clinton’s envoy to Africa, the Reverend Jesse Jackson, convened a second meeting between President Taylor of Liberia and President Kabbah of Sierra Leone in Monrovia."

Now remind us, when did that take place?

A. That’s also around the 26th. That’s a little later in July. The 26th.

Q. And the 26th?

A. Is our Independence celebration.

Q. And President Kabbah was present for that?

A. Yes.

Q. "The Monrovia summit was fundamentally intended to achieve two goals: One, to build more confidence between the two
leaders; secondly, to ensure that the focus on resolving the
problems in Sierra Leone was not lost in the midst of other
sub-regional distractions, as in the case of the Guinea-Bissau
crisis. At the Monrovia summit, both Presidents signed another
communique reaffirming their respective commitment in bringing
peace to Sierra Leone.

In continuation of Liberia's efforts towards resolving the
problem in Sierra Leone, a third summit was called in Conakry,
Guinea, by President Lansana Conte within the framework and
spirit of the Mano River Union protocols."

Again we dealt with that meeting, didn't we, Mr Taylor?

A. That is correct.

Q. In the autumn of 1998?

A. That is correct.

Q. "At that meeting, President Taylor informed President
Kabbah of Liberia's continued disposition to remain actively
grounded diplomatically and politically until peace is restored to
the brotherly people of Sierra Leone.

On the military front, the Liberian border with Sierra
Leone was been well fortified so as to prevent any situation
where retreating AFRC-RUF rebels could contemplate the use of the
Liberian side of the border to launch hit and run military
operations in Sierra Leone.

Because of this preventive measure, the Liberian side of
the border has remained absolutely calm from any military
activity."

Is that true?

A. That is true. Let's look back. If you reflect on the
letter that was sent by my ambassador in Guinea as late as August
of 1998, you can see that this is a desperate attempt to get in
touch. So evidently there is no movement and they are trying to
seek a means of really getting in touch. I'm referring to the
document of August 1998 sent by my ambassador.

10:50:47 Q. "And finally, in an attempt to ensure international
verification of Liberian's neutrality in the Sierra Leonean
crisis, the Liberian government has invited the United Nations,
the OAU and ECOWAS to send a joint observer mission at the border
that would monitor the movement of forces both on the Liberian
and Sierra Leonean sides of the border. To this date, such
verification team is yet to be put in place."

Then you address directly the question:

"Are there Liberians fighting in the Sierra Leone war?

Unfortunately, yes. There are Liberians fighting on both sides
of the military divide; one group on the side of the government,
and the other on the side of the AFRC/RUF rebels respectively."

Pause there. One side on the part of the government. Who
is that?

A. When President Kabbah goes into exile, something that has
been probably lost in all of this trial, this AFRC junta, we get
to find out, is not the entire armed forces of Sierra Leone as
the SLA, do you understand? There are some soldiers that remain
loyal to President Kabbah, and these are the soldiers referred to
in the Sandline document. Do you understand me? It is not the
entire SLA that go against Kabbah. There is still a part of that
army that remains loyal to Kabbah, okay? Some of them flee to
Liberia. They're under the command of ECOMOG, and that's how
this whole build-up of training - that training that is referred
to in this British document is what? We're talking about those
soldiers that remained loyal, okay, and we're talking about the Kamajors. Now --

Q. What about the Kamajors?

A. Well, these are the Kamajors that are recruited in Liberia that I meet there as of 1997 that are going across the border. Now - so who are these people that are fighting on the part of the government right now? The government - along with these soldiers that remain loyal to Kabbah are some Liberians also, you understand me? That's the Kamajors that now are recruited in Liberia and are being moved from Ricks Institute across the Cape Mount border while others are being flown from Robertsfield into Lungi airport. We've covered that in this trial. These are the ones that are fighting on that side.

Then you have the other part of the Sierra Leonean army that - remember, as President Kabbah states in his TRC report when he ordered the chief of defence staff to order these Liberians - these Liberians that do not follow the loyal Kabbah forces end up as a part of the junta. Do you understand me? So these are the people that retreat with the AFRC. So they are fighting on that side, and you have the other Liberians that are fighting from the Sierra Leonean government side that are fighting alongside ECOMOG and are fighting alongside the Kamajors. That's what I'm referring to here.

Q. Now, when you talk about "and the other side, on the side of the AFRC/RUF rebels", who are we talking about there?

A. That's what is referred to in this Court as the STF, the Special Task Force.

Q. "The involvement of mercenary Liberians in Sierra Leone appears to be the only concrete evidence being paraded by Sierra
Leone to the international community as constituting proof of Liberia's involvement in the war without explaining how, why, when, and who invited them."

Let us pause there. Now, Mr Taylor, how many combatants had there been in the NPFL at its peak?

A. I would say as many as 40,000 combatants.

Q. What about ULIMO-J?

A. ULIMO-J, I would say anywhere between 5,000 to 7,000.

Q. ULIMO-K?

A. Probably a little higher: 7,000 to 10,000.

Q. And LPC?

A. Another maybe 3,000 to 5,000.

Q. Mr Taylor, adding those together quickly, would you say there was somewhere in the region of 60,000 or so ex-combatants in Liberia by the end of the Liberian civil war?

A. Yes, I would say that. I would say that.

Q. Now, had the Liberian economy had the capacity to absorb them into meaningful employment?

A. No, no, no. We didn't have it, and it could not have worked unless there was some direct and very serious assistance from the international community. It would not work.

Q. So help us, Mr Taylor. Explain to this Court how this phenomena of Liberian mercenaries being recruited to fight on all sides in Sierra Leone - what was the economic situation which created that as a possibility?

A. Well, on the Sierra Leonean side, for example, they were getting paid. What they did not get paid to do, they probably looted. So from their perspective, there was always an ongoing situation. That's the problem we have with these non-state
actors, and it was very dangerous to have that number of
ex-combatants just out there doing nothing. So economically I
would just say what they could get, why they fought in terms of
little payments, and for those that were on the part of the
junta, we've seen evidence here that for the little while the
junta were in, whatever little money they received, they
distributed amongst their people. On the Kabbah side, they got
paid and they were well taken care of. As I have mentioned, the
exiled government of President Kabbah was very well funded by the
British government, and that is documented. And so there was no
loss of income, so recruiting non-state actors was very easy
because people were looking for means of survival. So it was
pretty simple.

Q. So were you aware of that situation, Mr Taylor?
A. Everybody in West Africa was aware. Even those that are
talking about our involvement knew very well. Surely, the
British, the Americans, which is a part of their business -
intelligence sources knew it. Let's take intelligence. Let's
look at factual accounts were there, and everybody knew what was
going on. This was what you call an open secret.

Q. What could you have done about it to prevent that?
A. Absolutely nothing. Absolutely nothing. The people that
are involved in this enterprise are not people under my command.
These are ULIMO-J, ULIMO-K, former - these are people that fought
against me. For some of them, I would guess it could be claimed
that it is out of fear, that they were afraid that I would do
something to them or the government would arrest them. That's
not credible, because those that remained were in senior
positions like the Varmuyan Sherifs of this world and people like
those. And so there was nothing credible about what they were saying. But this is something that I had no control over, and I could not have prevented what they were doing. Eventually, we tried to find a way out in working with Tejani Kabbah and ECOWAS in what I do eventually by suggesting amnesty, because they were in violation of our penal code.

Q. We'll come to that later. When you're saying at the end of that paragraph "without explaining how, why, when and who," let's deal with how?

A. How did they get there? Who took them there? They knew that they went there on their own. They knew that they were there for a purpose, so that's the how. How did these guys get over here? Just looking at how they would have determined: Oh, okay, we know who these guys are, they've been here, and they got here on their own, okay.

Q. And the why?

A. Well, why would relate to why are they fighting? The why would be who hired them? Is there a reason? They should have known that most of these people had been hired to stay in and do what they were doing.

Q. And the when. When had this phenomena started as far as you're aware?

A. That when would go all the way back to the Liberian civil war and as far back as the presidency of President Momoh. If they had just investigated that when, they would have seen that Momoh situation that led into Liberians being used to fight the RUF and then Liberians evolving into the two groups: Movement for the Redemption of Muslim, and then the consolidation of those groups into ULIMO. They would have known that that went all the
They would have known that.

Q. "Up to the present, the Government of Sierra Leone has managed to cleverly evade and deliberately avoid any public explanation as to how these mercenary Liberians got involved, why, and who enlisted them into the National Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone. Absurd as it appears, one wonders if it is normal practice for a sitting government to recruit the nationals of another country into its national security apparatus."

Now, let us remind ourselves, Mr Taylor: You are saying these things in 1999, long before President Kabbah gave evidence before the TRC, aren't you?

A. That's correct, yes.

Q. "During the early days of the RUF incursion into Sierra Leone in 1992, Liberia was already embroiled in a brutal civil war which resulted in massive social dislocation of her citizens into Sierra Leone as refugees. While in Sierra Leone, some of the Liberian refugees organised themselves and formed what later came to be known as ULIMO, one of the factions in the just ended Liberian conflict. It was claimed that these refugees had organised ULIMO as a counterbalance resistance movement to the then NPFL.

But as the RUF made significant military advances against government forces in the fields, the constitutional government of President Momoh approved a strategic military engagement plan which, inter alia, envisaged a military partnership between generals of the newly formed ULIMO movement and the Sierra Leonean national army. Operationally, the plan provided for the..."
1 recruitment and enlistment of some ULIMO generals into the Sierra
2 Leonean armed forces to help prosecute the war against the RUF
3 and, in return, the Momoh administration would give permission to
4 ULIMO for the use of Sierra Leonean territory for training and
5 other military activities into Liberia. Interestingly, all this
6 took place while Sierra Leone was ostensibly, but pretentiously,
7 participating in peacekeeping operations in Liberia within ECOMOG
8 with the view of restoring peace there."
9
11:04:37 What do you mean by that, Mr Taylor?

11:05:02 A. Well, there was a Sierra Leonean contingent of ECOMOG based
11 in Liberia during the civil crisis, and it seemed to us that on
12 the one hand, Momoh was there training Liberians that would come
13 and fight in Liberia to perpetuate the war, but on the other
14 hand, he had a Sierra Leonean contingent and amongst the
15 contingent in Liberia, the very Valentine Strasser that overthrew
16 him was a member of the contingent.
17
11:05:30 But let me just point out to the previous paragraph that
18 you went through. For some reason - I have nothing bad to say
19 about Tejan Kabbah in this matter, but I find it a little strange
20 that Tejan Kabbah will say in the truth commission report that up
21 until that day, he did not know that Liberians were being used in
22 Sierra Leone and when we go all the way back to Momoh, we come to
23 Strasser and I think Bio, all the way to him. I find it a little
24 strange - and I don't want to accuse him, but I find it a little
25 strange that he did not know. And if he did not know up until
26 that day, well, he should have known. And so I just want to make
27 that point because, like I said, it was an open secret that
28 Liberians had been operating alongside the Sierra Leonean armed
29 forces for a long time.
Q. Let's go over the page then, please:

"In the midst of this military pact, President Momoh was
overthrown in a military coup by Captain Valentine Strasser, who
inherited and gracefully embraced the strategic military
engagement plan. Captain Strasser retained the ULIMO-Sierra
Leonean army pact and used it for continuous prosecution of the
war against the RUF. Captain Strasser, after a few years, also
became victim when he was toppled by Maada Bio, who also
inherited the situation. And finally, following the election of
President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, he also took on the military mess
which three of his predecessors created and which ultimately
topped his government and joined forces with the RUF, thereby
creating what is now referred to as the AFRC/RUF rebellion.

Clearly, Liberians who are fighting in Sierra Leone are
there on the account of the Government of Sierra Leone and not on
orders of the Liberian government, as is being misleadingly and
mischievously floated around the world by the Government of
Sierra Leone.

The Government of Liberia reaffirms its respect for, and
commitment to, respecting all international protocols and
conventions to which she is a signatory regarding the conduct of
relations between or among sovereign states.

The Republic of Liberia recognises the sovereignty of the
Republic of Sierra Leone as a member state of the OAU, ECOWAS and
the Mano River Union, and the rights of its citizens to self
determination.

The Liberian government reiterates that it has absolutely
no military involvement in supplying arms to the AFRC/RUF rebels
fighting the Government of Sierra Leone and has no intention to
do so now and in the future.

Liberia also calls on Britain and the United States to immediately stop fuelling the war in Sierra Leone through the use of private American and British firms and individuals.

As a matter of national sovereignty and integrity, Liberia will not allow herself to be used as the beachhead to macromanage and teleguide the politics and economics of the ECOWAS sub-region in the interest of western multinational corporations.

Finally, the Government of Liberia will remain engaged diplomatically and politically in the search for lasting peace in Sierra Leone through dialogue and negotiation as a means of achieving a political settlement of the problem."

Now, what are you saying there, Mr Taylor, about "macromanage and teleguide the politics of ECOWAS"? Did you really think that was the objective of the United States and Britain?

A. You will be surprised, but I know many across the world listening to this - you'll be surprised at discussions that are held diplomatically. If all of those discussions were to come out, the world would not be at peace. These discussions sometimes are very frank, sometimes they are threatening, indirect threats, they are controlling. If you play ball, you sometimes get what you want. If you don't play ball - and I'm talking about hardball and softball - if you play softball, probably you'll get what you want. If you play hardball, you don't get it. There is a jungle out there dealing with little countries, and maybe that's why I'm here probably. I will talk a lot of it. It's a jungle out there.

Look, you're sitting down with some of these big countries...
and their diplomats, and they come out with very smooth
diplomatic words. Look, if somebody says to you, "President
Taylor, we realise that you have a lot of problems here. We see
a need for a lot that can be done, but we need your cooperation
on these lines and I'm afraid if we don't get it, there's very
little that we can do. But we want to help." You've already
told the man or the woman that "Listen, I can't do this," but
he's already told you that "Listen, you will do it or else you're
not going to get any help from me." And sometimes it's not in
the best interests of your country, but you have to do it or you
just don't get it. That's the plain fact out there in dealing
with third world and maybe even second world countries. It's a
fact of life.

So by "micromanaging" we're talking about some of these
things people don't - you know, they let you take the - you know,
you do the dirty work and, you know, it happens a lot, even in
dealing with intelligence. Without getting into specifics,
listen, you get a secret piece of information from a major
western intelligence source. What little country will tell -
will say to a major western intelligence source, "This
information is a lie"? You very rarely find that. So you take
it and maybe you begin to absorb it. But in the future you may
hear that you are being quoted as the source of that information
when you are not the source of that information. So the way that
this thing goes around in a circle - in diplomatic circles it's
very tough. Once this happens, you take a stand and it looks
like it is coming from you, but it has been teleguided by
somebody else. So you find yourself out front there pronouncing
policies that, quite frankly, you disagree with. As simple as
that. You disagree with, but you are stuck with it. And so that's the teleleading I'm talking about, and that's what they do all the time.

Q. But Mr Taylor, despite all these protestations, was it the case that the true target was you because of your personal behaviour, rather than Liberia?

A. I would agree with that. I think it was me. I came at a time that what they wanted from Liberia, they were not getting. So I was just a pain for them, you know, and I guess that's it.

Q. I think it was more me. It was more me than Liberia.

A. Why you?

A. Well, I was trained and educated in the United States. I know how to play the ball very well, and I am what I will call a new - I was among the new breed of African leaders that I referred to that were, you know, saying things that had not been said or heard for a long time. And so most of us, you know, we're talking pan-African business and getting trained in Libya during the Cold War and coming down. You are up for real trouble, and that was the whole thing. Then here I am, not one of those uneducated ones, but at least being able to hold my own water, you find difficulties. And I guess you've asked the question here several times, I think, over the past week: Was it wise? Probably it was not wise. Maybe it was prudent. But, you know, for some of us that believe in telling truth to power, they had a lot of that going all the way back with the meeting you asked me about when I met with Madeleine Albright came in in around '95/'96 to talk with us. I have always been one that will stand up, hold my head high, and speak truth to whoever. So I guess this may have been the problem. So I think it was more me.
than, I think, the country.

Q. So what do you say they stood to gain from Liberia?

A. What they are gaining right now: The oil now, all the blocks - I think there are some 12, 14 oil blocks that have been given out for virtually nothing. When I said that my great grandchildren will meet the oil before I give it for free to Halliburton, they got the oil. So most of the things that we were restructuring and trying to bring them in line with internationally acceptable regimes are not just there, and I'm not - and I don't want this to be construed that people that are in Liberia right now are not going through the same difficulties. It's a difficult process. I have a lot of - even though Ellen, the present President of Liberia, and I have our differences, but I do think that she's under a lot of pressure too, and I'm sure if she had an opportunity she would talk about pressure. There's a lot of so-called arm twisting out there. So they're getting maybe what they would not have gotten from me under those same conditions.

