Case No. SCSL-2003-01-T

THE PROSECUTOR OF
THE SPECIAL COURT
V.
CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR

WEDNESDAY, 12 AUGUST 2009
9.30 A.M.
TRIAL

TRIAL CHAMBER II

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

For Chambers: Mr Simon Meisenberg
Ms Sidney Thompson

For the Registry: Ms Rachel Irura
Mr Benedict Williams

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

For the accused Charles Ghankay Taylor:
Mr Courtenay Griffiths QC
Mr Morris Anyah
Mr Terry Munyard
PRESIDING JUDGE: Good morning. We'll take appearances, please.

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

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, Mr Griffiths.

MR GRIFFITHS: Good morning, Mr President, counsel opposite. For the Defence today are myself Courtenay Griffiths, assisted by my learned friends Mr Morris Anyah, Mr Terry Munyard and we're joined today by Ms Kathy Hovington who is an intern with us.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you, Mr Griffiths. Mr Taylor, I'll just remind you that you're still bound by your declaration to tell the truth.

Yes, Mr Griffiths.

DANKPANNAH DR CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR:

[On former affirmation]

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

Q. Yesterday when we adjourned, Mr Taylor, we were looking at events in April of 1999. Do you recall that?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. And we had looked in some detail at the arrangements made to transport RUF representatives to Lome for peace talks. Do you recall that?
A. Yes, I do.

Q. And we had also looked at the fact that coincidentally during the middle of those arrangements an incursion took place from Guinea into Liberia?

A. That’s right.

Q. And we had ended proceedings yesterday by looking at a statement issued by your government regarding that event, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. So we had reached then towards the end of April 1999. Is that correct?

A. That is correct.

Q. Were there any further events in April, Mr Taylor, which are of significance to us?

A. No, I think that’s about the most significant part, because that incursion is around the 21st. We come out with a report. No, we move right on into May, where there are almost immediately following our official statement about invoking certain parts of the treaties of the Mano River Union we receive a very - how would I want to call it? A very questionable letter from the British government moving into May that we had to deal with almost immediately.

Q. And that letter from the British government, can you help us as to what effect it was?

A. Yes, we - I received - our government received a letter from the British government through its ambassador stationed in la Cote d’Ivoire. Let me clarify that that ambassador was also accredited to Liberia, but was stationed in la Cote d’Ivoire and had been there during the crucial time of the year and they were planning to return. That letter in a way was a little cynical,
because it twisted in a way the intent of what we had done in our
major policy statement where we granted amnesty to ex-combatants
or those individuals fighting in Sierra Leone. By twisted I
mean, yes, we were not born with the so-called Queen's language,
but there was something cynical about that letter that did not go
down too well with the government because --

Q. Well let's have a look at that letter, shall we, Mr Taylor?
A. Yes.

MR GRIFFITHS: Could the witness, please, be shown the
document behind divider 34:

Q. Do you have the document now, Mr Taylor?
A. Yes, I do.
Q. Now, Mr Taylor, first of all let's look at the date. What
date is it?
A. This is 10 June 1999.
Q. Now before we look at this letter, had you been anywhere
outside of Liberia prior to 10 June?
A. Yes, early June I made two external visits.
Q. Where to?
A. To Nigeria and then on to Tripoli, Libya.
Q. And help us, the purpose of the trip to Nigeria?
A. Well, Abacha had - let me not say Abacha. Obasanjo had
just not been in office too long. We had exchanged telephone
messages - in fact, I think I had attended the inauguration - and
so coming in we had not had an opportunity to really sit to talk
about the situation in the region. So en route to Libya I
decided to do a stopover for, you know, a tete-a-tete to brief
him and bring him up to snuff about what was going on and to hear
from him, because again let's not push the issue, but Nigeria is
still the powerhouse of West Africa and so a new President coming
in, you know, all of us tried to see if we are in synch with each
other's views and exchange ideas as I had been dealing with the
Sierra Leonean problem all along and that was central on our
agenda.

Q. Now, can you help us as to how long before that visit
Obasanjo's inauguration had taken place?
A. Let's see, Obasanjo is in not too - it's not very long
before this. Not very long.

Q. And you went to Nigeria for that inauguration, did you?
A. Yes, I did.
Q. So this visit en route to Libya, was that the second visit
you had made to Nigeria since Obasanjo had come to office?
A. That is correct.

Q. And normally when these events occur, Mr Taylor, they are
concluded by an issuance of a communique?
A. That is correct. All visits end with a communique where at
least the public must know what were these guys talking about.
At the inauguration, for example, you really can't talk. There
are a lot of people and you may exchange greetings, but there's
no opportunity, but on what we will call a working visit like
this you come up with a communique explaining the principal
issues of discussion.

Q. Now before we look at this letter from the British
ambassador, could we have a look behind divider 35 please. Do
you have the document, Mr Taylor?
A. Yes, I do.
Q. What is this document?
A. This is the joint communique issued by the two Heads of
State on my one day working visit to Nigeria on 5 June 1999.

MR GRIFFITHS: Now, can I enquire from your Honours whether you have a number of duplicate copies of this document? It should only be a three page document.

PRESIDING JUDGE: You mean behind the same divider?

MR GRIFFITHS: Behind the same divider. Do you have several copies of the same thing?

PRESIDING JUDGE: I've only got the one copy.

MR GRIFFITHS: Okay. Well, it's just my bundle then:

Q. Now let's have a look at this communique then, shall we, Mr Taylor:

"At the invitation of His Excellency General Olusegun Obasanjo, President, Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Mr Charles Taylor, President of the Republic of Liberia, paid a one day working visit to Nigeria on 5 June 1999."

So it follows then, does it, Mr Taylor, that it was at President Obasanjo's invitation that you attended?

A. That is correct.

Q. "During the visit, the two Heads of State exchanged views on a wide range of subjects", such as?

A. We talked about Sierra Leone, peace in the sub-region and let's just get one thing clear here, because when you see, "at the invitation", we had spoken several times on the phone. He knew I was going to Libya. "Well listen, my brother, on your way could you stop for us now?" That's an invitation. "On your way, could you stop over for a talk as you go?"

Because Nigeria is actually out of - when you fly out of Kano, that's directly into North Africa. So when you see an
invitation here this doesn't mean that we had not talked about it, but as it's expressed when these documents are being done you say "at the invitation", but it doesn't mean that that's like a written letter or something.

Q. "At the bilateral level, the leaders commended the excellent relations existing between their two countries and explored further ways of consolidating their relations. In this regard, the two leaders agreed that the Nigeria-Liberia joint commission should be resuscitated and revamped."

What was that joint commission?

A. Economic cooperation and other things are dealing. We were looking at how we could get Nigerians to invest in Liberia. There are quite a few very rich people in Nigeria and business people. This joint commission to look across the board at cultural, economic and other ties.

Q. "On sub-regional matters, the two leaders reaffirmed their determination to work for the achievement of peace and stability in West Africa so that the process of economic development in the sub-region could be speeded up."

Mr Taylor, did you see a link between peace, stability and economic development?

A. Oh, definitely. Definitely, definitely.

Q. "The two leaders commended the efforts of ECOWAS in the search for a peaceful resolution of the crisis in Sierra Leone. They welcomed the recent ceasefire agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front and urged both parties to conclude, as early as possible, a final peace agreement that will bring a lasting solution to the crisis in that country."
Tell us, Mr Taylor, what was the hot topic for discussion between yourself and the new incoming President of Nigeria?

A. Sierra Leone, as I’ve just mentioned before. And this issue of talking about the ceasefire, let’s just clarify. We are looking here at June and let’s remind ourselves that the delegations are in Lome as of April. Between the middle to the end of April they are there and they take most of April and May and hammer out first of all a ceasefire agreement. And may I just mention sadly, may peace be unto her, the former foreign minister of Liberia D Musuleng-Cooper, that name has been through, just died about a month ago in Liberia, was present. I had Liberia had a permanent negotiating group in Lome as of April and my former foreign minister - not my - the former foreign minister, like I said, Mrs Cooper was there.

So I briefed him and he already knew what was going on over there and we expressed our satisfaction with this ceasefire but now the sticking point had to be how do we get a final agreement? Because there was several major issues that I’m sure we’ll get into later before we could get in agreement and we were now looking at some of the possible scenarios in how we could manage, you know, a peace agreement out of that Lome meeting.

Q. Help us a little further with the Liberian delegation which was present during that period, Mr Taylor. You’ve mentioned one individual, the late D Musuleng-Cooper?

A. Yes.

Q. How many others were sent as part of that delegation? Just a rough idea?

A. We had about three persons. Mrs Cooper. We also had a senior military personnel on the ground there, former General Joe
Tuah and an assistant to Mrs Cooper, I don't remember his or her name. But they were there because again - because of my role, we wanted somebody on the ground that kept me in touch with the daily occurrences. Even though I was speaking to President Eyadema all of the time but we had somebody there that any time something got stuck that I heard from Eyadema on this I could get to Mrs Cooper and we could add pressure. Let it be very clear these negotiations were not simple and I'm sure we will talk more about it, but it called for a lot of arm-twisting.

A lot of things went on I'm sure we'll get into later.

Q. And when had the Liberian delegation arrived in Lome?
A. In April along with everybody else. We were stationed there.

Q. Let's go back to the document then, shall we:

"The two leaders paid tribute to the chairman of ECOWAS, His Excellency President Gnassingbe Eyadema, for his initiatives and actions towards the resolution of conflicts in the sub-region.

His Excellency President General Olusegun Obasanjo congratulated President Taylor of the Republic of Liberia on his recent decision to destroy the arms and ammunition surrendered by the former warring factions during the disarmament process in Liberia. They noted that the destruction of these arms will mark the final disengagement of ECOMOG from Liberia."

Pause there again. Now, Mr Taylor, in tandem with all the other matters that we've been discussing over the course of 1999, was this theme of arms destruction running in the background?

A. Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

Q. And what kind of practical or logistical issues were thrown
up by that?

A. Practical issues had been resolved. The United Nations was paying for the destruction of the arms. They were sending in their experts to carry out the destruction. On the logistical side, what was of concern to us - I would say logistical and security. What our concern was, we were now in a period where arms are about to be destroyed. The armed forces situation is not settled because we have not restructured. ECOMOG is drawing down at a faster rate than anticipated. And what do I mean by that? Let's not forget that ECOMOG is now moving seriously into Sierra Leone.

So we are concerned that all of these taking place at the same time could cause some problems and we discussed how we could begin to look at the possible restructuring problem, the financial implications for such a restructuring project. All of these were just thrown around to get ideas.

Q. Well, can we discuss that a little further, please. At this stage was there a Liberian army?

A. No. Not in the true sense of the word, no. The army, by virtue of being partisan during the war - by "partisan", remember I said here before to this Court the army split itself into ULIMO-K, ULIMO-J, LPC, so they could no longer be looked at, quote unquote, as an Armed Forces of Liberia. But we come into office. There is no one to look at.

So what we are referring to when you see other statements here about Liberia deploying forces at the border, what we are doing, we are using what was the remnants of the Armed Forces of Liberia, the LPC, the ULIMO-J, the ULIMO-K, who have all said that they were loyal to our government. These are the people
that we're sending out. But they are not a disciplined, coordinated group. So what we do need is to formally train them. So at this time we do not have - as a matter of fact it is now, now as we sit in this Court, in Liberia that the Armed Forces of Liberia is being trained, now. Right now.

Q. Let's put those facts together, shall we. So, on the one hand, there isn't an organised army as such. On the other hand, ECOMOG is withdrawing their forces much more quickly than anticipated?

A. That is correct, yes.

Q. On the third hand, you've just had an incursion from Guinea in April?

A. Yes.

Q. On the fourth hand, what arms and ammunition are present in Liberia are about to be destroyed?

A. That is correct.

Q. So help us, Mr Taylor. What capacity did you have at this stage to defend your country?

A. Virtually, virtually, virtually none. What we were doing at that particular time, those dis-earnest individuals during the disarmament, demobilisation process that had a rifle here or rifle there brought them out. This is as simple as I can put it. Remember we are using ECOMOG at that time. I think that evidence was given in this Court where ECOMOG carried out cordon and search operations in Monrovia and they were in some grave - in the graveyard areas weapons were recovered. These are the type of little weapons that are available to whatever forces are there to resist this incursion from LURD and principally that's why LURD made such rapid advancement, because we had no defence.
Q. "On the situation in Africa both leaders expressed concern at the increase in the number of conflicts as well as their intensity. They called on all parties to these various conflicts to embrace dialogue, in the traditional African manner so that peaceful solutions can be found to these crises."

His Excellency Mr Charles Taylor, President of the Republic of Liberia, expressed gratitude to His Excellency General Olusegun Obasanjo, the government and people of Nigeria, for the warm and brotherly welcome extended to him and his delegation during the visit and President Taylor extended an invitation to President Obasanjo to visit Liberia. This invitation was accepted."

Did he later visit Liberia, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, he did.

Q. When?

A. He made a quick visit to Liberia for the 26 July celebration.

Q. Celebration of what?

A. Of the independence of Liberia. If I’m right, the 152nd anniversary of Liberia’s independence.

MR GRIFFITHS: Can I ask, please, that that communique be marked for identification. Communique on visit to Nigeria, 5 June 1999. MFI-85, please, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-85 for identification.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now from Nigeria as you indicated you travelled on to Libya?

A. That is correct.
Q. Why?
A. I was seeking economic assistance. We were trying to get Libya to help us with a major problem that was giving us trouble, the problem of oil, oil is a major problem for small countries, and trying to get some concessions on rights to purchase refined products at some reduced brotherly rate. This is what we went there for, economic reasons.
Q. And how long did you spend in Libya?
A. Only a couple of days.
Q. And did you visit the Mataba?
A. By this time, no. By meeting with Gaddafi you are already I didn't have to go to the Mataba. I didn't have to go to the Mataba but I spoke to Gaddafi at length.
Q. Let's go now then, please, back to that letter from the British embassy behind divider 34. Where were you when the letter actually arrived, Mr Taylor?
A. By 10 June I was not in Liberia. I think I may have been en route back from Libya. I'm not sure if I was in Liberia at this time.
Q. And we see it's addressed to the President of the Republic of Liberia, dated 10 June and it reads as follows:
"Your Excellency, my government have followed with interest your recent public comments on developments in Sierra Leone. This is a crucial matter for all of us. We share your expressed desire for a sustainable peace there. This will bring benefits not only to the people of Sierra Leone but also to the region itself, including to Liberia."
Were you unaware of that fact, Mr Taylor?
A. I was not unaware of that fact.
Q. “Like you, we are following closely the discussions now taking place in Lome between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF. They offer the opportunity for a fresh start and for lasting peace. We hope that all involved will seize that opportunity. You are conscious that the talks also offer Liberia, and you personally, Mr President, a chance to play a constructive role in the sub-region.

We therefore welcome your recent positive comments on the Lome negotiations and your assurances that Liberian diplomatic support for the rebels will cease.”

Pause there. “Liberian diplomatic support for the rebels”.

How did you interpret that?

A. That’s what I mean - in fact, that’s what I meant when I said that this letter did not go down well because if you see the language here is being twisted as we go along and let me just comment to the Court. This letter, even looking at it from a diplomatic standpoint, it is not - it is not usual, or may I just say it is unusual, for an ambassador to write a letter directly to the Head of State and government of a country that he or she is accredited to.

Now there are two ways of looking at these kinds of letters, because an ambassador is supposed to represent the views of his or her government. Now, all of us know that the Head of State of Great Britain is the Queen and the Prime Minister is the head of government.

Now this ambassador is writing this letter and these things develop like this when people want to develop what you call a plausible deniability, because let’s look back, if you don’t mind, counsel. Where she says in paragraph 3, if you want to
look at it, "We are conscious that the talks also offer Liberia and you personally, Mr President, a chance to play a constructive role in the sub-region", that is really suggesting that I’m not playing a constructive role, okay?

We tore this letter apart, you know, literally in terms of a response to it. You are alleging here that, "Okay, you have not been playing a constructive role. We hope that you will play", and where she says, "Like you, we are following closely."

Well like me, you are not like me because I am not following closely the talks. I’m a part of the talks. So these are the little nuances you find in these documents that build up over time.

