Case No. SCSL-2003-01-T
THE PROSECUTOR OF
THE SPECIAL COURT
V.
CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR
TUESDAY, 11 AUGUST 2009
10.04 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
Mr Christopher Santora
Ms Maja Dimitrova

For the accused Charles Ghankay
Taylor: Mr Courtenay Griffiths QC
Mr Morris Anyah
Mr Terry Munyard
Tuesday, 11 August 2009

[Open session]

[The accused present]

[Upon commencing at 10.04 a.m.]

PRESIDING JUDGE: Good morning. We will take appearances first, please.

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

PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you, Ms Hollis. Yes, Mr Griffiths.

MR GRIFFITHS: Good morning, Mr President, your Honours, counsel opposite. For the Defence today, myself Courtenay Griffiths and with me are my learned friends Mr Morris Anyah and Mr Terry Munyard. We are again joined by Ms Amelia Montgomery.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you, Mr Griffiths.

Before we proceed, just for the record I will have noted that the Court is starting late today, in fact 35 minutes late, and this was brought about by the necessity of a faulty Defence computer having to be repaired. That computer was required for the continued presentation of the Defence case.

Mr Taylor, I will remind you that you are still bound by your declaration to tell the truth.

DANKPANNAH DR CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR:

[On former affirmation]

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

Q. Mr Taylor, yesterday when we adjourned we were looking at letters which you had written to President Kabbah and you had also written in virtually identical terms on the same date to
President Conte. Do you recall that?
A. Yes, I do.

MR GRIFFITHS: Could the witness please be shown the
document behind our divider 9, please:
Q. Now, Mr Taylor, is that the letter you wrote to
President Conte?
A. Yes, this is the - this is the letter.
Q. Now, that letter is incomplete, is it not?
A. It is.
Q. Because there should be a second page to it?
A. That is correct.
Q. But when we look behind divider 10, we see that this
document bears a number of similarities with the document behind
divider 10, doesn't it?
A. It does.
Q. It's the same date, yes?
A. That is correct.
Q. And in identical terms, at least so far as the first page
is concerned, yes?
A. That is correct.
Q. Now, what prompted you, Mr Taylor, to be writing to both
Presidents in those terms on that same day?
A. Well, if you see the content of the letter, it's really
about steps that we are taking in certain parts of the protocols
that we are trying to invoke at the time and I am writing the two
of them, explaining to them some of the parts, the articles that
we want to invoke, and also impressing upon their minds that they
had been told and warned about the presence of Liberians in
Sierra Leone and the conditions under which our understanding was
for their being there. So basically, that's what we did here.

We also did a similar letter to the Secretary-General at the same time.

Q. At the same time?

A. Just about. About a day - about a day or so after, but we informed the Secretary-General also.

Q. Now, can we look, please, behind divider 14? Do you recognise that document, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes. This is the letter that I wrote to the Secretary-General also detailing to him the parts of the Mano River Union treaties that we were invoking in our quest to continue to push for peace in Sierra Leone.

Q. Now, let us look at the terms of this letter. Now, we note the date, the 23rd of February. Yes, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, we do.

Q. So it's a day after the two letters written to President Kabbah and President Conte, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. "I am pleased to present my compliments, and, in reference to the Sierra Leonean conflict, take this opportunity to bring to your attention efforts the Government of Liberia is making to help ensure peace and security in our sister Republic of Sierra Leone and to our sub-region as a whole. The Government of Liberia has consistently and repeatedly called on its citizens to disengage from the Sierra Leonean conflict and return home. In furtherance of this pronouncement, the Government of Liberia has invoked Articles V, VI, VIII and IX of the non-aggression and security cooperation treaty between countries of the Mano River Union particularly Article VIII,
which provides that any member of the military or paramilitary
forces found within the territory of the 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 immediately be notified.

Article IX calls for the establishment of a joint security
liaison committee consisting of three representatives from each
high contracting party who shall have the responsibility to
liaise on the subject of fugitive criminals, dissidents, as well
as subversive active 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
addition, my government has called for the immediate appointment
of these members of the joint security liaison committee provided
for in that instrument.

Furthermore, we have proposed a convening of a ministerial
meeting of the Mano River Union on March 3, 1999, in Monrovia, to
develop a mechanism for the implementation of the non-aggression
and security cooperation treaty, and to prepare for a summit
meeting of the Heads of State.

In view of the above, we renew our many requests for the
United Nations to consider the deployment of observers-monitors
at the Liberia-Sierra Leonean border. This development will
enhance the measures we anticipate taking along with the other
members of the Mano River Union.

Excellency, I'm herewith requesting your personal support
and that of the Security Council on this initiative."

And it's signed by you, Mr Taylor, yes?
A. That is correct.

MR GRIFFITHS: Now, before we move on, could I ask,
Mr President, that the incomplete letter, which I accept is
incomplete, to President Conte, be marked for identification
MFI-76?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes. That document will be marked
MFI-76.

MR GRIFFITHS: And could I also ask that the letter to the
Secretary-General dated the 23rd, be also marked for
identification MFI-77, please?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes. That document is marked for
identification MFI-77.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. So, Mr Taylor, would it be fair to say that the documents
we've looked at set out various steps taken by the Liberian
government to reassure the international community and its
neighbours of its intent so far as Sierra Leone is concerned?

A. That is correct, yes.

Q. And help us: In all, how many steps were taken by your
government to assure the international community and your
neighbours, Mr Taylor?

A. There are just so many. So many. But what we did, we - I
had the foreign ministry and the minister of state and some other
officials put together a chronology for government use so we
could take a stock of what we were doing and how well we were
fairing in trying to fend off all of these what you call
diplomatic pressures, and that chronology we kept as an official
government document that - mostly of 1998 and up to 1999 we did a
chronology.
Q. Could I ask the witness, please, to look behind divider 13. Do you recognise that document, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, this is the chronology.

Q. And remind us, who created it?

A. My government.

Q. Why?

A. We wanted to take stock of exactly what we had done, the different events, and then, you know, document them and make sure that we had things in order. Because we were always confronted with some diplomatic pressure, and we could just refer and go back to the records and bring exactly what we had done.

Q. Now, we see that the chronology begins on 5 May 1998, is that correct?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now, is there any significance so far as that date is concerned, Mr Taylor?

A. May 5, 1998. Well, not particularly, but during this period all dates are important.

Q. Now, we see that on that date you had written to the Secretary-General denying allegations by the ministry of defence of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that the Government of Liberia was involved in the conflict in Sierra Leone, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now, do you recall who was the minister of defence in Nigeria at this time?

A. No, I do not.

Q. But who was head of the Nigerian administration at this time, May 1998?

A. May 1998, that's - this is just about the time we are
nearing - this is General Abdulsalami Abubakar nearing the Abacha
time now. This is May/June - this is probably Abacha. I think
Abacha died somewhere in May. I have forgotten the right day.
Q. We dealt with that last week. Abacha died in June.

A. June. So this is still Abacha.

Q. So the situation then, Mr Taylor is this: You supposedly
had a good relationship with President Abacha, didn’t you?
A. Yeah, but don’t forget now we’re saying that there was a
deterioration coming on toward the end of the Abacha years.

Q. But in any event, it’s during the currency of the Abacha
regime that this letter is being written about Liberian
involvement, yes?
A. That is correct.

Q. And so you, therefore, decided to write to the
Secretary-General to deny those allegations, yes?
A. Definitely.

Q. Did you speak to President Abacha about this?
A. I am more than sure I did. The fact that it is stated here
that the allegations came from the defence ministry, in
diplomatic terms, that’s something that I am sure I would have
raised with the President, because you don’t find ministries in
governments accusing other governments. It doesn’t happen. So
this looks like - as soon as I see the defence ministry, and when
we saw it, I am sure I spoke to Abacha about it and then raised
it immediately with the UN, because we are going through all this
little problem with the ECOMOG people in Liberia. And if there
is a formal allegation, it’s out of protocol for ministers or
ministries, as it is put here, to go on and make these kinds of
allegations. But this may be typical of the type of thing that
we saw in the foreign ministers' meeting where the Sierra Leonean foreign minister says something, General Shelpidi says something, then there is a closed meeting, and they put them out and then come up with a decision. So something like this I wouldn't - while it is not as serious as one would look at it, but we did take some steps immediately to try to fend it off, and there is no doubt in my mind that I would have spoken to Abacha about it.

Q. Well, it must have been serious, Mr Taylor, for you - to have caused you to write to the Secretary-General about it.

A. Yes, but we had written to the Secretary-General many other times about other allegations too about this Sierra Leonean situation. So what we are doing, any time these issues come up, we - the best thing to do is to deal with it immediately and deal with it at the level. Here is the Secretary-General; I am sure we probably raised it back with ECOWAS about it. But we just building up, because we can see how things are moving, and Abacha and I are having, even though some difficulties, but we are still talking.

Q. Now, in drawing up this chronology of measures taken by the Government of Liberia to dispel allegations regarding Liberia's support for the RUF junta, Mr Taylor, was this supposed to be a complete list of steps taken by the Government of Liberia?

A. No. This is, I would say at best, a very good accounting. But along the way there are - there could be problems or steps that the government took. But this is a very good listing of what - I guess what's important for us at the time of the document.

Q. For example, just so that we know how much assistance this chronology can provide us with, are telephone calls made by you
listed on this document?
A. No, no, no, telephones calls are not listed here.

Q. Or other communications between you and your brother Presidents in the region?
A. No, no, no, these are not - these are not listed here.

Q. But help us with this: Does this chronology cover the period when allegations began about the Government of Liberia?
A. Yes, let's - in fact, let's reflect a little bit. The first and foremost real allegation made is done around June of 1998, if my recollection serves me write, when Ambassador Okelo writes a note to the Security Council, and this starts this whole process. But his is now coming back from when? It's coming back from the intervention in February. So this period, going to March, April, May, this is the grinding-out period where there are a lot of accusations here, accusations there. And when you see the armed forces people of Nigeria making an allegation in May, it's also going back to what? The February situation: Liberians are killed; Liberians are captured. So that's the level of the allegation.

Q. Well, what I am trying to seek your assistance with, Mr Taylor, is this: Give us a rough idea, using this document and what you have just told us, roughly when was it that these allegations starting surfacing about Liberia's involvement?
A. Quite frankly, I would say immediately following the intervention, or thereabouts, we started hearing little gossips about Liberians and Liberians being involved in Sierra Leone.

Q. So that would be round about February of 1998 then?
A. That is correct.

Q. And then in May, therefore, we have this complaint being
made by the ministry of defence of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. And then in June we have the letter from the special representative of the Secretary-General to the Security Council?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now we see, moving on with this schedule, that on 29 May, so towards the end of May, you call President Kabbah for dialogue in Sierra Leone, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Now, help us with this.

PRESIDING JUDGE: What does that mean, that entry for the 29th? The accused has already said that this list doesn't include telephone calls, so what sort of calls are we talking about here?

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. What does that mean, Mr Taylor? You have heard the question.

A. When the issue of telephone calls came out, these documents do not list - what I would call it - the transcript of calls, we don't refer to that. But when it says here that President Taylor calls President Kabbah, calls for a dialogue, it is this particular call could be even a public statement for a dialogue. But in this particular case, it's probably a phone call saying, "Look, let's talk." But when I say that it does not include calls, it does not include all of the calls, may I qualify that, because there are hundreds of calls between President Kabbah and myself and they are not listed. That's how I was responding to the counsel's question, your Honour.
Q. So can you help us then as to so far as 29 May is concerned, is that a telephone call or is it a public statement?

Do we know?

A. This must be a telephone call that I called President Kabbah and called for a dialogue.

10:27:40

Q. Now, help us. Would this be the first time that you had ever called President Kabbah?

A. Oh, no, no, no, no. He and I had been speaking on numerous occasions. No.

10:28:01

Q. Because he had become President in 1996, hadn’t he?

A. Yes. And I had also - remember after my inauguration in 1997 I had gone to Conakry and we met, so Kabbah and I were not strangers.

Q. It follows on 4 June Vice-President Dogolea attends the Mano River Union summit held in Conakry, yes?

A. That is correct.

10:28:32

Q. And can you help us as to the purpose of that meeting?

A. This is the early stage of getting the Mano River Union operational and at this particular level, I did not go. The Vice-President attended that and this was - I am sure at this particular level the Heads of State were not meeting, so he went to this meeting.

10:28:53

Q. Then on 22 June the Government of Liberia issued a statement reiterating its position that it does not provide support to the RUF or junta in Sierra Leone. Now we looked at that letter, didn’t we?

A. Yes.

Q. That letter followed the meeting between the President of the Security Council and the head of your mission in New York?
A. That is correct.

Q. Then we come to 24 June 1998 where you dispatch a delegation to Sierra Leone to reaffirm the stated position of the Government of Liberia regarding Sierra Leone. Who was sent to Sierra Leone on that occasion, Mr Taylor?

A. I really cannot recall the individuals on this delegation, but the foreign minister headed this delegation. But the members of it, I don't know. This is the type of delegation that the foreign minister headed, yes.

Q. And what was the purpose of sending that delegation to Sierra Leone?

A. Well, you have these major allegations coming out. The special representative of the Secretary-General has written to Security Council, the Security Council President has met with my minister counsellor and what he has said in that meeting was that he expected a response from Liberia. We begin that process of trying to respond. And because of the good relationship with Sierra Leone, we immediately - this is just a diplomatic move to assure your neighbour and your colleague that there is no need to worry and that these are just mere allegations and there is nothing substantive to it. So you dispatch a high level delegation that would be someone like either your Vice-President or your foreign minister to go in, meet the Head of State, the President, explain to him, "Look, your brother wants to let you know that there is no need to worry, these are just allegations, and you have the full support of the government." That's what you would do.

Q. Now, remind us, Mr Taylor, what's the date of Liberia's Independence Day?
A. 26 July.
Q. I ask for this reason: You note that the next entry is for 20 July, yes?
A. Yes.

Q. Where you host President at Tejan Kabbah in Monrovia, is that right?
A. Yes, President Kabbah - this is this should be about the - this is the wrong typing here because Kabbah is in Monrovia for the 26th. So we come from - so this particular, it should be really 26 July and not 20 July.
Q. So that date we should correct to 26 July, should we?
A. That is correct. He attends the 26 July independence programme.
Q. And you spoke to him on that occasion, did you, about the situation and the allegations?
A. Yes, yes. But I think we should note something here for the Court. If there is this conflict so serious and Kabbah and I are virtually at blows, Kabbah wouldn't come to visit me at my independence celebration.

So this must be noted here. It is important that even while this is going on, even Kabbah himself, you don't just - when Presidents are at virtual war with each other, they don't go visiting like that. They probably meet at different conferences, at side bars and talk. But for Kabbah to leave Freetown and come to Liberia, it simply means that, what, at least the relationship is not cold, I will put it that way.
Q. So we see that that meeting reaffirms Liberia's commitment to the policy of non-aggression against the territorial integrity of Sierra Leone, yes?
A. That is correct.

Q. Now, we note, Mr Taylor, that the next entry is for 15 October 1998?

A. Yes.

Q. So there is a two month gap, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Because, just taking stock of where we've got to, we see various measures taken in May, June, July, particularly in June at the time of that meeting between the President of the Security Council and your representative to the United Nations, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. We then see a two month gap over the summer of 1998, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Then the next event is 15 October when the Government of Liberia denies allegations by Sierra Leone that Liberia deployed 5,000 troops on the border. That's an incident we've dealt with?

A. Yes.

Q. Which was investigated by the United Nations and the allegation was proved to be false. Is that correct?

A. That is correct.

Q. So that's in October. Then in November we see President Taylor confers with the Sierra Leonean ambassador to Liberia and expresses Liberia's intention to undertake talks with the RUF in advancement of dialogue in Sierra Leone. Is that right?

A. That's correct.

Q. Now note the date, Mr Taylor, 10 November 1998. Now, you told us about visits by Sam Bockarie to Liberia, yes?
A. Yes.

Q. Did Sam Bockarie come to Liberia in November 1998?

A. Yes. Sam Bockarie passed through Liberia, yes, at that time.

Q. Well, let's just remind ourselves, please. When was the first time Bockarie came to Liberia?

A. September.

Q. The second time?

A. October.

Q. And the next time?

A. Going through in November.

Q. Now, where it says here that you confer with the Sierra Leonean ambassador and express your intention to undertake talks with the RUF, why were you informing the Sierra Leonean embassy of that intent?

A. Well, when you see a statement like this made in diplomatic circles that you confer with ambassador, sometimes they are courtesy calls. When you have a good working relationship with a country there are numerous times the ambassador may come in to see you. So this is really a discussion where you say, "Listen, we are going to undertake" - because do not forget and for the records let's get it straight, you mentioned the two months. Just as a reflection, do not forget that we get this letter from our ambassador in August 1998 about the intention of Eddie Kanneh and Sam Bockarie to visit Liberia. We inform our colleagues. So even at this ambassadorial level their governments already know. And in September remember we are very busy with the fighting, this Johnson situation in Monrovia. So we have that situation.

So here we are, this is just merely a courtesy call where
we mention that, yes, we will be talking to the RUF. So this is not anything new. You have these discussions on courtesy calls all the time. So just look at this as a reiteration, we are reiterating to the ambassador for him to pass onto his government because you know that by this time, of course, all of the Heads of State of the committees know that Bockarie has already made a trip to Liberia. This is November. So they already know. So this is just a conversation, "Well, look, we will continue our discussions" and in a discussion like this we would have even briefed the ambassador to pass on some messages to his government about the details of the conversation.

Q. So, Mr Taylor, bluntly, was it your desire to keep your contact with the RUF secret?
A. No. How do you keep a secret when you are talking to the governments, ambassadors and everybody? Everyone knew Sam Bockarie came to Liberia. It was announced. It's nothing secret.

Q. Let's go over the page, shall we? That same month you attended the Mano River Union summit held in Conakry, yes?
A. That is correct.

Q. We need not delay with that. Then in December you received the chairman of the Security Council committee on sanctions against Sierra Leone, Ambassador Hans Dahlgren?
A. That is correct.

Q. And, as we see, reiterated Liberia's denial of any involvement in the Sierra Leonean conflict, yes?
A. Yes.

Q. Then we have that letter you wrote to the Secretary-General on 19 December 1998 regarding the issuance of arms by the Kabbah
government, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. And also elaborated on the efforts made by your government
to improve its relations with the Government of Sierra Leone?

A. That is correct.

Q. And on the same date a special statement was issued
concerning the closure of the Liberian border with Sierra Leone
and the deployment of units of the AFL on the border. We've
dealt with that letter, haven't we?

A. That is correct, yes.

Q. That statement?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. And then on Christmas Eve, your government dispatched more
troops to the Liberian-Sierra Leone border to obviate any
eventuality of being implicated in the Sierra Leonean imbroglio,
yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Late December the 28th, you call on the leadership in
Sierra Leone to show statesmanship by engaging the RUF in
dialogue, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. And a day after issues a policy statement calling on the
United Nations to establish a commission of inquiry regarding the
allegations and inviting Sierra Leone to join Liberia in a joint
patrolling exercise of the border.

Now, again, can we pause and take stock and note something
here, Mr Taylor.