Q. What are these oil blocks that you're talking about?

A. My government had done the mapping of our continental shelf, I said before this Court, done by a firm TGS-NOPEC. Liberia, even in a conference in London in dealing with oil, it has been said that Liberia has Kuwait style or type oil deposits. Off the Liberian coast there are major, major deposits that were found, and it was described even in London as Kuwaiti type - I'm talking about the country Kuwait - style oil deposits. And at that time with the map that was shown here, you can see even before my government the type of companies that were dealing out there. We came in and we did the actual survey of the offshore
thing, and there are vast, vast reserves of oil and natural gas. And these are some of the things that we also know from the maps that there are vast resources of diamonds, gold, uranium, barite, bauxite that we have. So it's a pretty rich country, just like you will see the Congo and other places that we just did not have the economic means to exploit these resources, but they are there. And that's what we were trying to do, and it will be a problem for a long time, because these resources are capital intensive in terms of exploiting them. And what do I mean? I mean it takes millions and millions to - we are talking about from what was brought before me on the oil, we are talking about 10,000 metres or so water. So you need a lot of very expensive technology. It could cost as much as 300 to 400 million dollars or maybe just to drill one major well. So these projects are just so capital intensive that most countries have the resources, but cannot do it. You cannot exploit them because you do not have the means. And so in order to get these multinationals to come in, sometimes you have to really dance to their tunes and these multinationals are also what - interests of major countries. And so this is what I am talking about, counsel.

Q. But let me ask you another question regarding this period then, Mr Taylor, because you accepted in an answer a short while ago that you were the target and sought to explain that. So if that's right, why didn't you step down to save Liberia from further pain back in 1999?

A. Well, when you look at the desire of an individual to doing something for his people, because one wants to do what's right for his people and he is being pushed to do something less, is
that sufficient to step aside and throw up his hands? The whole point of some of us going to great lengths to suffer to educate ourselves - I never had a government scholarship in my life. I worked in factories in the United States in South Boston and other places to educate myself to help my people. I think it would be, to say the least, disingenuous for any African who desires to help his people to throw up his hands and run in the face of some of the people that he sat with in their own institutions. I think it would be in fact cowardly, may I say.

So I wouldn't do that.

Q. And help us, Mr Taylor, how long before this period, January 1999, was it that you had been elected?

A. I was elected in '97, July. So we're talking about a year and a half.

Q. A year and a half. Now, can I pause to provide some spellings, your Honours. There was a General Yerks mentioned. Lieutenant General Robert Yerks, Y-E-R-K-S, retired.

MR GRIFFITHS: Before we move on, could I ask that that document be marked for identification, please, MFI-69. So it's Liberia's response to allegations of her involvement in the Sierra Leone civil war, published London, United Kingdom, 26 January 1999.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked for identification MFI-69.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, one of the themes running through that document which we've just looked at is the issue of evidentiary proof, yes?
A. Yes.

Q. Now, you mentioned to us that you had spoken to the United Nations Secretary-General's special representative in Liberia about that, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Just what did you say to him?

A. I think he probably got fed up with my frustration. I mean, it beat me and my whole government. I kept saying to him, for God's sake, will the United Nations itself - okay, maybe they do not want to give me this information. Will the United States or will Britain give the information to the United States? Let them give it to them, let us see it. We want to see what these people are talking about. Even they could not get it, and he eventually asked for such information and - in the report that he did, but even the UN could not get this information. Even the UN. Until if it's available today - this is a Chapter 6 court. If it's available, I think the UN - that would be exculpatory - they should bring it. We want to see it. Until today I have not seen it.

Q. Which report are you talking about in relation to the special representative?

A. Following this document in London that we sent, we sent the minister to Britain inside London to the Foreign Office. The special representative to the Secretary-General did a report again late - very late in January detailing some of the frustration of the United Nations system about this particular issue, of which the government was given a copy of and I kept it in my archives, and the government has copies back there in Monrovia.
Q. And what did they report deal with, Mr Taylor?
A. It dealt with all the questions and the issues raised by the Government of Liberia, and some of the major things we were asking for was evidentiary proof and apparently that was not there, and so he also, in questioning it, raised the issue of the absence of such evidence.

Q. And he did that in this report, did he?
A. That is correct. He did.

Q. Now, I wonder if the witness could be shown, please, the document behind divider 5 in that same volume. So it's the next document in the folder. Is this the document you're talking about, Mr Taylor?
A. Yes, 30 January. Yes, this is it, yes.

Q. Now, we see that this is an outgoing code cable from Downes-Thomas, representative of the Secretary-General, Monrovia, dated 30 January 1999. So let us just remind ourselves. This then is four days after the statement made we've just looked at in London, yes?
A. That is correct.

Q. Now you see it's headed "Reported withdrawal of ECOMOG troops from Liberia"?
A. Yes.

Q. Now let's just go back. There had been discussions about when ECOMOG would withdraw from Liberia going back for a period of time, hadn't there?
A. Yes, there had been.

Q. And when was the projected date for their withdrawal as a peacekeeping force and transformation into a capacity building force, which we looked at earlier? When was the date scheduled
A. Well, it was more of an open situation where eventually the final withdrawal would have been at the point of the destruction of the arms, but we can see here it is pushed a little forward by virtue of this Sierra Leonan - the 6 January situation. So it is pushed forward.

Q. I hear the buzzer, Mr Taylor, so I anticipate we're not going to have time to get into the meat of this. Would be that be a convenient point, Mr President?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, you've actually got about two minutes, if you can do anything with that. Otherwise we will adjourn now.

MR GRIFFITHS: I think it would be easier if we adjourned now.

PRESIDING JUDGE: All right. We will take the morning adjournment and resume at 12 o'clock.

[Break taken at 11.28 a.m.]

[Upon resuming at 12.00 p.m.]

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, Mr Griffiths.

MR GRIFFITHS: May it please, your Honours:

Q. Mr Taylor, before we adjourned I had just invited your attention to a document behind divider 5 dated 30 January 1999, do you recall that?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Now this is a document, as we see, headed "Reported withdrawal of ECOMOG troops from Liberia", do you see that?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. And we see that it's a response to a request for the writer's comments on a news article dated 15 January 1999 on the
withdrawal of ECOMOG contingent for Monrovia, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. As well as his views on the implications of that move on the security situation in Liberia and on the ECOWAS-Liberia relationship. And the writer is also responding to a request for his analysis of the impacts of developments in Sierra Leone on Liberia and on relations between the two countries, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Now, let's go first of all to paragraph 2, please:

"Apart from the fact that the PANA article includes observations by the foreign minister of Nigeria, following his meeting with special representative of the Secretary-General, Okelo" - he is the Secretary-General's special representative in Sierra Leone, that's right, isn't it, Mr Taylor?

A. That's right.

Q. "It is basically a journalistic precis of the attached statement issued by the Nigerian minister of foreign affairs. The allegations against Liberia that are contained in both the statement and the article have been echoed consistently in other quarters and notably by the ECOWAS ministerial meeting that was held in Abidjan on 28 December 1998."

Pause there. Did you attend that meeting, Mr Taylor?

A. No, no, this is the foreign ministers meeting and this is the reference to we know the General Shelpidi.

Q. Yes. So that's when General Shelpidi makes those allegations at that meeting, yes, which we looked at?

A. Yes.

Q. "The recent frequency of these allegations combined with the apparent confidence with which they have been made would tend
to suggest that they are based on material evidence."

Then this:

"Such evidence, however, is not known or available to UNOL. It is worth noting that those who make these allegations publicly have yet to provide their supporting evidence or justifications publicly."

Do you see that, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, this is a sentiment being expressed in January 1999. Since that time, have you seen any supporting evidence or justifications publicly made?

A. I have not seen any. But may I just suggest something, counsel, to the top of this. We've been seeing this Prendergast, Prendergast and maybe we could help the Court in saying who Prendergast is.

Q. Who is Prendergast?

A. Prendergast is the Undersecretary-General of the United Nations for political affairs.

Q. And whilst we are on that, the issue of names and nomenclature, what does PANA stand for, what is PANA, P-A-N-A?

A. That's the Pan-African News Agency, PANA.

Q. Yes:

"It is worth noting that those who make these allegations publicly have yet to provide their supporting evidence or justifications publicly. This is apparent reluctance to furnish inconvertible evidence of Liberian complicity promises to remain the enigmatic element in this saga of allegations and corresponding denials regarding Liberia's involvement in the Sierra Leonean crisis."
In the meantime, the picture of purported RUF supporters is becoming crowded, if not unclear. From various reports on the situation in Sierra Leone, indications are that Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire and Mauritania are in some way linked with the RUF’s current operations."

Let’s pause again. Now, Mr Taylor, were you aware of these allegations being made against other countries in the region?

A. Yes, I was aware.

Q. So not just Liberia then, but also Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire and Mauritania were said to be implicated. Is that right?

A. That is correct.

Q. But out of all the named potential culprits, who was supposed to be the main contender?

A. Well, of course, there were two really main contenders at that time, Liberia and Cote d’Ivoire, but it ended up with Liberia alone.

Q. Now, we --

A. I mean, excuse me, I misspoke. Liberia and Burkina Faso.

Q. "Ukrainians, Yugoslavs, Israelis and ICRC" - what’s that, Mr Taylor?

A. The ICRC that I know of in this form would be the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Q. "... have also been reported to be actively supporting the RUF."

Now, you recall we looked at a document last week which spoke of white men working with the rebels?

A. That is correct.

Q. "Most recently, Sierra Leonean civilians in Freetown have
been included in the pro RUF list. According to ECOMOG spokesman, Colonel Okukolade, civilians in Freetown are activity collaborating with insurgents. If allegations about Liberian supply of fighters and war material to RUF are true, then one must conclude that either such supply anti-date the recent events in Sierra Leone, or that the joint ECOMOG-Liberia monitoring of the closed Liberia-Sierra Leone border has been thoroughly ineffective."

Let's pause and look at that. "If allegations about Liberian supply of fighters and war material to RUF are true", pausing there. Those are two of the allegations which you were seeking to meet in that statement in London.

A. Yes.

Q. And the writer here is saying, "Then one must conclude either that such supply anti-date the recent events", that is, that there was such a supply going on from before the Freetown invasion?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, we have been at pains to go through all those years from 1992 up until the end of 1998, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now, during that period, which anti-dates the events in Freetown, did you have that kind of relationship with the RUF?

A. Not that kind, no.

Q. And then the writer suggests there is one other alternative, and that alternative is that the joint ECOMOG-Liberian monitoring of the closed Liberia-Sierra Leone border had been thoroughly ineffective. What do you say about that?
A. Well, I - to a degree ineffective, but it's a very complicated subject. But I would say to a great extent "ineffective" could probably be something I can live with.

Q. Why ineffective?

A. They were there, and there was cooperation between whoever little securities that we had in ECOMOG and so if arms are going through and they are not interdicting these arm, neither are they reporting that they are seeing arms, either way, they are ineffective. On the firsthand, if arms are going in, they should be able to report faithfully that there are arms, and they are supposed to arrest those arms or stop them.

Now, if that is not the case, then either way you look at it they could be ineffective. Even in terms of reporting or interdicting, either way they are ineffective.

Q. You recall the joint report which you mentioned in your speech in late December about small quantities going over the border.

A. Yes.

Q. Yes?

A. Yes.

Q. How effectively could such a trickle, as you described it this morning, be indicted by the ECOMOG-Liberia monitorees on the border?

A. It would be a little difficult. Quite frankly, it would be a little difficult because of the trickle. I mean, if a guy had arms buried someplace and went and dug it up and decided to slip across the border in some shape or form, it's very difficult.

But, again, by that first question ineffective, even the information given to Dempsey - Colonel Dempsey, the
United Nations and all of them, for them to conclude that there were trickles going across the border that it was not official, they could have prevented this long delay and these accusations if ECOMOG had been reporting that, "Look, we are observing little things going on here, but they are not from the government and we haven't been able to lay our hands on it." So in a way they were not effective by the mere fact that they did not report it at the time, but they could have given such information to this UN-Liberia-US investigation.

Q. Now, this report continues:

"As a generalisation" - and he is talking now about, the writer, about the implication of ECOMOG’s withdrawal on the security situation in Liberia.

"As a generalisation, it is fairly accurate to state that in the wake of ECOMOG’s withdrawal, the Liberian population harbours concerns regarding the conduct of Liberian security agents. There are Liberians who hold the view that in the absence of ECOMOG, Liberian security agents may become menacingly unruly."

Is that a fair assessment, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes. Yes.

Q. Do you accept this?

A. Yes. The people in that region are ULIMO people, and so they could become unruly, yes.

Q. No, no. They are talking about Liberian security agents.

A. Yes.

Q. Becoming menacingly unruly.

A. Yes, that's what I am talking about.

Q. So security, that's state security agents, isn't it?
A. Yes, but there are ULIMO people now, that are - remember now the date we are talking about. Remember the date we are talking about.

Q. Mr Taylor, let’s have a look at the paragraph.

A. Yes.

Q. "There are Liberians who hold the view that in the absence of ECOMOG, Liberian security agents may become menacingly unruly."

So what the writer is suggesting is once ECOMOG pulls out, your security agents might become menacingly unruly and I’m asking you is that a fair assessment?

A. That’s what I am saying, yeah. That is fair now. Now, I am trying to describe who some of these security agents are, see?

Q. Okay. Go ahead then.

A. Who are some of these people we are talking about?

Remember, I have said that some of the very people in this particular region - that is in the Lofa region, okay - are what? Are remnants of what? Of ULIMO that are still - that’s their whole area. So it’s a little lawless up there, okay, and so they could become unruly from time to time.

Q. But then it goes on: "They are particularly apprehensive about the overall conduct of members of the Special Security Service, whose modus operandi account for quite a number of human rights violations."

Let’s pause. The Special Security Services was an arm of your government, wasn’t it?

A. That is correct.

Q. Its director was Benjamin Yeaten, isn’t it?

A. Yes.
Q. And what is being suggested here is that the people of Liberia, the civilian population, were apprehensive about that group headed by Benjamin Yeaten, who were also responsible for human rights violations.

A. Yes.

Q. So what do you say about that?

A. Well, I am saying that they are right about that. Let's get a good picture now of the SSS and let's see who are the SSS. So this is a fair statement.

Let's not forget, the Special Security Service is built around all of the warring factions that come into Monrovia in 1995; you understand me? If one wonders how did General Varmuyan Sherif become an assistant director, it is not because of any special secret service training that he had gone to the United States or come to Britain or travelled to do. This particular unit is infested with those that were brought in by the various warring factions - you understand me - and they remained in the service.

We have not yet totally cleaned up the SSS, okay, to really retrain them. And we get to see further on, we bring in people and we retrain the SSS and we weed out the bad people. So in the secret service - in the SSS you have ULIMO-J, you have ULIMO-K, you have LPC, you have NPFL; they all form part of this SS. When Varmuyan Sherif came, he did not come alone. He didn't come alone. There were several hundreds of the ULIMO people that were brought in and left in the service, and some of them, when I become elected as President, instead of keeping them around me, they are pushed out into the counties, into the regions, because I want them far from me and I still don't trust them. Some of
them go back to Lofa; some of them go back to Cape Mount. By these I’m talking about counties near the border. So that’s why I am saying that this is a fair statement, because the SSS by this time, regardless of who is commanding it, is still infested with ex-combatants that eventually we have to weed out and train. So this is a pretty fair statement.

Q. But, Mr Taylor, you have been in office, by the time this observation is being made, for some year and a half. Why hadn’t you done something about it?

A. It involves - they have kept me very busy in the first place. I am busy trying to prevent war and other things, so trying to begin to weed out - I guess the question could be asked why don’t we have an armed forces yet? Because we still - it takes money, funding, to get into this, okay. But that process eventually comes. I don’t own have a day straight in my life from that time. I mean, a year and a half in terms of presidential politics, that’s short time - very short time.

Q. "A sense of insecurity is also felt within certain sections of the international community and definitely by NGOs and by some members of ex patriot population in Liberia.

ECOMOG had deployed its personnel primarily in Monrovia, and in that connection more visibly at checkpoints in and along roadways leading to Monrovia. Liberian security officers have successfully taken over the manning of these checkpoints; however, concerns have been raised regarding the ability of government forces to contain organised violence anywhere in the country."

I want to pause there. Now, first the writer acknowledges ECOMOG having set up checkpoints in and along roadways leading to
Monrovia. Is that true, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes.

Q. So and in terms of roadways, what are we talking about there?

A. Major, major intersections, major highways in and out of Monrovia.

Q. As a consequence of that, at this time would it be possible to take a consignment of arms from White Flower to Sierra Leone without ECOMOG being aware of it?

A. No, that would not be possible.

Q. Why?

A. Because ECOMOG is on these roadways and they are still a wart part of the security apparatus, so they would know. They would know.

Q. But note, the writer goes on to observe:

"Liberian security officers have successfully taken over the manning of these checkpoints", which appears to suggest that by this time in 1999, it's not ECOMOG, but your security forces were manning these security checkpoints, do you see?