And so then we go to what you just asked about, this diplomatic support. Again, it's subjective. There is no diplomatic support that Liberia is giving to the rebels. Liberia is a part of the Committee of Five and the Committee of Six, charged with the responsibility, known by their government that sit on the Security Council as a permanent member, so to infer here that there is diplomatic support being given by Liberia to the rebels is total nonsense and this didn’t go down well with me and the government and we took exception to this kind of language.

There’s no such thing as diplomatic support for the rebels - none. If by permitting in line with the United Nations and ECOWAS and the African Union, if by permitting delegates to pass through Liberia constitute a diplomatic support, well, then I’m guilty, but that’s not what she is referring to here. This is an inference here that is negative and has a type of antagonising annotation that is improper and so we took serious
exception to this.

Q. And you note also in the second paragraph, Mr Taylor, the reference to, "This is a crucial matter for us all." Coming from the British embassy, how did you interpret that?

A. That diplomatically, "Hey, we have serious interests in Sierra Leone and we are not just going to let go." That's how you could interpret that. They are expressing clearly, "We have interests", and they normally add another word diplomatically to this "vital interest." This is where she is trying - this ambassador is trying to point out.

Q. Now, let's go back to the paragraph where we paused: "... your assurances that Liberian diplomatic support for the rebels will cease unless they remain fully committed to the peace process. We hope that you will continue to use your influence with the rebels to ensure that a peace agreement is secured and fully implemented."

"Your influence with the rebels", how did you interpret that?

A. That's the round about way, "You are providing support."

"Command, control" that you hear in this indictment, that's it. "Your influence" is just, "Your command and your control of them, we hope that you will take care of your little puppets that you have. Control them." That's what she is saying here and I'm saying it didn't go down well with us because this is far from the fact. That's what she is pointing to here.

Q. But Mr Taylor, forgive me, but you do recall that you had made some rather caustic remarks about the United States and Britain earlier in the year in a statement made in London?

A. Oh, yes.
Q. "We also welcome your undertaking to destroy the weapons left over from Liberia's own civil conflict. We look forward to the completion of this destruction. It will be a valuable practical expression of your commitment to building confidence in the region."

How did you interpret that, "your commitment to building confidence in the region"?

A. You know, like I said, this letter was just loaded with nonsense and you wouldn't even know whether this is the British government's view, or the ambassador writing that they will later on say, "Well, this doesn't represent the view of the British government", but this is one of those - this is just another one of those curve balls that, you know, he is sending that just doesn't give the reality of the situation.

Q. Then we come to this, "We continue to believe that Liberia can also use its influence to stop the supply of arms to the rebels in Sierra Leone." Again, what did you make of that?

A. That, you know, "You're controlling them, you're sending it and so we are just asking you to stop sending arms." Again, this is peddling - I mean, he is peddling this that just, you know, a tricky word "use your influence", but he is really trying to say "Stop sending arms."

Q. Now help us, Mr Taylor. Did this same British government ever provide you with proof or any kind of evidence that you were engaged in that kind of activity?

A. Nothing. Nothing. We're still waiting for it. Nothing whatsoever.

Q. "Such supply can only bring further isolation to the countries involved." "Further isolation", at the time how
Q. Did you view it as a threat?
A. Well, I viewed it as both a threat and an ongoing situation. This is something that is - this is an active situation I would just say as an additional threat.

Q. "Further isolation"?
A. Uh-huh, yes.

Q. "For our part we will continue to do all we can to help bring about a sustainable political settlement and reconciliation in Sierra Leone." Help us, Mr Taylor. Did the British have a representative in Lome during those peace talks?
A. Oh, yes, they had. All of the principal countries had people around what we call at the side bar issues. I'm sure the British representative ambassador in Lome, the US ambassador, there were side - everybody was present not participating directly, but you were on the fringes of the meeting getting information, putting in your little word, passing messages. All of these things happened during negotiations and they were happening in Lome at that particular time.

Q. "Our practical support for the rebuilding of a new democratically accountable Sierra Leone Army is part of our efforts."
A. Yes.

Q. Now do you have a comment to make about that, Mr Taylor?
A. Yes, there are just too many things hidden in here that you know the British are always very well dressed in top hats and so you very rarely know.

Let's go back to something that the Court ought to see:

"For our part we will continue to do all we can to help bring about a sustainable political settlement and reconciliation in Sierra Leone."

Don't forget there is this tussle between the British that I have talked about and what they interpret as Nigeria's role in West Africa and Nigeria wanting to dominate West Africa and exercise hegemony in Sierra Leone.

So with the vital interests of Britain there are two words here "political settlement". Britain is saying that, "We have vital interests", and don't let's forget while President Kabbah is out of power the British fund, okay, a covert radio station, they pay for the Kabbah government in exile and so they have vital interests.

Then they go one step to say, "Our practical support for the rebuilding of a new democratically accountable Sierra Leone Army." They are now hinting that they are going to rebuild the army, which they did. And let's remind ourselves who is commanding the Sierra Leonean army at this particular time? Khobe, the Nigerian. They are now saying, "We are going to take care of the army", and they do later on, but ECOWAS is trying her best to make sure that we take credit for Sierra Leone, but that is not to be, as ECOWAS had taken credit for Liberia.

I don't want the Court to lose sight of this play going on, because when we begin to look at responsibility for prolonging that war in Sierra Leone I will say categorically without fear
that Britain has to take responsibility for some of these
blockages and snares. Yes, the end result peace came, but they
want to make it appear as though Britain was responsible for
peace in Sierra Leone. That is not true. Without ECOWAS and
ECOMOG and what all of the nations did, peace would still not be
in Sierra Leone.

So these obstacles are being listed and you will not catch
this unless you go back to what I mentioned to this Court before
about some of the diplomatic messages that were reaching to some
of us in terms of veiled threats, "Well, we will not let this
happen. We will not let that happen." And what am I talking
about? "We will not let this operation go on in Sierra Leone the
way it is being planned. It will not work." And I have
mentioned to this Court that this attack on Sierra Leone by
ECOMOG was not approved under Chapter 7. I have mentioned that
to this Court. So this is basically explaining in subtle
diplomatic language what the British role will continue to be.

Q. Now just expanding on that role as you call it, Mr Taylor,
during the period of the AFRC government where was Kabbah?

A. During that time President Kabbah was in Conakry, Guinea.

Q. And during that time you say that he was funded by the
British government?

A. That is correct.

Q. And did he ever visit the United Kingdom?

A. I cannot say with any certainty. I don't have that - I
can't help the Court with that information.

Q. And this radio station that you say - the covert radio
station - funded by the British government, where was that
located?
A. To the best of my recollection, that was located at Lungi and President Kabbah broadcast from there and the British didn’t hide it that they funded the radio station. They made it - they did. It was funded by them.

Q. And what was that radio station used for?

A. I would really say to a lot of analysts at that particular time it was voicing the views from Kabbah, but it was also termed as a type of hate radio because some analysts at that time interpreted some of the statements coming out of the radio station as not being helpful and caused a lot of hatred between and amongst the different groupings in Sierra Leone. Now I'm in no position to ascertain whether these analysts are right, but that was the view of some intelligence analysts and diplomats at the time.

Q. Now let's go over the page, "I would like to stress that Liberia has nothing to fear from the delivery of lethal equipment for the new Sierra Leone Army."

So the British government is making it quite plain that they will be rearming the Sierra Leone Army. Yes, Mr Taylor?

A. That is correct.

Q. At a time when, as you've just told us, Liberia itself did not have an army?

A. That is correct.

Q. And did you view that as a threat?

A. Yes. In so many ways, more than one. Here we are - in the first instance the army had not been trained at the time but they are saying that we are going to equip them, but of concern to my government particularly with this - Sierra Leone is a sovereign state and they had a right to an army. Of concern were reports
that we received that Liberians - that some Liberians were being brought into that new Sierra Leonean army and it is my understanding as I sit here today that is still true today; where there are Liberians that are officers in that - in this present Sierra Leonean armed forces.

We were concerned about that kind of activity over there and that arming this army that was going to be comprising of the old SLA, the combatants of the war, that it would pose a possible problem in the very near future if these individuals had just been brought into a new army and armed. This was of concern not just to me, but a lot of military people were concerned. And let me expand on that a little bit.

During the discussions in Lome we are discussing - in fact it has come up during the preliminary discussions for the ceasefire. The SLA, the Sierra Leonean army, or what we called the AFRC, are not - are not present in Lome. They are not a part of this agreement. But they are arguing that they are the armed forces of Sierra Leone. But these are the very individuals that had attacked and removed Kabbah from office. So you rebuild this army quickly and rearm them, we saw that as a recipe for disaster. This is what we were looking at.

Q. Why a recipe for disaster?
A. That's the very junta force we are talking about and if you bring them in and it is - if everybody becomes the Sierra Leonean army and you just equip them, you are equipping the people that just removed the government, you are just rearming them. So we were advising caution on this as we had not fully decided on the fate of the SLA that was before the junta. That was the question. That issue had not been fully decided while they were
thinking about equipping a new army.

Q. “This is exclusively for use within Sierra Leone and provided against the background of the UN Secretary-General’s encouragement of the international community to assist the process of rebuilding the army. A new properly trained army will be needed to take over responsibility for security when ECOMOG departs.

We believe furthermore that the RUF may also stand to benefit from our assistance in the longer term, given that a final peace agreement may include provision for integrating some of the current rebel forces into a new Sierra Leone Army.”

And it’s signed, “Yours sincerely, Haydon Warren-Gash, Her Majesty’s ambassador.” Mr Taylor, did you attach any significance to the timing of this letter?

A. Yes, they know we are in Lome. We are in Lome discussing trying to bring peace. We do not see this letter as - quite frankly as a letter - as a complimentary letter. We see this as laying out certain yardsticks that we just want you guys to know that you are talking in Lome but here’s where we are. And I think this is a very serious letter and this happens sometimes when you are passing messages.

They know that this letter getting to me - they ought to know that we will understand this letter and we will convey to our colleagues our interpretation of these kinds of letters of which we did. So it is the type of situation that we felt it could have been construed as some type of interference into the Lome talks, but I just advised all of my colleagues about this letter and I’m sure - and our own analysis of it and we just guided ourselves accordingly.
Q. So you discussed it with your colleagues, did you?
A. Definitely. When you get these kinds of letters from major countries, you share them with your colleagues and try to get their own input and what they think about it and you have to share notes with these kinds of letters.

Q. Did you respond to the letter, Mr Taylor?
A. No, I did not respond to the letter. I'm sure the foreign minister - we noted certain things and the foreign ministry responded to the ambassador.

MR GRIFFITHS: Could I ask that this letter from the British embassy in Abidjan, dated 10 June 1999, be marked for identification, please, MFI-86.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-86.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. So we're up now, Mr Taylor, to 10 June. Help us then. What happens next?
A. Well, there are just so many things. While this is going on, we remember we've had the incursion that has come about in April and the United Nations headquarters begin to especially the Undersecretary-General for political affairs begins to look at this attack in Lofa as the beginning of a process of Liberia sliding back into instability. Now, we are all caught off guard with this assertion coming from UN headquarters where - after we had the combat in Monrovia with Roosevelt Johnson back in September of '98, we did not have this particular analysis coming.

But this incursion now in Lofa, the Undersecretary-General sends out to Liberia and he asks the special representative to look into what he had assessed as Liberia sliding back into
instability. So the special representative of the Secretary-General confronts us with this particular situation, and we take serious issue because as the people came in, they had abducted several European ambassadors that went through Guinea but the matter was settled almost immediately, and we were beginning to wonder why the Undersecretary-General of the United Nations, on his own, will suggest that Liberia appears to be sliding back into instability.

With this, we take it very seriously because we begin to think back again. You know, these things sometimes they creep on you, but if you keep them in mind you begin to put the pieces together. And I hate to delay the Court, but I'm on trial here so I just have to mention these things.

My ambassador has warned—by my ambassador, my ambassador in Guinea—way back in August that there was this thing afoot to destabilise my government. September we get the Johnson situation. Now we have exactly what we were afraid of. We have been getting information about a possible attack out of Sierra Leone. Remember we suggested from Zimmi. Now this attack has come out of the Guinean side, Macenta, and the Undersecretary-General in New York is saying that, "Uh-oh, Liberia is on the verge of drifting into instability." Putting all of these pieces together, we begin to demand some explanation from the Undersecretary-General through this special representative as to what does he know that we do not know. And it brings about a serious matter.

So for about two or more weeks we are really involved in intensive diplomatic discussions and then the special representative finally responds to his boss in New York based on
his assessment and, because it involves Liberia, we are provided a copy and basically what we suggest to the international community, we suggest to them that - in fact we point out to them that the absence of assistance to our government and in fact to any state coming out of a war situation that does not get assistance as far as proper demobilisation, proper readjustment, proper resettlement of ex-combatants and helping the country to get back on its feet economically and stabilise the situation - because we had tried to stabilise the situation politically by having a broad-based government, that all of these combined, without that assistance from the international community, there will be failure.

So this was the argument that we made as a government very strongly and the special representative responded to his boss, stating categorically what was some of the shortcomings of the international community and, to prevent this apparent slide that the Undersecretary-General was talking about, that it would take the active participation of the international community along these lines.

Q. So that's a couple of weeks after you had received that letter, Mr Taylor, you are engaged with that?
A. Yes, that's going toward the end of June, yes.

Q. Now, beginning of July are you still in Liberia?
A. July I'm back in Liberia.

Q. Yes. And do you remain there?
A. No, no, no, I do not.

Q. Where do you go?
A. By the end of June, beginning of July, my colleague President Gnassingbe Eyadema is getting concerned about the
process of the - about the progress of peace - of the peace talks
and so we talk about it --

Q. Who is we?

A. Eyadema and I talk about it and he tells me that he has
also spoken to Obasanjo about it, he has spoken to Blaise
Compaore about it and he has also informed President Kabbah
because even though Kabbah is carrying out the negotiation, but
he is President and so there are some discussions he is privy to,
but there are others, as a part of the negotiations, he is not
directly privy to. So we are sensing possible failure. We are
sensing possible failure and we agree that the only way we can
get this agreement to work is for all of us to come down to Lome
and bear down on all sides to make sure that we get an agreement.
And so I had asked him and he sent - in fact just before
then, as this is going on, the RUF is really putting up a stiff
resistance to this. Some additional - they wanted some
additional people. We arranged for them to come. So Eyadema
sent me his plane to Monrovia to pick me up on 5 July to come
down to Lome where all of us would meet. So I went to Lome,

Obasanjo flew from Abuja there, Compaore came from Ouagadougou
down to Lome and all of us met there on 5 July.

Q. And did you discuss your departure with the special
representative of the United Nations?

A. Oh, definitely. The UN is as deep into this as everybody
else. Don't let's forget they are transporting the people, they
are involved and so the special representative is aware of the
talks in Lome. He is aware of our movement on the 5th and
faithfully, I'm sure, he reported it to his head office that we
were proceeding to Lome.
Q. Have a look behind divider 36, please. Do you have it, Mr Taylor?
A. Yes, I do.
Q. Just for the purposes of clarity, let's see what this says.

It's dated 6 July 1999:

"Subject: President Taylor leaves for Togo to attend Lome peace talks. President Taylor left Monrovia today for Lome, Togo, to attend an emergency summit of West African leaders."

Was it an emergency summit, Mr Taylor?
A. Well, yes. Yes, we call it an emergency summit because there's this sticking problem down there. So once several of us are there it's a summit of a kind, yes.

Q. "According to a MICAT press release" - what's MICAT?
A. That's the ministry of information, culture affairs and tourism.

Q. "... press release issued on July 5, 1999, the President is to join President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and current chairman, President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, among other leaders to discuss regional issues including the crisis in Sierra Leone. The President's delegation included amongst others his foreign minister, Monie Captan; Senate President pro tempore Keikura Kpoto; information minister Joe Mulbah; the director general of the institute of public administration, Dr James Teah Tarpeh; the director general of the institute for strategic studies, Earnest Eastman; and the deputy minister of state for public affairs and press secretary to the President, Reginald Goodridge. The summit comes in the wake of misgivings expressed by the RUF about the draft peace agreement. The summit is expected to break any related stalemate."
Had they reached stalemate in Lome, Mr Taylor?

A. That is exactly what I'm saying, yes. They had reached stalemate and this is why we are called to see if we can break this stalemate, yes.

MR GRIFFITHS: Could that be marked, please, Mr President, for identification, outgoing code cable from Felix Downes-Thomas dated 6 July 1999, MFI-87.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That document is marked MFI-87.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, help us please. What happened when you arrived in Lome?