A. Uh-huh.

Q. That in the month of December, there seems to be heightened
activity in this regard, doesn't there?
A. In the month of December, yes.
Q. Because we see 10 December, the 19th, the 24th, the 28th, the 29th, do you see that?
A. Yes, I do.
Q. And, of course, we need to remind ourselves what's going on across the border in this period leading up to the New Year? This is the period when an advance is taking place on Freetown which culminates on 6 January, yes?
A. That is correct, yes.
Q. And so there is this heightened activity in that period, yes?
A. Yes.
Q. Let's go over the page. January 6 you write to the President of the Security Council reiterating the government's determination to normalise relations with Sierra Leone and renewing your call for the deployment of UN observers on the Liberia Sierra Leone border, is that right?
A. That is right.
Q. And then on the 9th, you call for an ECOWAS emergency session on Sierra Leone?
A. Yes.
Q. Then between the 10th and the 16th a high level delegation led by Vice President Dogolea visits Abuja, Accra and Lome to pursue the same issue, yes?
A. Yes. What is going on here, let's go back to the 9th. We do call for this emergency session. What he is travelling around is briefing Heads of State. We must - under the rules, you must - for any member state to call for an emergency session, you need
to get the concurrence of - I think it's about 50 per cent of
those willing to attend. And so he is going around because
within this period, we are working on getting a ceasefire. So we
are also trying to get this emergency session to deal with this
whole issue of the ceasefire in Sierra Leone.

Q. Now, on 14 January you announce an undertaking by the RUF
to agree to a ceasefire in response to a request by Liberia?
A. That is correct.

Q. Now, help us: How did it come about that it was you who
was making that announcement?
A. Because, don't forget now, there are three countries
responsible - or charged with the responsibility: Liberia,
Cote d'Ivoire, and Ghana are charged with the responsibility of
engaging the RUF and the junta. I am the point guard, so to
speak, on this effort. And you get to see, because there is
absolutely no connection between what Guinea is doing in this
particular situation, so the contacts are being made by me. Why?
At this time Sam Bockarie has already been to Liberia, the first
time, the second time, and has come through the third time. So
it is obvious that these contacts with are being made and the
information shared with my colleagues.

Q. Now, I want a bit more detail about that, Mr Taylor. So in
obtaining that agreement to a ceasefire, in practical terms, what
did that involve? Did it involve contact between you and
representatives of the RUF, for example?
A. Yes. We were - maybe something slipped that we haven't
gotten in here. Liberia being taken as almost the frontline
mediator on this thing, we had a senior foreign ministry official
responsible for the Sierra Leonean - what we call portfolio. I
am sorry, he is now dead. The deputy minister of foreign
affairs, Tambakai Jangaba --
Q. Could you spell that for us?
late now. He was the senior Liberian government official that
dealt with the day-to-day situation. In fact, we do have a
picture of him. He was also in Lome for these talks. We have
these ongoing talks. I mentioned to this Court - and I hope that
it is reflected somewhere - immediately following the January 6
invasion, by the 7th there were discussions that we were briefed
on that were held between President Tejani Kabbah and Foday
Sankoh. Immediately after that failed situation, okay? We were
briefed on this and this whole idea, okay, of getting back to the
peace table evolved almost immediately from ECOWAS; that at this
particular time it was important to go back to the November 1996
agreement. I keep emphasising this because it is, I would say,
these sets of discussions that finally, finally brought about
what we saw at the end in July 1999 in Lome.
So the actions that we had taken now, we had taken it in
concert. There are deliberations. And in fact, when you see,
for example, on the 14th President Taylor announces an
undertaking by the RUF, before you make this announcement, even
though it is coming from me, you have already informed everyone
what you have obtained, they accept it, and then you make that
announcement. There is nothing unilateral about these kinds of
activities in diplomacy. You have to inform people.
So most times when you hear states making announcements, it
does not mean that others have not been fully briefed. They are
briefed. But you have - you negotiated it, you've informed your
1 colleagues, they say, "Well, go ahead," and then you put it out.
2 That's for the outside world. But those are that are involved
3 have been informed before the announcement is made.
4 Q. So I take it it follows, then, that the ceasefire had been
5 secured prior to the 14th when it was announced?
7 Q. Now, I am helpfully reminded, Mr Taylor - I wonder if we
8 could just go back a page, please, and it's on that issue we
9 looked at right at the beginning as to the completeness of this
10 chronology. Looking at the month of December --
11 A. Yes.
12 Q. Yes, looking at this month of December, where
13 you - December 19, a special statement concerning the closure of
14 the Liberian border. Help me, had the border been closed prior
15 to that special statement being made?
16 A. The borders were closed several times: Closed/open,
17 closed/open. This is just another time of the closure. This was
18 not the first closure.
19 Q. I see. Okay. Let's go back then, please, and pick up the
20 chronology.
21 Help us, please, with the entry at January 22; what does
22 that mean?
23 A. January 22, that's the foreign minister of Liberia
24 underscores Liberia's interest in witnessing peace in
25 Sierra Leone.
26 Q. That's Monie Captan, yes?
27 A. Yes, that's the foreign minister informing.
28 Q. Then on 25 January in your state of the union address, you
29 declare an intention to contribute to the peace process in
Sierra Leone; is that correct?

A. Yes. The state of the union address, just for some context, that's the address to a joint session of the national legislature and because, just like in the case of the United States, because we operate similarly, because the legislature is not responsible for foreign policy, we are making the statement as a type of information. It doesn't mean that it is not ongoing, but we just underscore this.

Q. Now, why did your government decide to issue a white paper on the Sierra Leonean crisis on January 26, 1999?

A. Well, as we are going along, we are just - this white paper really is an official statement. Really, it's an official statement issued by the government, and I'm sure this is through the foreign ministry. But it's just a continuation of making sure that we are very crystal clear about where we stand on the issue.

Q. And then we see on 8 February 1999, the Government of Liberia welcomes the decision of President Kabbah to open dialogue with the RUF, yes?

A. Yes. President Kabbah in February publicly announces this whole concept of dialogue that the committee had been talking about for a long time. He goes public this time and says that he is prepared to open dialogue, and it is also around this time that in the background the groundwork had been laid for discussions for formal ceasefire into an agreement, and the background had already been set for the Lome Agreement - I mean, excuse me, the agreement - for the Lome discussions. So this decision on Kabbah's part to open a dialogue, he is hinting that we are about to start talking. This is what this really is
Q. And what was it your view regarding the opening of such dialogue between President Kabbah and the RUF?

A. Personally, I was happy because my role as mediator was - in a way, there was a plus to what we were doing and we felt good about it - and I am saying "we" because I am talking about members of the committee - felt good about it, that after these discussions, in fact, President Kabbah had met with Foday Sankoh again, I think a day or two before his decision, from information that we were fed, that he had met with Kabbah - I mean, with Sankoh, and Sankoh had also met with some of his principal people. Don't forget now, Sankoh is also incarcerated, okay, but he is meeting with him. So this particular pronouncement now simply means that all of the little pieces have been put in place to begin major talks.

Q. Now, did you consider such dialogue as being the best way forward?

A. Oh, definitely. Definitely, yes.

Q. And then we see in the day after you call on Foday Sankoh to exercise leadership in ensuring an end to the Sierra Leone conflict. What prompted you to do that?

A. We have already discussed. We know that we are going to - I know that Kabbah has met Foday Sankoh in Freetown. I know that. I know that Foday Sankoh has already met some of his senior people during these discussions and he is incarcerated. So I am making this pronouncement because I know the background of what is going on. So I already am aware of the meetings in Sierra Leone between Kabbah, Foday Sankoh and some of Foday Sankoh's senior people.
And so with this, this is just another move on Heads of State part to say, "Listen, we call on this person to do this," and he, Foday Sankoh, would be told from the news reports that President Taylor and other leaders in ECOWAS are calling upon you to show leadership.

Q. Now, that suggests that hitherto he showed a lack of leadership, doesn't it?
A. Well, I wouldn't put it quite that way. I wouldn't put it quite that way, counsel. I would just say that these are diplomatic statements. It doesn't mean that you had not done it before. It simply means that you should maybe push it a little further.

Q. Well, he had in a sense sabotaged the Abidjan Peace Agreement, hadn't he, Mr Taylor, in November 1996?
A. Well, I am not - I don't know all of what happened during the Abidjan agreement talks. I am not - all I know is that an agreement finally came out. I was not privy to what was going on at that particular time, so I don't know if any sabotage occurred, but I do know that an agreement was finalised.

Q. At this time, Mr Taylor, were you in direct contact with Foday Sankoh?
A. No, no. Foday Sankoh at this time, don't let's forget, he is incarcerated. Foday Sankoh at this time is already found guilty and is condemned I think to hanging. No, no, no. No one - I have no contact. The only contact that I have is with the President and what they are doing in Sierra Leone. No, I have no contact with him.

Q. What about contact with any of his subordinates?
A. Definitely. We have contact with the RUF people, with
Bockarie, them, and the other people inside Sierra Leone. We do have contact with them.

Q. What about one Gibril Massaquoi?

A. Gibril Massaquoi, not at that particular time. I know Gibril, but Gibril comes on later. I don't have any direct contact with Gibril at this time to the best of my recollection. Later on, yes.

Q. Let's go to the final page then, shall we. We see 16 February, the Liberian Senate conducts a hearing on the issue of accusations levelled against Liberia. Is that correct?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now you mentioned that yesterday, didn't you?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. In relation to Chapter 11 of the Liberian penal code?

A. That's correct.

Q. And its consequent implication of you in criminal activity as President of the country?

A. That is correct.

Q. And that's why the Liberian Senate took the step to conduct such a hearing, is that right?

A. That is correct.

Q. Then on 17 February police apprehend alleged collaborators of the RUF. Tell us about that, please.

A. There was I think reports that reached me. The details I would have to really reflect on. But there was a company called Red Deer I think that was operating out of Liberia where the British national - and apparently they had been working or doing some work for the RUF that we were not aware of. And so the police raided them, arrested them. They were - in fact, the
British national was thrown out of Liberia for what he was doing. All of the equipment, computers and different things were seized and the operations were closed down. That's what I know.

Q. What work were they doing for the RUF?

A. In fact, what was found at that place, we saw some suits of uniform, military uniform. The police seized I think hand-held walkie-talkies. There were quite a few things that - in fact, the Sierra Leoneans that were involved were also expelled. In fact, there was someone connected at the Sierra Leonean embassy that was also connected with that and because of his diplomatic immunity he was also expelled. But the Government of Sierra Leone was fully briefed about what was going on during this time.

We were asked to turn the British national over to ECOMOG.

We did not. We just declared him persona non grata and threw him out of the country. In fact, we were very enraged by this because we saw it, quite frankly, and I may have been wrong at the time, we saw it more as an intelligence ploy because we - in fact, we accused the British national of working for I think MI5 or 6 because we could not understand how they were operating this so-called Red Deer company in such secrecy but were in touch with a few Sierra Leonean that were connected with the RUF. We did not understand it and how could that be because there is a Sierra Leonean diplomat who is also going in and out of this property and was arrested. We couldn't hold him because of his diplomatic status. We threw him out.

So we saw this as an intelligence ploy that some major you know western intelligence agency had put together, but we were glad that we broke it up. We exposed it. We informed the
Sierra Leonean government about it. So we closed that right
down.

Q. What do you mean that a Sierra Leonean diplomat was
visiting the company?

A. Yes. We arrested him. We couldn't hold him because he had
diplomatic immunity, but we did expel him from Liberia. That's
what we couldn't understand. There were uniforms. They had
military uniforms, like I say walkie-talkies and we just couldn't
understand it because we had not been informed by the RUF that
they had any representatives at that place in Monrovia and they
were operating something like - at the front they had offices, at
the back they had warehouses and the police raid took everything
from them.

In fact, we really thought that the British were behind
this. We didn't accuse them formally but this was the thinking
at the time because how could the RUF be operating in Monrovia in
Liberia and carrying out actions against Sierra Leone with a
Sierra Leonean diplomat going to the property. So it was just an
intelligence ploy I think that they set up to do this and he got
caught red handed and thrown out of the country.

JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, if I may enquire, why did
the Government of Liberia come to the conclusion that these were
collaborators of the RUF?

THE WITNESS: They were RUF individuals - some of the
individuals arrested said that they were RUF personnel. Most of
them that were there were RUF personnel and that's what was
strange to us. They had admitted to being RUF personnel. But
the presence of this Caucasian British national that is operating
this company and the presence - the frequent presence of a
Sierra Leonean diplomat caused us to have questions about what was really going on there.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, what was your conclusion as to the intent behind British intelligence setting up such an operation in Liberia?

A. I think this was an attempt to show Liberia's involvement with the RUF and helping them out. This was what came to our minds.

Q. What, like a sting operation?

A. No. Based on your question, this whole plan was I think to showcase the idea that Liberia is involved in helping RUF people. And I guess at some later point they would have probably leaked the information that there is a place in Liberia where even though the Liberian government is denying, but there are RUF collaborators there, you know, operating. I think this is what they wanted to do.

I think a sting operation is a little different. A sting operation, if my understanding is correct, is when you carry out raids. So if there was a sting operation, the sting operation was carried out by the Government of Liberia. But the British intelligence ploy is not a sting operation. We carried out the sting operation by razing the place and arresting those involved.

Q. Now we see that thereafter - that was on the 17th. Thereafter on the 23rd you invited members of the Mano River Union to a ministerial meeting on 3 March that we have dealt with. Then on the 24th, so that's what --

A. This is --

Q. A week after. The Government of Liberia declares a Sierra Leonean diplomat persona non grata for alleged involvement
in acts incompatible with his duties as a diplomat. It also
frees the alleged collaborators in the case involving the Red
Deer International company. That's what you have just been
telling us about, yes?

A. Yes, that's correct.

MR GRIFFITHS: Let's leave that document behind but before
I do can I ask, please, that this chronology of measures taken by
the Government of Liberia to dispel allegations regarding
Liberia's support to the RUF junta be marked for identification

MFI-78, please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes. That document is marked for
identification MFI-78.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, you had told us about the disarmament
process which had taken place during - well, tell us when,

disarmament?

A. Disarmament started late '96 into '97.

Q. Now, help us. What had happened to those arms?

A. All of the arms were kept by the ECOMOG and UN observers in
Liberia. All.

Q. And where were they stored?

A. They were stored at ECOMOG headquarters.

Q. And what was the intention so far as what was going to
happen to those arms?

A. Well, there was a long debate over what should happen to
the arms. In fact, at the legislative level, at the cabinet
level, some ideas came that the good arms should be kept for a
restructured army and the bad ones should be destroyed, but we
had pressure from all over. In fact, the United States, our good
friends, insisted. I remember Howard Jeter telling me, "Mr President, we think that the destruction of all of these arms will send a proper signal that Liberia wants to put the war years behind it."

Quite frankly, a lot of our people did not like it, but eventually because we had been told by all of our good friends that if and when you did this a lot of doors would open up for Liberia, we finally decided to destroy all of the arms.

Q. Now, the discussions regarding that destruction began when?

A. I would say, oh, it runs several months. It runs several months, but it is concluded around late February, at least February where the final decisions are taken, I write to the Secretary-General, he responds finally and so I would put it to around this first quarter of '99.

Q. Now you appear to be suggesting, Mr Taylor, that you were hoping to ingratiate yourself with the Americans by carrying out this destruction?

A. I wouldn't put it quite that way, counsel. What I would say, if I - as I have recounted our interaction with the United States, while we were very firm as a small poor weak country because of our own dignity, we were not anti-America. And as a matter of fact let me say no Liberian President, none now, yesterday or probably in the future, will ever be successful unless there is a good relationship with the United States. So we were still hoping that we could build this strong relationship that we always had.

Q. Now did you have any access or control over those arms, Mr Taylor?

A. None whatsoever. None.
Q. Who had control over them?
A. ECOMOG and the United Nations had those arms at ECOMOG base under lock and key 24 hours a day.

Q. Now, at this time did you have any concerns about external threats to Liberia?
A. Oh, yes. Oh, yes. We were getting information about possible attacks. Yes, we were very concerned about our inability to defend ourselves.

Q. Well if there was such an inability, why were you putting the Republic at risk by discussing the destruction of arms?
A. Well, in the first place we didn't have the arms physically. As long as they were there, well, fine, that was one thing. But don't let's forget during this time we know that ECOMOG is also looking at the possibilities of a pull out, but there was a programme that had been agreed upon of capacity building and so we were looking at the restructuring of the armed forces. And let me just state that the United Nations at this time was already engaged in police training - in a police training exercise. They had started training policemen. So to a great extent we were still looking at the goodwill of the international community and a small contingent left behind by ECOMOG and, if there was a threat, we were counting again on ECOWAS, you know, to act because after all ECOMOG had moved next door in Sierra Leone and so they were not very far.

Q. Now, you spoke of discussions with the United States regarding the destruction of these arms. Was there anyone in particular --
A. Yes.
Q. -- you discussed this matter with?
A. Yes. We - I personally discussed this matter at length with the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State at that time, Howard Jeter, but also we had a retired United States general, General Yerks, that we had also asked on one of his trips back to the United States - small countries do this. You try to find friends.

And let me just mention right off the bat that General Yerks was not hired by the Liberian government. He was not paid any money. He was not paid any fees. Just as a friend of Liberia we asked him to talk to some of his friends at State that he knew very well to see what their real intentions were and as to whether they really meant business, because there were many other issues being discussed at that time. We were discussing arms, but America also had interest in the Mobil situation that I mentioned yesterday. So there were several issues on the table and sometimes it is good to get a neutral person to just go in and throw a few things around. So we spoke to General Yerks about that too.

Q. And did he conduct those enquiries for you?

A. Yes, General Yerks met with several individuals at State and he wrote a letter back to me detailing what their interests were and me gave some advice as to how he thought we could proceed without any hiccups. And, of course, these were just suggestions that we could take or leave, but he wrote me a full letter on that.

Q. Have a look, please, behind divider 16. Do you recognise that document, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, this is it.

Q. What is it?
A. This is the letter from General Yerks to me detailing the meetings who he had met at the State Department and coming up with some ideas of what he felt could move things forward.

Q. Now, we see from the date that it’s the - that’s the date received, yes?

A. Yes. If you look at the very top of the page, that would be a better understanding of the date that it came through.

Q. There appears to be a facsimile reference at the top?

A. Yes.

Q. Which is the 18 February and then we have handwritten to the right that it was received on 24 February, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Now just to remind ourselves to keep the chronology in mind, 24 February is the date from that last chronology you looked at when the Sierra Leonian diplomat was declared persona non grata so we keep up to date with this chronology of events. Now we see that this letter is addressed to you, the President of the Republic of Liberia, and it reads as follows:

"Dear Mr President:

I hasten to forward this note on the most positive enthusiastic reaction I received from the US Department of State reporting on my recent visit with you. Contacts have been made with Secretary Rice, Ambassador Jeter, Deputy Secretary Huddleston and Liberian Desk Officer List."

What's a Liberian Desk Officer List?

A. At the State Department, there are desk officers for countries. Before you even get to the level of deputy assistant secretary, there is that person responsible. And let me just add here for the Court, this Secretary Rice is not Condoleezza Rice.
It is then the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Susan Rice, who is presently US ambassador at the United Nations. That's somebody's name, List.

Q. List?

A. Yes.

Q. "The overwhelming consensus was the time has come to break sword and extend the olive branch in US/Liberian relations." Can you explain what you understood by that, "break sword and extend the olive branch"? What did you understand by that?

A. Our understanding at this time was that over the years of my presidency they had shown indifference and that they were prepared to turn a new page. This is how we interpreted it.