A. Oh, yes, I do.

Q. Now, had you given orders to your security officers at such checkpoints, Mr Taylor, to allow through shipments of arms to Sierra Leone?

A. No, but also I do not think - I do not think the writer is suggesting the total absence of ECOMOG from these checkpoints. I don't read it that way. Maybe my understanding is a little different.

I see our security people are there. In terms of military pullout, you don't abruptly pack up and go. Okay. So where you
may have the majority, where Liberia - let's say Liberia takes
over an area, I can give you a typical example of what is
happening right now in Iraq. Don't let's forget, the
United States has officially - the United States army has
officially withdrawn from their positions in and around Iraq. It
doesn't mean that they are out of Iraq. They are still there,
but they have announced that Iraqi government has taken over.
Yes, they are not involved in the front end, but these
operational details are not as simple as we may want to describe
here.

What he is saying here, the Liberian government forces are
taking over the checkpoints, but don't forget now this is the
movement. ECOMOG has not fully withdrawn yet, but the process of
the operational details mean that, yes, the forces are there, but
there is still that ongoing arrangement, contacts with them.
Just as you have in Iraq right now.

If there is a major operation in Iraq right now where Iraqi
forces cannot handle, they have the capacity to do what? To ask
the United States and they would then act. So we are talking
about really operational details on the ground. That's what he
may be trying to explain here. I think it's important for the
Court to understand.

Q. Now, moving on:

"However, concerns had been raised regarding the ability of
government forces to contain organised violence anywhere in the
country. The Camp Johnson Road area, once a volatile section of
Monrovia, has remained calm since the incidents of 18th and 19th
September 1998. Also, there is a generally shared view among
Liberians that organised armed robbery, and other forms of

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similar criminal activity prevalent at an alarmingly high rate
during the latter half of 1997 have been contained and reduced
very significantly by the efforts of the government." Is that true?

A. Oh, that is true. Yes.

Q. And how had that been brought about?

A. Well, we were very vigilant. I tell you there is an old
saying that we use in Africa, when you get to a village and you
have something important to keep and the question is, are you
going to have it at the time you are going to leave the village.
The first thing you look for is the best known thief in the
village and you give him that thing to keep and when you get
ready to leave, you will have it because the thief has it
already. So he has an obligation to keeping it.

So what we did, this is why I just explained in another way
round, the very SSS council that you are talking about here like
I said contained what, ULIMO-J, ULIMO-K, LPC, it's the same
operation we're talking about here. The very security forces
that we are talking about here comprise those elements of the
factions that we selected. You understand me? So they are
securing themselves, okay. Because in the LPC area, you have top
commanders of LPC that were in those areas assigned there to make
sure there is stability. So anything that's going on in that
area, the LPC people would know. The same thing happened in the

Lofo area with the ULIMO people.

So what we did in effect was to use the combatants, as many
was we could use, as security forces. So what you had was that
the LPC people during the war knew who were the bad ones, the bad
apples, so they could weed them out immediately. The NPFL knew
the bad apples, we could weed them out too. So we just did the
typical African thing. We gave all baggages that we brought to
the thief in the village and told him to keep it for us and
that's what happened.

Q. "Until now, the transition from ECOMOG provided security to
security provided by the Government of Liberia has been
uneventful and smooth."

Is that true?

A. That is true.

Q. Now, pausing for a minute, Mr Taylor, just to deal with
what you've been saying about the SSS. Are you saying you
weren't entirely in control of them?

A. No, no, no, no, no. No, I wouldn't say that. If we go
realistically, nobody is entirely in control of anything really.

If someone wants to do something bad, he will or she will do
something bad. What I am trying to say here is that in terms of
trying to explain some of the unfortunate things, one can say the
level of training at the time and those that were involved in the
system in trying to bring about this national reconciliation, we
brought good apples, bad apples all into the system. Then we
went into the process of trying to weed them out through training
and all that kind of stuff. But I am not of the type to not
assume responsibility. I would say that we must assume
responsibility for them.

Q. Are you saying, Mr Taylor, that there may have been
elements within the SSS which at this time were acting
autonomously?

A. Oh definitely. Definitely. Definitely. From the most
senior on down, yes.
Q. And what do you mean?
A. I mean there were things, whether it was Benjamin Yeaten or anybody else, there were things that were going on there. I am busy dealing with diplomatic and political matters. So officers were doing things. I mean, for example --

Q. What kind of things?
A. Well, we have an example right from the letter. Let's look at the letter written by my ambassador to Conakry who tells me about these RUF people that want to come in and talks about their contact in Monrovia being Varmuyan Sherif. Now God's know I didn't know that that Varmuyan Sherif had contact with the RUF. And so my question will be what did that contact entail? Okay.

We know that there are previous contact during the time that ULIMO is on the border, but I don't know the extent of Varmuyan Sherif - and I was shocked to even know that Varmuyan Sherif had had some contacts. So this shows you that a lot of these things, people that joined us, senior generals on that border and others, were still doing things that were quite frankly not with our knowledge, but we had no real control over.

Q. So, Mr Taylor, just to pause and examine that in a little more depth, you recall Mr Sherif giving evidence about transporting arms to Sierra Leone, don't you?
A. Well, that is correct.

Q. Are you saying he is lying about that?
A. No, no. I'm not saying that Mr Sherif is lying. And quite frankly, Sherif said he transported arms, I probably believe him.

What I am saying is that his actions of transporting arms into Sierra Leone in whatever little quantities based on his explanation were his own programme and without my knowledge.
and/or consent.

That's what I mean by some of these guys could do things without the knowledge and consent, just as he had this contact that I knew nothing about. And Sherif being a senior general with ULIMO that dealt with the RUF at that time still had the ULIMO - your Honours, we did not withdraw all of these combatants from their previous areas that they controlled. So take for example Lofa, I am President but most of the security people in that area are the former ULIMO people. They are there. They are former generals, they still respect. Yes, they are respecting of authorities, but on the ground there I would have never been able to control Lofa as an example unless the former senior people that commanded in that region were on the ground.

So for me it's easy for Sherif to move materials across the border. Very easy, okay, just as I did not know that he had this contact and again - and nobody would report it because the people in the area are still now - they no longer carry the name ULIMO, they are now all Government of Liberia but they are still doing their little things in that area, yeah.

Q. So did you know about such activities?
A. No. That's what I am saying. I did not know. If I had known, I would have stopped it. In fact they would have been arrested. In fact there was something that Varmuyan did later on that he got arrested for. We would not have tolerated that because that would have constituted, what, destabilising Sierra Leone.

Q. Going back to this document:

"It would not be surprising, however, if in the prevailing security situation within the sub-region, the Government of
Liberia is taking steps that would enable it to defend Liberia against externally perpetrated aggression."

What is being suggested there, Mr Taylor?

A. The cry that we have been making about people were planning to - from Sierra Leone and other places to attack Liberia.

Q. Let's look at the sentence carefully, shall we. "Taking steps that would enable it to defend Liberia". Now, pausing there, did you consider that Liberia had the right to self-defence?

A. Of course. All nations have that, yes.

Q. And did you regard it as your duty and obligation as the leader of that sovereign republic to take steps to protect your country?

A. Definitely.

Q. Now, let's look again at what the writer is suggesting: "It would not be surprising if the Government of Liberia is taking steps that would enable it to defend Liberia against externally perpetrated aggression."

At this time, Mr Taylor, were you taking such steps?

A. Yes. We are holding discussions with UN and other diplomatic sources in Monrovia about making possible certain arms that are being held by the international community, making certain useful arms available. These discussions are ongoing and I'm sure this is the reference that he may be making. In fact, subsequently I write a letter to the Secretary-General and there are a lot of exchanges dealing with this matter.

Q. "In this connection it is probably useful to note that there is currently a new case load of 13,000 refugees camped in Guiglo, Cote d'Ivoire. This refugee population is reported to be
composed basically of Liberians from the Krahn ethnic group. It also includes hundreds of Krahn military personnel who were previously with the Armed Forces of Liberia. There are, therefore, certain uncomfortable similarities between this situation and that of the Rwanda Mudende Camp."

Pause again. First of all, Mr Taylor, were you aware that there was this substantial group of refugees in the Côte d'Ivoire?

A. Very much, yes.

Q. Did you also appreciate that they were composed basically of Krahn?

A. Exactly, yes.

Q. Did you also know that many of them had been former members of the Armed Forces of Liberia?

A. Yes, I knew.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, such a situation had obtained in the early 1990s in Sierra Leone, did it not?

A. Yes.

Q. Which eventually led to the creation of ULIMO?

A. That is correct, yes.

Q. Now, did you have concerns about this group of disaffected Krahn, many of them former military people, in the Côte d'Ivoire?

A. Yes, yes, yes.

Q. What fears did you have about them?

A. That they could be regrouping to come in and launch renewed fighting in Liberia. These were all very trained people. In fact, they had moved - this area Guiglo that is being described here - maybe at some point we will get the map - on the other
side, that's the region in la Cote d'Ivoire that have Krahns. So what they did was to move into an area - and that's right across from - on the map we talk about Grand Gedeh. That's where the late President Samuel Doe is from, Grand Gedeh County. So that's across. Just as the Nimba with the Gios across - having Gios on the other side in Zongway and Bin-Houye where I said I stayed on the Ivorian border, lower, further southeastern moving towards the southeast, on the other side are those individuals that are related to the Krahns also.

Q. Mr Taylor, let us just pause for a minute, please, and remind ourselves. Remember we looked at a plan of ethnic groups in Liberia.

A. Yes.

Q. Could we just quickly have another look at that map, please. It's the map of language families in Liberia. You remember that one? It's the fifth map in that bundle.

Mr Taylor, whilst that's being found, could you just move seats for a minute.

A. Yes.

Q. Let's just have a look, first of all, at this ethnic grouping map, yes.

A. Uh-huh.

Q. Yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, just point for our assistance, please, as to the area where the Krahns are primarily located?

A. Right in this - excuse me. They are located here in this area, Grand Gedeh. This whole area.

Q. That's the light brown coloured area?
A. That is correct.

Q. Okay. Which borders - which shares a lengthy border with the Cote d'Ivoire?

A. That is correct.

Q. Right. Now, can we have a look at the Prosecution map L-1, please. Put that map away, Mr Taylor.

Okay. Now, bearing in mind where you had indicated was the area of Krahn settlement, point out Guiglo for us, please?

A. If you are looking at the map, right here is Guiglo. Right here.

Q. Right. Now, how far is Guiglo from the Liberian-Cote d'Ivoire border?

A. Guiglo here - I would say on a straight line, it would not be more than 25 miles from the border.

Q. So, Mr Taylor, putting all of that together - can you go back to your seat now, please.

A. Yes.

Q. And I am grateful to everyone for helping me with those maps.

Now that we have reminded ourselves of the geography involved, we now know the context in which the writer is here saying that:

"There is currently a new caseload of 13,000 refugees camped in Guiglo, Cote d'Ivoire. This refugee population is reported to be composed basically of Liberians from the Krahn ethnic group. It also includes hundreds of Krahn military personnel who were previously with the armed forces of Liberia. There are, therefore, certain uncomfortable similarities between this situation and that of the Rwanda Mudende Camp."
The Government of Liberia is being silent on the specific matter of ECOMOG's withdrawal. The reason for this is probably twofold: (1) any publicly expressed regrets about ECOMOG's withdrawal could conceivably constitute a telling statement on the Government of Liberia's capacity to guarantee security in Liberia; and (2) the Government of Liberia has probably come to terms with the reality that it has to shoulder the concomitant responsibilities of being independent and sovereign.

Despite these speculations on my part, one can safely assume that for the Government of Liberia, the withdrawal of ECOMOG is an unwelcomed move since the Government of Liberia itself has formally requested some form of ECOMOG's continued presence in Liberia.

Is that true, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, to a great extent. This whole problem is not working out as we anticipated. This new reality in Sierra Leone has visited this prompt action on the part of ECOMOG, and we are not - this is not operating according to plans as we had envisaged at the time.

Q. But my question is directed to this particular aspect of this. Was the withdrawal of ECOMOG unwelcomed from your government's point of view?

A. I am saying yes, in the way it is being done. Liberia - my government's view was moving away from peacekeeping to capacity building. That's my focus. Now we have an unceremonious total withdrawal because of this issue in Sierra Leone that is visited upon us. So in a way, I am not happy with this way it is being done. That's what I am saying.

Q. But did you feel that Liberia was - had the capacity to
cope in the absence of ECOMOG?

A. No, I never felt that way. I always felt that we needed to build capacity before there is a full withdrawal.

Q. "Relatedly, it is worth noting that ECOMOG's sudden withdrawal took place at a time when the Government of Liberia and ECOWAS were expected to conclude protocols that were to define the nature of the envisaged new relationship between the Government of Liberia and ECOMOG."

Pausing there. What prompted ECOMOG to suddenly withdraw in that unplanned manner, Mr Taylor?

A. The situation in Sierra Leone had --

Q. What aspect of the situation in Sierra Leone?

A. The war. The constant fighting. What period are we talking about here? Let's watch that period. We are through with what? The intervention. There is constant fighting. We now come to the January situation. There is fighting going on. They need sufficient force. They have gone to other countries trying to recruit additional forces. There is a shortage of available forces in Sierra Leone.

Now, so, you know, they have to now ramp up their plans for withdrawal. That's what's going on.

Q. So the Freetown invasion had led to many ECOMOG troops being transferred from Liberia to Sierra Leone?

A. That's what I am saying to you.

Q. And you're saying that you were anxious that ECOMOG not leave so suddenly?

A. Well, let's use unceremoniously, yes.

Q. Because you appreciated that Liberia didn't have the capacity to act on its own?
A. That is correct.

Q. So, Mr Taylor, help us, what would be your motivation to support the Freetown invasion if that was a possible consequence?

A. I'll have no motive whatsoever to doing anything. None.

Q. Why not? Who stood to lose?

A. Liberia and I, as President, stood to lose everything.

Q. Did you have anything to gain from supporting the Freetown invasion?

A. Absolutely nothing. Absolutely nothing.

Q. So one consequence of the Freetown invasion was this unwelcomed departure of ECOMOG from Liberia, was it?

A. Oh, definitely. Definitely.

Q. "Relationship between ECOWAS and Liberia. The relationship between ECOWAS and Liberia is intricate and complex. Any valid generalization of this relationship must be placed within a certain historical perspective and must take into account the nature of the interactions between Liberia and Nigeria, which is a dominant force within ECOWAS. With regard to the historical perspective, the following succinct observations should suffice:

(1) Nigeria led the campaign to organise a peacekeeping mission in Liberia. Under the authority of ECOWAS, Taylor opposed intervention ECOWAS/ECOMOG and vowed to resist it.

(2) The NPFL fought to stop ECOMOG from landing in Liberia on the 24th of August 1990. In response to the ECOWAS call for a ceasefire, Taylor countered by proposing an all Liberia conference to be held inside Liberia as a precondition to accepting a ceasefire.

(3) Taylor rejected the ECOWAS-supported proposal for a
triumvirate, an executive with three Presidents, as unrealistic, and proceeded to establish his own government in Gbarnga.

(4) Reportedly, President Babangida of Nigeria, together with President Doe, the man Taylor sought to oust, had mutual commercial interests in Liberia. Together, these Presidents owned the Liberian National Petroleum Company."

Is that true?
A. I think this writer, being a member of the international community, is best placed. From my vantage point, this was information. I cannot say with any complete factual clarity that I have proof to this. But it was something that I heard about.

Q. So let's just look at that a little closer, shall we. Who was the President of Nigeria when a decision was made to send a military force composed mainly of Nigerians to Liberia?
A. The then President was General Abraham Babangida.
Q. And, of course, at the time Samuel Doe was President of Liberia?
A. That is correct.
Q. And according to this, the man who is sending a force to stop you from taking over the country just happens to be in business with the President of that country: Yes?
A. That is correct. And don't forget also that even prior to this force being organised, Babangida and Doe were very good friends. Several things had happened. Doe had even named the graduate school, the University of Liberia - the School of Public Administration had named it in honour of Babangida. It's called the Babangida Graduate School of Public Administration at the university. They were close friends, that I know. Everybody
knows, and this is factual.

The second thing is that Nigeria had aided the armed forces of Liberia at the time with weapons and other military know-how, so those two things are factual. And, yes, this is the same person now that is coming in to send in these forces as a part of ECOMOG.

Q. And:

"(5) following ECOMOG's successful establishment of a ceasefire and the Yamoussoukro IV agreement, ECOWAS recognised Sawyer as de jure President of Liberia while Taylor was treated as a rebel leader.

The implications of the above listed observations have intermittently reflected themselves in the relationship between the Government of Liberia and ECOWAS."

Let us pause again, Mr Taylor. Would you accept, Mr Taylor, that that paragraph appears to suggest an underlying tension between you and the Nigerians?