A. Well, we get to Lome - and by "we" I mean Obasanjo, Blaise Compaore and myself get there - and Eyadema briefed us immediately about the problems. There are several problems:

One, Sankoh is not satisfied with - he does not believe that Kabbah is serious and genuine. The number of cabinet positions being made available to them, he is not happy with that. There is a side issue of what to do with what was the AFRC, what to do with those soldiers and as to whether they could be represented under this agreement with the general term of just RUF. There is also the issue of security for Sankoh, his return and what position he will hold in that government. Just these little sticky things.

Sankoh gets very belligerent and is not going to sign this agreement unless these key issues are resolved. He's threatening to break the whole thing down. So we go there and we begin - we are briefed by Eyadema and we begin to throw ideas around and I begin consultative discussions immediately.

When you see this delegation, all of these people are
seasoned negotiators and diplomats that are taken to split them
up into the different groupings. By the same time we will be
holding meetings and trying to break the stalemate, and we go
into high gear right away in trying to resolve these problems.

It takes - I mean, we hardly sleep.

Q. Well I've never been to such talks, Mr Taylor, and so help
us. Just in practical terms, what goes on at such peace talks?
A. Well, you take it informally. For example, on this day we
get there and just the Presidents talk. I'm there, Eyadema is
there, Obasanjo, Blaise Compaore. We begin to - we form a
strategy, first of all, to begin to talk to the sides to find out
what is their bottom line, so to speak, and then once we get to
know their bottom line how can we come up with compromises. So
we begin that process.

The first person we invited to come in to see us was
President Kabbah. President Kabbah came in and so we had a
meeting with Kabbah. We do have pictures to those meetings. We
hold - after Kabbah, we hold meetings with Sankoh. We --
Q. Can I interrupt you for a moment. When was the last time
you had seen Sankoh?

A. Oh, that was - the last time I laid my eyes on Sankoh was
back in 1982.

Q. '82?

A. I mean '92. '92. And I had not seen him since - that was
the first time I had seen him since then in Lome.

Q. Had you spoken to him since?

A. Never. Never. I had never spoken to him and I think
there's evidence presented in this Court. There's no such thing
as a conversation. Even when Sankoh went in '96 to Abidjan,
there were no discussions. I had never, ever spoken to him.

So in explaining what happens, so you are talking and sometimes it takes so long. I arrived in Lome the first night on the 5th. I think we went to bed about 4 o'clock in the morning.

By talking, exchanging ideas, the Presidents would break up. We broke up. I mean, for example, we decided that in dealing with Kabbah - and I don't think Kabbah knew this, but he will hear this now because I'm sure he's listening. It was decided that Nigeria - that Obasanjo will manage the Kabbah side.

Q. Why?

A. Because Nigeria was the big country and they had the largest force in Sierra Leone, so they - they had a better chance of what we call applying pressure and extracting compromises. On our side myself, Eyadema and to a great extent the OAU chairman would put pressure on the RUF side because we share a border with them and we had the experience, okay, as former guerrillas too and that we will be able to tie, because if we shutdown totally there will be problems, okay. Shutdown their guesthouses. We had put into place a little mechanism to squeeze them to. We tell the RUF, "Okay, we're going to take our passports back from you", because I had mentioned that to facilitate this travel we also helped with travel documents.

You know, we could threaten too, which we did. "We'll take all our passports from you. We'll shut it down. We'll do this."

So it was just a little internal strategy that, okay, this group is responsible. You put pressure on that side. This other group, you put pressure on this side to seek compromises and then we break up into little groups.

And so Sankoh comes - in fact, Blaise Compaore visits me.
I visit him. Sankoh comes to visit me and you see Senator Keikura Kpoto here. Keikura Kpoto is Liberian, but he practically grew up in Sierra Leone and went to school in Sierra Leone and has deep roots in Sierra Leone. So he speaks Krio as fluently as - you wouldn't even know he is Liberian. So we put all of our people, the director general of the Institute of Strategic Studies - we just put our best minds to work circulating amongst the different groupings and trying to extract whatever little compromise we could get along the way.

Q. Was Blaise Compaore OAU chairman at the time?
A. Oh, he - Blaise had been chairman. I think it was he was about to go out. I'm not too certain if he was still, but because of the role he had played during that time I'm sure - and the extent - the amount of experience he had with it, he was invited, yes.

Q. Now you mentioned travel documents, Mr Taylor. What are we talking about in terms of travel documents? Are we talking about passports, or what?
A. Laissez-passer. It's a document. Let's not forget that in West Africa, amongst the West African states, unlike the rest of Africa, you do not need a visa as a member of ECOWAS to travel to an ECOWAS member state. All you need is a laissez-passer. It's just a sheet of paper with your picture. It gives your name, date of birth and vital statistics on you and you can travel throughout West Africa without a visa.

Q. And who had provided those laissez-passers?
A. The Liberian government.

Q. And did you require any approval from anyone to do that?
A. Well, not approval. The Liberian government grants what it
wants, but it took the acquiescence, the knowledge of and whatever of everybody. They had to travel with documents and part of that circulation from Sierra Leone coming into Liberia, moving, part of that logistical requirement required a travel document which we provided.

Q. Now help us, Mr Taylor. Members of the RUF were on a travel ban imposed by the Security Council, weren't they?

A. Oh, but the Security Council lifted the ban for those that were on the travel ban. Not everybody. Those that were under travel ban, they had to lift the ban for them to travel.

Q. So the issuance of those laissez-passers, was that done with the full knowledge of the United Nations and ECOWAS?

A. Oh, it had to. They knew. Of course, they saw the documents. It was required. They couldn't enter Togo just swinging their hands. Yes, they knew.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, we have photographic records of this visit. So could I ask everyone, please, to take up the smaller of the two bundles for week 32, and we will be looking at some 40 photographs of this visit, and they begin behind divider 72.

Mr Taylor, I think we're going to have to change positions because I would like you as we go along, please, to indicate who various individuals are?

A. Yes.

Q. The first photograph we're looking at is DP33, Defence photograph 33. Yes, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes.

Q. Now, we see you, the second individual coming down the stairs, yes?

A. Yes.
Q. Who is the gentleman in front of you with the red tie?
A. This is the director of Special Security Services, General Benjamin Yeaten right here.

Q. Who is the white haired gentleman behind you?
A. This is - this name has come up before. This is the chief of protocol RL, John During. That name came out. The aircraft is the presidential aircraft of the Republic of Togo.

Q. The gentleman with the gold braid around his cap, we've encountered him before, haven't we?
A. Yes, we can't see his face very well but that's my aide-de-camp, General Momo Dgiba.

Q. Can you help us with any of the other four individuals we see in the foreground of the photograph?
A. Yes. Right here is the chief of protocol for the presidency, Ambassador Musa Cisse. We have that on the record. Back here I can't tell. It looks like deputy director of SSS, Joseph Montgomery, who may have been on the advance party. The gentleman standing here is a Liberian Secret Service personnel.

Q. And so this is your arrival in Lome, I take it?
A. This is correct, yes.

MR GRIFFITHS: Now, Mr President, can I seek some guidance here. Because of the number of photographs I'm wondering what is the most efficient way of us marking these for identification?

PRESIDING JUDGE: I think, unless there are any better suggestions, I would mark them separately.

MR GRIFFITHS: Very well. Because I think given that there are 40 of them it would be very difficult to give them sub-numbers within an overall reference.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, I think if we mark them - are you
referring to giving them one number with sub-numbers?

MR GRIFFITHS: I was wondering whether that would work, because all of these photographs relate to this visit to Lome and it might be useful to have them all on the one reference.

PRESIDING JUDGE: What we will do, my learned colleagues, have suggested and it sound a good idea, is we'll give them one main number and sub-numbers going from A, B, C, et cetera, and then back to AA, BB.

MR GRIFFITHS: Very well. Starting with that process then, the overall reference is MFI-88 and this will be 88A consequently.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that photograph with the Defence numbered DP33 will be marked for identification MFI-88A.

MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful:

Q. Could we go over the page now, please, Mr Taylor. Who do we see in this photograph, Mr Taylor?

A. Here I'm being greeted by the President of Togo, the late Gnassingbe Eyadema.

Q. That's President Eyadema of Togo?

A. That is correct.

Q. Can you help us with anybody else in the photograph?

A. No, I'm sorry. These are all Togolese officials. This looks like a security person. But I don't know any of them. It is just the welcoming party here. I don't know them.

MR GRIFFITHS: Can I ask that this then be marked for identification and we can call it "Being greeted by President Eyadema". Is this at Lome airport, Mr Taylor?

THE WITNESS: That is correct.

MR GRIFFITHS: "Being greeted by President Eyadema at Lome
PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that will be marked for identification 88B. I'll just note that it also bears the Defence marking DP34.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Can we go over the page behind divider 74, please, so DP35. Mr Taylor, is this still at the airport?

A. Yes, we are still at the airport. This is still President --

PRESIDING JUDGE: Just one point. Sorry to interrupt.

MR GRIFFITHS: Not at all.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That last photo we dealt with was behind divider 73, wasn't it?

MR GRIFFITHS: Yes, it was. The sequence of photographs begin behind divider 72.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Not 71?

MR GRIFFITHS: No, behind divider 71 should be Chapter 11 of the Liberian penal code.

PRESIDING JUDGE: The compilation of the folder I've got is obviously incorrect, because behind 71 I've got the photo that's been marked for identification 88A.

MR GRIFFITHS: Can I inquire whether anybody else has that difficulty? I think you may have been given a rogue bundle, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: It looks as though I have been, yes. If you can just bear with me, Mr Griffiths, it looks as though the folder markings are incorrect in mine but the photos appear to be in order, so you go ahead.

MR GRIFFITHS: I'm just wondering whether during the short
adjournment someone could reorganise your bundle.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes.

MR GRIFFITHS: One of the Chambers officers could reorganise your bundle so that it's in accordance with everybody else's.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you. I've just been offered a new bundle but I would have to go through it and mark all of other exhibits that I've already marked in here. Better minds than mine are organising this now, Mr Griffiths. I'm going to extract all the photos from one bundle and transfer them to mine.

MR GRIFFITHS: Very well.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Thanks for that, Mr Griffiths. I've now got the correct dividers.

MR GRIFFITHS: Not at all. So now we've dealt with the one behind 72. We've dealt now with the one behind 73 and I'm now inviting attention to the photograph behind 74, which should be DP35.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That's correct, yes.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, where are we in this photograph?

A. We are still at the airport exchanging pleasantries. Here is President Eyadema. Here - by then I think it's still the foreign minister at the time I think. This is Mr Koffigoh.

Q. Could you spell that?

A. I think it's K-O I think F-I-G-O literally for now. This is Koffigoh.

Q. And he is the foreign minister for whom?

A. Togo. To the best of my knowledge now he is either foreign or prime. But this is Koffigoh. I will stand corrected on the
position. I think he is foreign minister. At one time he is Prime Minister, at another time he is foreign. I think at this time he is foreign minister. I stand corrected on that. The gentleman here, I don't know his name but this is the protocol officer for the Republic of Togo right here. I don't know his name, sorry, but I know he is the protocol officer.

Q. Anybody else you can help us with?
A. No. This is just again the welcoming party. I don't know.

These are all Togolese.

MR GRIFFITHS: Right. Can we mark that for identification then, DP35, MFI-88C.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's marked MFI-88C.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page, Mr Taylor, DP36. Yes, Mr Taylor?
A. Yes.

Q. Now, we can see the red carpet and in this photograph it's quite obviously still at the airport, yes?
A. That is correct. We are walking now from the aircraft into the presidential lounges, having a minor conversation.

Q. Now help us. Can you assist with a few identities now?
A. Yes. Oh, names I may not be able to help with and so I'm not sure how much help I can be when it comes to identities, but this gentleman here is the interpreter. This is the chief interpreter for the Republic of Togo. I don't know his name. I know he is the interpreter. Of course, this is President Eyadema here. Now we can see this face much better, this face now we may have to correct the records. On the first photo we could not see the face and I had misspoken and probably misinformed the Court that it was Momo Dgiba, but the face is clearer now. This - the
aide-de-camp on this visit is Musa N'jie and not Momo Dgiba.

Q. How do you spell N'jie?

A. I think that's N'J-A-I, N'jie. He is Gambian and so that's a name that we may have to look into the spelling of N'jie.

Q. He is of Gambian origin?

A. Origin, but he is a Liberian citizen now.

MR GRIFFITHS: Can I whilst we're on the topic then invite everyone to go back to behind divider 72 and correct the record by crossing out the reference to "Momo Dgiba" and put in "Musa N'jie", the gentleman with the gold braid whose face cannot be seen in the background just about to depart from the aircraft. I am helpfully told that N'jie is spelled N'J-I-E:

Q. Okay, Mr Taylor, can we go back to behind divider 75 to DP36?

A. Yes, we're still there.

Q. And now that we've corrected that, can you help us with any other identities on this photograph?

A. No, these are predominantly Togolese Secret Service personnel. I don't want to guess here. This looks like Musa Cisse, but I can't be certain and so I'll just leave it. I don't know any of the faces here.

Q. Well let's leave it at that, okay?

A. Yes.

MR GRIFFITHS: DP36 marked for identification, please,

Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's marked for identification

MFI-88D.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Let's go over the page, please, Mr Taylor. Now we know who
is in this photograph, don't we?

A. That is correct, yes.

Q. That is yourself and President Eyadema?

A. That is correct.

Q. And what's happening at this point?

A. This is the official reception of the - receiving the guard of honour.

PRESIDING JUDGE: I take it you want all of these photos to be part of the same exhibit number and so I'll mark that 88E.

MR GRIFFITHS: Thank you.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That's the photograph DP37.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Can we go over the page, please, Mr Taylor. Where are we now?

A. We are walking - after the honour guard we are now walking toward the presidential lounge. All we are doing here is greeting - I'm greeting well-wishers that have come to welcome me.

Q. And is that gentleman in the gold braid just behind you the same Musa N'jie?

A. This is General Musa N'jie. Of course this is President Eyadema right here.

Q. And the gentleman with the red tie between the two of you, who is that?

A. That is a Togolese I'm sure Secret Service personnel. All of these are Togolese Secret Service personnel. It's good to note here that when a Head of State visits a country, it is the responsibility of the security of that country to secure him. So
even though there are Liberian Secret Service personnel, they
don't have priority here. The Togolese have. So that's why we
don't know these people because that's their responsibility.

MR GRIFFITHS: I think we're up to F, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That photograph DP38 is marked MFI-88F.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now over the page, Mr Taylor. Now we know who is present
in the photograph, but where are you?

A. We are now in the presidential lounge, sitting down, just
chatting and probably waiting for the convoy to be arranged for
departure.

MR GRIFFITHS: G, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's MFI-88G.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page, please. Who is this now?

A. Now, we are already in the hotel. We are now seated. This
is - President Blaise Compaore is conferring here with me in my
suite. He has come to visit me to confer. After we break up
from this big meeting, these are the consultative meetings going
on and so he has come to my suite to visit with me. I think you
can tell the difference here, because he is properly attired and
I'm half attired and so I'm at home. That's why you can tell who
is visiting who.

MR GRIFFITHS: H, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, MFI-88H.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page, please. Right, I would like your help with
who we can see here, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, this is my suite again. I mentioned a gentleman, the
deputy minister of foreign affairs that was the principal man responsible for the Sierra Leonean portfolio on a day-to-day basis. I mentioned his name, I think, yesterday, Tambakai Jangaba. That's in the records. That's this gentleman right here, Dr Tambakai Jangaba. That's me right here. Right here is Foday Sankoh visiting my suite at this time. The gentleman right here is the President pro temp of the Liberian Senate, the late senator Keikura Kpoto. That name has come up.

Q. Is he the gentleman you told us spoke fluent Krio?

A. Fluent Krio, fluent French. In fact, he did all of his studies in France. So fluent Krio, fluent French. He studied, I think, at the Sorbonne in France.

Q. Mr Taylor, I wonder if you could help us with a few details now that we have a photograph like this before us?

A. Yes.

Q. Was this the first occasion you were meeting with Sankoh again, or what?

A. This is the first occasion. After the split-up, now the consultations begin. Yes, this was the first meeting that I'm meeting with Sankoh, yes.