Q. "I have convinced them that your intention is and has been that, and their stated intention to me was likewise. The key to success in our mutual task is to show by action not rhetoric, on both sides, the sincerity of each one's purpose.

Your initiatives in brokering ceasefire in Sierra Leone, your meeting with President Kabbah, your being amenable to reason in the disposition of recovered arms all were forcibly pointed out by me and admirably commented upon by them. I do have a personal opinion on the disposition of arms. I seriously suspect the recovered arms will be of minimal usability given the lack of maintenance, et cetera. It would be a magnanimous gesture on your part to agree to their total destruction which in turn could lead to an early lifting of the arms embargo. This would allow too the expeditious refit of your national force. I emphasise the absolute need for you to reconstitute Liberia's armed forces and of your duty to your citizens to provide for their national security. I am convinced the department gave a little on this
point and recognised the need as long as the force is not projected outside of Liberia. To State's credit they were, prior to the Sierra Leone crisis, championing the effort to provide you with US Department of Defence assistance teams. I will follow up on this with Secretary Cohen."

Who is Secretary Cohen?

A. This is Herman Cohen.

Q. “The avoidance of even the perception of monopolies was a signal major point of their concern. I reviewed with them your decision to proceed at haste to bring Mobil back in country."

Pause there. "Perception of monopolies", what's that about?

A. They had misinterpreted the laws of Liberia as regards what I mentioned earlier here I think during the week or last week, regarding the functions of the Liberian National Petroleum Company. That is not - this is what we call in Liberia a public corporation that has as its duty under the laws of Liberia the importation of hydrocarbons, but they saw that as one company that the government wanted to use and we kept saying, "No, no, that's the law." The law is that the Liberian National Petroleum Company is responsible for the importation of petroleum products. It does not do it itself. It grants licences to do it. It didn't do it itself, but they didn't understand it.

And Mobil wanted to do this outside of the Liberian National Petroleum Company. We refused. They pushed it several times and we just got upset and told them they had to close down if they were going to continue to violate the laws. That whether we liked the laws or not, the laws are there and until they are changed no-one will be permitted to break them. So we had to
close Mobil down and throw them out of the country.

Q. “I reviewed with them your decision to proceed at haste to bring Mobil back in country. I was quite surprised at the great importance they placed on this matter.”

Who is the “they”?

A. Oh, State. State Department. They were - you know, Mobil is a major multinational and so they were very adamant they wanted Mobil back and all this other talk was about Mobil.

Q. “The Deputy Secretary stated the Mobil return in a meaningful manner will be closely watched as a major signal monopolies are indeed past. This is imperative and will lead to the opening up of productive input from donor nations and country plans from the IMF and World Bank.”

Mr Taylor, what is this saying? That, unless you let Mobil back into the country, you are not going to get any aid from IMF and the World Bank?

A. Yes, that’s exactly what he said here. And I have been talking about it here. Little countries go through this all - there is nothing new here. Don’t let’s forget now, we see here IMF, Europe, World Bank, the United States. The United States controls the World Bank and as long as a major multinational like Mobil, by not permitting Mobil to break our laws, our whole country was being held, what, at ransom for this particular act. But this is not unusual for little countries. Little countries go through this all the time. And so for them, you bring Mobil back, you talk to the World Bank, you talk to the IMF and we open up some doors for you. You don’t bring them back, you get nothing. It happens all the time. Nobody is shocked by this.

Q. “This is imperative and will lead to the opening of
productive input from donor nations and country plans from the IMF and World Bank. I strongly urge your good adviser Brown and director Dunbar finalise a meeting with Mobil and other friends in Monrovia within two weeks and suggest you clearly and personally impress upon them your desire to make this Mobil effort work. I will try to attend as well if conditions and logistics permit."

Who is adviser Brown?

A. That's the adviser to the Liberian National Petroleum Company.

Q. And who is director Dunbar?

A. That's the head of the Liberian national petroleum agency.

Q. What's his name?

A. This here is not a his, not his at this time. The director is a lady. Brown is a man. Lewis Brown. And the director there is Belle Dunbar.

Q. Belle Dunbar. "In summary, I trust I am not too presumption in suggesting a few near term actions." Top of the list, one: "Conclude Mobil meeting and quickly release/announce the event." Two: "Seriously consider destruction of recovered arms and inform, publicly, Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Three: "Announce your invitation for US Department of Defence assistance teams to come to Liberia. This will not happen until the arms embargo is lifted, but you will be on record and the arms initiative I suggested above would complement the lifting. The invite should go through state. Continue high profile your efforts to broker a ceasefire in Sierra Leone. Your leadership here is essential to success. These were the major items discussed. I will meet with
Secretary Rice when she returns from South Africa. As I continue to press efforts here to benefit the good people of Liberia, my intention is to coordinate closely with Ambassador Rachel Diggs, Adviser Brown, and Counsellor Pierre. God bless in your efforts for peace. General Yerks."

Now, effectively then, Mr Taylor, you were being told what timetable to follow, weren't you?

A. Yes, you could say that.

Q. Now, help us. What happened with the Mobil situation?

A. We eventually brought Mobil back. We brought Mobil back and they agreed to work with the Liberian National Petroleum Company. In effect here we were really squeezed, but we had to. You know, we wanted to move forward, and we did.

Q. So Mobil came back. Were the arms destroyed?

A. Yes, remember we --

Q. When were the arms destroyed?

A. The destructions started somewhere I will say around March. As we go forward we destroyed them. I am not being precise here because it was done over time. It took about close to two months to destroy the millions of rounds of ammunition. So it took --

Q. We will come to that, Mr Taylor. I am just looking at this checklist of what you had to do. I note the time.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, I think we will take the morning break now and resume at 12 o'clock.

[Break taken at 11.30 a.m.]

[Upon resuming at 12.00 p.m.]

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, please continue, Mr Griffiths.

MR GRIFFITHS: May it please your Honours:

Q. Mr Taylor, prior to the short adjournment we were looking
at this letter behind divider 16. Could we return to it, please.

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Now, we were looking at the various steps which had been set out and which you were being invited to adopt with a view to obtaining an assistance from, amongst others, the IMF and the World Bank, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Now, you've already agreed with me that Mobil was allowed back into the country?

A. That is correct.

Q. The destruction of the arms began in 1999?

A. That is correct.

Q. Did you announce an invitation for the US Department of Defence assistance teams to come to Liberia?

A. Yes, we did.

Q. When did you do that?

A. Just before we started the full destruction of the arms, what we did - the actual meaning of this was we invited them to come to undertake the process of retraining the armed forces. That's what he means by defence assistance team. So we did do that. Just before the destruction started.

Q. And the fourth thing that you were being asked to do was to continue high profile your efforts to broker a ceasefire in Sierra Leone, yes?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. And did you continue to do that?

A. Oh, yes, we worked - not just because of this, but because of our obligation also with ECOWAS, we continued the work, yes.
Q. Now help us, please, Mr Taylor, with this: Here is a letter setting out, in effect, a programme which you should adopt in order to receive the assistance referred to from donor nations and country plans from the IMF and the World Bank, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Now help us, please. At this point in time as President of the Republic of Liberia what was your priority: Getting your economy back on its feet; reorganising the Liberia army possibly with the assistance of the Americans; or was it, as suggested, assisting the RUF next door in Sierra Leone? What was your priority?

A. Getting my country going and making sure that we would receive the assistance from the international community that we needed so badly. This is 1999. I'm elected in 1997. Nothing is happening. Nothing is going on except Sierra Leone, Sierra Leone, Sierra Leone. That's all that is going on.

Liberia is not moving and all I'm trying to do - again, I emphasise, what General Yerks did here was just, you know, we sent out feelers. This is what we got, "Look, if you do this, it does not necessarily mean that everything that they promised would happen but at least it would be a start", and we did these things because we wanted to get the country going.

I don't have any money in the country. I don't have an army. I don't have a police. I have no assistance from the IMF. I have no assistance from the World Bank. I have no assistance from any - also in this letter he talked about donor countries. The European Union, that's the buzz word for other donor countries. Nothing is coming in. The only thing I'm thinking
about is how can I satisfy some of these conditionalities after conditionalities to get my country going and the last thing on my mind is trying to help a rebel group in Sierra Leone. That's the last thing on my mind.

MR GRIFFITHS: I ask that that letter from General Yerks, dated 18 February 1999, be marked for identification MFI-79 please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That document is marked MFI-79 for identification.

MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, over the course of going through the chronology of events we've looked at various reports of the Secretary-General of the United Nations observer mission in Sierra Leone.

A. That's correct.

Q. And we've observed that the Secretary-General was mandated by the United Nations to produce such reports at regular intervals.

A. That is correct.

Q. Now the last such report we looked at was dated 7 January 1999, wasn't it?

A. That is correct.

Q. Immediately after the Freetown invasion. Do you recall when the next such report was issued?

A. Yes, the 30 days, 60 days interval, so early March the Secretary-General did a full report accounting for the period between 7 January all the way - that's around the very first few days of March.

Q. Let us look, please, at the document behind divider 17. Do
you have it?

A. Yes, I do. This is it. It's the fifth report, yes. This is it.

Q. Now we see that this document, Mr Taylor, is dated 4 March 1999, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. And as you've already observed this is the fifth report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations observer mission, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. And if we just briefly look at some of paragraph 1, it provides that:

"The Security Council requested me to keep the Council closely informed on the situation in Sierra Leone and to submit a further report by 5 March with recommendations on the future deployment of the United Nations observer mission in Sierra Leone."

Now moving to paragraph 2, "Rebel attack on Freetown and its aftermath":

"As described in my report of 7 January ..., which we've looked at, "... rebel fighters belonging to the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the Revolutionary United Front attacked Freetown on 6 January 1999. The rebels attacked the city from the east and penetrated as far as the centre which they held for four days before being forced to withdraw by a counterattack. The fighting resulting in the deaths of between 3,000 and 5,000 persons, including rebel fighters, soldiers of ECOMOG, members of the CDF militia who were defending the capital and large numbers of civilian inhabitants. Many civilians were
severely mutilated by the rebels. Up to 150,000 people were

displaced in and around Freetown, and the rebels burnt down large

numbers of public buildings and homes."

Then at paragraph 3:

"After fierce fighting, ECOMOG forces located in the

western part of Freetown reinforced from the main ECOMOG base at

Lungi managed to expel the rebels and regain control of the city.

However, several thousand rebels are thought to remain in the

peninsula mountains surrounding Freetown despite ECOMOG and CDF

efforts to dislodge them. It is also believed that unknown

numbers of rebels might have infiltrated the city and remain

there ready to launch further attacks. Consequently the security

situation in Freetown, despite recent improvements, should still

be considered volatile. On 24 February ECOMOG succeeded in

expelling the rebels from Waterloo, although they remain in a

position to cut the main road from Freetown to Bo and Kenema.

The rebels are now thought to control much of the north of

the country, though ECOMOG has, with varying success, contested

rebel control around Lunsar, Port Loko and Kambia and retains

possession of Kabala and Bumbuna. In the south, ECOMOG has

repulsed several rebel attacks on Kenema. Around Bo, the second

largest city in Sierra Leone, the situation remains calm but

tense. Rebel forces reportedly rely on some foreign mercenaries,

including some Europeans and Liberians, and are reported to be

receiving weapons from outside the country.

During the crisis, which began in mid-December, ECOMOG

received several thousand reinforcements from Nigeria, Ghana,

Guinea and Mali. However, some doubt has been cast over the

longer term future of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone in light of
statements made by candidates in the Nigerian elections. The contribution of Nigeria to ECOMOG has been so central that ECOMOG's military viability could be threatened if that contribution were reduced. Though efforts to create a Sierra Leonean army deserve further support, the army is unlikely to be able to bear the burden alone, at least for the foreseeable future."

It then goes on to deal with UNOMSIL personnel. We need not bother with that, but just briefly skimming paragraph 7 note:

"Following rebel offensive in December and January, ex-soldiers in the disarmament and demobilisation camp at Lungi were relocated by the government in Freetown. The majority of them appear to have either joined the rebels or disappeared."

Let's go to paragraph 9, please, over the page. Again, just skimming at line 3:

"During the rebel attack on Freetown more than 200 policemen and members of their families were killed and police equipment and infrastructure were destroyed, including the criminal investigation department headquarters and all its files, records and documentation. The Pademba Road prison was also broken into and all of the prisoners escaped, a situation which poses a serious security threat. This has significantly impaired the government's efforts to maintain law and order in the city."

Then let's come now in a bit more detail to look at paragraphs 10 and 11 through to 14:

"The Government of Sierra Leone has continued to refine its policy with regard to negotiations with the rebels and to take initiatives accordingly. On 7 January, President Kabbah met with Corporal Foday Sankoh ..."
Pause there. When did you first learn of that meeting, Mr Taylor?

A. Immediately after it happened.

Q. And how did you find out?

A. Because Kabbah told us. He told me and other members.

Q. How?

A. By telephone.

Q. "... the leader of the RUF in an effort to arrange a ceasefire. On 16 January, the President issued a statement reiterating his readiness to pursue political dialogue and repeating his offer of amnesty to the rebels."

On 7 February 1999, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah delivered a radio broadcast in which he again indicated his readiness to engage in a dialogue with the rebel leaders and to allow Foday Sankoh to meet other RUF leaders, provided that the RUF accepted the legitimacy of the government. The President stated that the Abidjan Peace Agreement of November 1996 could be used as a frame of reference for such a dialogue.

On 21 February, President Kabbah addressed the people of Sierra Leone in a nationwide radio broadcast in which he called on the Security Council, especially its permanent members, to exert pressure on those states and individuals who continue to supply the weapons and logistics which are being used to kill Sierra Leoneans. President Kabbah stated that it was no longer enough for the Council to condemn the activities of the rebels but to consider the possibility of taking further action, not excluding the threat of force, against the rebels in order to give effect to the Council's previous demands that the rebels cease all violence and seek genuine dialogue for the restoration
of lasting peace and stability in Sierra Leone. President Kabbah also reasserted his government's determination to defend the territory of Sierra Leone.

On 25 February, the ministry of information, communications, tourism and culture reaffirmed the government's commitment to dialogue with the rebels, stressing the crucial importance of seeking the views and suggestions of the civil society and expressing the government's readiness to review the Abidjan Peace Agreement in the light of the prevailing situation.

On 28 February, President Kabbah again addressed the nation in a radio broadcast in which he agreed that Foday Sankoh and RUF members could hold their internal consultations in Lome or Bamako."

Pause there. Mr Taylor, were you aware of that?

A. Oh, yes, these were the two choices. I had spoken about this before.

Q. And, Mr Taylor, how were these RUF members to get to either Lome or Bamako?

A. The arrangements were made through the discussions that they would all come to Liberia under, you know, UN auspices along with the Liberian government and they will be transported via Liberia to Lome.

Q. And we will come in due course, will we not, to look at the discussions which took place to arrange those transport arrangements, won't we?

A. Definitely, yes.

Q. "He stressed that following these consultations, the RUF leader should be returned to Freetown to resume his appeal against his conviction for treason and related offences. The
President also called for the immediate release of all civilians being held in detention by the rebels, including children and women whom they had abducted during the recent attack on Freetown.

Let's ignore the next paragraph and go to paragraph 16:

These diplomatic activities culminated in the meeting in Conakry on 29 January of the Heads of State of the three troop contributing countries of ECOMOG: Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria. At that meeting, President Rawlings, President Conte and President Abubakar agreed on the need to convene an ECOWAS summit meeting on Sierra Leone to be followed by a visit by representatives of the ECOMOG Committee of Six on Sierra Leone to New York to brief the Security Council. The Committee of Six on Sierra Leone comprises those three countries as well as Togo, Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia. The three Heads of State also instructed their ministers for foreign affairs to develop a strategy for pursuing the dual-track approach outlined in paragraph 15 above.

Following a visit to Freetown from 13 to 16 February for consultations with the government, my special representative met with representatives of the RUF in Abidjan.

Pause there. Mr Taylor, given your role on the Committee of Six on Sierra Leone, you've already described contact that you had with the RUF.

A. Yes.

Q. Were you also aware that the United Nations were themselves in contact with the RUF?

A. They were talking to them too, yes. We were aware. There was nothing hidden about that, yes.

Q. And were you aware of this meeting in Abidjan between the
UN special representative with the RUF in Abidjan?

A. Yes, this was under really the auspices of the Ivorian government more than what is told here. He is just talking - they met there, but don't forget Ivory Coast is a member of this so they go to Ivory Coast for discussions too and the special representative meets them there.

Q. Over the page, please:

"On 21 February to ascertain the RUF commitment to the dialogue and the peace process and to discuss how best to expedite the internal RUF consultations pursuant to President Kabbah's offer of a dialogue. These discussions also dealt with a number of issues, including the venue, format, and duration of the internal RUF consultations, a ceasefire, respect for human rights, and the provision of humanitarian assistance."

Could I just have a moment, please, Mr President, to check something. Yes:

"A ceasefire, respect for human rights, and provision of humanitarian assistance. The outcome these preliminary discussions is now being reviewed by the Government of Sierra Leone and other members of ECOWAS."

Pause there. Mr Taylor, were you party to those preliminary discussions?

A. Yes, there's nothing going on here. There's a lot - maybe later I'm sure we'll get to it. This is the Secretary-General's report, but the background work is being done. He is only reporting the end result, but there is a lot of consultations going on. Even the decision to use the 1996 agreement. And another very important part, if you see here they are just talking RUF, RUF, RUF. There is nothing about the junta being
mentioned here. There are also discussions and decisions have been taken as to how we should proceed and this is why the junta doesn't come into the picture even into Lome.

Q. Why not?

A. Well, a decision was taken after the junta in fact - let's get this clear. After the junta was kicked out of Freetown the junta for all purposes was no longer considered a serious organisation. In fact, because it was determined even then that it was - they were the armed forces of Sierra Leone, eventually once an agreement was reached they would have to come under the auspices of the legitimate government. So it was not proper to hold discussions with the armed forces of Sierra Leone. That really comprised this junta that went into Freetown.

But the real obstacle and the real people to talk to were the RUF, so a decision was taken then and there to just forget who the junta were because these are Sierra Leonean soldiers. At the end of the day once we have an agreement we would deal with the armed forces of Sierra Leonean personnel. So that's why right now all of these decisions are taken. We have agreed that this is the way we're going to proceed and this is why you see President Kabbah keeps going back to the 1996 agreement. So all we are trying to do now is to revive the 1996 agreement and then move forward.

Q. Now tell me this, Mr Taylor. In light of what you've just told us, did you at any stage have any contact with the junta?