A. Oh, definitely, definitely. If my recollection is correct, I have said to this Court that this issue was brought under control during the administration of President Sani Abacha when I flew to Abuja and met with him and that meeting I have mentioned to this Court really caused the end of the Liberian crisis. But up until now, there was real, real bad blood.

Q. We are looking at 1999 now, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes.

Q. And Sani Abacha had died in June of 1998?

A. That's what I am saying, yeah.

Q. With his passing, was there still tension between you and the Nigerians?
A. No, but if you read this, my understanding, and maybe I am wrong - my understanding of this, this writer is giving a historical perspective of what he understood at the time and that's why we are coming into - coming from Babangida and it ends at this time, even though Abacha is dead, but this is historical.

Q. I am asking because of what we go on to in paragraph 9. So let's go there:

"The implications of the above listed observations have intermittently reflected themselves in the relationship between the Government of Liberia and ECOWAS."

In the context of more recent events, it would appear that, with regard to the ECOWAS-Liberia relationship, all is not well. Nigeria, the most powerful member of ECOWAS, led the onslaught of allegations against Liberia in connection with the situation in Sierra Leone. Ghana, a significantly influential member of ECOWAS, is reported to have viewed Liberia's alleged support to the RUF as 'a stab in the back of ECOWAS'. The ministerial meeting of ECOWAS held in Abidjan on 28 December, roundly denounced Liberia for complicity with the RUF. In this light, Liberia appears as a pariah within ECOWAS."

Okay. So let's pause and put that together. You've just told us that the tension between yourself and Nigeria, as far as you are aware, ended with your meeting with Sani Abacha in Abuja, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. Yet what the writer is here saying is that in 1999 it's that same Nigeria who are leading the barrage of accusations against you that you are the person supporting the RUF. That's what the writer is suggesting, which appears to suggest that
there had been a deterioration in your relationship with the Nigerians. Is that true?
A. Yes, there was a deterioration. In fact, you can see from the mischief that was carried out by General Shelpidi, and I am calling it a mischief because it is unheard of for a general to get up and make an accusation against a country or its leader without I would say at least the tacit approval of somebody up higher. So there is some whatchamacallit here. I would say some misunderstanding and I can understand Ghana's own view at the time. Don't let's forget now, we have a foreign ministers meeting and charges are being thrown across and this is again - this is nothing unusual about what is going on here. Because even before this meeting ends, before this foreign ministers meeting ends, Liberia is called upon right in the meeting, "Liberia, please, okay, Ivory Coast, please pursue this programme". So he is privy to this information. And I guess in briefing his home office, he is giving what's going on. It's a blow by blow description in that room.

But, again, it is still not based on the type of factual evidence you bring into a court of law, because before this meeting is out, you are going to see as we go further, Liberia is charged again with do everything that you can, you three countries go back and do this. So you have to look at this, we are in a court of law, but this also has to be looked at from what is usual in these kinds of things. I mean, there are some of these meetings where, as these accusations come out, they can be very hot. And Ghana is right, if it is true it's a stab in the back. What is Ghana saying? "Well, we have Liberia. If Liberia is doing this, this
looks bad". So this is the type of discussion that is going on, and it eventually calms down and we continue and we will see as we go further.

Q. Well, Mr Taylor, I'm sorry, I have to press you further on this. Do you remember last week telling us with regard to the head of Liberia's mission at the United Nations being summoned by the President of the Security Council in June of 1998 and accusations being made about Liberia meddling in Sierra Leone, do you remember that?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you remember us going through that in some detail?

A. I remember that, yes.

Q. And do you remember you telling us that it was the United Nations making the allegations at that time and not ECOWAS? You remember telling us that?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, that's June 1998. According to this writer, by beginning of February 1999 it's your own colleagues in ECOWAS, led by Nigeria, who are making these accusations. Do you see the point I make?

A. Well, but, again, I mean I read it differently. Let me tell you how I read it. We have to distinguish between foreign ministers meeting, my foreign minister blasting that the Sierra Leonean - let's go back. Who made these accusations at the foreign ministers meeting? There are two individuals. The foreign minister of Sierra Leone, according to evidence here, and who, General Shelpidi at a foreign ministers meeting. So they are yelling and screaming, my foreign minister yelling and screaming, asking them to bring proof because we have this
This is not a formal accusation from ECOWAS. It is not. This is not even an accusation from Heads of State and it ends at this foreign ministers meeting. So up until now I can still say ECOWAS has not launched any formal accusation. So that's my reading of this, based on my knowledge of what happened at that time.

JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Would this be 28 December 1998? Would this be the date?

MR GRIFFITHS: Of what, your Honour?

JUDGE SEBUTINDE: I am referring to the reference in paragraph 9, to the meeting in Abidjan.

THE WITNESS: That is correct.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. That's the foreign ministers meeting in Abidjan that we discussed --

A. 1998, yes.

Q. -- last week?

A. That is correct.

Q. Over the page, paragraph 10:

"This notwithstanding, there have been attempts within the sub-regional groups to enlist Liberia in efforts aimed at finding a peaceful settlement to the conflict in Sierra Leone."

Now, we have examined that at length, haven't we.

Mr Taylor?

A. We have.

Q. "To this end, it should be noted that immediately following the formal session of the 28 December meeting in Abidjan, ECOWAS convened a very closed, if not secret session where it was
reported that: (a) Liberia, along with Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, was to play a role in connection with the Foday Sankoh aspect in the Sierra Leone problem and (b) the foreign minister of Cote d'Ivoire expressed suspicion about the intentions behind the fact that the request (a) above was not made during the earlier formal session, but done as it were in camera and because of his suspicions he advised that unless he heard directly from the ECOWAS chairman, he would be unable to undertake the assignment. Subsequently, the ECOWAS chairman made contact with the Ivorian foreign minister which led to the ECOWAS peace initiative on Sierra Leone."

Pause there. Mr Taylor, this very closed, if not secret session, were you present at that?

A. No. This is still, after this yo-yo-yo-yo, they then met.

And you can see the reaction of the foreign minister. And what my foreign minister reported to me was the foreign minister at that particular time of la Cote d'Ivoire is a gentleman called Amara Essy. I think that name has been spelt. So what Amara is saying, "No, no, no, we are not going to get in contact with Foday Sankoh before we be accused as Liberia is being accused right now. After you people told Liberia to go and we have been working on this committee, you are now coming saying that Liberia is helping Sierra Leone. So we are not going to do anything until we hear again from the new chairman of ECOWAS who now is Gnassingbe Eyadema about this problem." So it brings to focus how some of these - in the very meeting after this loud talking and different things, people settled down --

Q. What loud talking?

A. There is big confusion in this meeting. My foreign
minister told me he couldn't sit there and hear Shelpidi accusing us or the Sierra Leonean foreign minister and this meeting almost ends up in pandemonium. After they calm down they come right back to say, "Well, listen, gentlemen, we want you to go and do this work. We think you can do it." La Cote d'Ivoire says, "No, we want a new mandate because you will end up accusing la Cote d'Ivoire as you are accusing Liberia."

So I am just trying to give you a picture in these meetings what goes on. You have accusations, counter-accusations. The temperature would go high, sometimes it would come low. Eventually reason would prevail before the meeting is out. And this is what happened.

Q. Mr Taylor, this is of some importance so I want to be quite clear of what you are telling us. Immediately following the formal session of the 28 December meeting - that's the meeting that Sebutinde just asked about, is that right? It's the foreign ministers meeting in Abidjan, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. On that same occasion, after the formal session, there was a secret meeting, yes?

A. Closed door. What we call a closed door meeting.

Q. Right and at that closed door meeting of foreign ministers on 28 December, one decision made was that Liberia was asked to play a role in connection with the Foday Sankoh/RUF aspect?

A. Yes.

Q. What role?

A. Remember I said that I had practically arranged with my colleagues a ceasefire in January. This role now is to continue to press the RUF to put into place and hold this ceasefire and to
come to the negotiation table. That's what we are told to keep
the pressure on.

Q. So, Mr Taylor, help us. If that's the decision that was
made behind closed doors, why was it necessary to make that
decision behind closed doors? Can you help us?

A. Yes. It happens all over the world, all over, from the UN
and other places. And let me tell you something. The foreign
minister comes to a meeting, he has a delegation of maybe two,
three, four persons. He has a special aid, he has some
assistants in the meeting. So you will see at a table at these
conferences, the foreign minister or the President would be
there, but there are other members of the delegation. Those
other members are there. And don't forget in this meeting you
have military observers there too. Shelpidi is there, the UN
military people. So it's a crowded room. You understand me?

But those people that are there, all of them, do not have
the constituted responsibility for the decisions that would be
made finally. So whenever serious decisions have to be made by
foreign ministers, they will go into a closed session and put
everybody out of the room just as you do right in this courtroom
here. When you have a closed session here, you close the
courtroom down and nobody outside can hear what's going on.
That's a similar situation. So we close the meeting down. Even
Heads of State do it. Sometimes there are some meetings that we
are with our foreign ministers and advisers, but when Heads of
State want to make decisions they put everybody out and the Heads
of State meet and come out with a decision. This is what happens
here. After this big room of aides and assistance and everybody,
they put everybody out and the foreign ministers present here -
and this is the Committee of Six by now - they then sit down and come up with a decision, which is the real decision.

Q. And from this the foreign minister of the Cote d'Ivoire was, as it's stated, suspicious of such a decision being made behind closed doors?

A. That is correct.

Q. Why?

A. Because Amara didn't want to take any chances. He is saying, "We have been working hard. Liberia is doing her best. We are very, very close to la Cote d'Ivoire. They are a member of the first Committee of Five." La Cote d'Ivoire, don't forget, had hosted the main agreement between RUF and Tejan Kabbah in November 1996. So la Cote d'Ivoire is a major player.

So la Cote d'Ivoire is saying "Well, you came to meeting and these people made all these things and we haven't resolved it. We come in this closed meeting and you are asking the same Liberia, you are asking us to go. We are not going to be a part of this until we get some more official thing from the Heads of State" - by the chairman he is talking about - "level before we fall into the same trap that Liberia is in right now of accusations after accusations." And it had to take the chairman of ECOWAS, who speaks for the authority at the time, to call him and say, "No, it is okay. Go ahead." That's what he is talking about here.

Q. "Recent pronouncements by senior Government of Liberia officials indicate that Liberia has now adopted a policy of pacification and conciliation towards Nigeria and ECOWAS."

A. Yes.
Q. "In its annual message to the third regular session of the 51st legislature convened in joint session at the Capitol Building on 25 January 1999, President Taylor talked about the responsible and forward looking ECOWAS and in that context informed the audience that 'outside influence in ECOWAS states economic union is becoming destructive to the union.'"

That's just a repetition of what we have talked about earlier?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. "Following positive references to his good friend and brother the late General Sani Abacha, he went on to state that during the latter part of 1998 we directed much of our time fostering good relations and closer ties with the new Head of State of Nigeria, Abdulsalami Abubakar, whom we applaud as a progressive leader."

Is that true?

A. Yes, he is a very - he is a decent man. He is a decent man.

Q. So why were you directing time and effort to fostering good relations if relations had been good since General Sani Abacha?

A. Well, don't forget I just told you that there was some deterioration as we went further down and then Abacha dies and Abdulsalami Abubakar comes in and he is a good man. He is a very understanding individual, even though it is a transitional situation.

But Abacha dies. I am one of I think one or two Heads of State that go to Nigeria and meet him, try to counsel him and I find him a very good person because I had not dealt with him on a one on one basis because I think at the time he was chief of
defence staff and vice-president. And normally Heads of State it is not - it is out of protocol to be so close to other officials in the government. You want to be close to your colleague. But when he died - when Abacha died - and I met Abdulsalami Abubakar, I found him to be a very good person and a very calm, very understanding man and so we decided to rebuild that deterioration in relationship that had obtained over the months before the death of Abacha.

Q. "All subsequent public statements by President Taylor, be they formal or informal gatherings, have to date included positive variations of this pro-Nigeria ECOWAS theme. Similar sentiments were expressed by Foreign Minister Captan at his ministry's annual reception for diplomats where he stated that Liberia would not engage in acts which would threaten or undermine the continued existence of ECOMOG. Clearly there is an expressed determination on the part of the Government of Liberia to ensure that current developments do not cause permanent damage to Liberia's relationship with either ECOWAS or Nigeria."

Then this:

"Impact of latest developments in Sierra Leone on Liberia: President Taylor has acknowledged that problems between Sierra Leone and Liberia have their genesis in the antagonistic relationship which existed between himself and former President Momoh."

Pause there. Is that true?

A. Yes, in these documents he doesn't get into details. Momoh and I were very good friends, but Momoh had been pushed to arm ULMO and then that caused some strain in our friendship.

Q. Strain, or antagonism?
A. Well, we can qualify antagonism because we were virtually
at war. He had armed ULIMO. They were fighting in Liberia. So,
yeah, you can say antagonistic. That's his word. I prefer being
a little more diplomatic about it by saying that the relationship
was strained. He is saying antagonistic. While I do not
disagree, but I prefer strained.

Q. "That he maintains is history and has sought to mend fences
with President Kabbah. In this regard, the Abuja mini summit of
26/27 October 1998 and the Mano River Union summit of the 12
November 1998" - we have dealt with that, haven't we?

A. Yes, we have.

Q. "... appeared promising. However, relations between
Liberia and Sierra Leone began to show signs of deterioration
with the emergence of accusations and counter accusations by one
towards the other."

A. Again we have dealt with that, haven't we?

A. Yes, we have.

Q. Five thousand troops amassed on border and allegations by
you that similar numbers in Zimmi. We have gone through all of
that, haven't we?

A. That is correct.

Q. And is it right that that had caused the strain on your
relationship with President Kabbah --

A. Yes, yes.

Q. -- in the latter part of 1998?

A. That is correct.

Q. "Most recently, the Government of Liberia justified its
closing of the border with Sierra Leone as a measure aimed at
precluding the operationalisation of what it claimed to be a
planned infiltration of fighters from Sierra Leone to destabilise Liberia. This was the clearest indication that the latest development in Sierra Leone has adversely affected Sierra Leone-Liberia relationship."

13:17:01 Now the latest development in Sierra Leone is what, Mr Taylor?

13:17:23 A. I am sure he must be referring to the 6 January situation.

13:17:43 Q. And he is saying that that 'has adversely affected Sierra Leone-Liberia relationship'. Again I ask you, was that a state of events which you wanted to bring into being?

13:18:10 A. No, not at all. Not at all.

13:18:36 Q. What would you have gained from creating a situation which adversely affected Sierra Leone-Liberia relationship?


13:19:36 Q. "Following accusation of Liberia's complicity with the RUF, relations between the two countries can best be described as strained. The mood and sentiments in Sierra Leone are indisputably anti-Taylor and anti-Liberia. It is also quite apparent that President Kabbah's stance regarding negotiations is hardening in the wake of what appears to be a successful ECOMOG operation to drive the RUF out of Freetown."

13:19:54 Pause there. "President Kabbah's stance regarding negotiations is hardening". What's that a reference to?

13:20:10 A. Well, we have managed to push him into the direction of getting this ceasefire and reopening negotiations, but after he was told by ECOMOG and had been told by I'm sure others that there could be an outright military victory he started hardening up a little bit, but it did not last very long.

And may I just mention why I am saying that relationship

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was strained, it did not mean that communication was cut off between us. There are so many - Kabbah and I were talking frequently and so, you know, amongst nations you can have strained relationships, but still there are certain things that must go on.

So that's what I mean by the hardening, because of - I think anyone, a President, with responsibilities as Kabbah or I had following the 6 January situation, would necessarily be a little upset. In fact, upset may be a simple word. And it would take some time to understand the realities of things.

And knowing that there is a force on the ground, if you look at a press release that was read here in evidence of General Shelpidi saying that, "Don't be afraid. Things are under control. Stay at home if you" - I mean he was convinced. I mean this is a man desperate and so he was convinced that militarily he could win and so I can say that he would harden his position and he did.

Q. Now, let's skip the first three lines of the next paragraph. No, before we do that, let's conclude:

"Thus it would not be surprising if relations between the two countries were to remain chilly for a fairly long period of time."

Let's skip three lines and pick it up in paragraph 15 at the sentence beginning:

"In addition to that, UNOL has placed emphasis on its basic mandate that is to assist in mobilising international support for international assistance to Liberia" - was such assistance forthcoming, Mr Taylor?

A. No, it was not.
Q. "... to support and facilitate the work of the UN system in developing an integrated approach to the peace building programmes of the Government of Liberia, to facilitate the provision of technical assistance and support by the UN for reconciliation efforts and the establishment of democratic institutions and to facilitate communication between the Government of Liberia and the United Nations on matters related to peace building.

To this end, UNOL has attempted to sensitise donors on the increasing need for assistance."