Q. Is it the first time that you saw him in Lome?

A. Yes, that's the first time.

MR GRIFFITHS: So DP41, photograph of first meeting between President Taylor and Foday Sankoh.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's marked MFI-881.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page. Now, it's the same individuals in this photograph, isn't it, Mr Taylor?

A. That is correct, yes. Just further --
Q. So we need not delay overlong with this one. DP42?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's marked MFI-88J.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Let's go over the page. Who is in this photograph now, Mr Taylor?

A. Now, these are the consultative meetings that I talked about. Over here, I'm here. This is Obasanjo right here. This is Blaise Compaore, and this is Gnassingbe Eyadema. We are now, the four of us, involved in a strategy session trying to find out how and what we can do in this process.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Let's mark these as we go rather than backtrack. DP44 is marked MFI-88L.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. DP44. Now that you've identified the personalities in 43, Mr Taylor, we needn't delay overlong on this one, need we?

A. Just further discussions. You can see we're talking. In this case it appears that I'm talking, they are listening. Just exchanging ideas.

Q. When we go to 45 over the page, same scene?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Let's mark these as we go rather than backtrack. DP44 is marked MFI-88L.

MR GRIFFITHS: Yes.

PRESIDING JUDGE: And you want the next one marked 88M?

MR GRIFFITHS: Yes, please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That's DP45.

MR GRIFFITHS: Thank you.

THE WITNESS: I think what is important too about these
photos - I think gestures in these photos are very important.
You can see who is talking here. Eyadema is making a point, so I
think as we analyse them we'll get to know.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Let's go over behind 85 now, please. Now, we see aspects
of this room now which were unseen hitherto. The gentleman in
the light suit sitting to your left, he is the interpreter you
mentioned earlier, isn't he?
A. That is correct.

Q. Whose feet can we see sticking out on the right?
A. We have to get another picture. This is the foot of Tejani
Kabbah. There's another picture we'll be able to tie that in.
That's - Tejani Kabbah now has joined us for these discussions at
that point. That's his foot.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, let's just pause for a minute before we see
the rest of his body. Now, had he arrived in Lome at the same
time as yourself and the others?
A. Quite frankly, I don't --
Q. If you don't remember --
A. I don't remember. But I would - I would state that on the
day that I arrived in Togo, it was evident that President Kabbah
was there. He could have arrived in the morning, but --
Q. Or he could have arrived before you?
A. Or before me. But he was there.

Q. So he was there before you?
A. Exactly.

MR GRIFFITHS: We're up to N with this one.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that photograph, DP46, is now marked

MFI-88N.
MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Let's go over to 47 now. Now we see the rest of his body.
A. Yes. I think because of the camera shot now, you can see me on the other side.

11:16:50 Q. But let's just flick between 46 and photo - DP46 and DP47. You and he appear to be sharing a joke?
A. Yes. We are not at war. Yes, we are - in fact, all of us are laughing here.

MR GRIFFITHS: We're up to O, I think, Mr President.

11:17:17 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that photograph, DP47, is marked for identification 88O.
MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page, please. Now, Mr Taylor, where are we now?
A. Now we are on our way to the conference centre.

11:17:49 Q. Hold on a second. I think we've got a problem here.
PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes.
MR GRIFFITHS: Behind 87 should be a photograph which looks like that.
PRESIDING JUDGE: That's the one I've got. We've got that one.

MR GRIFFITHS: That one that's on the screen now comes after, and I think we need to keep these in sequence, otherwise we'll get confused. The one that should be up now is DP48. Yes:
Q. Now, Mr Taylor, we're kind of familiar with the faces now.
A. That is correct.
Q. You are next to him?
A. That is correct.
Q. Then Blaise Compaore?
A. That is correct.

Q. Then Obasanjo?

A. That is correct.

Q. Then Eyadema?

A. That is correct.

Q. And appears to be security officers in the background?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now, where are you at this time?

A. We are now - let me see. We are on our way, because this is the general area of the conference centre. We are walking together from the hotel to the conference centre that is not too far away.

MR GRIFFITHS: P, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes. The photo, DP48, is marked for identification MFI-88P.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page. Now, it looks like the same location here, doesn't it, Mr Taylor?

A. That is correct, except that this is a wider angle.

Q. And let's see if we can deal with this quickly. Going from left to right, and I'm only interested in the main personalities:

Man in the white --

A. This is Foday Sankoh right here.

Q. Next to him?

A. Tejani Kabbah.

Q. Then?

A. Charles Taylor.

Q. Then?

A. Blaise Compaore.
1 Q. Then?
2 A. Obasanjo.
3 Q. Yes. Then?
4 A. Eyadema.

11:20:10 5 Q. Now, can you help us with anyone in the background?
6 A. These are just all of the aides and assistants. No, I'm
7 sorry, I can't make them out.
8 Q. Very well.
9 A. But aide-de-camps all lined up behind Presidents.

11:20:31 10 Q. Don't worry about it. Okay.
11 PRESIDING JUDGE: We'll mark that photo. DP49 will be
12 marked MFI-88Q.
13 MR GRIFFITHS: 
14 Q. Over the page. Same shot, Mr Taylor?
15 A. Yes, but just a little different take. You can see here
16 I'm sharing a joke apparently with Kabbah and we are all walking.
17 Same situation.
18 MR GRIFFITHS: R, Mr President.
19 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that photo is MFI-88R.

11:21:16 20 MR GRIFFITHS: 
21 Q. Another shot of the same thing at DP51, isn't there,
22 Mr Taylor?
23 A. That is correct.
24 MR GRIFFITHS: S, Mr President.

11:21:35 25 PRESIDING JUDGE: That DP51 will be MFI-88S.
26 MR GRIFFITHS: 
27 Q. Now, over the page, Mr Taylor, DP52.
28 A. Yes.
29 Q. Have you all joined hands?
A. Yes.

Q. Except Mr Sankoh, I see.

A. Well, he is clapping. You can see he is clapping. We are looking at something. There could be maybe either cultural performances out there, but you can see everybody has got a smile, so there is something going on in front of us.

Q. Right.

MR GRIFFITHS: We're up to the letter T, I think.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That's right. That photograph, DP52, is marked MFI-88T.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Right. Mr Taylor, what's this one, DP53?

A. We are now inside of the conference hall receiving the - I'm sure here, with the salutes, the national anthems are being played and we're just taking a salute inside the conference centre.

MR GRIFFITHS: We're up to the letter U, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's marked MFI-88U.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. DP54. You're all seated now in the same location?

A. That is correct.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That one, DP54, is marked MFI-88V.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page, Mr Taylor. A wider shot of the same scene, yes?

A. Yes. A little wider though. Now it includes Blaise Compaore. Cannot --

Q. Who is the gentleman sitting to your left?

A. That flag looks like - it looks like Equatorial Guinea's
flag. I'm not too sure. But this is, I'm sure, another member of ECOWAS sitting here. The flag looks like Equatorial Guinea. I can check that.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That photo is marked MFI-88W.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Same scene, Mr Taylor, yes?
A. Yes. Just a close-up, yes.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That photo is marked MFI-88X.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. And 57, Sankoh and Kabbah having a little tête-à-tête?
A. That is correct, at the table.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That photo is marked MFI-88Y.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page. Right. What's happening here now, Mr Taylor?
A. We are now witnessing the agreement. [Indiscernible]. We are - all of the members of the Committee of Six witness as the guarantors of this agreement, all of us are - we are signing the agreement now, the Lome Peace Agreement.

Q. You are actually signing the agreement in DP58, yes?
A. That is correct.

Q. So that's signing the Lome Peace Agreement. Now, I just want you to help us with --

MR GRIFFITHS: No, don't take that one just yet. Let's just linger for a little while:

Q. Mr Taylor, the man over your left shoulder witnessing your - observing your signature, who is that?
A. This is a senior ambassador in the office of the President.

Q. Which President?
A. Liberia. This is Ambassador Hansford. H-A-N-S-F-O-R-D.

You have - a lot of Presidents do that. You have a senior -
maybe former diplomats, experienced, old hands in government that
participate in these kinds of things. This is a senior
ambassador in the office of President.

Q. Now, the reason why I want to linger on this photograph is
this: The signing is the culmination of the process, Mr Taylor,
yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now, the reason why I want to linger on this photograph is
this: The signing is the culmination of the process, Mr Taylor,
yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. How long had you been in Lome by this stage?

A. From the 5th. We had spent most of the day of the 5th, the
night of the 5th, the 6th, all night. While it looks good here,
but we had hammered out a final solution, and that's why you see
us coming, walking, holding hands. But we had hammered this out.

Q. So how long had it actually taken?

A. For the Heads of State, two - I would say two full days,
from the 5th until the 7th.

Q. And working until - working what kind of hours?

A. Oh, we - on these two days, we probably went to sleep not
before 4 o'clock at night. We were --

Q. 4 o'clock at?

A. Night. In the morning. 4 o'clock in the morning.

Q. Thank you.

A. 4 o'clock in the morning, before --

Q. Did that include all of you?

A. All of us.

Q. Including Sankoh?

A. Well, most of these cases - well, I can say yes, because he
was not present with us in the - in these different rooms at
times. He didn't come and stay in one location. But he couldn't
sleep because if he was needed, he was called upon. If any
member of the Kabbah side was needed, they were called upon. So
President Kabbah himself didn't sleep. No one could sleep
because they were up until the late - the early morning of the
7th. We were just on a little hair string of this thing not
working.
Q. When?
A. The morning of the 7th. By the morning I mean late morning
of the 7th. Because by 4 a.m., that's the 7th. By 4 a.m., the
evening of the 6th, you are already into the 7th. So we finally
knockout this agreement I would say about 4 - we only had
sufficient time to go take a bath, get fresh breakfast and try to
relax a little bit before going back to the hall. So we - it
took us a full two days, I'd say, and nights to finally hammer
this out.
Q. Mr Taylor, I note the time and there are a few more
questions I would like to ask you about the process you've just
been describing. Would that be a convenient time, Mr President?
PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes. We'll adjourn now until 12 o'clock.

Q. Mr Taylor, when we adjourned we were looking at photograph
DP58, which is the signing ceremony, yes?
A. Yes. Would I have to move back?
Q. I think it would be helpful if you did.
A. Okay.
Q. Although, can I implore you, please, to keep your voice up with this microphone because I've had complaints in the past that this particular microphone doesn't pick up as well as the other one.

12:02:46 Now, Mr Taylor, you were telling us that there'd been two long days of hard graft, working until 4 in the morning up until this event, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. And you also told us that almost at the 11th hour there was a hitch, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Now, just help us, please. What did you have to do in order to achieve this agreement? Let's take, for example, your dealings with Foday Sankoh. What did you have to do and say to him?

A. The process starts with demands on both sides. The Government of Sierra Leone has her demands. Sankoh and the RUF have their demands. The Government of Sierra Leone, rightly so, is demanding that, first of all, the presidency of President Kabbah was not for debate, that's not debatable, he's President of Sierra Leone, finished, great. And President Kabbah is also looking, to the best of my recollection, at the situation involving the so-called SLA, because while the discussions are going on, there are side bar discussions about what to do with the army. There are some people that want to just bring them back as a part of the Sierra Leone Armed Forces. Others are rejecting this. On the RUF side, they are concerned, again, about security. They are concerned about --
Q. Security in what sense, Mr Taylor?

A. Well, when we disarm and go back to Sierra Leone, what will happen to us? Do we expect that people, you know, will get arrested? Will people violate the agreement and do things against us once we are not armed? Because when it came to disarmament, the Kabbah government was saying that the forces now that were considered the armed forces of Sierra Leone were not to be disarmed. These were developing to be the regular army of Sierra Leone.

As a reminder, we did mention here that at the time of the AFRC junta, some soldiers of the SLA remained loyal to the government. So you have an evolving armed forces now that will not be disarmed, but the RUF must be disarmed. And those individuals that will become a part of a future Sierra Leonean armed forces will have to be trained. In fact, they will have to be recruited and trained, and there was nothing automatic about coming into the Sierra Leonean armed forces. They had to go through a process. They saw that as being insecure. That once they gave up their guns, they were going to be insecure.

The next little sticking point came about cabinet positions and portfolios, the number of cabinet positions that would be given to the RUF side. It started from about two objections, it went up to three, then it went on to four, and I think it ended up a little higher than four. But this is why this special position was worked out where Sankoh would become Vice-President. That was part of another sticking point where it was finally ironed out.

So by the end of the day --

Q. And can I just interrupt. Apart from being Vice-President,
Sankoh also ended up being in charge of --

A. Minerals.

Q. -- minerals, didn't he?

A. That is correct, yes.

Q. And was that part of the bargain as well?

A. That was part of the bargain. Everything you see, all the positions that followed Lome were agreed in those back rooms. We agreed on all of those things. But it's sounding short now because we can't take up the whole Court's time, but these are long hours. Sometimes you almost give up. You think that it's going to break down. People sometimes walk out in their little committee rooms. They don't want to talk. You have to call them back. It was a very difficult process, and arm-twisting came about.

Remember I told this Court that Sankoh did not go to Lome as a totally free man. This was what I was talking about. Sankoh still had hanging over him the aspect of his appeal. That appeal was still pending. He was taken there. And while he was partially free, Sankoh could not just - at Lome, for example, if Sankoh had said, "This is it. If I have had it. I'm out of here", he was not going any place. He was going right back to Sierra Leone in jail. So this is what I meant by when I said he was not a free man. He was only free if an agreement was hammered out, that's when he became free. And subsequently I will tell you what - some of our difficulties came up after that.

But there were subtle threats, you know. Maybe that word "threat" may be a little harsh. Maybe I'll just call it subtle reminders where, "Look, don't forget that you're not really free. And if this is not going to be worked out, you can expect that
you're going to back to jail." And so these little reminders, if
you want to call them that, were all present during the
discussions. And there were little threats from all of us.
The borders issue came up with where we were going to close
down the guesthouse, we were going to put all the RUF people
outside from the guesthouse, and we were going to make it very
difficult across the borders, and we were going to ask for
reinforcement. All kinds of threats.
There was also the threat of the use of force, again, where
all West African countries would just combine and put an end. So
all of these things were going at that particular time. There
was nothing simple about this.
So, finally - and I will be very, very, very, very bold
about this. Even with these agreements - and I'm calling them
"these" because there were several elements of this - not
everyone came out of there happy. Not everyone got what he
wanted from this, but it was the best possible solution. And we
do see some of the after effects almost immediately. After Lome
we see some of the after effects coming up where again we get
involved in more discussions. But we are happy that we ironed
this out. Now this was the agreement between the Government of
Sierra Leone and the RUF/everybody, and I helped - later on we
will see from documentation how later on we helped to massage
this process when Johnny Paul Koroma begins to raise an issue on
the other side. That's coming up a little later. But these are
the issues that we are confronted with and the difficulties at
the meeting.
Q. And you say there was a last minute hitch. What was that,
if you recall?
A. Yes. That hitch was about the SLA, what would happen to it. And the second hitch - maybe we can say hitches. The second hitch was about the number of cabinet positions available and the position of Sankoh himself in the new government.

Q. And, Mr Taylor, those photographs that we've just looked at which show all of the personalities walking hand in hand towards the conference centre for the signing ceremony, what was the feeling like amongst you all?

A. We were all happy, like brothers. Look, maybe that's the way these things go. This thing out there that Kabbah and I were archenemies and probably we didn't want to see each other is a bunch of nonsense. That's all it is.

And let me just inform the Court, throughout the crisis in Sierra Leone, Liberia maintained a charge in Freetown. And, in fact, just before this meeting in June, it's important to inform this Court, we formally named an ambassador accredited near Freetown in person of McDonald Boam. That name is on the record.

So there's no war going on where Kabbah and I are using abusive language to each other on the telephone. We're talking. We're holding hands because - actually, there are differences, but it's not at the point where we are enemies. We never looked at in that particular way. We're holding hands because we are all happy and we are friends and we had been exchanging jokes throughout this particular period. There's no such thing as this - you know, like when a cat meets a dog and they flare up.

There's none of this nonsense. None of it.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, I just want to ask you about another detail. We saw photographs amongst those we have looked at so far of Sankoh, it would appear, visiting your hotel suite, yes?
A. That is correct.

Q. Did he also visit the hotel suites of the other leaders present?

A. Definitely. Definitely. These are our photographs. He visited Compaore, he visited Eyadema, he visited Obasanjo, and I'm sure he and Kabbah sat down. But these are the Government of Liberia photos that - each President going to these conferences carry their press team, their photographers, their state photographers and they take these pictures for historical purposes. But I'm sure all the other Presidents have photos of this particular situation.