A. Not at all. No. No one. No one got in contact. Even though we were authorised to - we were authorised - by "we" I mean the three countries were authorised to, up until this time we had never spoken to anyone in that junta. No one absolutely.
Q. I want to be clear what you are telling us, Mr Taylor. We appreciate the coup d'etat took place on 25 May 1997?
A. That is correct.
Q. They remained in power until the ECOMOG intervention in February 1998?
A. That is correct.
Q. We are now at February 1999?
A. That is correct.
Q. Mr Taylor, my question to you now is very specific. From 25 May 1997 until the point we have now reached did you ever have any contact with the junta?
A. Yes. Twice that we've talked about here. As far as that word "contact" is concerned, there were two contacts - if we want to call it contacts. The first one had to do with what? A letter from Johnny Paul Koroma that we did not respond to. And the second one was a delegation sent that I did not meet. So --
Q. Thank you for reminding me, Mr Taylor.
A. So I can recall those contacts.
Q. But apart from those two occasions, did you have any other contact with the junta?
A. None whatsoever. None whatsoever.
Q. Did you ever have any contact with the junta through ECOWAS?
A. No, no, no. I'm part of ECOWAS. I'm ECOWAS too. No.
Q. "Should agreement be reached on a venue for talks outside Sierra Leone, it would be necessary to temporarily lift the ban on the travel of RUF leaders imposed by the Security Council resolution 1132."
A. Now, were you aware of that travel ban, Mr Taylor?
A. That is correct and that is why Sam Bockarie did not leave to come unless it was known by everybody. And each time anyone left Sierra Leone, including as we go forward, it had to get at least either the direct or at least the - by direct I mean either documented or maybe a telephone call where some official at the UN being aware of it would grant the permission or they couldn't travel. Whether it was Sankoh, okay, or whether we go forward Johnny Paul or all of these people, they could not travel without this approval.

Q. Let's get to the core of this document for our purposes. Paragraphs 18 and 19:

*Relations between Sierra Leone and Liberia. In response to repeated allegations that the Government of Liberia was supporting the Sierra Leonean rebels, the Liberian government issued a statement, circulated on the conflict in Sierra Leone. In the statement, the government reaffirmed its recognition of the government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah as the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone and stated further that it had not and would not support, nor be a party to, any attempt to destabilise the Republic of Sierra Leone or any other country.

The Government of Liberia also announced in its statement that it had launched an effort to repatriate and offer amnesty to Liberians fighting in Sierra Leone and, as a matter of urgency, requested 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. The Government of Liberia also renewed its request to the Security Council to approve the deployment of United Nations monitors along with ECOMOG forces at the...
Liberia-Sierra Leone border in the light of repeated allegations of illegal shipments of arms to the rebels."

Now we've gone over all of that during the course of our examination of the events in 1999, have we not, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, we have. But sadly, even with this, this situation, sadly some countries misinterpreted this whole thing and saw this as admission to the fact that Liberia had sent fighters into Sierra Leone.

Q. Saw what as an admission?

A. The fact that we had said we were granting amnesty to and wanted Liberians to come home. Some people interpreted that as okay, he sent them so he is calling them back.

Q. Now for completeness let us just look at certain aspects of the other pages before I take you to the other paragraphs which are at the core of what we need to deal with. But just so that it cannot be said that we're ignoring other realities let us look starting at paragraph 21:

"The team found that the ultimate responsibility for the fighting for most of the civilian casualties and for the related humanitarian emergency in Freetown rested with the rebel forces.

Though it was impossible to state with precision the actual number of civilian casualties, most estimates put the total casualty figure at between 3,000 and 5,000, including rebel fighters and ECOMOG and CDF combatants. It is feared that at least 2,000 of those casualties were civilian inhabitants of Freetown. Many civilians were killed while being used by the rebels as human shields in combat or because they reportedly refused to come out into the streets to demonstrate in favour of the rebels. Many were killed while trying to protect family
members from death or rape, or while trying to protect their
property from looting and destruction.

        Much of the killing seems to have been arbitrary and to
have been carried out by child fighters or rebel fighters under
the influence of drugs or alcohol. However, there is also
evidence that some of the murders were targeted including
reportedly the murder of 200 police personnel. The
solicitor-general was killed during fighting as were the resident
minister for the north and adviser to President Kabbah and at
least two journalists.

        Other victims who appear to have been deliberately targeted
include senior officials of the Sierra Leonean national
commission for democracy and human rights, the council of
churches, and the national commission for rehabilitation,
reconstruction and reintegration as well as Nigerian nationals.

        According to medical sources interviewed by the human rights
assessment team, many hundreds of civilians were treated for the
amputation of limbs or other forms of mutilation including some
70 at Connaught Hospital alone. It is feared that hundreds of
other victims of mutilation did not survive to seek treatment.

        Victims of amputation and mutilation include men, women and
children, some as young as six years old. The mutilations were
usually inflicted with a machetes or axes. During February there
was a sharp drop in reported incidents of mutilation by rebel
elements in areas where they are located.

        There have been reports of widespread rape and other forms
of sexual abuse by rebel elements in Freetown and Makeni. In
Freetown eyewitnesses reported incidents of violent group rape of
young women and girls rounded up by the rebels for that heinous
purpose. Many rape victims were reported to have been subsequently abducted, mutilated or killed.

A significant number of the rebel combatants were children. Reports were received of death and injuries being inflicted by boys as young as eight to 11 years old.

The rebels abducted a large but unverifiable number of people in Freetown and other places they attacked. By mid-February, childcare agencies reported that some 2,000 children had gone missing in Freetown alone since 6 January.

Agency staff said that they had witnessed the abduction by rebels of some 300 of these children. Escapees reported that abducted boys were selected for training as fighters or used as porters. Women and girls were taken for sexual purposes or to cook food. A small number of prominent Sierra Leonean personalities and foreigners were also abducted including the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Freetown. Foreign abductees included several Indian workers, Roman Catholic nuns of Indian and Kenyan nationality and one Spanish and one French journalist. Though some managed to escape, at least eight abductees were killed and two seriously injured. Rebels continue to hold Roman Catholic mission personnel abducted at Makeni and Kambia.

Rebel forces were also responsible for the deliberate widespread destruction of civilian property and public utilities in Freetown and other locations, such as Makeni and Kambia. In the centre of Freetown, about 20 per cent of the housing stock was destroyed, with as much as 90 per cent destroyed in the eastern outskirts of the city. Some public facilities appear to have been deliberately demolished, including police stations, the Pademba Road prison, the Nigerian high commission and UNOMSIL.
headquarters. The residences of human rights activists, lawyers, 
journalists and government officials were also targeted as well 
as churches, mosques and hospitals.

Eyewitnesses interviewed by the assessment team also 
reported summary executions of alleged rebels or rebel 
sympathisers by ECOMOG soldiers. Persistent reports were 
received of execution in various parts of Freetown, sometimes 
carried out after a cursory interrogation. One alleged victim of 
summary execution was an eight year old boy caught in possession 
of a pistol. Members of the assessment team witnessed an 
execution at Connaught Hospital on 3 February by men in ECOMOG 
uniforms. Members of the CDF are also accused of mistreating 
civilians during the crisis in Freetown. ECOMOG jets attacking 
Freetown during the fighting are also reported to have caused 
civilian casualties. ECOMOG soldiers also detained and 
physically mistreated national staff members of a number of 
humanitarian NGOs and the International Committee of the Red 
Cross, apparently accusing them, without evidence, of being rebel 
collaborators. ECOMOG high command has subsequently indicated to 
my special representative their intention to investigate these 
allegations and to take corrective action as necessary."

Now, Mr Taylor, what we've just gone through there between 
paragraph 20 and 28 is in many ways a summary of the orgy of 
violence which engulfed Freetown for those four days beginning on 
6 January 1999. Now, Mr Taylor, have you ever denied that those 
atrocities were committed in Sierra Leone?

A. I've never denied that they were committed. I know - I 
mean, everybody knows some terrible things happened in 
Sierra Leone.
Q. Mr Taylor, did you order, incite, or in any way encourage the commission of such atrocities?
A. No, I did not. No, could not have.
Q. Did you have anything to gain from ordering, assisting, encouraging, or in any way aiding and abetting such acts?
A. No, I did not. I did not.
Q. Did you unleash that violence on Freetown in order to terrorise the population of Sierra Leone?
A. No, I did not. I had no control over those who did this and could not have ordered them. I had no contact. I had no control. I had no association with them to have ordered such, or encouraged such. None whatsoever.
Q. Now let’s just skim over the humanitarian situation section, whilst noting in passing just extracting from paragraph 31, “The number of refugees in neighbouring countries has increased to an estimated 450,000 with an estimated 700,000 internally displaced persons.”
Now, were some of those refugees a consequence of that Freetown invasion? Did some of them come to Liberia, Mr Taylor?
A. Yes. Hundreds of thousands, yes.
Q. Now, unless I’m asked to, I would like us please to go to section 7, page 10 of this document, and let’s begin at paragraph 44:
“Sierra Leone continues to face an extremely complex and difficult situation fraught with serious risks. Though ECOMOG has succeeded in driving the rebels from Freetown and restoring order in its immediate vicinity, the capital is still threatened by rebel forces in the peninsula.
I unreservedly strongly condemn the merciless murders,
inhuman mutilations, and other appalling human rights violations perpetrated by the rebels on the innocent civilian inhabitants of Freetown and the widespread property damage they have inflicted.

In the light of some allegation that members of pro-government forces may also have been guilty of violations, I hope that the government will fulfil its assurances that such allegations will be investigated and welcome its assurances that these forces will adhere to international human rights standards in the future.

Concern over violations of human rights and the prevention of further violations stand at the heart of the Sierra Leonean conflict. For that reason, and in view of the scale and enormity of the violations inflicted recently in Freetown, I intend to deploy an additional human rights officer to UNOMSIL. This will enable the human rights component to expand its reporting and deepen its coverage of human rights abuses in Sierra Leone as well as to maintain its technical cooperation activities with Sierra Leonean human rights organisations."

I think we can skip the next three paragraphs. Now let's go to paragraphs 50, 51 and 52:

"I intend to pursue further with President Taylor some of the suggestions contained in the statement of the Government of Liberia. Since practical obstacles to the proposal to deploy United Nations monitors at the border between Sierra Leone and Liberia remain, as deployment of the ECOMOG forces required to protect them is unlikely, the steps taken by the government to encourage the repatriation, disarmament and demobilisation of Liberian fighters in Sierra Leone are welcome."

Pause there. Mr Taylor, what were the so-called practical obstacles to the deployment of UN monitors on the border?
A. The UN monitors are not armed and so one of the difficulties they were having, they have to be protected by armed ECOMOG personnel and so they wanted to make sure that there would be ECOMOG personnel available to protect the observers in the region.

Q. Paragraph 51:
President Kabbah's decision to allow the leader of RUF, Corporal Foday Sankoh, to meet with rebel leaders in order to develop a coherent set of political demands, which would form the basis of subsequent negotiations with the government, is a bold and valuable initiative. The United Nations will continue to facilitate the conduct of talks through the provision of its good offices as required.

The preliminary meeting my special representative held with representatives of the RUF in Abidjan on 21 February may have helped lay the groundwork for further negotiations which might be based on the Abidjan Peace Agreement signed in November 1996 by the government and RUF. In order to proceed, RUF must recognise the legitimacy of the government, agree to a ceasefire, renounce violence, especially attacks on civilians, and permit humanitarian access to the areas they control under conditions of adequate security.

Now in summary, Mr Taylor, what did you make of the - this fifth report of the Secretary-General?

A. Well, he is reporting faithfully to the Security Council about what is going on. Although he doesn't get into the details because he doesn't know all of the details, but at least the end results are he is seeing, as he reports here, the end result is the Lome meeting that starts - even though you see the Lome
agreement is signed in July, but the talks in Lome start as early
as April beginning with the first stage of trying to get a
ceasefire and then the second stage the actual agreement. That
ceasefire - the ceasefire discussions begin in April, they go
May, I think the ceasefire is negotiated around June and then we
get into the second phase, you know, where we get a full
agreement.

So by and large, on the issue where he talks about the -
about, "I intend to pursue further with President Taylor", one of
the things we were trying to do at this time was not to bring
anyone out of Sierra Leone except it was done in conjunction with
the United Nations, okay? Because this thing of granting amnesty
was to get them not to be afraid of our laws against mercenarism,
but we wanted to make sure that each person was identified; that
is the UN, Sierra Leone and Liberia would work together in
identifying them and probably coming up with a travel document or
a card of identification to know who were coming out of
Sierra Leone back to Liberia just in case there was some
questions in the future.

So by and large the report is exactly what happened and we
finally decided that the talks would be held in Lome in April.
Everybody now is moving towards Lome to get the discussions
going, so it's a pretty accurate report of the prevailing
situation on the ground.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, you have told us I think yesterday - it
could have been last week - of having written to the
Secretary-General in January of 1999. Do you recall telling us
that?
A. Yes.
Q. Did you ever receive a response to that letter?

A. Yes, the most important - that's on the arms. I had written him about the - about the arms and he finally responds around this time.

Q. About what arms?

A. The destruction - for the destruction of the arms in Liberia and he responds. Right after this report he responds to the letter.

MR GRIFFITHS: Now before I move to that letter, can I ask, please, that this fifth report of the Secretary-General to the United Nations be marked for identification MFI-80, please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, I noticed two pages there that you probably don't need put in. One of them is numbered 21593 and the other is numbered 21608. They both appear to be covering pages.

MR GRIFFITHS: I fully agree with that, Mr President, and there is no need to burden ourselves with additional pages if they have not been referred to.

PRESIDING JUDGE: All right. The document just described by Mr Griffiths excluding pages that have been numbered 21593 and 21608 will be marked for identification MFI-80.

MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful:

Q. Now let's look, please, behind divider 18. Mr Taylor, this letter we see is dated 5 March 1999, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. And it's addressed to you from the Secretary-General?

A. That is true.

Q. "Excellency, I have the honour to refer to your letter addressed to me dated 22 January 1999 concerning the disposal of
the weapons surrendered to ECOMOG during the disarmament exercise of 1996 to 1997 and my preliminary response dated 22 February 1999.

I am sure you will agree that this matter can be speedily resolved. We are currently assembling a team of small arms experts who can determine which weapons are serviceable and which are not and will dispatch them to Monrovia as soon as possible. The team will, of course, look forward to the full cooperation of your government. After conducting a technical assessment of the arms and ammunition, accompanied by representatives of your government and of ECOMOG, the team will make its determination accordingly.

I note and welcome your government’s willingness to destroy any weapons found to be unserviceable. The United Nations team will therefore be prepared to offer your government technical advices on the modalities for the destruction of such weapons. As regards any weapons or ammunition which may be found to be serviceable, we would assume that further consultation on their disposition between your government, ECOMOG and ourselves would be necessary."

What does that last sentence mean, Mr Taylor?

A. You say that further consultations between all of the parties?

Q. Well, it’s my fault for asking an inappropriate question.

What was the attitude of your government towards weapons collected which could still be used?

A. We were pushing at first for the serviceable weapons to be kept for a future armed force. This was a view that we held. I even appointed a cabinet committee to look into it, but that was
not to be the case. You can see from a letter that we just went through, as this process is evolving we finally gave in and destroyed everything.

But our original intention was to at least keep the serviceable ones. Once a future army was trained, it could be armed. But we were told that that would not fly and so one of the things that the insistence was - even on the lifting of the embargo it was stated that we had to destroy everything to get the embargo lifted. It didn't make sense to us. It would still mean we had to go back to taxpayers. After the army was formed we would have to go back to the Liberian people to buy weapons. so why throw away good weapons? But some of these things you never understand them in the international community. So here I am stuck. I am being told - besides that Mobil thing I'm being told here if you want to get the arms embargo lifted you have to destroy all of these weapons. So we just gave in finally.

Q. But, Mr Taylor, you are a sovereign republic. Why did you need to be consulting about such serviceable arms with ECOMOG and the United Nations?

A. Sovereignty, yes, we - that's a word that we'll get into the actual definition. We must see that that's - sovereignty is relative when it comes to little countries and so you can exert all sovereignty you want, but you don't get anything in return if you don't dance according to the tunes of the big countries. So sovereignty really is relative when it comes to these issues in the international community.

So we - because I am concentrating more on getting my country moving forward, getting my economy going, I'm not about to hold the country up for an impossible amount of time just to
get - what, to keep weapons. So I want to move forward and so I try to do - after holding up for what? We're talking about - these discussions were going on for - in excess of six, nine months we were on these discussions. But apparently the international community was determined to destroy all the arms or nothing would happen for Liberia and so I wanted for something good to happen for Liberia and I gave in. So sovereignty becomes relative under certain conditions.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, the UN special representative in Liberia at this time, is it still Mr Felix Downes-Thomas?

A. Yes, he is still there.

Q. And as far as you're aware, the special representative in Freetown, Mr Okelo, is he still in place?

A. To the best of my knowledge, yes, he is.

Q. And at or about this time in 1999, were there any developments in the relationship between those two men?

A. Yes. In fact, Okelo - Okelo had dealt this first what I will call mischief all the way back in June of 1998 when Okelo wrote that document to the Security Council talking about most of the people that were supporting the junta were Liberians.

So Okelo always had this little attitude when it came to Liberia. And he would write or say things from his post in Sierra Leone about Liberia that sometimes were not true and I guess without the knowledge of his colleague on the other side. And so we were always calling in the special representative of the Secretary-General in Liberia and saying, "But look, we see this. It is not true. You are here. You have to correct this."

Okay.

So by the end of March there appeared to have been some
conflict between him and Downes-Thomas who is the special representative in Liberia writes - wrote a very serious memo to his bosses and tried to correct some of the what I will call really antagonising statements that have been made by and through Okelo that he tries to correct because he is under pressure too from the Liberian government side to make right some of these false interpretations that have been presented from Okelo, who is not assigned to Liberia. And he sends this report out in late March and we are given copies of it because we want to correct these problems also just as we've always been writing to the Secretary-General to correct problems.

MR GRIFFITHS: Now, before we move on further to discuss that could I ask, please, that the letter from the Secretary-General of the United Nations to President Taylor dated 5 March 1999 be marked for identification, please, MFI-81.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That document is marked for identification MFI-81.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, we've moved on and we're now discussing a memo which you say you saw in late March, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. Who is that from?

A. It's from Mr Thomas commenting on the activities of his colleague and what he had caused to be said from the Liberian side.

Q. Okay. Let us look, please, at the document behind divider 19. Do you have it, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Now we see that this is what's called a code cable from
Q. And we see it’s entitled “Observations on Sierra Leone and Liberia”:

“With reference to your code cable of 25 March, I wish to thank you for providing me with a copy of special envoy Okelo’s of the 29th March together with the note on his political officer’s unannounced visit to Monrovia during the period between 5 and 11 March 1999.”

Pause there. Did you know - were you informed about such a visit at the time, Mr Taylor?

A. No, I was not.

Q. So the UN special representative in Freetown sends unannounced his political officer to Monrovia without telling the President of Liberia about it?

A. Well, as we can see here he didn’t even tell his colleague about it. No, once this is a UN official and he has proper travel documents coming to Liberia, arriving at the airport of course he would not be turned back. He would be received as a normal person coming in.

Q. “The contents of the cables in question are as contradictory as the differences which exist within the terms of reference provided to PAO Zongwe by special envoy Okelo and the officer’s own interpretation of what his trip to Liberia was intended to accomplish. On one hand, the special envoy advises that his instructions to his officer were to ‘attempt an assessment of the Sierra Leonean situation from the Liberian...”
perspective and observe internal Liberian developments impacting on Sierra Leone’. On the other hand, the officer states that his visit to Monrovia was to participate in the mission ‘on the preliminary findings mission in connection with the disposal of arms collected during the 1996-1997 disarmament in Liberia’.

Now pause there, Mr Taylor. What was the purpose of the Secretary-General of the United Nations having Mr Felix Downes-Thomas based in Monrovia?

A. The purpose was to represent the United Nations, his office, and to report faithfully, and I use the word faithfully, back to the Secretary-General as to the developments in Liberia.