Let's ignore the rest of that paragraph:

"As to the strategy UNOL intends to pursue in the future, I wish to indicate that we intend to adopt a dual track approach. While UNOL will continue to ensure that the government respects human rights and maintain harmonious relations with civil society, pursued policies of good neighbourliness and take constitutional measures that reflect" and I think that should be "credibility and accountability it is our intention to ensure that the UN system in Liberia utilises its resources to also strengthen the capacity of all peace orientated civil society organisations so they can play a crucial role in the consolidation of peace."

Now, in the next paragraph there is an attempt to clarify what militia units means. Did you have a militia in Liberia at this time, Mr Taylor?

A. Everyone that - all ex-combatants were called militias.

Q. And then we come then to paragraph 18, "Observations": "In assessing the various elements that constitute potential sources of tension in the sub-region, the issue of the
prevalence of demobilised combatants who are yet to be rehabilitated and reintegrated into the society warrants special and focused attention. This is an issue on which I placed emphasis when I met with donors in America and in Europe prior to my assumption of duties in Monrovia. I continue to maintain that neglect of ex-combatants would pose serious security problems at both national and sub-regional levels. In this connection, and until this matter is addressed satisfactorily, Liberia will remain a source of mercenaries."

Pause there. And your country was a source of mercenaries, wasn't it, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, yes.

Q. And, Mr Taylor, so to say that Liberia as opposed to President Taylor had a hand in what was going on in Sierra Leone, in fact that was true, wasn't it?

A. Yes.

Q. Because Liberian mercenaries on both sides were causing difficulties in Sierra Leone, weren't they?

A. They were.

Q. And was that because you were unable to control these 60,000 or so former combatants in Liberia, which we've talked about earlier?

A. I would say yes, yes. Control is another qualification that I really want to tread gingerly on. But the whole idea that you have this war, and this is the picture I think we need to be very careful with here. Here is a picture of a country that has come out of war. There are some 60,000 individuals that have participated. A lot of them are already involved in external operations outside of Liberia on their own accord. Some of them
have been hired and have been influenced into coming in as we referred to ULIMO-J, K and ex-fighters. So it is a very difficult problem. But then we have no control because, number one, they don't have jobs. They have nothing to do. So it's a very difficult problem.

Now, how it's interpreted in legal language as to what control is is another matter. In fact, we never had any real control over those that were there. And even if we wanted to control them, we didn't have - we could not have controlled them because they were not a part of our operation. And in fact, to make it appear a little better, they changed it. We introduced the word mercenaries when we threatened them, okay, but they called them non-state actors.

Q. Now, did you acknowledge of their involvement, Mr Taylor?

A. When you say knowledge of their involvement, are you referring --

Q. Did you know that Liberian mercenaries were operating in Sierra Leone?

A. Yes, I knew.

Q. Were they operating there with your consent?

A. Not at all. They were hired by that government without my consent. At all.

Q. Well, let's look at it in a different context then, Mr Taylor. You launch a revolution in Liberia in December 1989 which by the time of its resolution in 1996/'97 leaves this huge band of unemployed and potentially unemployable non-combatants roaming Liberia looking for a job. And then they later have a role to play in Sierra Leone. Somebody might say this is a situation you created. Do you follow me?
A. Yeah, but then that scenario - I would not go along with that scenario. It has to be looked at in a different light.

Okay. It has to be looked at in a different light. That scenario, of course people would say that, but we must understand it is not the 60,000 ex-combatants that we now have calculated at the end of the war in 1997 that are the source of the problems just in Sierra Leone. We have to go back.

We have to go back to 1991 when we are saying that Liberians fleeing the war are beginning to be, what,

institutionalised in that system. So we have - we must separate those Liberians that started off and submitted themselves to the process of being mercenaries verses the rest of the Liberians that at the end of the war are calculated as 60,000.

So even before the end of the war in 1997, so to speak, you have already operating in Sierra Leone, hired by the government, and let's not forget we are saying that the first Liberians that were hired were done by whom? President Momoh. Valentine Strasser comes into power, he carries on. Maada Bio comes to power, he continues. Tejani Kabbah comes to power and he continues. So that's a separate scenario from the end process.

So I want to divide it into two. You have Liberians that are involved all along the years with every succeeding government in Sierra Leone with their acquiescence, full acquiescence, verses the end of the process that even add more insult to injury. So I really want to describe it in this light, because if I can approximate a number, by the time the combat - by the time of my elections in 1997, I am putting - in fact, it's in one of our security briefings. The number of Liberians that are in Sierra Leone, former AFL, those that may have been trained as
refugees and used, former ULIMO-J, former ULIMO-K, former LPC and even some former NPFL that had left, I would put the number to 5,000 to 6,000 Liberians are involved in Sierra Leone. I would put it to at least that number of Liberians that are operating there between 1991 all the way through.

Q. I have some more serious questions to ask you about this, but I note the time, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, thank you, Mr Griffiths. We will take the lunch break now and resume at 2.30.

[13:30:59] [Lunch break taken at 1.30 p.m.] [Upon resuming at 2.30 p.m.]

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, Mr Griffiths.

MR GRIFFITHS: Mr President, your Honours, can I first of all announce a change in representation. Mr Silas Chekera has left us and we're joined by Mr Terry Munyard of counsel.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Mr Taylor, before we adjourned for lunch, we were looking at paragraph 18 of the document behind our divider 5. Do you have it now before you, paragraph 18?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Now in the context of that paragraph and the mention of Liberia remaining a source of mercenaries you told us that it was important to distinguish two groups, is that right?

A. That is correct.

Q. The first group are those who had been present in Sierra Leone since on or about 1990, is that right?

A. That is correct.

Q. Who had, through successive regimes in Sierra Leone, served
as an integral part of the Sierra Leonean army?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. Yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Taking orders within the structure of that army, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now dealing first of all with them, did you at any stage ever have control over those individuals?

A. None whatsoever. These were arch enemies of myself and the government. These are people that fought, ran away, joined, fought, came back. No, these were enemies of the Liberian state.

Q. Did you know that from or about 1990 there had been incorporated into the Sierra Leonean military regime such a force? Did you know?

A. I would say yes. I got to know, I would say, more like during the administration of Valentine Strasser. Before then with Momoh, I mean, we had ideas, but as a part of the military structure of the armed forces of Sierra Leone I got to know during the administration of Valentine Strasser.

Q. Now did you ever give orders to that particular group, Mr Taylor?

A. What, to come and kill me? These people are - they are fighting me. If any orders had to be given to them by me, it would have been probably to come and get me. I mean, come on, these are enemies of the Liberian state. These are former Armed Forces of Liberia personnel that were fighting against me. They fought against me with Doe. Some of them fought against me with ULIMO. No, these were enemies. How do you order your enemy to - except to come and get you?
Q. Now you say there was a second group, former combatants from the civil war in Liberia?

A. Yes.

Q. Now so far as they are concerned, how do they come to be involved in the Sierra Leonean conflict?

A. Now this second group - following my election as President of Liberia, the first group exists in Sierra Leone as we described. Following my election as President, there are still ULIMO, there are still LPCs - and by ULIMO I mean J and K in Liberia. There is this group that becomes what they call frightened and they decide to leave immediately after my being elected as President, but there are still ULIMO, there are still some of the AFL and others that flee. They join the first group in Sierra Leone.

Some of them are, let's say, joined - even the RUF, for example, like this boy that came here, this gentleman, Abu Keita, is this - is one of these types that - some of them went on and joined their colleagues with the armed forces of Sierra Leone. Some of them joined the RUF and the other junta people depending on their friendship. That's that group of people.

Then there is in that subgroup those that are just lingering and just whatever action comes about, they join it. We see an example of this even in another crisis where people are just floating around. What we say, idle brains is the devil's workshop. There is nothing to do and these people are just moving about. We first have a wave of crime in the country and they are just floating from one place to the other. They don't have money. They don't have food. They don't have means. I have no control over them. These are - this - instead of saying...
"these", this is the consequence of war. In every war situation across the world, there will always be people left out of the loop and are just out there for the taking and this is what I'm describing.

Q. Now, did you as President of Liberia do anything to stop those individuals crossing the border to become involved in the conflicts in Sierra Leone?

A. Yes, in a way we - you know, we tried to open - we had to do indirect things. Let's clarify that the 60,000 figure we used here are not NPFL. These are all combatants from all sides, so to a great extent we don't have control over a large amount of these people.

Q. I'm still going to press you, Mr Taylor, because I reminded you a while back of a speech you made following your election in which you said, "I am not just President of NPFL. I'm President of ULIMO." Do you remember it?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. Okay, so help us. What could you have done to stop that migration across the border now that you were President of all of Liberia?

A. The only thing I could have done was to continue to seek international assistance to open more schools, help to provide jobs and help to retrain them, the type of assistance I was not getting. When you have combatants amassed as that, the only thing you can really do and the only thing that any nation would do, you have to engage the international community for assistance to begin to train, retrain, educate, try to get them into the jobs market. Without that, you really cannot do anything. It's the type of involuntary around about control, okay. But you have
to engage in projects that would eventually move them into becoming productive citizens. That's the only thing any President can do.

But to say to have a command type control as you're dealing with, you know, combatants, that's not possible and when I say I'm President of all Liberia, of course after the war we come together, we begin to move. I can no longer think NPFL. I must think about the Liberian nation and its people. And so that statement is geared toward assuring and reassuring those that want to stay in Liberia that it will be for all Liberians and not just for one set of Liberians.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, those unemployed former combatants who drifted over the border, once they were over the border did you have the power to discipline or punish them?

A. No, no. In order to punish, you must have command of the individual and you must have control of the individual in order to punish. How do you punish someone that is not under your control? It's as if we are seeing now that - let's take any combat situation anywhere in the world right now. Remember when we get into what they call extraordinary rendition that we have in the war - you cannot be responsible for people that are not under your direct command and in fact you must have knowledge of and you must have command of in order to control.

Now, I don't have command of these people. In fact, no one in Liberia really can boast of having command of these individuals. So how do you discipline people that you do not have command and control over? That's impossible.

Q. On this same topic, you will recall, won't you, evidence including your own account regarding Hinga Norman and ECOMOG's
recruitment of Liberians to fight alongside the Kamajors, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you have any ability to prevent such recruitment, Mr Taylor, in practical terms?

A. No. There was no way to prevent them in any practical terms. That's why I complained so bitterly in my letter to the late General Sani Abacha that in fact I couldn't do it. No one consulted me and this was one at the crux of the problem in trying to insist - and let me remove that word "trying".

Insisting that the mandate of ECOMOG be changed from peacekeeping to capacity building, because as long as ECOMOG was operating under its so-called peacekeeping mandate it acted as a state unto itself. And so I have no control over who they picked up. Imagine they are flying people out of the international airport, okay, and remember the press statement that was done here that we read of the ECOMOG spokesman when the officer at the airport Martina Johnson protested, he described militarily of bringing her into line if she had not ceased from her activities. So no one had control. We didn't have the guns and they were still in that mode of "we're in charge". I had no control over that process. That's why I protested directly to Sani Abacha over and again and finally had to write him officially to put it on record.

Q. Now, those Liberians who were recruited to assist the Kamajors, did you ever any control over them?

A. None whatsoever.

Q. Could you, for example, discipline or punish them for wrongdoing?

A. I could not. I didn't know all of them. I didn't know who
they were being - who - how they had - I knew how they had been
taken, ECOMOG had taken them, but they were not under my command
so I could not discipline.

Q. Tell us, Mr Taylor, in conclusion on this topic, of all the
various groups of Liberians who were operating in whatever
capacity within Sierra Leone during the period under
consideration, did you have any control over any of them?
A. None whatsoever.

Q. Did you have the ability to curb their behaviour through
punishment or any other means?
A. No ability. No other means. They were not under my
control, so I could not punish. They were hired. They were
employees of another government. They were under the - if we
talk about command and control, I'm sure if you read Tejan
Kabbah's statement he will tell you they were in the employ of
that government and its military services. I had absolutely no
control.

And to add a little bit to that, one of the methods that we
used before to even get people to stop somewhere later, we
threatened them with prosecution. And we get to know that these
Mano River Union meetings that were held, one of the things if we
got into some of the details of those meetings, they had to do
with invoking certain parts of those agreements where what we
call the high contracting state would itself arrest the
individual. We were trying to say, "Well, okay, Kabbah, if you
arrest them, because they are in your country under your control
and you send them to us, we will prosecute them under our
mercenarism law". That never happened.

Then subsequently we had to change and say, okay, when the
peace process got going and the new discussion came up and said they are scared to come home because they are going to be prosecuted, then we extended a general amnesty by saying that we will not invoke our laws of mercenarism. So we had no control.

If anyone actually had control of those men it was the Government of Sierra Leone at the time.

Q. And help us, at any stage did you ever issue orders to any Liberians acting in whatever capacity in Sierra Leone?

A. No, no. Not one. And I don't think any one of them has come before this Court and said, "While I was in Sierra Leone President Taylor ordered me to do X, Y, Z", whether it is Abu Keita who claimed what - no, none whatsoever.

Q. Did you seek at any stage to incite them to commit offences?

A. I had no contact with them to be able to incite them. I had no control over them to incite and/or encourage. There was just absolutely no contact and no control and there is no one that can faithfully tell these judges that I ordered him or her in Sierra Leone. That is not true.

Q. Did you aid or abet any of them, Mr Taylor?

A. How could I aid and abet them when I did not have control?

No, I did not in any way.

Q. Very well. Let's go back to paragraph 19, shall we:

"Another issue of concern is Liberia's relationship with Nigeria and ECOMOG. Even if there is no love lost between the NPP led government and ECOMOG, the Government of Liberia would have wanted to see a scaled down ECOMOG presence as opposed to its sudden and massive withdrawal. All the same, ECOMOG has withdrawn its troops with the notable exception of one
company-size team which is to guard the weapons in the joint custody of the UN and ECOWAS. With the peacekeeping force having been withdrawn at a period when relations between ECOWAS and Liberia appears to have reached a low point, it will be essential to take all possible measures to encourage the re-establishment of cordial relations between the two.

At the end of it all, what seems quite clear is that the problem of Liberia and Sierra Leone, and indeed Guinea, are interrelated. The circulation of former combatants and their recycling within the countries of Mano River Union, combined with the exchange of accusations among these neighbouring countries, suggests that one should move from isolated assessments of individual countries to a bold attempt to grapple with the current problems in these countries."

Do you agree with that, Mr Taylor?

A. I fully do. Yes, I do.

Q. And what is it that you are agreeing with, Mr Taylor? Tell us in your own words.

A. Well, you've got ULIMO that formed out of Guinea, K, and J out of Sierra Leone. While ULIMO is fighting in Liberia there are Guineans also that are involved, Guinean nationals, because they are predominantly the Mandingo ethnic group. So they fight. Alhaji Kromah brings them by their thousands out of Guinea. After the war a lot of them go back into Guinea. You've got a problem there and he should have extended this to la Cote d'Ivoire. After the war the thousands of Krahns that do not feel comfortable in Guinea or in Sierra Leone that go into where? La Cote d'Ivoire. Into Guiglo. They are there.

There are these other individuals that have their jobs in
Sierra Leone, thousands of them are working with the Sierra Leonean army. Their families move over there. So here you have of this so-called 60,000 group of combatants that went through and let's clarify this, we are not talking about - we are talking about the number 60,000 represents the total number of combatants that went through the war, not necessarily the number of combatants that disarmed at the end of the war. Now I want to draw that distinction. So by the end of the war there are less than that 60,000. The 60,000 marked the total number of combatants, just to say it.

So you have ex-combatants in Guinea. You have ex-combatants in Liberia. You have ex-combatants in Sierra Leone. You have ex-combatants in la Cote d'Ivoire. Idle minds. No work, no jobs, nothing to do. They are just there for whoever comes and asks for a service. That's the problem. So in looking at it, we have to address it as a regional matter, take it at the subset level of the Mano River Union, where you have to begin the proper demobilisation of these ex-combatants. That really never happened. By proper demobilisation I mean identifying each combatant, getting to know his or his interests, getting them a job or training or retraining them or getting them involved in a structured manner that they can move their lives forward. It never happens.

So to go and solve the problem in Liberia and leave Sierra Leone and Guinea, you haven't solved it. To solve it in Sierra Leone and leave Liberia and Guinea you haven't solved it, so it was better to look at it as a whole. At some point it would have involved la Cote d'Ivoire and, in fact, it did involve la Cote d'Ivoire, because by the time the crisis in la Cote...
d'Ivoire started a lot of those that were available, most people what do you want to do? Most people want to use what they will call experienced fighters.

So the first thing when the conflict erupted in la Cote d'Ivoire they came into Liberia to recruit, okay, and people - when I say came into, let me qualify that. Not that people came across the border and said, "We want you", but I mean the word gets out and I reverse that and instead of came into they went into la Cote d'Ivoire and offered their services.