Q. The point I'm getting at is this, Mr Taylor: Was there some kind of special relationship between you and Sankoh?

A. No. There was nothing special about - special relationship between me and Sankoh. I knew Sankoh. As I said, we had worked together briefly during those years before we split up over this Top 20, Top 40 situation, and those pictures should in no way lead anyone to believing that he is on those pictures because of the special relationship. Every Head of State, they had to - it was almost like a turning - you had to go from room - from one place to another place.

And let me just emphasise, I think it may be important, because of the significance of this meeting, all of the Heads of State are lodged in one hotel. So we are on different floors.

So you may just get in the elevator, one Head of State may need you at this place. So everything is happening in one building in different suites. He will visit me, he will visit Compaore, the protocol officers are running up and down, the hotel is really controlled. So it's not difficult to get to other Heads of
MR GRIFFITHS: The letter Z, Mr President, for DP58.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes. Photo DP58 is marked MFI-88Z.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page please, Mr Taylor. DP59. Signing ceremony as well, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. Just out of interest, Mr Taylor, to your left, who is seated?

A. I tell you, I can't help. It's been so long. This is - sitting here must be a senior official representing his government, even though he would not be at this table. I don't quite remember who this person is, but where he is seated, he is representing his President. I can't help with this.

Q. Okay. Let's move on. Letter AA, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's MFI-AA. That's photo DP 59.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. DP60, Mr Taylor. Same scene?

A. That is correct. A little wider anger now. Eyadema is on this side. Same scene. We are signing.

Q. Right. Let's move on. BB, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: MFI-AB. That's the marking on that photograph, photograph DP 60.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. DP61, Mr Taylor. Now, here we have a wider shot?

A. Yes.

Q. Yes. And the gentleman to your left - we can now see the flag. Does that assist in any way?
A. I am sorry. This flag - I do not want to help the Court in the wrong way. Maybe the reason why I don't know him, he's probably a foreign minister. He's not a Head of State, I don't think, at this time.

Q. Well, let's not delay over it, Mr Taylor. But as we can see, engaged in the signing process from left to right, Foday Sankoh, yes?

A. That's Foday Sankoh right here.

Q. President Kabbah?

A. President Kabbah.

Q. Blaise Compaore?

A. That is correct.

Q. President Eyadema?

A. That is correct.

Q. President Obasanjo?

A. That is correct.

Q. Yourself?

A. That is correct.

Q. And the gentleman whom you can't identify?

A. Exactly. Right there.

Q. And looking to the right of that photograph, do we see a United States flag?

A. Yes. They are there representing the interests of the United States government. They are there. And further coming along - so we will probably - United Nations personnel. Everyone is there. They are all guarantors of the agreement.

MR GRIFFITHS: AC, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, photo DP61 is marked MFI-88AC.

MR GRIFFITHS:
Q. We're not going to delay on DP62, Mr Taylor.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Do you want it marked?

MR GRIFFITHS: Yes, please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Photo DP62, MFI-88AD.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page, please, DP63. Now, we know who the personalities are.

A. That is correct.

Q. At what stage is this, Mr Taylor?

A. This is after the signing ceremony.

Q. And we see President Kabbah embracing --

A. Foday Sankoh.

Q. Yes?

A. That is correct.

MR GRIFFITHS: AE, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that photo is marked for identification MFI-88AE.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Then over the page, a photograph with which we are all familiar, DP64.

A. That is correct. We've seen this picture given here I think as - the little girl is given as an exhibit, but this is the Sierra Leonean, apparently, protocol or security personnel handing the girl, this kid, over to President Kabbah who eventually holds up the young girl to the conference.

Q. And as we can see, that little girl's right arm is amputated.

A. That is correct.

MR GRIFFITHS: AF, Mr President.
PRESIDING JUDGE: That photograph number DP64 is marked for identification 88AF.

MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful:

Q. Over the page, Mr Taylor, DP65. Yes?

A. Yes. We've signed the agreement, and Kabbah and I are talking here. All the other Heads of State are standing, listening. This is Obasanjo's back turned here. This is Blaise Compaore here. We can surmise, except there's objection, this is a side view of Eyadema, and it could be subject to objection, but this is Eyadema. And Kabbah and I are just sharing some thoughts as we are standing up.

Q. And let's go over to DP66.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page, Mr Taylor.

A. Yes.

Q. Now, we see there everyone seemingly sharing a joke, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. Now, can we just pause at this photograph for a moment, Mr Taylor, and can I invite your assistance to this extent: Having spent time negotiating with Foday Sankoh, help us, what kind of a man was he?

A. Well, at this time Sankoh appeared to have changed substantially. He appeared to have wanted peace. He was very, very serious about some of his demands. But at this time he appeared to me, and I can almost say all of us, as being ready for peace. That was our interpretation of it, and we took it at that. And I guess not being able to psychoanalyse Sankoh, I
would say that he may have been serious at this time. That's how
he appeared to us.

And we will get to know later that maybe some of our
judgment at the time may not have been 100 per cent, because if I
answer your question and thinking about what I encounter in the
future and how upset I get later on, on a bar of 1 to 10, I would
say at this time he's around 6/7, because of my experience later
on and what I had to do on that committee later on. And that's
after the fact, may I say.

MR GRIFFITHS: Okay. AH, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that photograph DP56 is marked
MFI-88AH.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page, please, Mr Taylor. Now, Mr Taylor, this is
the aftermath again of the signing, is it not?

A. Yes.

Q. And we're all familiar now with the personalities, so let's
not delay on this one, yes?

A. There's another important person here, counsel.

Q. Who is that, Mr Taylor?

A. Representing here - representing President Jerry Rawlings
of Ghana is the then foreign minister Victor Gbeho representing
the Government of Ghana here. He's the Ghanaian foreign minister
Victor Gbeho.

Q. Can you help us with a spelling or shall we look it up on
the internet?

A. Please. G-B-E, Gbeho, H-O. This is an Ewe name so I am
not familiar with it. Victor Gbeho.

Q. G-B-E-H-O, I'm told.
PRESIDING JUDGE: We'll mark that photograph DP67 as MFI-88AI.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Over the page, please. A little victory celebration seems to be in order here, Mr Taylor, yes?

A. That is correct. That is correct. We are holding hands up in the hall in a very joyous mood, all of the principal players to this agreement. If you watch here from a protocol level the Ghanaian foreign minister is not holding hands up and that's just maybe because of protocol, that's all. But all of the heads and state and the parties are here in celebration.

PRESIDING JUDGE: We'll mark the photograph DP68 as MFI-88AJ.

MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful:

Q. Another shot of the same celebration, Mr Taylor, over the page, yes?

A. Yes, now Gbeho is holding Kabbah's hand here. This is just really we're saying, "We did it." I don't know this other official here. This is a different stage. Sometimes, like, when you are taking group photographs, you may have one stage of one set of people, then another stage. I don't recall who this is. But this is really saying, "Yes, we did it."

MR GRIFFITHS: AK, Mr President?

PRESIDING JUDGE: That photograph is marked MFI-88AK.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. DP70, Mr Taylor.

A. Yes, we see President Kabbah and Foday Sankoh sharing a conversation here.

Q. Now, help us. Both are dressed differently from what
they're wearing in the previous photograph, so which occasion is this?

A. This is a different time. When I look at the background, this could be probably even before the signing ceremony. This is inside the hotel. So they could - throughout the discussion there were tete-a-tetes here and there. This could be one of those tete-a-tetes before the signing ceremony.

Q. Now after the signing ceremony was any kind of official function held?

A. Yes, there was a dinner.

Q. What kind of a dinner?

A. A state dinner hosted by President Eyadema for everyone.

MR GRIFFITHS: AL, Mr President?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, photograph DP70 is marked MFI-88AL.

Q. Let's look at the final photograph then, Mr Taylor?

A. This is the dinner.

Q. This is the dinner?

A. That is correct.

Q. And if we look, Foday Sankoh is wearing the same outfit as in the previous photograph, yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. So where do you think the previous photograph was taken?

A. It had to - this is still - the dinner was held in the hotel, so this is the in the hotel. This could be following the signing before we actually go to sit for dinner. There are little discussions, and I think - because when I look back, this is the dinner and they're not - and the background of the other photograph is similar to this.
So I can say before the dinner, and that is possible because at these programmes, with the number of Heads of State and government here, people come down from your suites in a sequence, okay. Each person would have maybe a three to five minute interval. So let's say if the dinner is at 9, we will begin to come down at about 8.30 in order not to crowd up the elevators with all of the different things. So they were arranging - maybe they start from the lower level. So those that are representing Heads of State, let's say, will come down first.

So they may say at 8 o'clock the delegation from, in this case Ghana, will come down. At 8.05 this delegation will come down. So as people are coming down, from the first delegate - or delegation to the last you may have about 20 or 25 minutes in between. So people are chatting before you finally get to - so the last person that may come down - in fact, one of the first that may come down may be the host, who is greeting everybody, and the last person will be all of us that will come down that were invited as Heads of State, and I think this is one of those times, let's say, that Sankoh and Kabbah had come down a little early and were just exchanging maybe pleasantries, I would put it to.

MR GRIFFITHS: Yes, could we have that marked for identification, please?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes. That photograph DP71 is marked as MFI-88AM.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, that's the end of the photographs that I want to ask you about. So could I invite you, please, to resume your normal seat. Now, Mr Taylor, following the signing of the
Lome Peace Agreement did you speak to any journalists about the event?

A. Yes. In fact, ECOWAS reported on these matters and there were a team of ECOWAS journalists that were present putting together this programme for a future ECOWAS journal, and a lot of us - in fact, all of the Heads of State, I can say, were interviewed, including myself. I can remember the gentleman, the senior correspondent for ECOWAS at that time - I'm not sure if I can pronounce his name. I remember the last name was Godwin. Godwin. He did that interview with me. He also interviewed Eyadema and most of the other Heads of State for an ECOWAS magazine.

Q. Very well. Let's look at the document behind divider 37, please. Is this the publication, Mr Taylor?

A. This is it. It's an ECOWAS publication, yes.

Q. And we can see that the document is headed at the top, barely legible, "ECOWAS Review", yes? "President Eyadema and the wise men of ECOWAS savour the fruits of collective endeavour in Lome", and we see a photograph to the left which we've seen when going through the various photographs. Yes, Mr Taylor?

A. That is correct.

Q. And we see that the document is also headed "Crisis resolution: Saga of ECOWAS peace in Sierra Leone", yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. We're just going to flick through the pages until we get to page 37, where there's a record of an interview with you, Mr Taylor, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Just to see what the headlines are. So if we just flick
past the table of contents and go to page 2, yes, and we see
that's the opinion piece, yes?
A. Yes.
Q. I'm not going to delay on that, and it goes over the page.
A. Maybe we could get the spelling for Godwin. That's at the
head.
Q. At the top. Ebow Godwin, yes?
A. He's the publisher, yes.
Q. Is he the person who interviewed you?
A. He's the one.
Q. We go to page 4: "President Eyadema's rising profile as a
peacemaker".
A. Yes.
Q. And let's just look quickly at the second paragraph in the
middle of that page, Mr Taylor:
"In the words of the Togolese leader, 'There can be no
progress and economic development first without the maintenance
of peace, security and stability in the sub-region.'"
That echoes various statements you had made to the same
effect, doesn't it?
A. It does, yes.
Q. And was it a general view amongst the ECOWAS leaders?
A. That is correct, yes. That's why we fought so hard for
peace, yes.
Q. I'm not going to delay on that. Let's go to the next
headline on page 6, just so that we get an overall picture of the
stages involved in coming to this agreement. You see the
headline, "RUF warfront commanders pledge support for Togo
talks"?
A. That is correct.

Q. And in the box at the top left:

"RUF rebel army chief, Sam Bockarie, alias Mosquito, and former Sierra Leonean AFRC military junta boss Johnny Paul Koroma, last week provided the ongoing peace talks in Togo a further boost when they pledged their total support for ongoing talks aimed at bringing sustainable peace to Sierra Leone."

Do you see that?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. And bottom right, photograph of your nemesis, UN diplomat Francis Okelo, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Over the page, please. "Foday Sankoh calls for ceasefire in Sierra Leone", is that right?

A. That is correct.

Q. Over the page again. A topic you'd touched on before, Mr Taylor: "RUF wants unconditional release of Foday Sankoh", yes?

A. That is correct.

Q. Because as you indicated, he was still, in effect, a convicted prisoner at the time?

A. That is correct.

Q. And if we just briefly look at the last paragraph in the left-hand column:

"He assured that his organisation does not believe in the military option. 'We believe in the negotiated settlement.' At this stage the chairman of the War Council, SYB Rogers, delivered the message of preconditions and appealed for the unconditional release of Foday Sankoh to enable him to take part in the
negotiations."

Yes?

A. Yes. If we look at that date, you see that date is 11 May. This is a magazine that covers that period. There are already - remember, the first two that go to Lome are Bah and the lawyer.

Q. Omrie Golley?

A. Golley. So this is now in May when they are fully involved in the negotiations, and by now they are sensing certain things and they are beginning to put some pressure on for unconditional release to participate. But we managed to control it by telling them that there was no threat to Sankoh while in Togo and they should not worry.

Q. Over the page, please. Headline at the bottom of the page, "US government throws weight behind ceasefire agreement in Sierra Leone", yes?

A. Yes.

Q. And we see in the first paragraph, just to help ourselves: "Efforts to restore peace to Sierra Leone received a major boost when US presidential envoy Reverend Jesse Jackson on Tuesday threw the full weight of the American government behind ECOWAS chairman Gnassingbe Eyadema to broker the much awaited ceasefire agreement in Sierra Leone."

A. Yes?

A. Yes.

Q. That article continues over the page and it need not delay us. Over the page, "Agreement on Ceasefire in Sierra Leone"?

A. Yes.

Q. And if we count down three paragraphs, have jointly decided to, one, agree to a ceasefire as from 24 May, yes?
A. Yes.

Q. Two, maintain their respective positions in Sierra Leone as of that date and refrain from any hostile or aggressive act which could undermine the peace process, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Three, commit to start negotiations in good faith, involving all relevant parties in the discussions not later than 25 May in Lome?

A. Yes.

Q. And also:

4. Guarantee safe and unhindered access by humanitarian organisations to all people in need and establish safe corridors for the provision of food and medical supplies to ECOMOG soldiers behind RUF lines and to RUF combatants behind ECOMOG lines?

5. Immediate release of all prisoners of war and non-combatants.

6. Request the United Nations, subject to the Security Council's authorisation, to deploy military observers as soon as possible to observe compliance by the government forces, ECOMOG and CDF, and the RUF including former AFRC forces with this ceasefire agreement.

A. Yes.

Q. Over the page, please: "I am prepared to negotiate even with the devil for peace. Foday Sankoh bares his mind in a chat with journalists." Yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Let's just look at the underlined paragraph on the left:

'I do not trust anybody except God', says Mr Sankoh. "But
I am prepared to negotiate with the devil if that will only bring peace to the people of Sierra Leone', he declared."

Yes?

A. Yes, I said before that he'd never trusted Kabbah.

Q. Over the page, please. We'll ignore the press conference on page 14 and let's ignore the RUF opening address at the Lome peace talks. In fact let's go as far as page 21, please, just to get an idea of what the negotiations involved, "Key demands by the RUF". It's interesting looking at this document:

"After his reinstatement in 1998, President Kabbah announced to the country and the world that the back of the People's Army had been broken and that what remained were ill-equipped remnants. In January 1999, however, the so-called remnants invaded the capital Freetown and Kabbah and his team had to flee, leaving behind the people helpless and unprotected.

Even the United Nations peace monitors who had been sent for the disarmament and demobilisation exercise were caught in this deception and they too had to flee as the People's Army marched into Freetown.

Both the Abidjan and Conakry Peace Agreements were aborted because of lack of sincerity and commitment on the part of the Kabbah government."