Q. And help me --

A. And this is a very senior United Nations post.

Q. And help me, what was the purpose of having an identical individual in Freetown by the name of Francis Okelo?

A. That he would do the same on that side in that other - using your word - sovereign country.

Q. Now help me. Can you, given your understanding of these things, understand why Mr Okelo in Freetown would take it upon himself to send this man unannounced onto the turf of his colleague in Monrovia?

A. Two words. Two words. Mischief. The second word I would use would be deceit. And there is a problem because the mischief again starts with Okelo from back in June of 1998.

Q. It’s the same Okelo who sent information to the Security Council --

A. Yes.

Q. -- who was acting in this underhand way with his own colleague in Monrovia?
Q. “But before responding to your request for comments on the officer's note I would like to formally convey to you my overall views on the matter. These follow.

The contents of both communications from UNOMSIL are incredible and objectionable. Nevertheless, they raise certain fundamental questions which deserve answers:

Can special envoy Okelo or UNOMSIL decide unilaterally to conduct work in Liberia and, if so, on what basis?

What are the reasons for UNOMSIL's implicit assumption that the reporting from the UN office in Liberia is either inadequate or deficient?

What was the need and urgency for UNOMSIL to undertake the so-called 'assessment' in Monrovia?

And does UNOMSIL per se have any role to play in the disposal of arms and ammunition currently in the joint custody of the UN and ECOWAS whose surrogates are UN office Liberia and ECOMOG?

These questions also relate to some basic issues that have significant bearing on interdepartmental communication as well as inter-mission cooperation and in that regard on the matter of policy guidance provided to peacekeeping and peace-building missions.

It was wrong and improper for special envoy Okelo to have sent a junior officer to, in effect, snoop around Monrovia."

Mr Taylor, can you think of any reason why the UN's man in Freetown was wanting to snoop around Monrovia in this way if he didn't have an agenda of his own? Can you think of any reason?

A. Well, he had an agenda. He had an agenda. He had had some
very rough statements from Liberia going all the way back to his original thing.

And, you know, there is one thing that I think we ought to interject here, one of the worst things to happen to any little country is to get something tossed in UN circles. A statement or an accusation, it's like - it's almost like a cancer. It just grows and grows and grows. And so Liberia always had a very bad - terrible spot. Whenever any of our officials encountered Okelo, I mean they really gave it to him straight, because we just felt that Okelo was mischievous, and for him to have done what he did as of June, that went to the Security Council and caused this avalanche from that time until now, that it was mischievous. And even though segments of the United Nations, ECOWAS, everyone had said, "Yes, there are these allegations. We have no proof", but Okelo was still there. For what reason? He had an agenda.

Q. "For him to have done so without a word about it to me, either before and during or even after his political officer's escapades in Monrovia, is simply extraordinary if not suspect.

In short, the manner in which special envoy Okelo and his political officer handled this matter of the Monrovia visit has been thoroughly unprofessional.

Putting aside the special envoy's failure to display, in this case, elementary professional courtesy, I am even more surprised by his cavalier indifference to the potentially disastrous situation that could have been created for UN office Liberia by the plausible perception that the United Nations is engaged in some form of spying in Monrovia. This is not farfetched given the continuing deterioration and complicated
relations between Sierra Leone and Liberia. It becomes an extremely delicate matter for a UN official, especially one based in Sierra Leone, to be sent surreptitiously to make 'an assessment of the Sierra Leonean situation from the Liberian perspective and observe internal developments impacting on Sierra Leone'.

If indeed this so-called assessment was ever intended to be a serious undertaking, then headquarters, which must have approved the mission, could have at least informed me accordingly and ensure that the assessment was carried out in a professional, transparent and coordinated fashion. Despite these remarks, I will refrain from characterising the judgment from which emerged the decision to send the PAO to Liberia. However, I do consider that decision objectionable. Clearly unacceptable is special envoy Okelo and his PAO ascribing unto themselves the responsibility of assessing and reporting 'on the Liberian situation and the leadership of President Taylor ...'. Unless I have misunderstood the mandate of UNOL, I believe that these matters are indisputably and strictly within the purview of the special representative of the Secretary-General in Liberia.

In this connection, I should draw your attention to the attached message from me to you dated 9 February 1999. I sought clarification and guidance about what appeared to be headquarters' approval of the special envoy's request to visit Liberia for purposes that I found questionable and smacking of 'mission-creep'. Before its receipt of my message, DPA was as uninformed about this business of special envoy Okelo undertaking a mission to Liberia as I suspect it was about the PAO's assessment mission in Monrovia. Whether or not this points to a
certain internal breakdown in communication, I do not know. What remains curious, however, is that the PAO’s ‘assessment’ mission was not fundamentally dissimilar to the terms under which special envoy Okelo was to have visited Liberia.

Only in the light of the foregoing, do I now consider it necessary for headquarters to issue a clear directive concerning the areas of competence for UNOL and UNOMSIL. Such a directive could usefully include procedures for cooperation between these two entities. While I sincerely consider action along these lines to be somewhat unfortunate, I nevertheless hope that it would serve to preclude any further attempts at blurring the distinct jurisdictional areas of both missions' activities.

With regard to your request for comments on the officer’s note, I should state that I found it reckless and somewhat amateurish. My suspicion is that he could have benefited from proper instructions and sound guidance. It is therefore not surprising that he failed to confine himself to strictly Sierra Leone-Liberian business. By and large, his note is an amalgam of chatty cocktail gossip, gratuitous observations and dangerous subjective speculations. Special envoy Okelo’s view that his office makes perceptive observations on the Liberian situation and the leadership of President Taylor is probably a result of him being stationed in Sierra Leone. From my vantage point, however, there is a degree of irresponsibility on the part of special envoy Okelo in forwarding and widely distributing the note officially. That note, albeit journalistic in nature, contains dangerous and, in my view, unverified pieces of information. Be that as it may, the somewhat inconvenient truth is that the note now officially advises the United Nations that
one of its staff members has confirmation that:

President Taylor is a business partner to Mr Radcliffe, a
British diamond dealer believed to be one of the many diamond
dealers with connections in Sierra Leone."

Let's pause there, Mr Taylor. Diamonds are not only a
girl's best friend. They are also at the heart of this
Prosecution, as we know.
A. That is correct.
Q. Now what we have here is Mr Okelo, from the vantage point
of Sierra Leone, floating a connection between you and diamonds.
Do you agree?
A. That is correct.
Q. Now this was the same Okelo who in June of the previous
year had floated other ideas about Liberia, is that right?
A. That is correct.
Q. And here we have his colleague in Monrovia depicting his
behaviour in the most unprofessional way. That's right, isn't
it?
A. That's right, but it goes beyond that. Mr Radcliffe here
is the gentleman that was arrested from the Red Deer place that
we just went through by Liberian police, the British national,
and deported back to Britain. If he had been a business partner
of mine he would have told the British government, "Radcliffe
here is the gentleman at Red Deer that was arrested by Liberian
police having these uniforms and walkie-talkies and were deported
from Liberia and turned back over to the British government."
That's why we suspected that he was working for MI6. That for
this British Caucasian to be in Liberia operating as - so this is
where you can see the mischief. This is the Radcliffe. This is
the diamond dealer that is there. He is with RUF people in our place. He is arrested, he is deported back to London and the Sierra Leonean diplomat is declared persona non grata. That's the same Radcliffe.

Q. Now look what is happening here, Mr Taylor. In a note described by a professional colleague as journalistic in nature, this document is now officially advising the United Nations.

A. That's right.

Q. Now what's the implications of that, Mr Taylor?

A. Oh, very serious implications. This is supposed to serve as further confirmation that Liberia is getting diamonds from the RUF and this is the confirmation. This is the intent.

Q. Now prior to this, had you heard any suggestion that you were involved in diamonds in Sierra Leone?

A. No, no, no, no. Prior to this there had been no - what Okelo first said was that most of the people that were supporting the junta were Liberians. This is the first real input that diamonds become an issue. It starts here.

Q. And so we need to examine in detail how that comes about.

Q. So it's the special representative of the Secretary-General in Freetown sending someone on a spying mission to Monrovia?

A. Yes.

Q. Who then develops a note described as journalistic?

A. Yes.

Q. Which is then circulated in the United Nations?

A. That is correct.

Q. Yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. Secondly, in that note circulated, "Sam Bockarie (aka
Mosquito of RUF fame) resided in Monrovia at the house of Liberian senator ..." - pronounce that name for me.

A. Senator Kpoto.

Q. Now first of all, taking things in stages, who is Senator Kpoto?

A. He is late now. The late Senator Kpoto served as pro tem of the Liberian - President pro tem of the Liberian Senate.

Very, very, very well-known individual. Very, very, very well respected in Liberia.

Q. Now, help us. As far as you're aware, was there any contact between him and Sam Bockarie?

A. None. The President pro tem had no contact with Sam Bockarie. Sam Bockarie came to Liberia, he came on the invitation of my government and the people he had contacts with included, like I said, the deputy minister of foreign affairs, Benjamin Yeaten; my chief of protocol. This is the President pro tem of the Senate. He had nothing to do with this man.

Q. Now, where did Sam Bockarie stay when he went - visited Monrovia?

A. After the first trip, where he stayed, at a hotel. By the second trip, he was granted - my government gave them a guesthouse on the boulevard.

Q. Now, was that guesthouse owned by Liberian Senator Kpoto?

A. No, no, no, that guesthouse was not owned by Senator Kpoto. As a matter of fact, that house was leased by the government from the foreign minister, Monie Captan.

Q. Now, help us. By this stage, we're talking about March 1999, had Sam Bockarie at any time resided in Monrovia?
A. No, not to my knowledge. No, maybe some - some time in his earlier life, but no. During this period, no, no, no.

Q. So as far as this piece of information being circulated through the machinations of the special representative in Freetown, was there any truth in it?

A. No truth whatsoever. None.

Q. Yet this was circulating at the United Nations?

A. It was, yes.

Q. Thirdly, "The wife of Johnny Paul Koroma, head of the AFRC, Sierra Leone, received money in Monrovia and must have some time lived or continued to stay in Liberia." Any truth in that?

A. None whatsoever. But let's go back to some evidence that was given in this Court about this so-called Johnny Paul Koroma's wife. Totally, totally different. Never lived in Liberia.

Q. Fourthly:

"Arms and ammunition are being stockpiled in Liberia (presumably at Yekepa airstrip) to be used for a devastative (sic) assault on Freetown in the event that the proposed political dialogue between the Government of Sierra Leone and the rebels fails."

Now let's take things slowly, Mr Taylor, given its importance. First of all, can we have a look at the map of Liberia, please, L1. Where is Yekepa?

A. Yekepa is in the northeastern part of Liberia.

Q. Can you indicate on the map where it is, please.

A. Yekepa, that's right up here.

Q. Yes, we see where that is.

A. Yekepa, yes.

Q. Now just give me a moment, please, Mr Taylor. Is there an
airstrip in Yekepa?

A. No, I wouldn’t say - there used to be an airstrip in Yekepa, but over the years of the conflict, the closure of the company, it was - it had grown up into a forest.

Q. Now, let’s have a look please. Can we go back to this bundle of maps and let’s have a look at map 3, which is a planning and transport atlas of Liberia. We know where Yekepa is now, don’t we?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. And we see below it just to the left the symbol of an aeroplane?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. Do you see it?

A. Yes.

Q. But where that symbol is, Mr Taylor, is that in Yekepa?

A. Where that symbol is, yes, that’s Yekepa.

Q. Right. Now, were arms and ammunition being stockpiled in Liberia presumably at Yekepa airstrip?

A. There were no arms being stockpiled in Liberia anywhere, Yekepa or not, none whatsoever, because we did not even have arms to stockpile. So this man, whoever he is, is talking pure nonsense. It’s a blatant lie.

Q. Now, help us. Remember on 22 January you had written to the Secretary-General about the destruction of arms, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. Was that because you were secretly stockpiling them at Yekepa, Mr Taylor, so you could afford to?

A. No, that’s not true. That is not the case. We were trying to destroy these arms because we wanted to get going, but Liberia
had no kind of arms and why would we - even if we had arms, why
we would take them to Yekepa? I mean, that's what just became so
suspicious to everybody.

What is Yekepa? Let's just get one thing - maybe I need to
tell the Court this. Yekepa is a little town that used
to be a mining town that had been deserted by the LAMCO mines for
many years. It's a deserted area that nobody really goes to,
okay? That's why I'm saying at the time the mine operated they
had a small airstrip there for light planes to come and go, but
I'm not sure what date this map is. If you look at a recent map
of Liberia, it would not even show an airstrip because it doesn't
exist.

Q. Now can you go back to your seat, Mr Taylor, and it may be
that we might have to look at the map again after lunch, but for
now let's just conclude this document, shall we:

"With these confirmations the PAO seems to have unearthed
the evidence of Liberia's complicity in the war in Sierra Leone,
something that up to now has eluded UNOL. The question this
raises, however, is whether or not the UN should remain silent
about these matters, particularly about the confirmed information
related to the stockpiling of arms by Liberia for war against
Sierra Leone. I would very much like guidance on how to proceed
with that specific matter. I consider it an extremely serious
allegation and would not want to be accused at a later stage for
having had information of that sort and failed to act on it."

Now, Mr Taylor --

A. Yes.

Q. -- you recall we've looked at previous United Nations
documents which have said quite explicitly that the UN has not
received any evidence implicating Sierra Leone in implicating Liberia in Sierra Leone?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you remember we've looked at all those documents?

A. That is correct.

Q. All of a sudden now, due to the activities of this political officer sent surreptitiously to Liberia --

A. Yes.

Q. -- you're said to be complicit in what's going on in Sierra Leone?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now what did you do about this, Mr Taylor?

A. Well, as you see what is going on, we immediately raised the issue of making sure that this is investigated, this allegation. We are on the special representative and really what happens after this is this dies a very natural death because there is really nothing to it. After this document is fired off, we never hear about this report any more.

Q. But the damage had already been done?

A. It had been done, but everybody knew that it was a lie and so nobody pursued this beyond this. That was it. But that's what I mean by the mischief of this. Just as you've said, everyone is out there trying to find something. They send this little boy, who probably never even reached to Nimba because Yekepa is really on the Liberian/Guinean border.

Now this is supposed to be the confirmation, but if you watch what is going on here and the reason why I think this dies a natural death, because when this special representative says, "Well, listen. We are advising you on what to do from now. This
is very serious. Let's get into it", the intent of just making it, you know, a hush hush, or maybe something where it would put Liberia in a bad state, they do not want an investigation. This is typical to what happens in these systems.

All of the years of the accusations, the Secretary-General himself has said in his reports that this is another incident where Mr Taylor, for example, is asking for people to be deployed at the border. Not once, not twice, not thrice, many times. Some of these things are designed never to reach to conclusion.

This is what I'm saying. "We'll spread this disinformation and let him fight over it."

But, like you say, the damage is already done and after this there is no formal investigation and nothing happens. It just stays out there and lingers and lingers, because if there is anything serious or credible about this what would have happened? The Security Council would take this up immediately.

MR GRIFFITHS: Mr Taylor, let that thought linger over lunch because I note the time.

THE WITNESS: Okay.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, thank you, Mr Griffiths. We'll break for lunch now and resume at 2.30.

[ Lunch break taken at 1.30 p.m.]

[ Upon resuming at 2.30 p.m.]

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, Mr Griffiths.

MR GRIFFITHS: May it please your Honours:

Q. Mr Taylor, can we go back to where we left off just before lunch, please, and could you have before you the document behind divider 19. Do you have it, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, I do.
Q. Now, just before lunch you were saying that there was no formal investigation but it just stays out there, lingers and lingers, because if there is anything serious or credible about that, that would have happened. The Security Council would have taken this up immediately, and then we had - because the tape ran out - to stop. What were you telling us, Mr Taylor, please?

A. Well, it may be important for us to put this in a focus so the Court can see what is going on. As a reminder, in August of 1998 - remember the letter, I don't remember the exhibit number - where my ambassador in Conakry writes this letter to the foreign minister, but he raises some very important points based on what we see in there, and remember in one important part of that letter he says that Eddie Kanneh comes and says that some woman has told him that there's a plan underway to get Taylor out of office. If we look at that.

Now, this particular case now involving this report and Mr Radcliffe, while there is, I do believe, controversy over the Sierra Leonean web page and what they've been producing - I think there is some controversy, I think, still under discussions in the Court regarding that web page - this incident of Mr Radcliffe and whatever happens in February of 1999, and Radcliffe and his co-conspirators are dealt with, and that is reported in all the newspapers and it's on that Sierra Leonean web page, because I have seen it. Now, when you look at this, now this is almost a month after Radcliffe - he's not alone. Radcliffe, I say, is operating with some Sierra Leoneans. There is an Australian involved in this too, and they are handled. The Australian is sent back to Australia. Radcliffe is an older man, but he looks like typical of a good secret agent. He is sent back to Britain.
We didn’t hear anything about Radcliffe. The Sierra Leonean diplomat is expelled from the country. They all go back to their countries. You hear nothing from these people.

Now, why would Charles Taylor send his business diamond partner back to London and you hear nothing about him? The other guy that goes back to Australia, you hear nothing about him.

This is not a secret story. This matter happens in February of 1999 and it’s reported widely. So this - my situation was an accident waiting to happen. This whole Charles Taylor thing, it’s as confusing as it can ever get. It’s just an accident that had been waiting for years to happen. I mean, decisions had been taken and the players were just going on, because it’s not natural to have all of these accusations just hanging out there: arms, diamonds, billions of dollars, assets around the world, and nobody gets to the bottom of it. For years. Not one month, two months. For years.

It’s another example of what I’m talking about with this whole story of this man and Sam Bockarie is coming and living in Keikura Kpoto’s house. Why should Sam Bockarie live in Kpoto’s house when he’s officially coming and everybody who is supposed to know, knows that he’s coming to Liberia. They know where to find him, but he reports here. So it’s this kind of stuff that I’m talking about.

In February of 1998 is when this Radcliffe story first breaks, okay? It’s reported widely. And he comes and he twists it all around and there are several players. So for me, I’m just saying this level of mischief, I don’t think these people are operating on their own. Okelo comes in June. He sees Liberians that are being investigated by ECOMOG. There is no
report from ECOWAS or the OAU saying these people were sent by Taylor. He fires a letter off to the Security Council saying that the people that we're looking for, they're all supported by Liberians. Most of them are Liberians, and we just have this hanging and hanging and hanging, and I guess this is the result of the accident now that has happened to me. Nobody ever stopped to check anything.

Q. Mr Taylor, you mentioned a letter from the Embassy of Liberia, and I don't ask everyone to turn it up because it's a document that was advanced in week 31. It's MFI-49. Let us just remind ourselves of something in that document. The second paragraph:

"According to Major Kanneh, his sister has learnt from the Guinean number two of the United Nations representative that they are doing everything possible to overthrow President Charles Ghankay Taylor."

A. That's what I'm saying. That's where the mischief --

Q. -- number two.

A. Yeah. That's where the mischief is coming from. This mischief started from back there, and that guy is the political officer. I don't know if he is the number two in the hierarchy, but this guy who is doing this report is the political - is the political officer. So all this mischief, I don't think Okelo is alone in this. I don't think so. But it's just hanging out there on me.