14:54:22 So, in effect, for me I see it as the four countries having to solve that problem even today. Look, those of us that are getting older now and passing, we must understand that in every region, whether it is in East Africa or whatever, at the end of these wars these non-state actors, the ex-combatants and their quantities, whether you deal with Congo now or some of the other wars, will be a long, long-term problem. It is not resolved by just ending the war and say, "You hold an election." You have to deal with the ex-combatants from the war - and I mean deal with them - and making them to become productive citizens again. If not, you will have problems.

And I say this now, whether it's in Liberia or whether it's in Sierra Leone or whether it's in Guinea, that risk remains today. Today those players are still out there. Some of them are still not in school. Some of them still do not have jobs.

Some of them still have not been retrained. They are still available for service.

At the flick of a problem, they will rush for this particular incident. This is why I'm agreeing with this, because it points out that this has to be holistic. This is not a
situation - like right now, let me tell you all something right
now before this Court. This trial in Sierra Leone, this trial of
Charles Taylor, whatever, will not cause a total end to that
little problem in those regions just by holding a court trial.
You've got to go back and deal with the root cause of these
problems and get these people - these minds occupied.
No court trial will say, "This marks the end of the Sierra
Leonean problem or marks the end of the Liberian problem or marks
the end of the Congolese problems." These problems are resolved
when the participants in the crisis are trained, retrain, put to
work, reconciliation. That's what brings it about. There is -
if not, the soul continues to fester. So I agree with what he
says here because of what I've just said.
Q. And to complete it, "This should" - over the page, finally
"be done in a manner which would allow for the search and
provision of comprehensive solutions."
A. That's it.
MR GRIFFITHS: Now could I ask that that document be marked
for identification, Mr President. So it's a code cable by some
--
PRESIDING JUDGE: Just one moment, please, Mr Griffiths.
Yes, Ms Hollis.
MS HOLLIS: Yes, we note that the pagination indicates that
this is a nine page document and we would ask that we be given
pages 8 and 9. If you look at the top of the document, it has
page 1 through 7/9 and so we would ask that we be provided with
those two additional pages.
PRESIDING JUDGE: What do you say, Mr Griffiths? Do you
have the other --
MR GRIFFITHS: We have never had the additional pages in our possession and, if you note, earlier in the document it makes clear that it attached a document to this. I’m trying to find a reference to that. It’s quite clear that so far as this part is concerned, with the best regards, this is a complete copy of the cable sent by Felix Downes-Thomas. What is missing is an attachment, which I’ve never seen.

PRESIDING JUDGE: We’re just marking it at this stage.

I’ll note what you’ve said, Ms Hollis, and if the matter is not sorted out when the time comes to tender it, perhaps it can be argued then.

MS HOLLIS: Thank you.

PRESIDING JUDGE: But we’re just identifying it at this stage.

MR GRIFFITHS: So it's a code cable from Felix Downes-Thomas, special representative of the Secretary-General, dated 30 January 1999, entitled "Reported Withdrawal of ECOMOG Troops in Liberia", MFI-70, please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-70 for identification.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, the observations made by the special representatives on 30 January 1999, were those the sole comments made by the special representative on the situation in the sub-region at this time?

A. Well so far these are the - these are his comments, but that is not the end of the problem because while that is going on we are fighting, trying to get the ceasefire to hold. And then we have - the United Nations is trying to put together a set of
their own suggestions as to how we could move forward and I've been point to this. That document was sent to me. Some senior officials at the UN developed certain points, some points of how they see things can continue, what they call the five-point plan, and it is floated to members of the committee. I get a copy and I'm sure the others got theirs to solicit our own comments on some of the ideas that were coming up as to how to proceed and help and go forward.

Q. So the United Nations brings forth a five-point plan, you say, yes?

A. Well when I say United Nations now it's senior officials down there, because that's a general term because when we talk about the United Nations that will have to go a little further, but senior political officers advanced - what they do in these cases is they do what they call float ideas and get comments back before they become a UN decision. Ideas are floated for some time and so these are points that are floated to see as to whether they can get some general agreement as to how to proceed.

Q. Did you discuss this five-point plan with the Secretary-General's representative in Monrovia?

A. Definitely. In fact, he brought the document. The document did not originate just from him. It originated from UN headquarters to - and he was informed and apparently instructed, because he brought it to us to discuss these proposals that were coming from UN headquarters as to some ideas that they had regarding contacts and what to do and what the UN would be prepared to do, what was expected of the committee of the member states.

Q. And did any record come out of that process of discussion
with the special representative?
A. Yes, after we had some - after we received those documents we gave him a feedback, and then he subsequently reported back to UN headquarters after that commenting on the points and some of the feedback that he had received from his area of assignment.

Q. Is that a report you’ve seen?
A. Oh, yes, I’ve seen both the document that originated from UN headquarters and his own report back to UN headquarters and his comments. These are two separate documents.

Q. Can you help us with the date of that report back?
A. The first - the five-point plan could have been somewhere very early, I would say about the first week, in March, 5, 6, 7, somewhere. About the 5th or 6th of March, I would think.

MR GRIFFITHS: Could the witness please be shown the document behind our divider 7, please.

THE WITNESS: Yes, this is the document that originated from UN headquarters, not from Thomas.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Right. Have you seen this document before, Mr Taylor?
A. Oh, yes, this is the issue regarding the five-point that came from the special representative who was a senior official to - came from New York to him and, in fact, Thomas was informed. This is about the plan that they are thinking about.

Q. As we see this is entitled, "Your five-point plan and next steps". Do you see that?
A. Yes, I do.

Q. It’s dated 5 February 1999 and it provides as follows:

"Please refer to your fax messages dated 25 January 1999 concerning meetings in Ghana and in Togo to your fax dated 26
January on your meeting in Côte d'Ivoire and to your code cables of 28-29 January and 1 February on your meeting with President Kabbah and the meeting of the Heads of State of the three troop-contributing countries to ECOMOG in Conakry on 29 January.

The initiatives you have taken in conceiving the five-point plan and securing support for it among the leaders of the sub-region are highly commendable. You have kept the United Nations at the centre of the diplomatic process, while helping to avert a split among the members of ECOWAS. We fully concur in all your actions and encourage you to proceed further along the same lines as you see fit.

We agree that your round of visits has been helpful in revitalising support for joint efforts along both tracks of the dual-track policy. We, therefore, concur in principle with the proposal that you made in your fax dated 26 January to visit Monrovia and Ouagadougou."

Now did Mr Okelo in due course visit you in Monrovia, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, to the best of my recollection, he did stop by.

Q. "You would presumably wish to consult with President Kabbah and with Mr Kouyate and/or ECOMOG beforehand to inform them in general terms of your intentions and secure their concurrence. We would appreciate your assessment of what might be achieved as a result of such meetings. In addition to briefing the Heads of State/foreign ministers of Liberia and Burkina Faso concerning the latest situation in Sierra Leone, your own recent diplomatic activities and other United Nations activities including humanitarian and human rights, you may wish to make the following points:
The full cooperation of the Organisation of African Unity and ECOWAS with the United Nations is vital to any resolution of the conflict in Sierra Leone;

It is equally important that these organisations should adopt a united position with regard to the resolution of the conflict, especially in their relations with the Security Council and the international donor community;

The international community hopes that the Governments of Liberia and Burkina Faso will do their utmost to contribute positively towards a resolution of the conflict;

In the case of Liberia, the United Nations, though aware of allegations of Government of Liberia involvement with the rebels, has no direct evidence of such involvement. The United Nations welcomes reports that the Liberian Senate is considering investigating allegations of Government of Liberia involvement" - "... has no direct evidence of such involvement."

Now help us, Mr Taylor. For how long had representatives of the United Nations been present in Liberia?

A. Oh, they have been present now for about a year, but they were involved before that time.

Q. Yes. And they are also involved over the border in Sierra Leone, aren't they?

A. Definitely.

Q. And so we have this situation where on 5 February 1999, so a month after the Freetown invasion, the United Nations is saying they have no direct evidence of such involvement. Is that right, Mr Taylor?

A. That is right.

Q. And now let us just return to the frontis - the front page
1  to remind ourselves, please, that this is an outgoing code cable
2  and so it's going from the United Nations to Okelo in Freetown
3  and Downes-Thomas in Monrovia. Do you see that?
4  A. No. Well at this time Okelo represents Freetown, but he's
5  still in Conakry.
6  Q. He is in Conakry?
7  A. Yes.
8  Q. But it's the direction of the cable that I'm interested in.
9  A. That is correct.
10  Q. Where is it coming from, Mr Taylor?
11  A. It's coming from New York, UN headquarters.
12  Q. So UN headquarters are saying they have no direct evidence
13  of such involvement in early February 1999. Is that correct?
14  A. That is correct.
15  Q. And then:
16     "The United Nations would also welcome the exercise of any
17     influence President Taylor could bring to bear on the rebels to
18     reach an accommodation with the Government of Sierra Leone,
19     including a ceasefire which would permit the delivery of
20     humanitarian assistance and provide a basis for further
21     discussion."
22  Now, Mr Taylor, you may have to interpret this diplomatic
23     language for us:
24     "The United Nations would also welcome the exercise of any
25     influence President Taylor could bring to bear on the rebels."
26  Unravel that for us, please.
27  A. Well, in simple terms all they are saying here is that we
28     hope that President Taylor, working along with what he's been
29     doing, will continue his good work and that this - the ceasefire
- that there will be a ceasefire that will hold. All this diplomatic English - remember I informed this Court that by about 12 January we had announced that we had obtained a ceasefire. So everybody is working and they are aware of the work that I'm doing.

As a reminder, let's go back. We said that in 1998 we see in August this letter from my ambassador in Guinea. By September my colleagues are informed. They acquiesce. Sam Bockarie visits Liberia once. He visits twice. The third time he goes through to meet the chairman of the OAU. So they know that we are working. We have this 6 January situation.

This is not just a Sierra Leonean matter. All members of ECOWAS are involved in cross telephones. This is a hot issue from the morning of the 6th, the 7th we are all talking and I just said to this Court Kabbah - Tejan Kabbah met by the 7th with the RUF official Foday Sankoh. And so what they are saying here in short is that, "Look, we now see that there is some progress so we want for President Taylor to continue". That's all. This is basically in simple English what they are talking about.

Q. So, Mr Taylor, help us. Did you take this as an endorsement of what you had done or a caution not to, to borrow a phrase, meddle in Sierra Leonean affairs? How did you interpret it?

A. Quite to the contrary. I looked at this as an endorsement of what I was - I had done and was doing and what they expected me to continue doing.

Q. And, Mr Taylor, let us just remind ourselves, please, at the historical junction we've now reached, we're in February
1999. We have just passed that important watershed, the 6 January invasion of Freetown, yes?
A. Yes.
Q. And we have the United Nations at this stage saying no direct evidence of involvement and, secondly, endorsing your involvement with the rebels. That's the position, isn't it?
A. That is correct.
Q. And so thereafter when you continued your efforts so far as the guesthouse in Monrovia and so on were concerned, did you consider that to be with the approval of the United Nations, that world body?
A. Definitely, but I bring it to the first instance. I see it as an approval of ECOWAS, I see it as an approval from the OAU before it even gets to the United Nations. Africa and our brothers have proved this. They acquiesce. They are thanking - not just me. I mean what I'm doing, I just don't want to take credit alone for it because everybody is aware on that Committee of Six and they are endorsing what I'm doing so when - I don't want to waste time, but I just have to go through this.

When in this international community you hear statements like this coming from let's say as far as the United Nations, this is nothing that the United Nations starts on its own. This simply means that they have seen and have investigated and this is with the acquiescence of even the organisation on the ground.

So this statement that the UN is making, it's not in isolation of what ECOWAS or the OAU believe at that particular time.
The United Nations would not be saying one thing and ECOWAS saying another thing here in West Africa and the OAU saying another thing. No, no, no, no, no. In these diplomatic circles...
these things don't work that way. When you hear a profound statement being made at the UN, that means that the other auxiliary organisations agree. That's how it works. I just wanted to point that out.

Q. "In his 9 June 1998 report, the Secretary-General responded positively in principle to calls by the Government of Liberia to deploy United Nations personnel at the border between Liberia and Sierra Leone. In practice, however, this has proved impossible in view of the absence of any ECOMOG deployment to provide security.

In the spirit of the Secretary-General's initiative in Abuja in July 1998 and of the Conakry mini summit of November 1998 the United Nations would welcome further face-to-face meetings between President Taylor and President Kabbah with the possible participation of President Conte which could consider a solution within the context of the Mano River Union agreement. The special representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone and the representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia should be prepared to facilitate such a meeting.

In the case of Burkina Faso, the United Nations would welcome any announcement by the government of an investigation into allegations of government of Burkina Faso support for the rebels."

Now, that topic, possible Burkina Faso support for the rebels, was something mentioned in that earlier report from Mr Felix Downes-Thomas dated 30 January, wasn't it?

A. Yes.

Q. "The United Nations would also welcome the exercise of any influence President Compaore could bring to bear on the rebels in
his capacity as chairman of the OAU for the purposes outlined above. We are pleased to note that a small human rights team is now in Freetown to assess the situation and look forward to receiving its report as soon as possible and regular reports on the human rights situation thereafter. We hope soon to receive more details about the proposed ECOWAS summit and the subsequent visit of the Committee of Six to New York to brief the Security Council later this month and look forward to seeing you at that time."

Now that meeting in New York which is mentioned, Mr Taylor, was there a representative of the Republic of Liberia at that meeting?

A. Definitely.

Q. Who was that?

A. You see the Committee of Six. That would be the foreign minister.

Q. Now, you mentioned earlier discussing this five-point plan with Mr Downes-Thomas?

A. That is correct.

Q. And that there had been a report about it, yes?

A. Yes, he filed a report back to headquarters, yes.

Q. Can you help us with the rough timing of that response?

A. That had to be within a day - a couple of days. Because this was a very hot topic, so he responded almost immediately because we got a copy almost I would say a day or two. Not more than two or three days I would put it to.

Q. Okay. Before we move on, can I ask that this code cable --

A. Excuse me, counsel. May I just ask you a question? Based on the issue raised by the Prosecution, the numbering of this
page 7 of 9 and 8 of 9, could this be the addition to the
document that the Prosecution raised an issue for? Maybe we
could look at it later.

Q. Well, in relation to that issue, what we could quickly do
is if we turn behind divider 6, just to clarify this point about
numbering, do you see in the top right-hand corner 5 of 9,
CLN-113, do you see that?

A. Yes.

Q. Behind divider 6, do you see right at the top, 5 of 9?

A. Yes.

Q. Go over to page 6 of 9, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Go behind divider 7. Seven of 9?

A. Yes.

Q. Eight of 9?

A. Yes.

Q. The next page, 9 of 9?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you see that? So it appears to suggest that this was at
one time one document and that it constituted various attachments
to a document?

A. That's what I thought.

Q. Do you see that?

A. That's what I thought, so we probably could take a look at
it.

JUDGE DOHERTY: The dates don't tally.

MR GRIFFITHS: The dates might not tally, but it appears
that the numbering at the top, which all appears to be in the
same hand, does follow from 5 through to 9.
PRESIDING JUDGE: I think Ms Hollis's original observation was on the document behind divider 5. If you look at that, the numbers do not follow.

MR GRIFFITHS: The numbers do not follow, but it does appear that the - at least those behind 6 and 7, that the number does follow in that instance. That's the point I'm making. But it doesn't follow on from the document behind divider 5.

JUDGE DOHERTY: I think you may have a point about 7 and 8 because they are both CLN-046.

MR GRIFFITHS: Yes. And CLN-113. But I accept that it doesn't answer the query raised by my learned friend in relation to the document behind divider 5. I appreciate that there's a discontinuity between those two dividers:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor --

PRESIDING JUDGE: In any event, I think you were in the process of marking that.

MR GRIFFITHS: I would like to have that document, "Your five-point plan and next steps", dated 5 February 1999, our application is for that to be marked MFI-71.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-71 for identification.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Yes, Mr Taylor. So you were telling us that there was a further report, was there, of your discussions with Mr Felix Downes-Thomas regarding this five-point plan?

A. Yes and this is his response back. After the headquarters sent him this to make his observation, he responds after this.

Q. Let's look behind divider 6, please. Yes?

A. Yes.
Q. And we see this is now dated 9 February 1999 and it’s from Mr Downes-Thomas to Mr Prendergast at the United Nations in New York?
A. Yes.

Q. We see that again it’s follow-up steps on the five-point plan in Sierra Leone?
A. That is correct.

Q. It says, "I bring to your attention the attached self-explanatory code cable of 5 February which was copied to me", which is the document behind divider 7?
A. That is correct.

Q. Yes?
A. Yes.

Q. Which as we note, if we just flick over, it was also copied to him from the heading behind divider 7. Do you see that?
A. Yes.

Q. "You will note that the matters referred to in indents four, five and six of paragraph three" - which are the items that we looked at in some detail, yes?
A. Yes.