Now that indicates a deep degree of distrust, doesn't it, Mr Taylor --

A. Yes, it does.

Q. -- which had to be overcome?

A. It was mutual, really. It was mutual.

Q. "It is now time, therefore, to be serious and committed and to draw the necessary conclusions from the failure of these two
earlier agreements. We firmly and unequivocally share the aspirations and desire of all Sierra Leoneans for a genuine and lasting peace and reconciliation in our beloved country. In this regard we consider that we should all work towards creating a climate where lasting peace becomes a reality and not a dream. We wish to fully participate in building this climate when we all share the prize of peace. The desire for genuine and lasting peace should not and cannot be mere words but must be by affirmative actions and deeds. It should not or could not be predicated upon a preparation for war.

After the past eight years of our liberation struggle which we'd commenced with reluctance, it is now crystal clear that our conflict is essentially sociopolitical and cannot be resolved by military means but through genuine negotiation."

Now that's a position which you had adopted at a much earlier stage, wasn't it, Mr Taylor?

A. Definitely, yes.

Q. "It is in this regard that peace talks must be seen as an important first step in creating the necessary environment in which confidence building and respect restoring measures can be pursued and installed. In saying so, however, we must enter a caveat, because as the leader of the RUF so aptly puts it we deem as more dangerous the quick fix and prescriptive hidden agendas of self-seeking mediators. We have every right to be suspicious of those who have made careers out of Africa's plight. They invariably end up as meddlers in internal conflicts prolonging the suffering of our people."

Now you made mention of such a meddler this morning, didn't you?
A. Yes.

Q. Prolonging the suffering in Sierra Leone?
A. Yes.

Q. Who was that, Mr Taylor?
A. I said Britain was the meddler. If anybody was meddling at that time it was Britain.

Q. "After taking sides in this conflict, it is now time for the international community to restore its bona fides by being proactive and evenhanded. We do believe that an important first step in the process of peace we are inaugurating would be the immediate and unconditional release of the RUF leader Corporal Foday Sankoh. All charges against him should be dropped, thus sign posting a move away from the path of the politics of revenge and recrimination into the highway of healing and national reconciliation. In the same vein, there shall be a blanket amnesty for all AFRC personnel and so-called sympathisers and collaborators and all combatants with effect from the signing of the agreement. All hostilities should cease and a ceasefire be immediately established throughout the country upon the signing of the new peace agreement by the various parties. There should be a new political landscape which should be underpinned by the setting up of a transition government which shall remain in power for a period of four years."

Pause there. Now that seems to undermine the suggestion that the Kabbah government, democratically elected, was not up for negotiation, doesn't it, Mr Taylor?
A. Yes, that's one of the sticking points that I had mentioned earlier.
Q. So this is the one of the hurdles which had to be overcome?
A. Yes.

Q. "This government shall have the task of establishing a proper democratic framework that is people-focused rather than leader-oriented. The transition government shall appoint a commission which would come up with recommendations about the creation of a structure, composition and training needs of a new Sierra Leonean army and police and security service, a corruption-free and efficient civil service, an independent judiciary and legal system, and government departments and parastatals. It shall, through the participation of all Sierra Leoneans and civil society, map out a new order in which tribalism, nepotism, corruption, economic and social mismanagement become an unwelcome thing of the past.

The transition government shall have the task of drafting a new constitution.

A neutral peace monitoring group shall oversee the encampment, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of all combatants.

A ceasefire monitoring group, comprising the People’s Army, the Kamajors and the neutral peace monitoring group shall be responsible for monitoring, verifying and taking appropriate action against all violations of the ceasefire and must be in place before any ceasefire is effected.

All foreign troops and mercenaries must leave Sierra Leone within 14 days upon the signing of the peace agreement.

The transition government shall ensure the encampment, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of all combatants upon the signing of the peace agreement.
A new national electoral commission, the status of forces agreement between the SLPP government and Nigeria shall be terminated with immediate effect."

That, in effect, meant that ECOMOG would have to leave Sierra Leone, didn't it, Mr Taylor?

A. Not exactly. The status of forces agreement between the SLPP government and Nigeria was different; that is as far as it concerned Nigerian soldiers in Sierra Leone that were not under the command structure of ECOMOG. When Maxwell Khobe took over that position as commander of the Sierra Leonean armed forces, that was under a separate agreement between Sierra Leone and Nigeria. So this status of forces agreement is between Nigeria and Sierra Leone of what Nigerian troops will do, which is outside of an agreement with ECOMOG.

Q. "The transition government shall carry out a national population census. The RUF/SL shall be given every opportunity to transform itself into a political party. The transition government shall suspend and review all business contracts entered into with government and all other contracts relating to the mineral and natural resources of Sierra Leone."

It then sets out a number of economic priorities. Then moving - having gone through past the letter F in the middle column:

"The transition government shall introduce compulsory free primary and junior secondary school education as well as free primary health care in the towns and villages for the vulnerable population. Ongoing health programmes shall be reactivated with the special emphasis on prevention.

The RUF recommends itself to a peacefully negotiated
settlement of the Sierra Leonean crisis which is what the silent, unheard people want."

Now, Mr Taylor, I have gone through these demands for this reason. Now you recall that it's said that you were a party to a design to terrorise the civilian population of Sierra Leone, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. And it is said that the instrument of that design was the RUF?

A. Yes.

Q. And we see here what the demands were of that so-called terrorist organisation, don't we?

A. Yes, we do.

Q. Free primary school education, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Renegotiation of contracts made by the government, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. And various other social reforms, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Does that sound like terrorism to you?

A. It doesn't sound like terrorism to me, but we know historically the ANC was a terrorist organisation, wasn't it? So that's what they do when they want to label you.

Q. Let's jump forward to page 28, please. Another headline, "Obasanjo praises Eyadema's peace efforts". Page 30, please. "RUF rebels win the war, but Kabbah wins the peace. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah enters negotiations arena with RUF rebels with disadvantage". Let's just quickly look at the bottom paragraph in the middle of that page:

"Corporal Foday Sankoh, who had a death sentence imposed on
him in Sierra Leone after he was detained by the Abacha regime in Nigeria in 1996, became a serious bargaining trump card before the negotiations actually began. 'We want to see our leader, Corporal Foday Sankoh, before we can take part in any peace negotiations. He must be released to a neutral country where we can see him face to face to ascertain the true state of his health,' demanded number two stand-in RUF leader Mosquito."

See that?

A. Yes.

Q. And the penultimate paragraph in the right-hand column:

"Barely seven days after he arrived" - that's Sankoh, so this helps us with the chronology of events.

"Barely seven days after he arrived in Lome aboard a United Nations chartered aircraft led by Solomon YB Rogers, an old potbellied civil servant who claims to be the chairman of the RUF Peoples War Council, Lieutenant Colonel Womandia, Colonel Idrissa Kamara of the remnant AFRC military junta, and hardly visible, but potentially dangerous, Brigadier Mike Lamin, the presumed number two man to General Sam Bockarie."

Yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Let's leave that document now and let's move immediately to your interview, Mr Taylor. Page 37, do you have it?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Now, let's see what you had to say, Mr Taylor. And we see the headline: "Furore over Sierra Leonean peace agreement. Ex-warlord reveals how peace deal was reached at midnight in Lome."

"Against a background of mounting criticisms and a barrage
of condemnations, Liberian President Charles Ghankay Taylor, one
of the four ECOWAS Heads of State, who salvaged the peace talks
from imminent collapse at the critical tail end of the
negotiations in Lome, has come out strongly in defence of the
final peace document signed in Lome on Wednesday, 7 July, but
warns Sierra Leoneans against the danger of playing politics with
the latest peace accords.

President Charles Taylor, together with Olusegun Obasanjo
of Nigeria, Captain Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, and
Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo, current ECOWAS chairman, sat through
a nailbiting marathon session from Tuesday evening lasting
several hours into the two hours of Wednesday morning of 7 July
1999 in a collective effort to break a nightmarish deadlock at
the 2 Fevrier Hotel in Lome.

Though the Liberian Head of State, a former warlord, has
been accused in the past of supporting the RUF rebels, President
Taylor regarded the outcome of the protracted negotiations as a
significant victory for collective ECOWAS diplomacy.

He debunked criticism of the final peace agreement on
Sierra Leone by various human rights activists and other foreign
self-righteous pundits. He appealed to the international
community to accept and give due respect to the collective wisdom
of the leadership of ECOWAS because the sub-region was evolving
its own peculiar style of building and making peace.

Over the pages that follow, President Taylor reveals how
the strings were pulled behind the scenes to strike a peace deal
on Sierra Leone to our correspondent, Ebow Godwin.

Q. Sir, you helped in so small measure to save the
negotiations from imminent collapse. How did you manage to
achieve that feat?

A. After several years of war, one can understand the frustration, the fears and anxieties. One of the key roles that I played as a friend and as a brother was to convince Mr Sankoh that the time for peace is now and that with the coming in of President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, who has played a very constructive and positive role, and that the issue of security and other burning issues and concerns could be taken care of by President Obasanjo upon his personal commitment to us, and that it was time to make a move and that great men had to take chances.

Q. From a bush warlord, you have become the head of state of Liberia. You seem to be gradually assuming the role of a peacemaker in the sub-region. How do you see your changing role under the circumstances?

A. Well, some ways, somehow, my potential, I will admit, were obscured by virtue of the war in Liberia. As the world may know, I am not a soldier. I have never been a soldier. I am an economist. I went into this war to bring some relief to the Liberian people, an agenda for the new Africa. For example, what can be expected of an African at this particular period when the rest of the world is moving forward, with the new millennium coming, can one not play a role? I have to play a constructive role. And as I look at peace being made in different parts of the world, whether it is in Britain, Northern Ireland or in the Middle East, I think the world, knowing my background as an economist, I know without peace there can be no economic development, so I have to play a role. I have to make sure that Africa takes a new line because Liberia, after all, has always
been in the limelight of African unity, economic stability.

Q. Some of us in the early stages of your struggle believed that you had a political agenda, as you rightly stated. Do you think Corporal Foday Sankoh has an agenda?

A. Sighs. My quest for peace in Sierra Leone is not for Foday Sankoh. My quest for peace in Sierra Leone is for Sierra Leoneans in general and the West African sub-region."

Pause there. "My quest for Sierra Leone is not for Foday Sankoh." But he's your co-conspirator, Mr Taylor?

A. That's what they want to make it sound like. And I have stated this over and over in my testimony to this Court: It was, and still remains, a general belief if - in fact, at that time if there were no peace in Sierra Leone, there would never be peace in Liberia. There will not be development in Liberia, there would not - nothing would happen in Liberia unless peace came into Sierra Leone, and, like I said, I didn't come to the presidency some first grade student. I came as an economist educated in the west too, and I always knew that we had to bring stability in Sierra Leone. If not, the peace dividend from Liberia would have meant nothing. How do you progress in Liberia when there is a war across the border? Not adding the accusations - even if there were no accusations against Liberia, there was still problems in Sierra Leone. We still had some 90 plus thousand refugees in Sierra Leone, okay? We had - no investor is going to come into Liberia knowing there's war across the border. So from the get-go it had never - this was never about Sankoh, as though he was supposed to be my twin brother or something like that. You know, in trying to construct theories, they build up all of this thing about how close they are supposed
- Look, this was never about Sankoh. This is all - this was then
- and I'm speaking all the way back in 1999 - it was about Sierra
Leone and trying to hurry up and bring peace, because I was a man
in a hurry, trying to do something for my country that I knew
would have never worked unless Sierra Leone was solved. That's
as simple as it can get.

Q. "My quest for peace in Sierra Leone is for Sierra Leoneans
in general and the West African sub-region.
And so he has a duty now to prove himself to Sierra
Leoneans; the sub-region; Africa. And so he has a duty to prove
to the world community that he has the capacity to be a leader
and to play in this big league. There is this big catch here.
He must now present himself as a statesman, one with an agenda.
He has to spell out that agenda, and I think he owes it now to
the Sierra Leonean people and those who have followed him all
over the years to prove himself as worthy of their trust. And I
think that is an obligation that he must fulfil.

Q. Now, what are your general impressions about the peace
agreement? In your case, you were a rebel leader. You fought a
war, and later you went through the democratic process through
legitimate elections. You won. But it appears RUF rebel leader
Foday Sankoh has entered government through the back door.

A. Laughs. Chuckles. Well, I'm not sure if you can call
this entry as clearly by the door. Maybe it is not through the
back door, maybe it is through the window. But what I think will
have to happen now is this: We know that there will be elections
coming up in less than two years, and I think that opportunity
will afford Corporal Foday Sankoh to come in.

This is a peace process, and I do not think he should rely
fully and just sit supinely on the fact that he's part of the
government. He must transform the RUF into a political machine
and go to the Sierra Leonean people and prove himself."

Pause there, Mr Taylor. And I pause again to ask this:

Remember, this agreement is 7 July 1999, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. In 1999 there is still two years left in terms of the
indictment period. Do you understand me?

A. Yes, I do.

So it means that despite your words as recorded here, the
Prosecution are alleging that you were nonetheless supporting the
RUF and continued to do so after Lome as a military terrorist
machine. Do you follow me?

A. I follow you. That's what they want to say.

Now, when you were saying here that he must transform the
RUF into a political machine, what were you saying?

A. I'm saying the war is over. You are now in government.
You have to prove yourself to the people. You fought all these
years. People have died. People have been injured. So now you
have to get into the political arena to prove yourself. And the
only way now to do it is to organise yourself in a political
party. A political machine, a particular party, that's what I'm
referring to, and begin to do what politicians do. This is no
longer war. It is not the guns any more. It is time now to move
into the political arena and begin to convince the people of
Sierra Leone that you are worthy of all this fight over the
years. I mean - and all of us had to do it. Yes, from time to
time you had to --

Q. What do you mean all of us had to do it? What had happened
to the NPFL, Mr Taylor?

A. We had to move into the political arena.

Q. And become what?

A. A particular party.

Q. Called?

A. The NPP.

Q. And what were you advising Mr Sankoh here to do?

A. Stop the war. Move into politics, not violence. This is
what I'm talking about here. This is time to put the guns down
and move into the political arena and you do not do that by guns.

Put together political machinery and begin to do - you know, and
prove yourself as worthy of what you've been fighting for.

Q. *But, you know, I want to mention one little problem there
I want to alert the world about. We are very happy and thank God
that we got this peace agreement and I am very thankful that
Foday Sankoh saw wisdom in what we have been talking about where
as I have referred to, not using the power of power but the power
of wisdom to achieve what we have. This peace I think the world
must know is an ECOWAS peace. I do not want us to confuse this
peace with the rest of the greater international community. This
ECOWAS peace, as always, we expect that the UN, speaking for the
greater international community, will respect the wishes of the
West African sub-region in bringing about this peace.

Now I know there are different schools of thought about
what should be happening in West Africa. I have a great amount
of appreciation for the style of peace that is now being
developed in Great Britain with the IRA and the rest of them. I
think I give a lot of credit to the British and Irish Prime
Ministers for the way they have handled the peace process and I
think ECOWAS respects them for what they are doing. We also have
a great amount of appreciation for the way the peace is being
handled in the Middle East.

The point being that every part of the world, and this is
acceptable by the UN, every region is now carving out its own
style of peace building and peacemaking. We would not want to
have any intervention or imposition. I think ECOWAS must stand
strong. ECOWAS has proven its capacity in helping to bring peace
in Liberia. ECOWAS now stands at the threshold of entering the
new millennium with no conflict in the sub-region. Liberia was
before, Sierra Leone resolved, Guinea-Bissau was handled, we had
a possible situation in Niger with the coup d'état against the
late Mainassara Bare and that was handled. Even the coup d'état
against Mainassara Bare is being handled regionally.

There must be a great amount of appreciation and respect
for the ECOWAS methods of handling conflicts. There may be
disagreements, but I think the region's own actions must be
respected. I am not convinced that the region will accept
anything outside of what it has managed to put together."

Sounds a bit like a pat on the back there, Mr Taylor?

A. More than that. It's also a warning too. It's a warning
to the outside world to leave us alone because this - we've been
talking about this and that's why we go at length to talk about
this. Here is a pat and a warning that because around the side
bars of this agreement we are still hearing murmuring from major
western countries as to what they want to see. ECOWAS leaders
are now saying, "Uh-uh, this is what we want to see" and this is
why I go at length to talk about other parts of the world where
they're carving out their own peace and, you know, leave us
alone.

And we are pointing out - in the case of Mainassara Bare of Niger, I can remember this case very well. He was overthrown by Malam Wanke. I think that M-A-L-A-M W-A-N-K-E. I personally went to Niger after the coup d'etat because Mainassara was my very, very good friend and brother. In fact Liberia one was of the countries in ECOWAS that protested and refused to recognise that government. So eventually we got together and I had to go to Niger myself, I sat down with Malam Wanke. Later on he came, visited Liberia and under the auspices of ECOWAS a date for election was put into place.