It's hanging out there and the way these things work, your Honours, some countries have already consumed this. They've consumed this. For them, it's a part of their programme already.
Others will get to know that it did not happen, and you will see from here on there's not one report of the Secretary-General that comes out to even talk about this. You will see nothing about this. This is it. But the damage is already done and I'm from that time, I will believe until now, diamonds started and diamonds continue, continue, that Charles Taylor is supposed to be receiving diamonds. Now my diamond business partner Mr Radcliffe, the British, is gone. My other business partner, the Australian, is gone. You hear nothing about them any more, but there will be people that will come up and say: Yes, we heard about diamonds, and this is how it all goes. And I hope we can get that newspaper article so the Court can see it, that this is nothing new. It happens in February.

Q. So we have the following themes coming out of this, don't we, Mr Taylor: One, your connection with diamonds.

A. That is correct.

Q. Two, your connection with Sam Bockarie?

A. Yes.

Q. Three, a connection with the AFRC?

A. That is correct.

Q. Four, arms and ammunition going to the RUF?

A. At least stockpiled, yes, for that purpose; to wage war.

Q. And, of course, the same Mr Okelo in the June of the previous year had started the ball rolling on the:

Charles Taylor has sent Liberians to fight in Sierra Leone.

A. This is what it amounts to.

Q. Right. So five themes: Liberians in Sierra Leone?

A. Yes.

Q. Diamonds?
1. A. Yes.
2. Q. Association with Bockarie?
3. A. Yes.
4. Q. Association with the AFRC?
5. A. Yes.
6. Q. Arms and ammunition, all can be traced back to Okelo?
7. A. Beginning in 1998, that's when it starts.
8. Q. And that's in June 1998?
9. A. That is correct.
10. Q. The letter from the embassy I've just referred to which mentions the second in command of the UN special representative, that's August?
11. A. Yes.
12. Q. And then come March of 1999 we have these further allegations, yes, Mr Taylor?
13. A. That is correct. That's what I'm saying, yes.
14. Q. What do you say is going on here then, Mr Taylor?
15. A. Decisions - the way these things work out there, you know, like I say, my situation was an accident waiting to happen. It was just a slow process to get to me and they finally did. It's just a slow process and it happens. Sometimes it takes years, but they finally get to you. Just as we're hearing today, I've been out of office now since 1983. Two years before I left office, I was accused of - excuse me.
16. Q. You left office which year?
17. A. No, no, '93. I'm talking - this thing got me so upset. 2003, excuse me. Two years before I left office I was accused of amassing billions. So put that back to 2001/2002. Until today, recently as - as recent as a few months back, I heard the Chief
Prosecutor of the Sierra Leonean Court still talking about millions and billions. No-one, no human being, from 2001 until now has ever come up and said, "Here is a bank account with a million dollars belonging to Mr Taylor." It is just hanging out there. That's all you get.

I remember a good man like Colin Powell sitting down in Washington DC at a donors conference saying, "Well, we're talking to Mr Taylor with assets scattered around the world." This is what he was giving as a document, just as unfortunately he sat at the Security Council with this little file and talked about these weapons of mass destruction. But, you know, these documents are given to you and you read them. I don't hold him responsible for that.

But what has really disturbed my entire life, no-one has come up to say, "Well, here is it." What is so secret if Charles Taylor has money? Unlike diamonds, "Charles Taylor is a little good for nothing. He's receiving money from - diamonds from the RUF." And, "Oh, he's smuggling arms, that - phantom arms, phantom diamonds, phantom bank accounts." Until today, they've just hung this thing over me. It has destroyed me.

MR GRIFFITHS: Can I ask, please, that this document be marked for identification. It is the code cable dated 30 March 1999 from Felix Downes-Thomas, special representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and may it be marked as MFI-82 please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, said document is marked MFI-82.
Yes, I think I know what you're going to say, Ms Hollis.
MR GRIFFITHS: The numbering, I know.
PRESIDING JUDGE: It does end in page 4 of nine pages.
MS HOLLIS: That’s correct and we would ask that we be provided with pages 5 through 9.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Do you have that?

MR GRIFFITHS: I would if I could, but I have the document in this form. I’m sorry.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Well once again, Ms Hollis, we note what you’ve pointed out. This is a matter that can be raised again when the document is tendered.

MS HOLLIS: Thank you, Mr President.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, earlier when we looked at the previous documentation, in particular the fifth report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, we observed that the modalities, to borrow a UN phrase, were being put in place for the transport of representatives of the RUF for consultations as to peace, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now, were you involved in the planning of those logistics?

A. Not the direct - this was being organised by the United Nations, but my government was a part of the operational phase of it where - that is requesting permission to come through, getting our security personnel to escort their people to the border to pick up the Sierra Leoneans, internal helicopter flights. There are some other details that were strictly within UN circles, but we knew. Even the movement - in fact, Foday Sankoh flew over Liberia. He was one of the first to go to Lome.

But the whole month of April is a very busy month dealing with - this is not a one day situation. We go through this for about two/three weeks. We are moving people, getting clearance.
for people. Some of these individuals did not have travel
documents. We had to help with these documents. We had to help
with providing security. And on some of these missions not just
the Liberian government was involved and the United Nations, but
we also had - sometimes, you know, the big countries carry on
their own operation. We had - the United States had individuals
involved. But this was a very busy month of logistics, moving,
bringing people in.

Q. Which month?

A. April.

Q. Can you recall now when in April this began?

A. I would put it to - the real operation I would put it to
around mid-April. I'm saying this because I think Sankoh left
just - he probably moved just before the middle of April, so I
would put the full scale operation to about the - I would say the
last two-thirds of April.

Q. Right. Well I'm hoping, Mr Taylor, we can go through the
arrangements and the logistics involved with this fairly swiftly.
Now could I invite your attention first of all, please, to a
document behind divider 20.

A. Yes.

Q. Now I'm hoping, Mr Taylor, that what we can do is to just
flick through these documents - a succession of documents -
dealing with the overflight and the arrangements fairly quickly
so we can see what's going on, yes?

Now, we see this document here. Let's go to the second
page of it, 2 of 2 at the top, yes? "Arrival in and departure
from Liberia of UNOMSIL aircraft"?

A. Yes.
Q. Now looking at it:

"Further to my earlier note of today's date on the subject above, I'm attaching a copy of the request from United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone for an overflight authorisation in connection with the purpose stated in my previous note."

And what purpose is that, Mr Taylor?

A. If I can recall this movement, it's got to be the Sankoh movement. I'm not sure if it's in that note, but this is about the first of those.

Q. Right. Now, there are a succession of documents dealing with this. Can we go over to the next divider, please? It is divider 21, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. So this is the following day, 17 April, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. "Flight clearance and related border activities. Further to telephone conversations with both ASG Fall and SRSG Okelo on 17 April 1999, I wish to advise as follows:

The Government of Liberia has acceded to the request for the possible landing of an aircraft at the Robertsfield International Airport as well as to the request for overflight. The convoy from Monrovia to the border that would carry the 'special guests' is scheduled to depart Monrovia at 0600 hours on Sunday, 18 April 1999."

A. Yes.

Q. "UNOL will be part of that convoy and will be represented by two officers and a security officer. The US embassy has informed me that its political officer will also join the convoy."
Given the unroadworthiness of UNOL’s car fleet, I am grateful to the UNHCR resident representative in Liberia who has provided us with two vehicles, fuel and drivers to facilitate UNOL’s participation in this exercise.

Advice given to UNOL’s representatives include the following:

Their basic function is to observe what transpires at the border with a view to reporting to the same.

While they should confine themselves to remaining on Liberian soil to the extent possible, they would have to use discretionary judgment if a decision to cross over into Sierra Leone territory became necessary.

They should advise the special guests that UNOMSIL has informed us that the agreement is not more than 14 comrades, compatriots are to be picked from the border for onward transportation to Togo via Robertsfield International Airport. I will through telephone contact seek confirmation as to whether the 14 includes the guests already in Monrovia."

Can we pause there and just clarify a couple of things.

Special guests are who, Mr Taylor?

A. There are two individuals. This is General Ibrahim Bah, to the best of my recollection, and Barrister - what do they call the Sierra Leonean man? Barrister Golley.

Q. The man who wears a three-piece suit in the jungle?

A. Omrie Golley. These are the two individuals that are the special guests that are representing the RUF that the United Nations is talking about here.

Q. Right. So there --

JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, was that Ibrahim or Abraham
THE WITNESS: Your Honour, Ibrahim. Normally some people
spell - I think it's an "I", Ibrahim. Some people say Abraham,
but I think it's Ibrahim. That's how I know it, Ibrahim Bah,
with an "I" and not an "A".

MR GRIFFITHS:
Q. Right. So they're the special guests?
A. Yes.

Q. And do you see on the last line it says "includes the
guests already in Monrovia". Who are they?
A. Well, they are in Monrovia. Bah and Golley are in
Monrovia. They are joining this convoy. So I do not know which
other guests, but the special guests refers to the two of them.

Q. Right. So the special guests are Bah and Golley?
A. Yes.

Q. Let's go over the page, shall we:
"They should seek permission in advance from the
appropriate persons as to whether or not snapshots can be taken.
The transportation of the guests is fundamentally the
responsibility of the Government of Liberia."

Is that true?
A. Yes. We are a part of it, yes.

Q. "In view of the time that it takes to get to the border, it
may be necessary for the team to remain overnight. I have
provided the team with a satellite phone and I have instructed
them to advise both UNOMSIL, Freetown and UNOL Monrovia of their
arrival at and departure from the border. Thus UNOMSIL will know
when to dispatch its aircraft to Robertsfield International
Airport."
With regard to the question of crossing into Sierra Leone, the UNOL team was advised to play it by ear since the various scenarios relating to this eventuality could involve a situation where the entire delegation found it necessary to cross over. In such a situation, the UNOL team is advised to join heads with the US delegate to determine how best to proceed. I am also requesting UNOMSIL's advice on the matter."

Okay?

A. Yes.

Q. So that's on the 17th?

A. Yes, they are going to see if they can get the other individuals to come.

Q. Right.

A. Yes.

Q. Now let's go over to the next divider, please. We are now at the 19th, aren't we, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes.

Q. And again it's dealing with flight clearance and related border activities:

"Following my telephone conversation with ASG Fall on Saturday, 17 April on matters dealt with on the same date on the subject above, I decided that it could be prudent for the UNOL officers going to the border with Golley et al - is that the man you were talking about?"

A. That's Golley, yes.

Q. "... not to venture into Sierra Leonean territory. They were so instructed. Also ASG Fall and I shared information in our separate telephone conversations with the Secretary-General regarding the nature of UNOL's involvement in the Golley stopover..."
in Liberia. The three UNOL staff members, the legal officer, one political officer and the security officer, departed Monrovia on 18 April at 0600 hours for Foya, Lofa County, along the border with Sierra Leone. The team joined a convoy of vehicles carrying members of the Liberian Special Security Service who accompanied Mr Golley."

Is that true, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, they are responsible for the security, yeah.

Q. "One political officer of the United States Embassy in Monrovia also formed part of the delegation." Is that true?

A. That is true.

Q. "My officers have been in telephone contact with me and have reported that they arrived in Foya late last night, where they overnighted before proceeding to the border this morning, a 40-minute trip. Speaking to me from the border at 1045 hours, my officers informed me that Mr Golley and his party had crossed over into Sierra Leone, where they were hoping to link up with their comrades at a location which is situated 45 minutes away from the border.

One is not sure how long the operation of selecting participants for the Togo talks will take; however. Mr Golley has a target to include such negotiations by 1300 hours today. Once the delegation returns to the point where my officers are located, they shall commence the journey to Robertsfield International Airport.

I have reiterated my instruction to my officers that they should contact UNOMSIL Freetown just prior to their departure from the border. I have also instructed them to keep me briefed on their movements and to advise me when they are within three
hours of Monrovia. Once I receive the information, I shall also
contact special representative Okelo...". Yes?

Yes.

A. Yes.

Q. Go over the page. We see from paragraph one this is the
same date, the 19th.

A. Yes.

Q. "Kindly provide as precisely as possible the arrival time
of Brigadier General Joshi et al."

What's that about?

A. I'm not too sure, but this brigadier general, I'm sure, is
one of the individuals that works for the UN that is helping to
coordinate this operation.

Q. So they're also coming into Monrovia at this time, into
Liberia?

A. Yeah, and it may be good for the attention of the Court to
point out who ASG Fall is. He's the assistant Secretary-General
of the United Nations, Fall. I know him very well. He's from
Senegal, Fall. So he's the most senior officer now. I mean,

Q. So he's a much more senior individual?

A. Yes, Fall is Assistant Secretary-General.

Q. "Trying desperately to reach Ministry of Foreign Affairs to
alert them about the said arrival and to request, if necessary,
for permission for General Joshi and his party entry and stay in
Monrovia. Therefore, kindly provide urgently the names and all
relevant passport information of those accompanying General
Joshi. Also advise whether they will be arriving in uniform,
with arms or not."
Now that - the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is that your
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr Taylor?

A. That is correct, yes.

Q. Right, so that's the 19th. Let's go over the page and look
behind divider 23. Yes?

A. Yes.

Q. And we're still dealing with the travel arrangements and
we've now --

MR GRIFFITHS: Mr President, can I just pause to mention
this. I am dealing with all these travel arrangements, hopefully
as quickly as possible, and then perhaps at the end we can give
them one collective MFI number, because they're all on the same
topic?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page, Mr Taylor, behind number 23, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. We're now on 20 April.

"Flight clearance and related border activities. I attach
for your information a copy of the report of UNOL's officers who
have returned from the Sierra Leone/Liberia border. In addition,
an update on recent developments follows:

Following the return to Monrovia of UNOL's officers,
UNOMSIL CMO Brigadier General SC Joshi, Major Abid Bhutta,
Mr Desmond Parker and I met with the Minister of State For
Presidential Affairs, the Honourable Jonathan Taylor, at the
Executive Mansion."

Do you recall that meeting, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, they did meet.
Q. "Mr Omrie Golley and General Ibrahim Bah of the RUF were also present. Brigadier Joshi outlined his mission to convey the 14 RUF participants, including of Golley and Bah, to Lome."

Yes?

15:03:02
A. Yes.

Q. And as you'd already indicated, Mr Taylor, Golley and Bah were already in Monrovia?

A. Yes.

Q. "Mr Golley expressed his gratitude to Brigadier General Joshi for UNOMSIL's role in facilitating the talks, but pointed out that problems with communication had made it necessary for him to seek the assistance of President Charles Taylor in providing transport for the RUF participants to Lome."

Again, Mr Taylor, you agree with that?

15:03:18
A. Yes.

Q. "Golley also pointed out that during his discussions with the RUF high command on 19 April in Sierra Leone ..." and we've dealt with that road trip up to Lofa County, over the border?

A. Yes.

Q. "... the latter had expressed grave concerns regarding the security of its members. These concerns were heightened in light of the fact that it was the understanding of the high command that the internal discussions in Lome would be 'en famille', while recent indications were that everyone and his brother were now going to be a part of the discussions. The security implications of such wide participation was particularly worrisome to the RUF high command. He also wondered why Corporal Sankoh's escort en route to Lome included ECOMOG officers, as was reported to the BBC."
Pause there. So Mr Taylor, Sankoh was already in Lome, was he?

A. By this time, yes. He was about the first to be taken there. But what he - what they did not know, Sankoh was not taken to Lome as a free man. That's why he's being escorted.

They don't know this.

Q. Who doesn't know this?

A. Golley doesn't know that. They think that he's free, but Sankoh is not taken to Lome as a free man. That's why he's under escort and he's taken there. And quite frankly, maybe, you know, I can say this is over time now. If these talks had not succeeded, he would have returned to Sierra Leone still incarcerated. That was the whole purpose of having them escort him, and some people knew, but others didn't know. But he was not a free man. That's why he's being escorted, and they are concerned about this.

Q. And let's pause and look at some supporting evidence for that, Mr Taylor. Exhibit D-19, could be put that up quickly on the overhead, please. Now, we see this is dated Sunday, 18 April, yes? And we're in this period now, this critical weekend, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. And it's from the BBC News.

"The leader of the Sierra Leonean rebels, Foday Sankoh, has arrived in the Togolese capital Lome following his release from jail to consult his commanders on possible peace talks to end Sierra Leone's eight-year civil war. Mr Sankoh has been sentenced to death for his movement's attacks on civilians, but the Sierra Leone Appeal Court agreed to
release him" - important word - "temporarily in an effort to end the conflict. 'The Revolutionary United Front is convinced of the need for peace and they know they have to make some sacrifice,' he told reporters as he boarded a United Nations plane at Freetown Airport.

The rebel leader is due to hold a week of discussions with his military commanders in the Togolese town of Kara, the hometown of the Togolese President Nassingbe Eyadema, who is helping to broker the peace initiative.

It is hoped that this will lead to direct talks with the Sierra Leone government.

The United Nations Security Council lifted a travel ban on Mr Sankoh imposed because of his movement's attacks on civilians, and he will be accompanied by UN officials.

BBC West Africa correspondent Mark Doyle says the peace efforts come at a time when both sides appear to have realised that a final military victory will not be possible without completely destroying what little remains of Sierra Leone's infrastructure after nine years of war.

The rebels of the Revolutionary United Front control much of the Sierra Leonean countryside in a war which has created the largest refugee population in Africa and destabilised several West African countries.

Despite backing from a 15,000-strong West African intervention army, the Sierra Leone government has proved incapable of beating the rebellion through military means. Some 6,000 people are thought to have been killed during a brief rebel invasion of the Sierra Leonean capital, Freetown, in January.
The rebels committed widespread atrocities, including deliberately mutilating innocent civilians.

Mr Sankoh’s commanders have not seen him for the two years that he has been in jail since being picked up on arms offences in Nigeria in early 1997.

BBC West Africa correspondent Mark Doyle says that if their meeting goes well, substantive talks will then get underway between Sierra Leonean government envoys and the rebels.

The President-Elect of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, has said he believes that the talks will be successful.

Nigeria, the most powerful state in West Africa, leads the intervention army fighting on the side of the Sierra Leone government side, but wants to pull its troops out.

The rebels have been calling for months for Mr Sankoh to be freed as a gesture of reconciliation.

President Kabbah, who was elected in 1996 and ousted for nine months by a 1997 military coup, has repeatedly said that the law should run its course, but he has said he would be prepared to pardon Mr Sankoh if that was the price of peace.

So what we’re looking at now then, Mr Taylor, is this, is it not: These initial talks just involve the RUF, is that right?

A. These initial talks just involve the RUF, but also these are what you call exploratory talks to see as to whether there can be some progress, because what Tejan Kabbah has said is that the Sankoh appeal was coming up and the only thing that would stop that process would be if peace came. So that’s what I meant when I said he was not a free man when he went to Lome. If things had broken down, he would have been brought right back to continue the process of appeal. The Heads of State knew that.
At least I knew that, okay?

So when they get to Lome, they begin the discussions and the first discussions in Lome are about ceasefire. Once that takes hold, then they get into the actual negotiations and so

Q. Let's not get ahead of ourselves, Mr Taylor. Let's just, as quickly as we can, get through these logistical difficulties and then we can discuss what actually happens when everybody gets there, okay?

Now, Mr Taylor, you said you knew that Sankoh was not a free man --

A. Yes.

Q. -- but the RUF in Sierra Leone didn't know that.

A. They did not know that.

Q. Was it a deliberate decision taken not to tell them?

A. I would say yes.

Q. Why?

A. Because they would not have seen that movement as being fruitful and earnest, but I also want to believe that Sankoh helped because Sankoh himself knew that he was not a free man and he didn't tell them either. So there was not like a little secret kept. He knew he was not a free man when he went to Lome at the early stages and I think this was done - if they had been told, "He's just going. He's not free", nothing would have happened in Lome.