Q. "... four, five and seven of paragraph three touch upon issues that were raised in the letters from President Taylor to the Secretary-General transmitted to headquarters with my code cables of 12 May 1998 and 20 December 1998 respectively."

Now, Mr Taylor, in order to understand the significance of what is being said there, what we need to do is to turn back behind divider 7, keeping open divider 6, yes?
A. Yes.

Q. And then when we look at the second page of the document
behind divider 7, yes?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. If we count down the bullet points we'll see that there are seven such bullet points, yes?
A. Yes, yes.
Q. So when he is saying, "You will note that the matters referred to in indents four" - indent four is, "In the case of Liberia, the United Nations, though aware of allegation of Government of Liberia involvement with the rebels, has no direct evidence of such involvement," yes?
A. Absolutely, yes.
Q. Indent five is the one after, "The United Nations would also welcome the exercise of any influence...", yes?
A. Yes.
Q. And indent 6 to which he is now referring is, "The Secretary-General responded positively in principle to the calls by the Government of Liberia to deploy United Nations personnel"?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. And do you see there's a reference in that to a report on 9 June 1998, do you see that?
A. Yes.
Q. Now, let's go back then to behind divider 6. So now we know what Mr Downes-Thomas is talking about in his code cable dated the 9th, which is four days later. Do you follow me?
A. Yes, I do.
Q. "... transmitted to headquarters were raised in the letters from President Taylor to the Secretary-General, transmitted to headquarters... 12 May 1998 and 20 December 1998 respectively", yes?
A. Yes, 20 December.
Q. "20 December respectively". So putting that together, you had told him as long ago as May of 1998, yes?
A. Yes.

Q. About the matters we had looked at at page 2 behind divider 7?
A. Yes.
Q. No direct evidence, yes?
A. Yes.

Q. And that there should be observers in principle and also assistance?
A. Yes.
Q. So you had been talking to him about those things for as long ago as May 1998, yes?
A. That's correct.
Q. These issues were also raised in President Taylor's letter of 6 January 1999 to the President of the Security Council, yes?
A. That is correct.
Q. Now that is a letter which we've already looked at, isn't it?
A. Yes, we have. Yes.
Q. That is the letter, if we want to write down a reference, which is behind divider 3, tab 3 in this bundle. So that letter referred to is tab 3 in this bundle:

"I refer to these communications only to seek advice as to whether or not indents four, five and six should or could be regarded as partial or complete responses to the related matters which President Taylor has raised formally with the Secretary-General."

SCSL - TRIAL CHAMBER II
Okay?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. Now let's unpack what he is saying there, shall we? So we have this outgoing cable from New York on 5 February --
A. Yes.
Q. -- setting out the matters which we've looked at behind divider 7?
A. Yes.
Q. And would it be fair to say that what Downes-Thomas is now asking on the ground as a recipient of that code cable is whether or not that is the position of headquarters?
A. That is correct.
Q. Yes?
A. Yes.
Q. Whether that's the official position of the United Nations, yes?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. That's what he is asking?
A. Yes.
Q. "I am completely in the dark concerning the 'intentions' referred to in paragraph three of the attached cable and for which it would appear that ECOWAS/ECOMOG's concurrence would be required. Should they have any bearing on UN/Liberia relations, I would be glad to receive any light that could be shed on them. Similarly, if the 'five point plan' relates in any way to Liberia, it would be useful to receive some information about it. In the meantime, I will share with you some very general thoughts on the attachment. Within the context of sub-regional stability and of Sierra Leone/Liberia relations, much could be
gained from a face-to-face meeting between Presidents Taylor and Kabbah with the participation of President Conte. Among other things, such a meeting could carry the added value of another attempt to resuscitate the dormant Mano River Union and would also be a worthwhile enterprise with which the United Nations should be associated. UNOL is ready to work hand in glove with UNOMSIL to facilitate such a meeting."

Mr Taylor, was the dormant Mano River Union brought back to life?

A. Oh, yes, we brought it back to life.

Q. "Before we move in that direction, however, it would be useful to determine what we need to obtain from such a meeting, even if it were to be 'unstructured'. I realise that for now and as a preliminary step one could float the idea of this meeting simply to gain from all concerned an agreement in principle to it. Nevertheless, in the process of seeking such an agreement, it is very likely that one would be confronted with certain pertinent questions for which any sensible answers would have to include not only the objective(s) of such a meeting but also some clear ideas about our choices with respect to a convener and venue for it. Unless we are already fairly clear about these matters, this good idea of a face-to-face meeting could usefully be broached with the concerned parties in an exploratory manner, not as a firm proposal."

Now this:

"Given my extremely limited official involvement with Sierra Leonean matters, I am suggesting with much hesitation that it would perhaps be good to re-examine this matter of, on the one hand, soliciting the cooperation of the Government of Burkina..."
Faso in rekindling the negotiation process in Sierra Leone and, on the other hand, encouraging that government to investigate allegations of its own support for the RUF. In this connection, it would be useful to consider whether or not the announcement of, or an actual, investigation by the Government of Burkina Faso into its alleged support for the RUF would engender the necessary goodwill on the part of the government to play a meaningful role in advancing the course of dialogue in Sierra Leone. In this regard, it is perhaps worth noting that the Government of Burkina Faso has not been as confidently strident as Liberia in its denial of these allegations. While one must not read too much into that, it nevertheless remains an aspect that should be kept in mind in making decisions and proposals regarding the involvement of the Government of Burkina Faso and the form that takes in this particular matter. It might therefore be better for the United Nations to determine, on the basis of its own interests in this matter, what is more relevant: The Government of Burkina Faso's investigation of allegations against it or the Government of Burkina Faso's cooperation in the context of dialogue in Sierra Leone."

Let us pause there. Now, Mr Taylor, you tell us that late in 1998 you were aware that Sam Bockarie was passing through Liberia on his way to Burkina Faso, yes?
A. That is correct.
Q. Did you know what the purpose of that meeting - of that visit - was?
A. Yes.
Q. What was it?
A. The purpose of that visit from my understanding, what I was
told, was to speak to the chairman of the OAU in furtherance of the peace process in Sierra Leone.

Q. Who told you that?

A. Bockarie.

Q. Did you speak to your friend Blaise Compaore about the visit?

A. Oh, yes, Blaise I spoke to him. He expected Bockarie and, like we had said before, many members of ECOWAS and the international community knew that Bockarie was travelling through to go to Burkina Faso.

Q. Are you aware of any deal that was made about arms between Burkina Faso and the RUF at or about that time in late 1998?

A. I'm not aware of what transpired over there. No, I'm not.

Q. When here it is being suggested that the Government of Burkina Faso was providing support to the RUF, a suggestion earlier made in that document dated 30 January which we looked at, what do you know about that, Mr Taylor?

A. I know nothing about it and, as a matter of fact, I don't think that the - that Blaise Compaore, as chairman of the OAU at that time, would have been foolish or just inconsiderate in supplying arms to the rebels. That's my own take on it, but I do not know. He was the chairman of the OAU, but my own assessment would be it would have been silly for him to do that and I don't think that he would be involved in any such thing directly.

Q. So what are these suggestions here about then, Mr Taylor?

A. I'm afraid not. I guess as I see this, I think the point here that the special representative is making is that we are fighting tooth and nail to really get this monkey off our backs -
by monkey I mean these accusations. Blaise doesn't share a
border with Sierra Leone, so I guess he just, you know, would
say, "Well, you know, let them believe what they want to believe
and just forget about it", I think, but that's for him to account
for. But I would just put this to the same type of things that
you hear things, but sometimes you don't - you don't put a lot to
it. Sometimes it's not exactly as people are explaining. I
would hate to be, you know, put in a position where I would have
to account for him. I really, really don't know, but I don't
think - I think it would have been silly for him to do that.

Q. Well the reason I'm asking, Mr Taylor, is this. You've
told us in the past of a friendship which existed between
yourself and Blaise Compaore, yes?
A. Yes.

Q. Here you are now in the early months of 1999, both of you
accused of assisting the RUF. Surely in those circumstances the
obvious thing to do is pick up the phone, call your friend and
say, "Blaise, what is going on here?" Do you follow me?
A. Oh, yes.

Q. Did you do that?
A. Oh, we talked. We talked about the accusations and
everything. Blaise really didn't care. He said, "I know it's
not true and so they can believe whatever they want to believe.
I mean, I don't share a border with them. How do they expect me
to do what they say I'm doing?" He really didn't take it
seriously. And, quite frankly, if I didn't share a border with -
if I didn't share a border with Sierra Leone I don't think this
would have continued because I can tell you I would just have
said, "I don't have to be involved in this. I don't have to be
involved in this. I'm off this committee. Bye. That's it." I
would have just walked away from this.

But for me this is one of those situations where you are
stuck. I was just stuck with Sierra Leone. I've got hundreds of
thousands of refugees in Liberia. They have in Sierra Leone. We
share borders. They have a conflict over there. I can't get
anything going. The accusations are flying left and right. I
was just stuck.

If I was in one - I if I was one country more away from
there I would have never stayed on this committee. I would have
said, "Away with this". I didn't need this headache every day
and you are Superman. You know, you are making the impossible
possible. You don't have arms in your country, but you are
supplying arms. All this nonsense. I would have walked away
from it and I guess Blaise had the luxury of just ignoring this
because he was far away. I didn't.

Q. "Finally it would be good for Mr Okelo to visit Liberia.

By briefing the appropriate government authorities on his
initiatives and related activities, he would also be conveying
the message that in the eyes of the United Nations the Government
of Liberia does have a role to play in the scheme of things. His
envisaged meetings in Liberia, the substance of which could
usefully be confined to Sierra Leone-Liberia relations, would
also give him the opportunity to learn first-hand about the
Government of Liberia's views and positions on the various
aspects of Sierra Leone-Liberia relations."

Now, Mr Taylor, by this stage in February of 1999, had you
met Mr Okelo?

A. No.
Q. No?
A. No, that's why Okelo could write all these things. I didn't really know Okelo, no.

MR GRIFFITHS: Now I wonder if we could have this document outgoing code cable, dated 9 February 1999, entitled "Follow-up steps on the five-point plan on Sierra Leone", could it be marked for identification, please, MFI-72.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-72.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, that's 9 February, Mr Taylor. At or about that time, did your government issue a further statement about the situation in Sierra Leone?
A. Yes. It's a never-ending situation with this Sierra Leone. The government put together a full statement again, similar to what we had just done in November of '98 - I mean December.

Around 29 December. Now there's an official statement released by my minister of foreign affairs that goes one step further.

Q. And what's that further step?
A. Well, now we deal with the issue of granting amnesty, trying to encourage people to step back from the fear of prosecution. It's an extended statement that we make. I think that's just - just close to the mid - not much longer than this. About maybe four or five days following all of these exchanges of ideas, but a little before the 15th or thereabouts we - I think it may be a little later that we issue a full statement from the ministry of foreign affairs detailing again our non-involvement and then stating all the actions that we want to take hereafter to help the problem in Sierra Leone, including the granting of amnesty and spelling out in broad - in very serious details, not
broad, but specific details, the time that they had to take advantage of the amnesty period and if they did not take advantage of that period, that it could no longer be beneficial to them. And so it's a very broad and very, very tough statement I think to further let the international community know that we are very serious about peace and that we are doing our best.

Q. Could the witness please be shown the document behind divider 8, please. We see that this document is headed "Republic of Liberia, ministry of foreign affairs, Monrovia, Liberia".

Then it goes on:


The ongoing fighting in the sister Republic of Sierra Leone is hurting the sub-region politically, economically, and diplomatically. As a founding member of the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity, the Economic Community of West African States and the Mano River Union, Liberia values its historic role in world affairs, especially in African emancipation, independence and conflict resolution. This role places a compelling responsibility on the government and people of Liberia to continue working for a final resolution of the Sierra Leonean conflict.

Liberia is sensitive to the international concerns that have been expressed regarding its alleged complicity in the Sierra Leonean crisis. The Government of Liberia is cognisant of the adverse effect that this state of affairs is having on the maintenance of peace, unity, stability and progress in Liberia, the ECOWAS sub-region, and the larger international community.

At the same time, the government is outraged by the nature
and level of atrocities attending the war in Sierra Leone. The use of children as soldiers and the maiming of fellow Sierra Leoneans are unconscionable. This malevolent human tragedy must be stopped."

Pause there. Mr Taylor, did you have sight of this document before it was made public?
A. At the foreign ministers - yes, I had sight of it.
Q. Now when it says that the government is outraged by the level and nature of atrocities attending the war in Sierra Leone, you appreciate of course that the suggestion is you were the one directing and controlling that. You know that, don't you?
A. Yes, I do. Yes, I do.
Q. And you know that so far as that Prosecution is concerned, where you say that you are outraged by the use of children as child soldiers, that's precisely what you had been doing during the Liberian civil war, wasn't it?
A. But that's not what we did in Liberia. We did not do that. We didn't cut off hands in Liberia. There are no evidence in Liberia of any of this mayhem and maiming after the civil war today, yesterday, as it was, no.
Q. "The Liberian government recognises the efforts of ECOWAS to restore and maintain peace in the sub-region and as a member of the Committee of Six wishes to re-state its support for the ECOWAS peace plan for Sierra Leone."
In this regard the Government of Liberia reaffirms its recognition of the elected government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah as the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone. The Government of Liberia states further that it has not, and will not, support nor be a party to any attempt to destabilise the
Republic of Sierra Leone or any other country.

As a democratically elected government, the Government of Liberia has not, and will not, support any attempt by insurgents, including the Revolutionary United Front and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council or other armed dissidents to destabilise or remove the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone from office.

The Liberian government has consistently maintained that the war in Sierra Leone is internal and, relying on its experiences, believes and hopes that the conflict in Sierra Leone can and should be resolved through dialogue and negotiations.

This approach remains a constructive pass to sustainable peace and national reconciliation in the Republic of Sierra Leone.

The Government of Liberia has consistently argued that Liberian citizens have been used as mercenaries in the Sierra Leone conflict by successive governments of Sierra Leone, the RUF/AFRC, the Kamajors and ECOMOG."

Pause there. So you are saying that (1) Sierra Leone government, (2) RUF/AFRC, (3) Kamajors, (4) ECOMOG, have all used Liberians as mercenaries in Sierra Leone, Mr Taylor, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. We need not go back to that argument because we have looked at it ad nauseam.

A. Yes.

Q. "The Government of Liberia notes the existence of legal instruments that prohibit its nationals from serving as mercenaries. These instruments include international conventions and protocols, particularly the non-aggression and security cooperation treaty between countries comprising the Mano River Union."
Do you remember mentioning that to us?

A. Yes.

Q. "Most importantly Chapter 11 of the Liberian penal code, subsection 11.13 on mercenaries, provides for life imprisonment or the death penalty for convicted mercenaries."

Is that right, Mr Taylor?

A. That is correct.

Q. We'll have cause in due course - no, we might as well deal with the matter now. So it's Chapter 11 of the Liberian penal code, is it?

A. Yes.

MR GRIFFITHS: Whilst we're on that topic, could I invite everyone's attention to behind divider 71, which is the second smaller volume for week 32:

Q. What are we looking at here, Mr Taylor?

A. Chapter - we should be looking for Chapter 11, subsection 11.13.

Q. Of what?

A. Of the Liberian penal code dealing with mercenarism.

Q. Now, if we go over to the, yes, fourth page of this chapter of the Liberian penal code, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Do we see 11.13?

A. Yes.

Q. Mercenarism?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. Do we see that, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes.

Q. Now, let's just look at what offence is created by this
"The crime of mercenarism is committed: A felony of the first degree by an individual, a group, an association, representative or representatives of a state and the state itself with the intent of opposing by armed violence, a process of self-determination or the territorial integrity of another state when the following acts are perpetrated:

(a) the sheltering, organising, financing, assisting, equipping, training, promoting, supporting, or employing armed forces partially or wholly and consisting of persons not nationals of the country being invaded or attempting to invade and merely or solely for money, personal gain, material or other reward; or

(b) the enlisting, enrolling or attempting to enrol in the said armed forces; or

(c) the allowing of the activities referred to in subsection (1)(a) to be carried out in any territory under the jurisdiction of another state or in any place under its control; or

(d) affording of facilities for transit, transportation or other operations for the armed forces and activities referred to in subsection 1(a).

Mercenaries shall not in this republic enjoy the status of combatants and shall not be entitled to the prisoners of war status. Assuming command over or giving orders to mercenaries shall be considered an aggravating circumstance: If the act of mercenarism results in the death of any nonparticipant in such mercenarism other than a mercenary, the person convicted may be sentenced to death or life imprisonment as provided by section
50.5 and 51.3. In the case of a state, such an act of
mercenarism shall be regarded as a declaration of war against the
Republic of Liberia."

Now, let us try and deconstruct the legal language here to
see what this means. So the crime of mercenarism, if we go back
to subsection (a), "the sheltering, organising, financing,
assisting, equipping, training, promoting, supporting or
employing armed farces partially or wholly and consisting of
persons not nationals in the country being invaded or attempting
to invade and merely or solely for money, personal gain, material
or other reward."