So I'm just pointing out here that everyone is having it their own way. The British had it their way. Tony Blair and I'm sure I can't call the name properly, I think it's a Bertie Ahern of Ireland, put together the famous Good Friday Agreement. We knew about all of that. So I'm just trying to say that if I didn't call it properly, your Honour, you can help me with that.

JUDGE DOHERTY: You spoke properly, Mr Taylor.

THE WITNESS: Thank you, your Honour. Where, you know, they carved out that agreement and the Middle East was carving out its own agreement and we are trying to say that regions of the world have their own style under certain specific conditions and that we should be left alone. After all of us had mumbled, Heads of State, we knew what they were thinking around these side bars and we were determined to move away. So in a way I'm patting ourselves on the back, but I'm also voicing out some of the frustrations that we were beginning to say to each other and I'm just putting it out there.

MR GRIFFITHS:
Q. Next question:

"Sir, now during the negotiations did you at any point have to resort to some little bit of arm twisting?"

A. Well, I want to give credit to all of my colleagues, President Eyadema, President Obasanjo, President Compaore. We all sat down and reasoned together. I do not want to call this arm twisting. I think the analysis is very clear. Our brothers saw a need and mind you both sides gave up a little more last night, on the nail biting protracted night.

I want to commend President Kabbah for seeing the wisdom to take one extra step. I also want to commend Corporal Foday Sankoh for seeing the wisdom for bending over backwards a little more. So I want to give credit to my colleagues who were present. We did what we had to do in a typical Africa vein and as African brothers we sat down and we resolved that we were not about to go to the OAU summit without peace in Sierra Leone. And that was one focus. The second focus was that the millennium must meet West Africa and possibly Africa where a West Africa can export our style of conflict resolution. We might be able to help in the Great Lakes region, in Angola and between Ethiopia and Eritrea and so on and so on. We believe the new millennium must meet Africa as stable as possible."

A. Yes.

Q. Then the question, Mr Taylor, over the page:

"I hope you do not mind me asking you this question. You have been accused severally of giving tacit support to the RUF rebels in the past. Does this worry you? And how far has this affected Liberia's image with the international community?"

A. Yes.
Q. Question asked, what, three years before the indictment is unveiled?
A. That is correct.
Q. So let’s have a look at your answer:

"Quite frankly it has not just affected, it has done serious damage to Liberia. I am reminded of the old saying that public sentiment can be greater than law, perceptions can be very dangerous. We are in a new world now. We left what I call the Cold War and now we are in a period that I describe as the warm disorder. And this warm disorder gives certain countries the right to decide what is right and what is wrong and leaves little countries with very little defence. But having said that, we now have peace. We have denied this vigorously. People have never understood how the RUF made it and I guess the RUF will be able to tell its own story. But now that we have peace we must sustain the peace and I want to spend a lot of the time working with all of the parties.

I hope to visit Sierra Leoneans in the not too distant future to make sure that Sierra Leoneans understand that and I want to take this occasion to call upon all of the young men and women in arms, guerillas in Sierra Leone, whether in RUF or the Kamajors, to call upon them to support the peace.

We need to build on confidence. We need to send our young men to school. We need them to understand that the time for war is over. I had the same problem before, you know, where I had to explain to most of my combatants the need to understand that during wars things appear easier for the combatants. When you can strong arm someone with a gun you think that is macho. There is nothing macho about it. It is time to end the war."
And I want to call upon the RUF combatants to follow their leader. He has made the right choice. He has made the best decision. I want to call upon the Kamajors and all the rest of the people to follow President Kabbah. He has made the right decision. And to urge all Sierra Leoneans not to play politics with this peace. Oh you gave too much, oh you did this. Look, we must begin to reunite this region and I think this is the best way to go."

Now, Mr Taylor, "warm disorder". What are you talking about?

A. Following the Cold War we have one major superpower. We have one major superpower. And quite frankly from - I put together this whole phraseology "warm disorder". I have been of the opinion, and this is what I put together to call it a warm disorder, if based on my thinking - democracy is very important as far as the human existence is concerned. When we look at the pillars of democracy, and I have great respect for American democracy, so by America becoming the world's only superpower, while there are problems with that, it's something that you can live with, you know, thinking about how they deal with that power, whether it is soft power or whether it is hard power. Now, this warm disorder has to do with looking at the pillars that protect democracy in the United States. You have the three branches of government and there is the concept of checks and balances; the legislative branch, executive and the judiciary.

These three branches are essential for the support of democracy, and that's why it works so well in the United States, a country, quite frankly, I think is great. If any one of those three were to fail, you'll have chaos in the United States - any
one of those three. Let’s go back to the Nixon years. I was in school in the United States. I can remember a famous judge John Sirica. This was a strong judge. The judiciary took a very strong position in the United States. Even when they had what was called then the Saturday Night Massacre, not actually killing, but Elliot Richardson out of Massachusetts was dismissed as Attorney General. But the judiciary stood firm, and so they averted chaos in the United States at that particular time, and any one of these failing would have meant problem.

We come all the way down to other very strong Presidents in America. So when you look at this new era of the world’s only superpower where there is not that issue of checks and balances, that’s what I referred to as the warm disorder. Because there’s a degree - whether people accept it - there’s a degree of disorder when one nation can speak and decide, and you follow or else. That’s what I call the warm disorder, because really in the world right now when America speaks, it’s virtually over. I mean, I am jealous? Maybe, yes. I will never - no little country will get to that point, but it’s factual. So that’s what I call the warm disorder, this process where there is not that process of checks and balances in the global community where two or more powerful nations can sit down and really speak and compete and draw lines like they all do. There are red lines for this states. Now in the world there are no more red lines. There are no more red lines, really, to speak about. That’s what I call the warm disorder. There is this total semblance of peace, but under there there is disorder because dissatisfaction - and so if you look now realistically, you have more conflict since the end of the Cold War than you had during the Cold War
because there were red lines.

Q. You sound nostalgic, Mr Taylor, for the Cold War?

A. Well, it may sound that way, but --

MR GRIFFITHS: I note the time, Mr President.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's a convenient place to stop.

We'll take the lunch adjournment now and resume at 2.30.

[Lunch break taken at 1.30 p.m.]

[Upon resuming at 2.30 p.m.]

PRESIDING JUDGE: Please continue, Mr Griffiths.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Mr Taylor, before the luncheon adjournment we were looking at an interview conducted with you at the conclusion of the Lome summit, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. We are behind divider 37.

A. Yes.

Q. Now, can we deal with the final question posed to you, please:

Q. "With regards to ECOMOG, as former warlord who has got previous experience with ECOMOG, how did you address the anxieties and fears of the RUF about the future role of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone?"

A. I shared my experience. I will tell you. My experience with ECOMOG in the beginning was a very unpleasant one. But I must give ECOMOG one credit. Most of all the soldiers are professional soldiers and they carry out orders. When the order was finally given to ECOMOG to exhibit neutrality, I must say candidly, they did exhibit neutrality. That is why I left Gbarnga to Monrovia. I told the RUF leadership that, 'Look,
ECOMOG is our hope'."

Now, you covered that in the past, didn't you, Mr Taylor, in relation to your discussions with General Abacha?

A. Yes.

Q. President Abacha?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. "I told the RUF leadership calling for the total withdrawal of ECOMOG from Sierra Leone was an impossible request. They understood that. What I told them to fight for was the assurance, and they got the assurance. President Obasanjo, you know, some great things have happened to Nigeria, the outgoing Head of State, General Abubakar, was the right man at the right time. He brought into being a democratic government. President Obasanjo, a very decent man. He and I have met now a total of about three times. We had hours of discussion. A very simple, down to earth, decent man, and within the short time he has been President, he has - without a big stick or threat, he has won the admiration and respect of all his colleagues in the sub-region. And when he said, 'Look, I am in charge. I will guarantee you that ECOMOG troops will henceforth do peacekeeping in Sierra Leone and will only fire back in self-defence,' he did not have any problems getting anyone to believe him, and so it was very simple. He got the full assurance that ECOMOG troops in Sierra Leone will get involved in peacekeeping and will only fire in self-defence, and it was all over."

Now, Mr Taylor, that's the conclusion of that interview.

A. Yes.

Q. Now, just to complete the picture of what is available in this publication. If we go over the page, we see there is a
question and answer session with Foday Sankoh, yes?
A. Yes.
Q. Which goes over several pages talking about his life and
development, and then beginning at page 44, as is normal
following those meetings, there was a communique, wasn't there,
Mr Taylor?
A. Yes.
Q. And we see the final communique of the Lome meeting - no,
I'm sorry, I am misleading everyone. This is on the peace
process in Guinea-Bissau. Because that was going on at the same
time, wasn't it?
A. Yes.
Q. Yes. I think we can leave this document now, Mr Taylor.
So by this stage then, Mr Taylor, the Lome peace talks have
been brought to a successful conclusion, yes?
A. Yes.
Q. And you and the other ECOWAS leaders leave feeling a sense
of achievement, no doubt?
A. That is correct.
MR GRIFFITHS: Before I move on to what happened next, can
I ask, please, Mr President, that that document, "Saga of ECOWAS
Peace in Sierra Leone, Special Report," be marked for
identification MFI-89, please.
PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-89.
MR GRIFFITHS:
Q. Now, Mr Taylor, following that meeting in Lome, what did
you do?
A. I had to rush back to Monrovia.
Q. Why?
A. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, was scheduled to come to see me on 8 July, and so I rushed right back to Monrovia that evening to receive him the next day.

Q. And what was the purpose of that meeting?

A. It was in conjunction with the whole West African peace situation, the successful outcome at Lome. He had apparently a plan to visit to Sierra Leone, and so he just decided to extend it on. So even if Lome had not been completed, that was a scheduled trip, anyway. So I just rushed back and received him.

Q. And help us, was there a record made of that meeting?

A. Oh, yes. We had long discussions. He held a press conference. We did a press conference together in Monrovia on the 8th before his departure.

Q. Yes, and was there a record kept of that?

A. Yes, yes, yes.

Q. Have you seen that record?

A. Oh, yes, I have it. It was a part of my archives. We have the records.

Q. Can we look behind divider 38, please. As we see from this frontispiece, Mr Taylor, this is an outgoing code cable from Felix Downes-Thomas to Prendergast, at the United Nations, attaching a record of the Secretary-General's visit to Liberia on 8 July 1999. Do you see that?

A. Yes, records and a transcript of the press conference.

Q. Right. Turn over the page, please. We see when we look overleaf that this document is headed "Note to the File: Meeting between President Taylor and the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, held at the Executive Mansion on 8 July 1999": "In his opening remarks at the official talks with
Secretary-General Kofi Annan and selected government officials held at the Executive Mansion on 8 July, President Taylor thanked the Secretary-General for his visit to Liberia and pointed out that Africa was going into the new millennium at a time when she was trying to solve her problems. This was more so given the recently signed peace agreement on Sierra Leone. The President conceded that the peace talks were tough but the negotiators were able to put it together. He went on to say that it was now time to pursue peace. The President informed Mr Annan that he had asked RUF leader Foday Sankoh to go and establish himself and his party in Freetown. The Government of Liberia was sending a high powered delegation to Freetown and was also establishing a hot line between Monrovia and Freetown to assist the peace process."

Pause, please. Did you send such a delegation to Freetown, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, we did.

Q. Who were the individuals sent?

A. It was the foreign minister and other ministers. The defence minister I am sure went along, but it was a high powered delegation to see the government and to begin to establish ourselves on the ground there to assist the peace process ongoing.

Q. "... and was also establishing a hot line"?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. By that what do you mean?

A. Direct frequent calls with the President and with Sankoh where it became necessary. Kabbah and I had this calling situation, but this hot line would be that we would make it almost a usual situation where any problems, anything, he could
pick up the phone and call me. If I had a problem I could pick up the phone and call him.

Q. "He said West Africa was coming together at a time when the whole world was yearning for peace and security.

President Taylor stated that there were different methods of solving problems and that no country on this planet would support atrocities of man against man. He stressed that Liberia condemned atrocities that were committed in Sierra Leone. It was important that Sierra Leone had finally opted for peace rather than war. He requested Secretary-General Annan to call on the international community to give respect and support to the work ECOWAS was doing in the region.

The President expressed his appreciation for the work the United Nations was doing in Liberia. He praised the representative of the Secretary-General for the good job he was doing particularly on the issue of weapons disposal. The President pointed out that there was no need for a real diplomat to go on radio and the special representative's quiet diplomacy had helped to ensure that his message got through, even though he had had to endure criticisms from the press."

Is that right, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes.

Q. Who, Felix Downes-Thomas?

A. Oh, you know, sometimes the press would want him to come out and talk about these things, but he was more what you call - Downes-Thomas, when he retired from the United Nations I think he was a 30 year veteran of the UN. He was not one of these new people. So they always believe in people working and dealing with his main boss and so he was not the outspoken press man,
"Oh, I just did this. I just sent this message." He dealt with it very quietly.

Q. "He informed the Secretary-General that all the weapons would be burnt and destroyed at an abandoned iron mine in Bomi County. In calling for wide publicity on the destruction of weapons, the President observed that if Cambodia could get wide international publicity for destroying its stock of arms, Liberia, which was destroying 10 times more, should also get wide publicity. President Taylor further pointed out that ever since Liberia held multi-party elections, it had not received any direct assistance from governments except from NGOs. But while NGOs might be useful, they also had their own political agendas. He lamented the fact that while the international community had assisted post-conflict countries, the same could not be said of Liberia. He went on to say that if it was not for the grace of God, there would have been chaos in Liberia because of the level of poverty among its citizens.

The President also informed Mr Annan that he would be visiting New York in September to address the General Assembly."

Mr Taylor, can I just pause for a minute. Did you make that trip to New York in September?

A. No, I did not.

Q. "In response, the Secretary-General thanked President Taylor and President Taylor and Kabbah for their efforts in helping bring peace in Sierra Leone. He expressed the hope that the spirit that made the Lome peace talks possible would sustain the whole peace process. He said for Africa to take up its position in the world, there was need to take on the
development challenges not just through aid, but through its own development efforts. The Secretary-General stated that he has been involved in endorsing the sub-region on international fora and would continue to do so.

The Secretary-General also stressed the need to resuscitate and sustain the Mano River Union and urged its leaders to meet regularly, or even monthly, and that there was no need for a predetermined agenda before a meeting could be made. He further thanked the President for his leadership in agreeing to destroy the weapons collected during Liberia's disarmament period. The Secretary-General promised the President that the United Nations would work to ensure that the destruction of the weapons received as much publicity as possible and including such news outlets as the CNN.

The Secretary-General conceded that the international community had not been forthcoming in its assistance to Liberia and that he had been urging with the IMF Managing Director Michael Camdessus to exercise flexibility in IMF's lending to distressed African countries. Secretary-General Annan went on to say that he had urged donors not to judge governments by their past record but by policies they were currently pursuing.

Mr Annan assured President Taylor that the United Nations would continue pushing donor nations to be more generous and show compassionate towards African countries. He added that he had been assured by donors that resources would not be diverted to Kosovo at the expense of Africa. The Secretary-General assured the President that United Nations agencies would continue to operate in Liberia and that their mission was to support government programmes and not to have programmes of their own."
And you see that that is signed by Masimba Tafirenyika, whose name cropped up when we were looking at the transport arrangements to take the RUF delegation, yes?

A. That is correct, yes.

Q. Now you said that the Secretary-General held a press conference whilst he was in Monrovia, Mr Taylor, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. When we go over the page we see "Unofficial Transcript of Secretary-General Kofi Annan's Press Conference in Monrovia", yes?

A. Yes.

Q. "Mr President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen. Let me first say how happy I am to be here in Liberia, to be back in Liberia again. And in a relatively short time, the President, ministers, have made me feel very much at home. And the ceremony we witnessed just now reconfirms the feeling, the sense that I am home wherever I am in Africa. I would want to also thank the President and the leaders of the sub-region who played an active role in making peace possible in Sierra Leone. In particular, I would want to thank you Mr President, President Obasanjo, Presidents Eyadema and Compaore and all other foreign ministers of countries who participated in the agreement.