Q. Right. We're going back to the document now, yes, behind divider 23:

"... included ECOMOG officers as was reported on the BBC. He informed the meeting that in light of these considerations,"
the 14 participants chosen by the high command had remained in Sierra Leone and would be transported at a later date to Lome, while both General Bah and himself would proceed to Lome by private arrangement. He pointed out that there was a need to move quickly in establishing contact between the RUF participants and their leader and it was on this basis that he had decided to leave today for Lome, accompanied by General Bah. He was, according to him, acting upon the orders of the RUF high command.

Brigadier General Joshi assured Mr Golley that the security of RUF participants was guaranteed as long they utilised the means of transport offered by UNOMSIL. He refuted the allegation that Corporal Sankoh’s escort included ECOMOG officers and appealed to Mr Golley to await the arrival of the other participants and to proceed as earlier planned. Both Golley and General Bah categorically refused that course of action. A request by Brigadier General Joshi that Golley and Bah communicate with Sankoh on the matter was rejected.

It was finally agreed that both men would attempt to contact Corporal Sankoh while the UN team consulted with UNOMSIL and headquarters New York on the latest developments.

On return to UNOL headquarters, I called Minister Taylor and drew his attention to the fact that the travel of the RUF delegation had been made possible by the Security Council, which had lifted the travel ban imposed on the 14 representatives of the RUF to enable them to participate in the Lome meeting. I also emphasised that, for this reason, it was imperative that they travel on the UN aircraft. To travel otherwise would give rise to the probability of their going elsewhere other than Lome. In this connection, the minister should be aware of the
probability that any assistance given by his government to an alternative means of transport could be viewed as the Government of Liberia aiding and abetting the escape of these persons from the sanctions imposed on them. Minister Taylor ..."

Who is that, Minister Taylor?
A. The minister of state for presidential affairs.
Q. What's his full name?
A. He's Dr Jonathan Taylor.
Q. Jonathan Taylor:
"Minister Taylor took pains to explain that the Government of Liberia did not wish to be seen as either aiding or abetting the RUF to break sanctions. He pointed out that President Taylor had in his presence and in response to security concerns raised by Golley promised to do whatever was necessary to move the process forward."

Had you said that?
A. Yes, there was fear.
Q. On whose part?
A. On the part of the RUF delegation, Golley and Bah, and in fact the other guys from what had happened did not want to come. They were afraid also. So this is just the surface of it. But it took a lot of talking and massaging to get them to even move, and we said, "Well, look, whatever we have to do ..." - they wanted, first of all, to verify that Sankoh was in Lome. They wanted to be sure of that first, even before the team left Sierra Leone, but we managed to work around it to get them to go. It was mostly based on fear.
Q. So help us, Mr Taylor. How much direct involvement did you have in all this that's going on between these dates, starting on
16 April? We're now at 20 April.

A. Well you have to realise that, counsel, my foreign minister and my minister of state for presidential affairs, I mean, once they know and get involved their instructions are coming from me. So I'm not meeting these people talking, but that's why, when you call the minister of state, that's the chief of staff of the President's cabinet. I mean, that's almost - the UN special representative can't just call me indirectly. He has access to him, but I'm involved. Yes, I'm making the decisions.

Q. But during this period, Mr Taylor, did you meet with Ibrahim Bah and Omrie Golley?

A. No. When Bah and Golley first came to the country, no, I didn't meet them. I didn't have to meet them, no.

Q. Did you see them at all before they left for Lome?

A. Yes, I did see them before they left.

Q. Because you told us earlier that Bah left Liberia when Dr Manneh left.

A. That is correct.

Q. Had he, to your knowledge, been back to Liberia since?

A. Not at all. That's why I keep saying they tried to connect Bah with me. Bah is strictly - he left Liberia around '93/'94 and had no connection with me. He is now fully with Foday Sankoh, based on even evidence before this Court.

Q. Going back to the document:

"During a strategy session at UNOL headquarters, it was decided that the way forward is as follows: The UNOMSIL aircraft will carry out its mission on Thursday, 22 April. RUF participants will cross over into Liberian territory on
Wednesday, 21 April and would be escorted to Voinjama.

UNOMSIL’s aircraft will land at the Voinjama airstrip on Thursday, 22 April and take the first batch of participants to Lome via Spriggs Payne Airport, Monrovia, if refuelling is necessary. If not, then the flight from Voinjama to Lome will be a direct one.

The aircraft will turn around and effect a second shuttle on Friday, 23 April.

Brigadier General Joshi discussed this plan with Okelo. I did the same with Minister Taylor, minister of state for presidential affairs, who acknowledged the plan to be the most effective means of achieving the desired outcome. Minister Taylor is in the process of concluding arrangements for a security escort from the Liberian border crossing point to Voinjama as well as further overflight and landing clearances."

And then, "I attach for your information", which need not bother us.

Can we note everyone, because of earlier concern expressed, that we see - if we go back to the beginning of this document, we note the numbering in the top right-hand corner, 2 of 8. If we go over to behind divider 24, we see we come to 3 of 8. Can I now invite your attention to that document, 3 of 8. Do we all have it, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. "Report on the visit to the Liberia-Sierra Leone border:

On 18 April, three UNOL officers, Biong Deng, Alvin Wood and Masimba Tafirenyika, accompanied a two-man delegation of Revolutionary United Front members, Omrie Golley and General Ibrahim Bah, to the Liberian-Sierra Leone border. The main
The objective of UNOL’s participation in this mission was to observe the crossing of the two-man RUF delegation into Sierra Leone and their re-entry into Liberia, accompanied by a delegation of 14 RUF members who were scheduled to fly to Lome to attend RUF internal consultations with their leader Foday Sankoh. According to departure arrangements, the group was to meet in front of President’s Taylor residence at 6 a.m. on 18 April."

Is that right, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes.

Q. Why?

A. That’s the Executive Mansion.

Q. Yes, I know. Why?

A. Well, I really don’t - in front of the place I really don’t know the main details why they had to meet out there, but that’s the Executive Mansion and I guess the --

Q. "UNOL officers, accompanied by special representative arrived at the rendezvous at 6.10 a.m., 30 minutes before the arrival of the RUF members escorted by Special Security Service members including the SSS deputy director."

Who is that?

A. At this time this had to be Joseph Montgomery.

Q. Why do you say that?

A. Well he was the deputy director for operations, so this would be something that he would be involved with.

Q. "Also included in the convoy of seven vehicles that departed for the border was a political officer from the US embassy in Monrovia, Mr Hartford Jennings. In addition to UNOL’s two vehicles which were provided by UNHCR, the convoy also included one from the US embassy ..."
Now, Mr Taylor, you remember that Mr Hartford Jennings appearing in relation to Hassan Bility?

A. Yes, that is correct, who was supposed to - yes, yes, yes, Hassan. It's the same Jennings.

Q. "... the convoy also included one from the US embassy, two for the SSS members and two provided by the Government of Liberia to the two-man RUF delegation. From Monrovia, the convoy drove from Gbarnga, Zorzor, Voinjama and Kolahun before arriving in Foya, where the delegation spent the night prior to proceeding to the border on 19 April. In Voinjama, the convoy was joined by two additional vehicles of SSU members and Armed Forces of Liberia soldiers. During a stopover in Voinjama, Mr Golley made a telephone call to Lome, Togo, and spoke to the executive secretary of ECOWAS, Mr Lansana Kouyate, and to the foreign minister of Togo. In his conversation with Mr Kouyate, Mr Golley raised concerns regarding the security arrangement for Sankoh from Sierra Leone to Lome. He referred to a BBC news bulletin which he said had reported that afternoon that Sankoh's security during the flight to Lome was provided by ECOMOG. This he alleged was contrary to the understanding between the RUF, United Nations and ECOWAS. He also stressed to Mr Kouyate that he did not want Sankoh to go through the ordeal of talking to a lot of people. He made it clear that no one should be allowed to talk to Sankoh, especially the press, before the arrival of the RUF delegation. Apparently he was assured by Mr Kouyate that security arrangements would remain as agreed.

In informal private conversations with the two RUF members on the night of 18 April in Foya, Mr Golley raised a number of
issues pertaining to Sierra Leonean peace process. Among the
issues he raised included the fact that:
The RUF continues to consider Sankoh as a man in chains,
since his temporary release was only to facilitate the peace
process.

The outcome of negotiation between the RUF and the
Government of Sierra Leone should not be prejudged.
Although the RUF wants peace in Sierra Leone, it should not
be a victim of peace.

President Taylor was not fairly treated by ECOWAS and the
United Nations by not being properly consulted and given due
respect."

Did you agree with that, Mr Taylor?
A. Not exactly. Mr Golley is lawyer, so.

Q. So, you're a politician?
A. Yes. I mean lawyers have their own interpretation
sometimes, and so he is not quite right about this.

Q. Okay. "The RUF was not in a hurry to engage in peace talks
and would not allow itself to be kicked around.

Constitutional machinations in Sierra Leone would not bring
peace. Genuine peace could only be brought about through
dialogue and negotiations among Sierra Leoneans. He emphasised
that both sides should be opened minded and put all cards on the
table.

The recent peace process conference in Freetown was not
representative of the Sierra Leonean civil society.
The RUF should be respected as a partner in peace, and as
far as the RUF was concerned, it was not getting that respect
from the United Nations and ECOWAS thus far.
We left Foya for Tinkia border on 19 April at around 8.15 a.m. We were met at the border by a group of RUF members, who informed us that they had come to fetch Mr Golley and General Bah for consultations with RUF military leaders inside Sierra Leone in order to select delegates to meet with Sankoh in Lome. UNOL officers and the US political officer waited at the border for about seven hours before Golley and General Bah returned at 4.30 p.m., but without other RUF members expected to fly to Lome. On their return, Golley briefed us on their meeting and expressed optimism regarding the progress made thus far in selecting members of the delegation and the security arrangements for the RUF members. He showed us a list with 14 names on it, but excluding his and General Bah's. He then copied the same names on a new sheet of paper, adding his and General Bah's at the top. He informed us that the two of them, himself and General Bah, would be flying to Lome using either a UN or a commercial flight upon arrival in Monrovia. Golley informed us that the other 14 RUF members would hire a plane and that he had already made arrangements to that effect.

We left Tinkia around 5 p.m. and made a brief stopover in Foya before proceeding to Monrovia. Upon arrival on the morning of 20 April, we obtained contact numbers from Mr Golley where he could be reached for travel arrangements with the UN."

Let's go overleaf again, please, and we see the continuation of the same handnumberings in the top right-hand corner. Now, we see that this one is from Joshi to Okelo, yes, Mr Taylor?
Q. “I arrived here yesterday accompanied by four MILOBS at 1500 hours.” MILOBS are what, Mr Taylor?

A. I’m sorry, I can’t help. I can only --

Q. Military observers, I think.

A. Yeah, these are, definitely.

Q. “On arrival we called on Felix Downes-Thomas, who informed me that the arrangements communicated to us for transportation of the RUF delegation from Sierra Leone to Monrovia was already in progress. I was, however, informed by the political officer that due to apprehensions expressed from security and logistics, Mr Omrie Golley and Lieutenant General Ibrahim Bah were returning with the delegations. Accordingly, the RUF delegation had chartered an aircraft to proceed to Lome independently, whereas Mr Omrie Golley and the General Ibrahim Bah would wish to proceed to Lome using our flight. They arrived there at 0500 hours today and I met them today at 12.45 p.m. The special representative was present on my request accompanied by his special assistant, Mr Desmond Parker.

During the discussion held in the office of the Minister of Presidential Affairs of Liberia, Mr Jonathan Taylor, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Minicon was also present. Mr Omrie Golley expressed his desire to proceed to Lome as per arrangements given in paragraph 1 above. My response was in accordance with our arrangements put in place based on instructions received and concurrence of the Government of Sierra Leone and Corporal Foday Sankoh; that is, (1) transportation of delegation of 14 inclusive of Mr Golley and Ibrahim Bah by UN aircraft only; (2), delegation to be unarmed; (3), to be
accompanied by two military observers on each of the two shuttle flights to Lome. I further emphasised that no other arrangement was acceptable in view of the travel ban imposed by the sanctions committee. Since the arrangement was unacceptable to Mr Omrie Golley in view of his stated apprehensions, I suggested that we continue our discussion after he has consulted Corporal Foday Sankoh again. I understand that Mr Omrie Golley has not talked to Corporal Foday Sankoh and has since left Monrovia, along with Lieutenant General Bah.

During my telephone conversation with Foday Sankoh, the latter expressed apprehensions about the motives of Mr Omrie Golley. I am further given to understand that Mr Omrie Golley and Lieutenant General Ibrahim Bah have left Monrovia, presumably for Lome, at about 5.30 p.m. today.

Special representative Mr Felix Downes-Thomas called the Minister For Presidential Affairs, Mr Jonathan Taylor, at about the same time and impressed upon him that any deviation which may constitute violation of the sanctions committee approval of the arrangements of transportation of the RUF delegation to Lome may not be advisable.

As discussed, we are going ahead with preparations to lift the RUF delegation on two successive days commencing Thursday, 22 April, from Voinjama to Lome, either directly or via Monrovia in two sets of shuttle flights after consultations with Foday Sankoh and Maskita. The aircraft on its return on 24 April can bring back two military observers from Lome and me from Monrovia to Freetown. Mr Felix Downes-Thomas has commenced preliminary discussions with the Government of Liberia, who appear to be in agreement with this course of action."
So can we take it then, Mr Taylor, that the Government of Liberia was involved every step of the way in this process?

A. As you can see, every step of the way. We are not meddling. We are involved every step of the way.

Q. Let's see if we can just finish this logistical part this afternoon, please. Over the page, behind divider 26. Do you have it?

A. Yes, I do.

MR GRIFFITHS: I think something has happened here, because this document is incomplete. I see what's happened. We've dealt with this document already. This is the document behind divider 23. It's the same document. It's the start of the pages 1 to 8 document, so I think we can usefully discard this. It serves no purpose; it's a repetition. So let's go behind divider 27 then.

For the assistance of the Court staff, can I say that we'll be taking this up to the document behind divider 32, okay? We're just dealing with transport arrangements. So if you have available to you, I'll give you an opportunity to get all the documents up to the document behind divider 32, please, so we can just complete this episode.

Q. So let's now go behind divider 27. We're now on 21 April.

A. Yes.

Q. And this is from the special representative of the Secretary-General, we can see.

"Further to my report of 20 April 1999 on the above and to my report of today's date on the security incident in Voinjama involving UN personnel and other members of the international community, please be advised of the following:

I have had constant and ongoing consultation with UNOMSIL,
CMO Brigadier General S Joshi on the latest developments here as they relate to General Joshi's mission. The events of the last 24 hours have necessitated a change in strategy and a reworking of the itinerary which was proposed yesterday."

Now can we pause for a moment here, Mr Taylor. Now, let's see where we are. The Government of Liberia are in the middle of assisting the United Nations, ECOWAS and the Government of Sierra Leone to transport representatives of the RUF to Lome. Is that right?

A. That is right.

Q. On 21 April 1999 an incident took place in Voinjama, didn't it?

A. Yes, yes.

Q. What was it?

A. I think it was just some minor altercations. Nothing that is very grave. Just some minor altercations.

Q. Voinjama is where?

A. In Lofa County.

Q. Now, what was the security incident in Voinjama?

A. The details I don't quite recall, but I think it was just some of these problems where you're going through maybe a checkpoint again and people that do not understand, misbehave. But to the best of my recollection it was not a serious problem. It was not a war or anything.

Q. Well, let's move on:

"I have held constant and ongoing consultations with UNOMSIL CMO Brigadier General Joshi on the latest developments here as they relate to General Joshi's mission. The events of the last 24 hours have necessitated a change in strategy and a
reworking of the itinerary which was proposed yesterday, after our meetings with Messrs Golley and Bah and with the Minister of State For Presidential Affairs.

In light of the current security situation in Voinjama, we have decided that it would be unwise to proceed with the proposal to move the RUF participants from Foya and airlift them from Voinjama. Instead, we propose to airlift the 14 from Vahun to Monrovia using a helicopter and to then proceed to Lome. This will eliminate the need for the participants to travel by road from Vahun to Voinjama, especially during this tense period."

Tense period, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, that's - okay, there's a little problem coming. This is the beginning of the LURD situation developing, that's what. But it's a - it's not very serious at this time.

Q. So what do you mean it's beginning of the LURD situation?

A. Well, you have - there is some firing in Voinjama where people try to get people to run out of the town and the securities put it under control.

Q. We'll come back to it in a moment:

"... tense period. Brigadier General Joshi has proposed that this exercise should commence on Friday, 23 April, once the following steps have been taken:

He is able to get an evaluation of the feasibility from his aviation safety officer; the appropriate message is conveyed to, and received by, the RUF; and the Government of Liberia provides us with security assessment of the Vahun area.

There would be a need to make two trips from Vahun to Monrovia, given the fact that the helicopter has a capacity of 15 passengers, and one must take into account the presence of two
military observer escorts on board, along with representatives of UNOL and the Government of Liberia.

In light of the above, the exercise will commence on Friday the 23rd and end on Saturday, 24 April, if all goes well. The Government of Liberia has been requested to provide a security assessment of Vahun, and we await their response."

In due course, Mr Taylor, did you provide such a security assessment?

A. Yes.

Q. Yes?

A. Yes, and they did fly out of Vahun.

Q. And that security assessment, was it provided by your government?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. Let's just flick ahead before we conclude and have a quick look behind divider 33. What's that document about, Mr Taylor?

A. This is about the LURD situation.

Q. No, the 21 April 1999 incursion into Lofa County, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Let's go back behind 27. So at the time that this airlifting is going on there's been an incursion from where?

A. Guinea.

Q. Of whom?

A. LURD.

Q. Let's go behind 28 now, please. Over the page. Back on transport. We're still on 21 April here and this is from General Joshi:

"Please refer to my fax of yesterday on the subject. While all arrangements for conveyance of RUF delegation to Lome were
being put in place, a report was received of a security
disturbance in Voinjama area also involving UN personnel along
with a combined UN/donor mission. I am annexing a list of these
personnel with this message. Reports from Government of Liberia
sources seems to suggest involvement allegedly of some Guinean
dissidents, though earlier reports indicated a faction fight
within the Liberian security forces which has since been
reportedly verified by the Government of Liberia to be incorrect.
Accordingly, the arrangements for transportation of RUF
delegation made thus far should stand cancelled unless the
security situation in Voinjama shows an unlikely improvement.
The new arrangement envisages a three-stage movement of the
delegation. These stages will be as follows: Stage one, road
movement of delegation from rebel area to international border
under rebel arrangement; stage two, road movement from
international border to Vahun under arrangement of UNOL,
Government of Liberia, UNOMSIL military observers. Government of
Liberia will be requested for security and transportation during
this stage. Air transportation by UNOMSIL helicopter/aircraft
from Vahun to Monrovia and onward movement from Monrovia to Lome.
The same stages of movement will be repeated the next day.
The movement will be carried out on Friday and Saturday, that's
23 and 24 April respectively. This would require feasibility
evaluation by our aviation safety officer, necessary
communication to the RUF leadership in Lome as well always Buedu,
and security guarantees by the Government of Liberia in the Vahun
area.
I am proceeding to make necessary arrangements and request
your advice and guidance as deemed appropriate. I am also
annexing a cable from Felix Downes-Thomas on the subject. In the meantime, we have received an unconfirmed report that three members of donor groups tried to move to Guinea by a car provided by the International Rescue Committee which was ambushed."