So, Mr Taylor, if what the Sierra Leonean government and
what ECOMOG had done in recruiting Liberian nationals, that was,
in fact, an offence under Liberian law, wasn't it?

A. Definitely. Definitely.

Q. Next, subsection 2: "Assuming command over or giving
orders to mercenaries shall be considered as an aggravating
circumstance."

Does that mean, Mr Taylor, that as President of Liberia, if
you were giving orders to Liberians working as mercenaries in
Sierra Leone, you were breaking the laws of your own country?

A. That's true.

Q. And that would have been an aggravating feature so far as
your criminal liability was concerned, yes? So if, as suggested,
you were giving such orders, you were nothing but a common
criminal, weren't you, Mr Taylor, liable to be executed by the
Republic of Liberia?

A. That is true and that is why the Senate did launch a full
investigation into the allegation - the Senate of the Republic of
Liberia, to see if the President - in fact, that would have, first of all, subjected me to being impeached as President of the Republic and tried by the Liberian Senate. And so the Senate launched an investigation with the knowledge of the United Nations and they welcomed it.

Q. We've seen mention of it already.
A. Exactly, yes.

MR. GRIFFITHS: Before we go back to the other document in the other volume, Mr President, could I ask that this Chapter 11 of the Liberian penal code be marked for identification, MFI-73.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Said document is marked MFI-73 for identification.

MR. GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, we can put that volume away now, please, now that we know what we were talking about in the other paragraph. And can we go back to, please, behind divider 8. Yes, Mr Taylor?
A. Yes.

Q. So we now understand what is being said where in the penultimate paragraph it provides: "Most importantly, Chapter 11 of the Liberian penal code, subsection 11.13 on mercenaries, provides for life imprisonment or the death penalty for convicted mercenaries.

In view of this notation, the Government of Liberia has repeatedly called on its citizens to disengage from the conflict in Sierra Leone and return home. In furtherance of the efforts of the Government of Liberia to discourage Liberian citizens from complicating the crisis in Sierra Leone and to ensure compliance with the laws and conventions relating to mercenaries, the Government of Liberia undertakes the following: (1) renews its
call on the Government of Sierra Leone and all parties to the
collision in that country to abolish the use of Liberians as
mercenaries."

Yes?

A. Yes.

Q. As a matter of interest and in passing, help us: Do you
know what the situation was under Sierra Leonean law regarding
the employment of mercenaries?

A. No, I really do not know, counsel.

Q. "As a matter of urgency, the Government of Liberia requests
the United Nations to assist the Governments of Sierra Leone and
Liberia in identifying, documenting and processing Liberians
fighting in Sierra Leone for an organised repatriation. Amnesty
will be granted to those Liberians involved in the Sierra Leonean
conflict who will cooperate with the voluntary repatriation
programme. This amnesty takes immediate effect and will expire
within 45 days from the date of this statement."

What was the purpose behind that?

A. We are trying to help in whatever way we can to get these
Liberians out of Sierra Leone. Remember in the first instance
we've called for the Sierra Leonean government, which must be the
first party, to release them. Those that they have in their
employ, let these people go. The purpose of getting the UN
involved is going to call for money and the process of
demobilisation where we will get the international community to
come together and help both Sierra Leone and Liberia to
demobilise these people and send them.

As a reminder, we know that Liberians are being held in
prison. Quite a few of these people are being held in prison,
and this is why all the way back, when Okelo writes his memo, he states that majority are Liberians and it is stated that Liberians are arrested. And from the best of my recollection, right in this Court, some of those people appeared here. So - and I'm sure if I had sent them, they would have told this Court, "I was there, your Honour, but the gentleman sitting over there, Mr Taylor, sent me." That was not the case. I was trying to get him first to release them, get the UN involved. By this, the fear would be taken away and we would get them out of Sierra Leone and that would help to bring peace.

Q. "At the end of the voluntary repatriation exercise, the Government of Liberia, working with the Government of Sierra Leone, will arrest and prosecute to the full extent of the law any Liberian citizen found to still be engaged in the ongoing armed conflict in Sierra Leone.

In order to support the productive reintegration of ex-combatants and returnees and to prevent their cycling into lawlessness and violent activities anywhere, the Government of Liberia hereby appeals for assistance from the Government of the United States of America and countries of the European Union.

Liberia also appeals for assistance from the United Nations system, particularly UNICEF, UNHCR, FAO, UNDP and WFP.

The Government of Liberia hereby calls for the immediate appointment of members of the joint security liaison committee provided for in the Mano River Union non-aggression and security cooperation treaty between Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. In order to enhance security and confidence within the Mano River Union, the Government of Liberia hereby requests the convening of a summit of the Mano River Union.
The Government of Liberia renews its request to the Government of Sierra Leone to accept the joint patrol and monitoring of the Liberian-Sierra Leonean border. The Government of Liberia again solicits assistance from the United States and the European Union to facilitate this joint border patrol to ensure compliance with all existing resolutions on Sierra Leone. To this end, the Government of Liberia renews its requests to the United Nations Security Council to approve deployment of United Nations monitors along with ECOMOG forces at the Liberia-Sierra Leonean border.

The Government of Liberia shall relocate all refugee camps further inland to discourage any attempt to use those camps for subversive activities against the Government of Sierra Leone. To this end, the Liberian government again calls on the UNHCR to assist in the inland transfer of all refugees from near its borders with Sierra Leone.

The Government of Liberia reinforces its directives to all its security forces to be on maximum alert with specific instructions to vigorously patrol the borders and to further intensify customs and immigration procedures at all sea and airports as well as other points of entry. The national security agencies are further mandated to continue to ensure that no cross-border movement of arms takes place and that there be no transhipment of arms and ammunition through Liberian territory."

Now, Mr Taylor, to whom was this official statement directed?
A. Everyone. United Nations, Sierra Leone, everyone. We are trying to leave it crystal clear what our position is on this matter and trying to help in whatever way that we could to not
just get ceasefires going, but also internally trying to help to
control the situation on the ground.

Q. Now, we will note that, amongst other things, you mentioned
the non-aggression and security cooperation treaty between
countries comprising the Mano River Union?

A. Yes.

Q. Yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Conventions and protocols?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. Now, following this official statement, did you have cause
to write to either President Kabbah or President Conte regarding
these matters?

A. Yes, I wrote to in fact three groups; President Kabbah,
President Conte and the Secretary-General again.

Q. What about?

A. In the case of Kabbah and Conte, we cited certain protocols
and what could be done. We invoked certain protocols under the
non-aggression treaty in those letters and what we expected and
what to do. These are just attempts to really solidify whatever
gains were in the making.

MR GRIFFITHS: Before we come to look at those letters
could I ask, please, that this official statement of the
Government of Liberia on the Sierra Leone crisis dated 19
February 1999 be marked for identification MFI-74.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-74.

MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful:

Q. Now, the letter to Tejan Kabbah, can we look behind divider
ten, please. Mr Taylor, let us just orientate ourselves. The
statement we've just looked at was dated 19 February, yes?
A. Yes.

Q. A couple of days later on 22 February you write to President Tejan Kabbah in the following terms, do you not:

"My dear friend and brother. I present my compliments and,
in consideration of our mutual desire to find a common and
permanent solution to the problems besetting the peace and
security in our sub-region, hasten to seize this opportunity to
bring to your urgent attention the 1986 non-aggression and
security cooperation treaty between member states of the Mano
River Union which, inter alia, obliges them in principle and
substance to be their brother’s keeper and to cooperate in mutual
security interest of each other. The relevant articles of the
treaty which are operative in the current subregional
circumstances are Articles V, VI, VIII and IX.

In this connection I wish to refer to Article VIII which
provides that any member of the military or paramilitary forces
found within the territory of a high contracting party without
proper leave of absence, prior clearance, entry permit, and
travel document shall be arrested and kept in custody. Further,
the government concerned shall be immediately notified."

Pause. Now, when it says "any member of the military or
paramilitary forces found within the territory of a high
contracting party without proper leave of absence, prior
clearance, entry permit or travel document", who are we referring
to?
A. Member states and ex-combatants.

Q. I just want to make sure I understand what it is you are
telling us. If a Liberian is found on Sierra Leonean soil and
that person is a member of a paramilitary group or the military and that person is there without any leave of absence, prior clearance or entry permit, that person can be arrested and detained by the security forces of that state?

A. Yes, and the other high contracting party notified, yes.

Q. Right. So consequently it follows if there are Liberians operating in Sierra Leone under these circumstances, President Kabbah or indeed ECOMOG in Sierra Leone had the power to arrest and detain them and thereafter notify the Liberian government?

A. That is correct.

Q. And is that why the Liberian government had extended that amnesty under Chapter 11.13?

A. Yes.

Q. To permit the return of such individuals?

A. Exactly.

Q. And to take out of that equation any fear on the part of the combatant that he might be executed if returned to Liberia?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now help us, Mr Taylor. Why did you find it necessary to be reminding your brother President Kabbah of the terms of this treaty dating back as far as 1986?

A. Well, you know, I would not say that he did not know of it. This reminder is just another attempt on my part to push this process further and to help clear up the mess as I can put it.

And so, like in most cases, some countries do not invoke certain treaties until it is necessary. In my case this has become a necessity to invoke these provisions of these protocols.

Now, probably he didn't see any need. He could have advised me. But because we are anxious to doing whatever we can.
to resolve this problem, we invoked this, remind him, hoping that he can act because in the first place in the back of my mind I'm aware of Liberians that are in custody in Freetown. There are so many of them that are being held. But if we know what happens subsequently, they are tried in Sierra Leone, they are convicted in Sierra Leone, Liberians that came to this Court. So we have a situation I'm trying to remind him that, "Look, let's help each other. We'll put this thing out and in 45 days if we do not get them, listen we will get the UN, UNHCR, other people involved. You arrest them, you send them over here, we will try them" and this is just - I guess I can just put it to trying to build - it's a confidence building measure that I'm putting into place again just to assure him that we mean business as far as helping to bring peace.

Q. It continues:

"According to Article IX, the establishment of a joint security liaison committee consisting of three representatives from each high contracting party shall have the responsibility to liaise on the subject of fugitive criminals, dissidents, as well as subversive activities of citizens of their respective countries in the territory of each other, exchange information, investigate reports affecting the security of the high contracting parties with a view to maintaining the desired peaceful coexistence.

In view of the above, and in order to bring about an amicable solution to the problems which beset our sub-region, I propose that the ministers of foreign affairs, defence and national security of the Mano River Union meet in Monrovia on March 3, 1999, to work out implementation of the non-aggression
and security cooperation treaty and the appropriate security measures."

Pause there. Do you recall, Mr Taylor, in a previous communication we noted between Mr Downes-Thomas and the United Nations reference to the Mano River Union having become dormant?

Q. Are you trying to resurrect it here?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. Are you trying to resurrect it here?

A. I can say yes, but not to leave my colleagues out. They are - they participate fully, so I don't intend to take any direct credit for having done it alone. We are all working together, but I'm doing my best on my - you know, on my side as a Liberian.

Q. Now, this meeting, did it take place on 3 March?

A. To the best of my recollection, it did take place.

Q. "... to work out implementation of the non-aggression and security cooperation treaty and the appropriate security measures. Meanwhile consistent with our desire to have this matter speedily resolved, the Government of Liberia also calls for the immediate activation of the joint security liaison committee as provided for in the non-aggression and security cooperation treaty. We have also undertaken to relocate all refugee camps further inland to discourage any attempt to use these camps for subversive activities against neighbouring governments."

Now, what would be the effect of the immediate activation of the joint security liaison committee, Mr Taylor?

A. That will put into place a mechanism. Once they met, people would be security personnel and intelligence people would have a free movement in and out of these countries. They
I can recruit informants. A lot can happen once this committee is put into place. And that's why I begin immediately and it caused some questions, but we did it anyway to move the people back from the borders to give people an opportunity to be able to be clear with their work.

Q. Now let's go to the next paragraph:

"Moreover, my government is prepared to act immediately to arrest and keep in custody, pending prosecution or extradition, any and all persons or dissidents found in violation of the non-aggression and security cooperation treaty and of the penal code of Liberia relative to mercenaries. As you are aware, I informed you, both in Conakry" - when was Conakry?

A. That's October/November.

Q. "And Monrovia" - when was Monrovia?

A. Monrovia was - in fact we had several Monrovia. We had July there was Monrovia. There was at least July.

Q. "As you are aware, I informed you". Who are you writing to here, Mr Taylor?

A. This is Tejani. This is Tejani.

Q. "I informed you, Tejan Kabbah, both in Conakry and Monrovia of the many Liberians that were both unlawfully engaged in fighting and military training in Sierra Leone."

A. Had you told him that --

Q. -- from the previous year?

A. Yes. And he never said to me he knew about them. And he knew.

Q. And did he say to you, "Well, you're controlling these people, my dear brother." Did you say that?
A. No, he couldn't and he didn't.

Q. Why were you anxious to tell him from as long beforehand as Monrovia and Conakry about this?

A. Because in fact, you know, to be frank about it, I wanted him to know that I knew what was going on and that he was in fact partly responsible for it. So I said to him I said, "Listen, there are people - Liberians - that are fighting and training over there. They are doing it unlawfully. It has to be stopped. We have to do whatever we can to stop it." He said, "Oh, yes, my brother. You're right. You're right."

Q. But help me with two further matters in this regard and the first is this. If, as is suggested, you were in charge of these Liberians, why were you informing President Kabbah about their presence? Can you help me?

A. Because I was not involved with them, that's why.

Q. Secondly, at the time you were informing your brother president of this, Mr Taylor, back in 1998 no less, were you aware that a decade later you would be on trial on these allegations --

A. No.

Q. -- so you were, in effect, setting up a prior defence?

A. No, I had no idea in my wildest dream that I would be sitting here.

Q. "I informed you both in Conakry and Monrovia of the many Liberians that were unlawfully engaged in fighting and military training in Sierra Leone. I am also prepared to grant amnesty to those Liberians found fighting in any Mano River Union state, particularly Sierra Leone, who would surrender to the United Nations within 45 days or prosecute those who fail to do so."
My dear friend and brother, I entreat you to consider my proposal of convening the ministerial meeting of the Mano River Union so as to enable us to continue our quest for peace, security and good neighbourliness in our sub-region."

Then we have the normal salutation, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, whilst we're at it, can we have a look at the letter you also sent to General Lansana Conte. Before we move on, can I ask that this letter to President Kabbah dated 22 February 1999 be marked for identification MFI-75, please?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked for identification MFI-75. I'll notify you, Mr Griffiths, you've got about - something less than four minutes of tape left.

MR GRIFFITHS: I think it's sufficient time for us to get started on this other letter though.

JUDGE DOHERTY: Mr Griffiths, before you move on, I note that the heading of that MFI-75 is "Draft 1". Is that the final document that went to President Kabbah?

MR GRIFFITHS: Well, I'll ask the witness.

Q. Mr Taylor, you'll see that the document we have in front of us is headed "Draft 1". Can you help us now as to whether this was the final version?

A. This is the final version. After this draft, then the letter is done exactly as this. There's no change.

Q. So the letter which President Kabbah received was identical to this, was it?

A. Identical. Exactly as this.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Well when the witness says "identical", I take it that the letter that President Kabbah received did not...
have "Draft 1" written on it?

THE WITNESS: No, your Honour, it didn't.

PRESIDING JUDGE: And did not have "yours" crossed out on the second page?

THE WITNESS: No, your Honour.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, was the letter to Lansana Conte in almost identical terms?

A. Yes, but some little - some different nuances for Lansana Conte.

Q. Now just before we conclude today, can I invite your attention to this fact. The letter behind divider 9 - behind divider 9, do you have it? To Lansana Conte, yes?

A. Yes, but it's not the whole document though.

Q. Is that document complete, Mr Taylor?

A. No, I don't see the second page of it.

Q. But if we just keep our finger in divider 10 so that we can conclude with this document tonight, the paragraphs are all identical, aren't they? If you just hold it like this, Mr Taylor, you see, and just flick backwards and forwards?

A. Yeah.

Q. They are identical, aren't they?

A. They are just about identical, but I would want to make sure that the second page - I think it's important to see the second page, because as I'm telling Tejani I told you about this the first page of the document would be exactly the same, but the second page could have some slight nuances - differences.

PRESIDING JUDGE: If I could interrupt, the tape has just
about run out, Mr Griffiths.

MR GRIFFITHS: Very well.

PRESIDING JUDGE: I think we'll have to adjourn at this point, Mr Taylor, and I'll remind you of the normal caution that you're not permitted to discuss your evidence with any other person.

We'll adjourn now until 9.30 tomorrow morning.

[Whereupon the hearing adjourned at 4.30 p.m. to be reconvened on Tuesday, 11 August 2009 at 9.30 a.m.]
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