When we go over the page, we see the list of those who were to be involved in the movement, yes, Mr Taylor?

A. That is correct.

Q. I don't think we need dwell over long on that. Let's move on over the page, please. Letter from Felix Downes-Thomas dated 23 April:

"I wish to thank you for the overall assistance and cooperation which UNHCR, through you and your office, have extended to UNOL to facilitate the arrangements related to the subject above. Specifically, I thank you for providing us with the two vehicles and drivers that took our observers from the Monrovia to the Liberia-Sierra Leone border on Sunday, 18 May 1999."

That can't be May. That has to be Sunday, 18 April.

A. Yes.

Q. "Your permission for us to use the UNHCR vehicles in Vahun for movement between the border and the airstrip in Vahun is also appreciated."

He expresses his gratitude for the excellent display of interagency cooperation. I don't think we need trouble any more with that.

And then when we go overleaf behind 30, again we can deal with this quite swiftly. What we have here behind this document is a list of those RUF representatives. We see it's signed by Masimba Tafirenyika, who we know was sent to meet with the..."
delegation at the border. Are you following me, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes. My problem is there a more complete list that I know of. There's a complete list. This is just part of that.

Q. We're missing the second page. I will have to see if we can obtain the second page of this document, because we see we start at number 8.

A. The full list is a little further, because there is a full list.

Q. Well, let's ignore this document. Can I invite everyone to fold this document over and ignore it, the document behind divider 30. Let's go behind divider 31 dated 24 April, yes.

Paragraph 2:

"The operation to airlift the RUF delegation commenced this morning at 9.10 in the morning in Monrovia. One UNOL officer accompanied the two UNOMSIL military observers to Vahun. One Government of Liberia security officer as well as one political officer of the US embassy also travelled on the helicopter, which arrived in Vahun at 10.30 a.m.

The 14-member delegation was picked up and arrived in Monrovia at 1.50 p.m. There were seven changes in the composition of the original delegation. The delegation was taken to a Government of Liberia safe guesthouse, where they were provided lunch before the first of the two seven-member groups boarded another UN flight for Lome."

Which guesthouse is that?

A. That's the RUF guesthouse.

Q. "The second seven-man group will remain under the protection of Government of Liberia security until tomorrow, when hopefully they will depart around 10 a.m. for Lome. Thus far,
the entire operation has proceeded with no hitches.

Attached is a list of the 14 members of this delegation."

If we go over the page now, now we see the list. This is behind divider 32. Yes, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, that's it.

Q. And for the record, the list of RUF representatives were:

(1) Mr SYB Rogers, who is described as the head - I'm hesitating.

I'm waiting to see if there's an objection.

MS HOLLIS: I think we complicate things when we draw

attention to certain things. Otherwise a name is just a name,

but when you draw attention to it then it causes problems.

MR GRIFFITHS: Can I just read out the list of names?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, go ahead and read those.

MR GRIFFITHS: Mr SYB Rogers, head; Colonel Lawrence S

Wormandia; Brigadier Mike Lamin; Colonel Rashid Sandi; Lieutenant

Colonel Idrissa Kamara; Major Agnes Finnoh; Major Amara Vandi

Junior; Major Rashid Foday; Major SS Williams; Major Earnest

Nggeba; Major M Jalloh; Captain Alex Williams; and Major Morie

Gibao; and Lieutenant Aruna Dauda Finnie. And I presume we

should add to that list Omrie Golley and Major Ibrahim Bah, which

was indicated in some of the earlier documents that we looked at.

Now having reached this point, Mr President, could I pause

now, please, and as one MFI with perhaps subdivisions into A, B,

C and D and so it would be MFI-83.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That's correct. I think we start with

the document behind divider 20, don't we?

MR GRIFFITHS: Divider 20. So the document behind divider

20 is a note to Monie Captan, minister of foreign affairs, from

Felix Downes-Thomas, representative of the Secretary-General,
dated 16 April 1999. Could that be MFI-83A?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that’s marked MFI-83A. There is some confusion here.

MR GRIFFITHS: It’s behind divider 20, but I didn’t refer to the face page of it.

JUDGE SEBUTINDE: I’m looking for the reference to Monie Captan.

MR GRIFFITHS: If you look here, your Honour, “Note to Monie Captan”.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Well, in any event, those both pages are forming part of the one document MFI-83A. That’s your intention, Mr Griffiths?

MR GRIFFITHS: Well, your Honour, I think there is no point in burdening ourselves with the first page because I didn’t refer to it, so if we just refer to the second page, solely the note to His Excellency Monie Captan, minister for foreign affairs.

PRESIDING JUDGE: All right. That’s the document then that is marked MFI-83A.

MR GRIFFITHS: I’m grateful. And then if we move to behind divider 21 and if we refer to this as the “outgoing code cable” from Felix Downes-Thomas, dated 17 April 1999, and refer to that as MFI-83B, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that will be marked accordingly.

MR GRIFFITHS: And then moving on to C, the document behind divider 22 which again is an outgoing code cable from Felix Downes-Thomas, dated 19 April 1999, that becomes our MFI-83C.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-83C.

There is two documents. Do you want them to form part of the --

MR GRIFFITHS: We referred to both of them, so if we refer
to them as the one number.

MR GRIFFITHS: Both pages. And moving on to behind divider 23, again it's an outgoing code cable from Felix Downes-Thomas, dated 20 April 1999. May that become MFI-83D?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's marked MFI-83D.

MR GRIFFITHS: And then moving on, behind divider 24, report on the visit to the Liberia-Sierra Leone border, dated 20 April '99. May that become --

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's marked MFI-83E.

MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful. Then the fax from Brigadier General Joshi to Francis Okelo, special representative of the Secretary-General, dated 20 April 1999, can that become MFI-83F?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, MFI-83F.

MR GRIFFITHS: We're ignoring the document behind divider 26. That can be discarded. We go to behind divider 27 and this is an outgoing code cable from Felix Downes-Thomas, dated 21 April 1999. MFI-83G, please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, marked MFI-83G.

MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful. Next is a fax from Brigadier General Joshi to Francis Okelo, dated 21 April 1999, to become 83H, please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's marked for identification MFI-83H.

MR GRIFFITHS: Next is a letter to Mr Ebou Camara of UNHCR from Felix Downes-Thomas, dated 23 April 1999.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That's marked MFI-83I.

MR GRIFFITHS: We're discarding the document behind divider 30. Next then we have an outgoing code cable from Felix
PRESIDING JUDGE: This is marked MFI-83J.

MR GRIFFITHS: And finally behind divider 32 can we just call this "List of RUF delegation to Lome"?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document just described is marked for identification MFI-83K.

MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful. I think that concludes that exercise, Mr President, your Honours:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, having gone through all of that documentation, can we just pause for a minute and review where we are. Firstly the RUF movement through Liberia to Lome, that was all official and public. Is that correct?

A. That is correct.

Q. With a number of international parties involved. Is that correct?

A. That is correct.

Q. Including a representative from the United States embassy in Monrovia?

A. That is correct.

Q. And those agencies included the UN, the UNHCR and ECOWAS?

A. That is correct.

Q. So it was not just down to the Government of Liberia, was it?

A. Not at all.

Q. It occurred at a time when a degree of tension arose in Lofa because of the incursion from Guinea?

A. That is correct.

Q. And involved in the security arrangements in transporting Bah and Golley up to the border are members of your SSS?
A. Involved, yes.

Q. Which is run by, of course, Benjamin Yeaten, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. Dr Manneh was in no way involved with this process?

A. No, no, not at all. Manneh had left years before.

Q. And can it be said that this movement was part of a plan to which you were party, concocted in Libya?

A. What plan? To move Golley and Bah to the border?

Q. Along with the RUF representatives. That's what I'm asking.

A. Don't let's forget now, Golley and Bah are moved to the border, not just with the SSS, but there are UN people involved. Everyone is involved. It's not just the two of them. The United States embassy is involved in that escort. The United Nations is involved. They go up to the border and they wait while the RUF people go in, do their negotiations and come out. There is nothing concocted in Libya. This is concocted right in West Africa by ECOWAS states, the United Nations, and if we're looking for co-conspirators and any concoction then the UN and the American embassy are all co-conspirators.

Q. Thank you. Now, this occurs at a historical period when the RUF and the junta have been forced - well those involved in the 6 January invasion have been forced to retreat from Freetown, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. And whilst this is going on, on the one hand, Mr Taylor, do you still have in mind the four-point plan of action suggested to you by General Yerks?

A. Well, whether - the suggestions from General Yerks, they
are all good, but whether the United States government decides to help or not the process of bringing peace to Sierra Leone is an obligation - is a duty - and so I do not see that as a quid pro quo. I just see those suggestions as being good, but we have a duty - a responsibility - to bringing peace to the West African sub-region and so I do it because we are West African brothers. I do it because we are just about one family. Not specifically because of that particular issue, but - I mean it helps, but that’s not basically the reason.

Q. Now, I referred you earlier to a document regarding that incursion in Lofa County. Can we have a look now at that document, please. It’s behind divider 33. Do you have it, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Now, we see the document is headed: "Situation report, Republic of Liberia, the April 21, 1999 incursion into Lofa County compiled by the National Security Council, May 4, 1999. Overview. This latest attempt by armed insurgents to disrupt the peace and stability of Liberia was not entirely unexpected."

Wasn’t it?

A. Well, we know of - they are speaking here at a level that we haven’t reached yet, but they know of certain things that the security have been following. Don’t forget now, we’ve been warned. We’ve been --

Q. Which warning are you talking about?

A. Let’s go back to my ambassador in Guinea sending that note from Eddie Kanneh. They’ve already warned us that there’s something at foot, be careful, watch your borders. So we are
observing and when this happens, this is just a reflection.

Q. And you will recall the reference to former Krahn members of the AFL congregating in Guiglo in Côte d'Ivoire?

A. That is correct, yes.

Q. So is your National Security Council monitoring these developments across the borders in your neighbouring countries, Mr Taylor?

A. We are trying to. It's a difficult process. We're trying to. These kinds of programmes and monitoring call for a lot of money, but we are doing our best.

Q. "At a time when efforts have been accelerated for the final solution of the Sierra Leone crisis, a new window of violence has erupted from Guinean soil as if abdominal effect is in the making.

The Government of Liberia, cognisant of a larger danger of conflict engulfing the third member of the Mano River Union, consistently sounded alarms over the past 12 months to the effect that dissidents were being trained in a number of locations in both Sierra Leone and Guinea with the plan of carrying out an attack on the Liberian government.

At a diplomatic level, Liberia engaged in a constructive shuttle in an attempt at honest dialogue with our neighbours and other countries within the ECOWAS framework; no less than a dozen shuttles were carried out over the past 12 months."

Q. Which shuttles are you talking about?

A. The Mano River Union meetings, the ECOWAS meetings, the foreign ministers' meetings, the defence ministers' meetings. All of these combined.

Q. "In addition to several meetings between the leaders of
Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, high level delegations, including those headed by the Vice-President of Liberia, the President Pro Tempore of the Liberian Senate, the Foreign Minister, the Defence Minister, the Minister of National Security, et cetera, have kept dialogue open with their counterparts in our neighbouring countries.

At the highest level, assurances were exchanged between Presidents Kabbah, Taylor and Conte that no dissident activity would be allowed to emanate from any of their countries directed against the respective governments."

Had you come to such an agreement?

A. Yes. Remember the Mano River Union protocols and those parts that I invoked in those letters to Conte, Kabbah, and I even wrote Kofi Annan about. So this is the reference to that.

Q. "Nevertheless, the Government of Liberia continued to receive intelligence reports of dissident training activities in the town of ..." blank. What should we put in there?

A. Zimmi. That's where we had gotten the reports. It was Zimmi.

Q. "In Sierra Leone and Macenta, Guinea. The government over the past several months has identified former council members Alhaji Kromah, Vambah Kanneh, Lavalie Supuwood amongst others" - identified them as what?

A. Those that are trying to engage in these activities.

Q. So that included Mr Supuwood, did it?

A. Yes, at that particular time. It just shows that we - that people can forgive and forget and move forward.

Q. "At the same time, suspicion abounded that Liberia was harbouring Guinean dissidents and accusations rife that Liberia
was supporting the RUF against the Kabbah government. This three-way scenario, finger-pointing, and counter-accusations among the leaders of the Mano River Union states neither quieted anxieties that tension within the sub-region would accelerate.

On the diplomatic front, over a year ago the level of the Guinean representation in Monrovia was scaled down to the level of a charge d'affaires, while the Liberian Embassy in Conakry receives merely a lukewarm reception from our Guinean hosts.

Is that true?

A. Yes, that is true.

Q. "As a matter of disappointment, the Ambassador in Conakry was not invited to the recent inauguration of President Conte. Neither was the Government of Liberia invited to attend."

Is that true, Mr Taylor?

A. That is true.

Q. Mr Taylor, how had relations with President Conte come to this low an ebb?

A. I guess the better question would be was it ever high?

Conte and I never got on. Conte supported Alhaji Kromah with ULIMO-K. They fought out of Guinea. Kromah actually lived in Conakry, everyone, and so remember when I said my trip in 1995, I go to Monrovia - and we've seen that picture, one of the exhibits shown here - where Conte, Boley and I go to Conakry. Now, that is a hairy, hairy move being made, because up until that time Conte and I had never dealt - we were archenemies, I can say. So we just really never got along. Even the - I said to this Court I have a wife that is partly from Guinea and Senegal, and she was even close to Conte, and in our tradition I can remember I sent her to Conakry once - in our position - in our tradition when a
woman comes and she sits at your feet, I mean, and she talks to you, traditionally, as a man you accept her. You accept what she says. But even Conte did not do that. So Conte I had always had problems. So I wouldn't say it deteriorated; let's say if we were at a level of five, it didn't go - it just dropped to four. But we were always low. We were never - on a scale of one to ten, we were always around five. I mean, it was just that.

Q. Well, help me with this on that topic then, Mr Taylor: Who did you get on better with, President Kabbah or President Conte?

A. If we compare the two and the relationship, I guess because we could speak English, I think Tejani Kabbah and I got on a little better because maybe we could express - I speak a little French, but not that much. But Tejani and I got on a little better because we could say very strong things to each other, which we did, and we could understand it. And I couldn't communicate that well in French, even though I speak a little good French. But I would say between the two of them, I would say a little better with Kabbah.

Q. "Although some level of dialogue continues between the governments of Liberia and Guinea, this slide in diplomatic interaction has given greater pause in the traditionally friendly, warm and brotherly relations between the two countries. In a candid and straightforward fashion, the Government of Liberia, concerned over the imminent incursion into Liberian territory, the President of Liberia warned in public statements and media reports that Liberia would exercise the option of going in hot pursuit of any insurgents, no matter where they came from. The Government of Liberia has always regarded this threat as valid, but had, however, never entertained the hope that it would
be forced to make good on its threat.

Further, as a means of instituting some preventive actions and to give reason a chance to prevail, the Government of Liberia has decided not to take any such immediate action more than two weeks following the incursion in order to give reason, sanity and good judgment a chance to prevail.

However, it must be noted that the Republic of Liberia cannot afford to be seen in a position of issuing veiled threats. Hence, the need to thoroughly address the Lofa incursion in the most straightforward terms and to create confidence amongst all parties that such an incursion will henceforth be discouraged.

That the City of Voinjama would be the target of the insurgents is not just surprising to the Liberian government. In the first instance, Lofa County is bordered by both Guinea and Sierra Leone. The porous nature of the border provides more than 60 separate crossings – such border crossings underpinned by generations of cultural, social and commercial interactions transcending family and tribal connections are most difficult to monitor."

Pause there. Is that the geographical, social, political, ethnic reality, Mr Taylor?

A. It is. It is.

Q. And without you having to move, if we just remind ourselves by looking at this map, we're talking about this area here, aren't we?

A. That is correct.

Q. Which projects like a finger into Guinea, yes?

A. That whole green section on the map, counsel, at the top, yes.
Q. That's the area we're talking about, is it?
A. Exactly, yes.
Q. And it's that area where you say that:
"... underpinned by generations of cultural, social and commercial interactions transcending family and tribal connections are most difficult to monitor."
Yes?
A. Yes.
Q. "It is because of this reason that the Government of Liberia has opted to pursue confidence building as a counter-measure to conflict."
Now, Mr Taylor, let us just pause for a moment and look at that. Just over the border from Lofa County is Kailahun, is it not?
A. Yes. I haven't been in there, but yes.
Q. In Sierra Leone, yes?
A. Yes.
Q. And that was for some time in a sense the redoubt of the RUF, their stronghold?
A. Yes.
Q. And it's in that particular geographical location that when this incursion takes place on the 21st, a number of individuals, agencies and countries are trying to extract RUF members to go to Lome, they're coming over the border in that same part of the world, isn't it?
A. No, not exactly. This incursion is coming from a little different point.
Q. Yes, I know, but we're talking about the RUF coming in to Foya.
A. Yes.

Q. To be taken out by helicopter to Monrovia.

A. That is correct.

Q. And we're talking about an attack on Voinjama which is --

A. Okay. Okay, the general area. Okay, I understand. Yes, that's right.

Q. Yes?

A. Yes, that's right.

Q. Now, help us, Mr Taylor. Did you see any design or motive behind the timing of that incursion?

A. Well, one could say this is an attempt to sabotage the process, that that could be a very good reason, but I think in terms of value, that would be very, very low on the value bar. But I think - their attempt to sabotage the process, I think it's very strong, yeah.

Q. Let's just finish with this document, shall we:

"Voinjama is also the former stronghold of the defunct ULIMO-K faction and home to a large number of citizens who supported the cause of ULIMO-K. Besides, the geographical proximity of Voinjama to the dissident training centres of Macenta, Guinea and Badar, Liberia, made Voinjama the ideal target for the insurgents from Guinea."

Now, apart from this situation report, Mr Taylor, did you take any other steps regarding this incursion?

A. Yes, we contacted President Conte. By this time, we got Nigeria involved, we got ECOWAS involved, discussions followed at the ECOWAS level. Of course, General Lansana Conte denied that he was involved. But we did subsequently do exactly what we said here. We wanted to take it at a confidence-building level
instead of the conflict level.

MR GRIFFITHS: I note the time, Mr President. Would it be
c convenient to pause there?

JUDGE DOHERTY: Mr Griffiths, before we do that, I'm not
clear who is the author of this report.

THE WITNESS: The National Security Council of Liberia,
your Honour. My government.

MR GRIFFITHS: Well, maybe we can just use the remaining
seconds to mark this for identification, please. So situation
report on 21 April incursion into Lofa County to be marked as

MFI-84, please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is now marked MFI-84.

MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Just before we adjourn, Mr Taylor, I'll
remind you of that caution again. You are not permitted to
discuss your evidence with any other person.

We'll adjourn now until 9.30 a.m. tomorrow.

[Whereupon the hearing adjourned at 4.30 p.m.
to be reconvened on Wednesday, 12 August 2009
at 9.30 a.m.]
INDEX

WITNESSES FOR THE DEFENCE:
DANKPANNAH DR CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR 26416
EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR GRIFFITHS 26416