This is an important step forward. But now we have to focus on the hard part of implementation of making it work. I think it is essential that we all come together and pull our efforts to solve the political crises and conflicts in Africa, in this region and elsewhere. Because if we do not do that we cannot focus on the essential task of economic and social development. If we do not do that, we are not going to be able
to attract investors in this region, local and international.
No-one invests in a—a and there is an inaudible word there—
“and this is why the process of establishing peace and calm in
your region is so essential for the dreams of prosperity and
civility that we all have. And I have been touched by the
message I have received that the entire West African community
here is saying: Yes, peace has taken hold in Liberia, let’s move
on to the economic and social development, appealing to the
international community to help. I share that desire, and I have
been working on that and will continue to work on that.”

Now, Mr Taylor, that phrase “the entire West African
community here is saying: Yes, peace has taken hold in Liberia”,
was that happy condition to remain?
A. Not really.

Q. Did things change?
A. Yes.

Q. How quickly?
A. Well, at a very slow but increasing rate things started
changing with the situation at hand. This incursion really never
dies, and by incursion I mean the incursion out of Guinea that
attacked Lofa County.

Q. We will come back to that:

"Your representative who spoke on your behalf said there
are some that I should think about Liberia. Let me assure you, I
don’t need a plane ride from New York to think about Liberia. If
I didn’t think about Liberia, I wouldn’t be here. But we will
continue to work with you and to ensure economic development, and
I hope as we resolve the conflict in the region, there have been
very positive developments the last few months. Nigeria has gone
through a peaceful democratic transition, peace has taken hold here in Liberia. Yesterday a peace agreement was signed in Sierra Leone. The situation in Guinea-Bissau I hope will resolve within the next few [inaudible] and if this region can really consolidate this peace and work together, I think we will see a difference in the sub-region.

But, of course, yesterday there was also an issue of another agreement in Lusaka on the Democratic Republic of Congo, and I hope that will also be signed by the Heads of State and bring stability to that large country in the middle of Africa.

So, my brothers and sisters, let's continue our efforts in search of viable and long-term peace, to be able to work on the essential issues of economic and social development. And I am convinced that if we do our part and sustain these efforts, the help from the international community will also come. We have to do our part and then pressure the outsiders to join us in our journey towards stability and prosperity.

And then there was a question and answer session. Were you present throughout all of this, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, I was.

Q. Let's go over the page and look - let's just have a quick look at these answers:

"First of all, I hope that my visit will underscore the solidarity that the UN and I personally feel for the plight of the Liberian people and the efforts to rebuild a society. And I have also come to the region to encourage the peace processes that are taking place and really encourage the leaders and people of the region to work together to stabilise the region so that we move on with economic development. I think on your second
question, when we talk of the United Nations, we refer to the United Nations as if it's some abstract and somewhere in New York. We ought to be careful, because the United Nations is you and the government and the people of the world. The United Nations is a strong as its members want to be. But I would want to say is for us to avoid these regular conflicts, these unnecessary killings, these unnecessary destructions that we see around today. We need to develop a culture of peace, tolerance. We need to accept diversity. We need to celebrate diversity. We need to build society based on based on the rule of law and respect for human rights. And since I became Secretary-General, I have wished for this. We have tended to be so consumed and concerned by state security. I hope we will begin to shift that concern to the security of the individual within the State. We should put the human being at the centre of everything that we do. And I hope that as we move into the next century, this mission will take hold and if it does, the world will be a better place for all of us."

Now, I want to deal with the next answer, because of a matter we will be coming up to deal with in due course:

"The Secretary-General: I think what is important is that not only has the conflict ended, but we should really get away from the whole question of armaments. In my report to the Security Council on conflicts in Africa and economic and social development on the continent, one of the issues I highlighted was the need to reduce expenditure on armaments and that governments should not be encouraged to spend more than 1.5 per cent of their budgets on armaments. I was talking to Michael Camdessus of the IMF a few days ago, and he said we have to find ways of even
discouraging those who give credits to government to bring in armaments instead of helping them develop their economic and social infrastructure. And in this, having achieved the peace here - and I said peace seemed to be taking hold in the region - I was very pleased when the President informed me that he had decided to burn all the weapons that were collected during the conflict which have been stored here since the end of the conflict, and his plan to is to burn these weapons on 26 July."

Now, we know the significance of that date, don’t we, Mr Taylor?

A. Yes, we do.

Q. Independence Day, yes?

A. That’s correct.

Q. "... and have a big bonfire of peace, and I hope the flame will rise as high as possible when the time reaches so that the entire region can know that it is not well spending money on weapons and that what the people demand and are asking for is an economic and social development, food, shelter, education, health, and that is where our efforts should go. And I hope we will understand the symbol of burning the arms on 26 July."

And then on what the UN is doing on the arms embargo on Liberia:

"On the issue of embargo, these are issues discussed by the Security Council periodically, and I am sure this will be reviewed. But in my discussions with President Taylor, I don’t think the question of armaments or expenditure on arms is the first thing on his agenda."

Was that true, Mr Taylor?

A. That was true.
Q. So what was the first thing on your agenda?
A. Economic development. Getting the country stabilised so we could begin receiving aid and assistance for our people.
Q. So let me then move on to your second question:

"I think the UN and the international community has an obligation to work side by side with Liberia and Sierra Leone in reconstructing this economy and pushing ahead with development. In fact, in my discussions with President Taylor, and also early this morning with President Kabbah" - pause there. So the Secretary-General had visited both of you on the same day?
A. Yes, he came through Freetown into Liberia, yes.
Q. "... we did talk about reviving and energising the Mano River Union to encourage sub-regional cooperation and economic, political and security issues, and I think we will be working very, very closely with the President and his colleagues in the sub-region. Thank you very much."
And then there is this question:
Q. "On the peace agreement in Sierra Leone and the issue of giving amnesty to people who committed atrocities.
A. Let me say that the peace agreement which was signed, with a clause on amnesty, the parties to the conflict signed an agreement. The parties to the conflict won the peace. Obviously, peace and justice must go hand in hand. But perfect peace is hardly ever achievable. And if one were to pursue perfect peace, the peace that will bring stability, the peace that will, may prove to be very elusive. Having noted that there is an amnesty clause in the agreement, I would like to stress that in the United Nations, the international humanitarian human rights law will continue to apply. Thank you very much."
Now, pausing for a moment, Mr Taylor. There was that amnesty clause in the Lome agreement, wasn't there?

A. There is.

Q. And you having been present at those discussions, help us. What was seen as the purpose behind that?

A. All of the agreements around - where you have had conflict in Africa, they have put this clause in to make sure that they move away from any future problems that one government may come in wanting to go after certain people, that they will use that as an opportunity to do that.

MR GRIFFITHS: Now, as we see, that was your meeting with the Secretary-General on 8 July. Before we move on, Mr President, can I ask that that document be marked for identification, please? It's outgoing code cable from Felix Downes-Thomas dated 10 August 1999 attaching notes on the Secretary-General's visit to Liberia on 8 July 1999, MFI-90.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, we will mark that all as one document, MFI-90.

MR GRIFFITHS: I am grateful:

Q. So, Mr Taylor, that's 8 July immediately following your return from Lome. So what's the next stage in events, can you recall?

A. Yes. Following that, we are now in July. I begin preparing for two events: The July 26 Independence celebrations; and also the symbolic burning of the arms as referred to by the Secretary-General here in this big bonfire. And so I am beginning to - first of all I receive a letter - we sent out invitations. I receive a letter from President Obasanjo confirming he will be coming, and by this time we are beginning
to receive goodwill messages from around the world. Mostly on
Independence Day, countries send out goodwill messages wishing,
you know, that country well, and we are receiving all of those in
preparation for the 26 July celebration.

Q. Okay. Now, you say you received a letter from which
President?
A. Obasanjo writes me and tells me that he is coming.
Q. And this is when?
A. This is in July.

Q. Can we have a look behind divider 40, please. Do you have
it, Mr Taylor?
A. Yes, I do.
Q. "Dear President and Brother, I have the honour to
acknowledge receipt of your most thoughtful letter of 16 June
1999 and to thank you most sincerely for your kind words about
me. It was indeed a great honour to host you during your last
visit to Abuja, as it underscored the close and friendly
relations that currently exist between our two countries and
peoples. I also welcome the opportunity provided by your visit
for a full and frank exchange of views on matters of common
concern, including the search for options for restoring peace and
promoting security in the West African sub-region.
I am pleased to note that the 152nd anniversary of Liberian
Independence will be marked by a symbolic destruction of the arms
and ammunition surrendered to the United Nations and ECOWAS by
the former military factions in your country. The significance
of the occasion certainly underscores your government's
commitment to bringing about lasting peace in Liberia and other
countries in the sub-region. I am certain that this gesture of
compliance with the wishes of the international community will be fully reciprocated by an appropriate response from all concerned.

Your appreciation of the positive contribution and huge sacrifice made by ECOMOG forces to bring about peace in Liberia is, indeed, most welcome. We as leaders must strive to ensure that these sacrifices are not made in vain by providing conditions for the peaceful resolution of conflicts in our countries and, indeed, the rest of the continent.

I am glad to accept your invitation to attend the celebrations marking the 152nd anniversary of Liberian Independence on 26 July 1999 as an expression of my support for the efforts to secure lasting peace in our sub-region."

And then the normal salutations. So that's on the 14th, Mr Taylor.

A. Yes.

Q. So we are talking about, what, just over a week before the actual event?

A. A little more than that, yes. But there are several other - we are very busy at this time. There are several other goodwill messages coming in from almost all member states of the UN. We received from Germany, we received from West African countries. Just goodwill messages; on the occasion of the 152nd anniversary we wish this and that. But these are coming while we are preparing. We do get confirmation at this time on who is really coming to the celebrations. Obasanjo accepts, Kabbah accepts, I think Idriss Deby from Chad, Blaise Compaore from Burkina Faso. Several Heads of States come and we begin the preparation for such a gathering in Monrovia.

Q. And just to see an example of the kind of goodwill messages
received, let us just quickly move behind divider 41. Before we
do so, can I ask, Mr President, that the letter from President
Obasanjo dated 14 July 1999 be marked for identification MFI-91,
please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: That document is marked MFI-91.

MR GRIFFITHS: I am grateful:

Q. So now let's go over the page. What do we see here,
Mr Taylor?

A. The goodwill message from - this is a note from the foreign
ministry on President Rau of Germany of the federal republic on
our independence. This is just the transmitter from the foreign
ministry. The message is attached.

Q. When we go behind, we see the message in English, don't we?

A. That is correct.

Q. And when we see go behind that, we see the message in
German?

A. That is correct.

Q. Is this the kind of format adopted for such messages,
Mr Taylor?

A. I wouldn't say form, but this is the style that - each
country may have its own style, it's not a direct form, but it's
more a style. They all would just send - some would be straight
letters, some would be maybe one paragraph, two paragraphs, but
they come from all over.

Q. And, for the record, the message from Johannes Rau,
President of the Federal Republic of Germany, reads to this
effect:

"On the occasion of Independence Day in the Republic of
Liberia, I convey to you my own and the German people's cordial
greetings.

On this day, I would also like to wish the Liberian people a prosperous future, economic progress and peace within their society.

I am confident that you and your government will succeed in making constructive contributions in the spirit of cooperation based on partnership towards the re-establishment of peace and stability in the region of West Africa."

Now, let's come then, Mr Taylor, to the particular day itself. Before I move on, could we mark that for identification MFI-92, please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's marked MFI-92. We will mark it as one document.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, just talk us through, please, precisely what happened on 26 July. Let's start, first of all, with this. Which Presidents attended?

A. We have Presidents Obasanjo, Kabbah.

Q. Kabbah was there, was he?

A. Yes. Tejani was there. He was there, yes. We also had President Compaore, Blaise Compaore, of Burkina Faso. We had I think the foreign minister of Ghana and other foreign ministers. I think probably the Prime Minister of Togo. But we a full house for the celebrations.

Q. And help us, what else happened on the day, if anything, apart from celebrating Independence Day?

A. Well, we also had in circulation at that particular time a letter that a good friend of President Clinton had written to him to assist Liberia.
Q. But mention was made in some of the correspondence about the destruction of arms?
A. Yes.
Q. Did that take place on Independence Day?
A. Yes.
Q. Was there any particular ceremony to mark that?
A. We burnt it, yes. There was a big bonfire.
Q. Where was that bonfire?
A. At the Barclay Training Centre. We had the UN personnel, the experts that were there and all of the representatives. The Barclay Training Centre is - it's come up before, it's the military barracks in Monrovia. We had the physical burning, symbolic burning of a large quantity of arms. No ammunition, because they would have been popping. There was no ammunition.
Q. Was President Kabbah present for that?
A. Yes, Kabbah was there.
Q. Now, you have mentioned a letter, Mr Taylor. Who wrote that letter?
A. That letter was written by Lester Hyman.
Q. To whom?
A. To President Clinton.
Q. And who is Lester Hyman?
A. Lester is a lawyer, a very strong stalwart of the Democrat party and one of the - from the old stock of that whole Kennedy set. Very good friends - he has come from the old democratic stock. And he had known President Clinton for some time, and had been used to do some work for Liberia and the new government in terms of helping to re set-up the whole aspect of our maritime
programme and had really gotten used to what was going on in the country and was writing the President to advise him that to the knowledge of him, that it would be very good if the United States could begin a policy of rethinking its whole attitude towards Liberia.

Q. Have you seen a copy of that letter?
A. Yes. It was written to me. I read the letter, yes. I mean it was written to President Clinton, but I have a copy.

Q. Have a look behind divider 42, please. Is that the letter?
A. Yes, this is it.

Q. Yes. We see it's dated 28 July. So two days after the Independence Day celebrations, yes?
A. Yes.

Q. And we see it's addressed to the Honourable Bill Clinton, President of the United States, the White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue:

"Dear Mr President, I write to ask you to meet informally with President Charles Taylor of Liberia when he comes to Washington September 15-19 just prior to his address to the United Nations General Assembly in New York on the afternoon of September 21."

Pause. Question number one: What prompted Mr Hyman to write this letter? Was it at your request?
A. No, not at my request. No, not at all. What was going on at this time, remember now in 1998, I don't go. We have some problems and there is this letter before the Court from Ramsey Clark dealing with this matter.

Q. That was in the year of your election as President?
A. Exactly. Now, we come to a situation now where
historically, with this good relationship between Liberia and the United States, the President of Liberia, upon undertaking this trip to the United States, had a full programme. He went to the United Nations. After that, he went to Washington DC. He met with the President. Not at the side bar in New York, but he met with the President in Washington DC. And then there would be visits to maybe one or two American cities, like probably it would be like Chicago or maybe Atlanta, Georgia, or maybe even California where in conjunction with the United States government investors would be put together. You talk to them in trying to get investment and it's a good thing to do.

I am about to go to the United States and we have not settled this issue yet. There are suggestions that there will be a side bar meeting at the United Nations with President Clinton. And I said no, that that was not sufficient because the mere cost of flying to the United States - you know, what, you go to address the General Assembly, you address the General Assembly, everybody's addressing the General Assembly. But for me, in order for us to benefit, that trip had to be inclusive of many other constructive actions.

So we're going to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars, you charter a plane, you go, you are at New York, the Waldorf Astoria, you are paying huge sums of money. There is a huge delegation. We don't have the money. But the benefits, if you were to meet the President and meet investors and encourage investment to the country, that would be an opportunity, because I am speaking an as an economist now, that there would be some way you gain some money back. So why spend all this money only to go to address the General Assembly when your foreign minister
can read the speech. So I said, well, you know, if there is not
an agenda where I will meet with Bill Clinton in Washington DC I
was just not going there. It just isn't worth my while.
So these discussions are ongoing. And so Lester, remember
I have said, is a lawyer who is an old hand in the Democrat
establishment, who knows President Clinton very well and is
helping to do some work with the maritime programme. We have
talked about that here before, the ships that fly the Liberian
flag. Good. And so he, knowing President Clinton, writes. He
knows the Secretary of State very well, Madeleine Albright, and
so he writes and puts in his little word to see if he can get
this thing going.

Q. Okay. Now, at this stage in July, Mr Taylor, was it your
intention to attend the meeting of the UN General Assembly.
A. Full intention. We were making preparations and
everything, yes. I had full intentions.
Q. Let's go back:
"Specifically, I understand that you will be attending the
congressional black caucus dinner on Saturday evening, September
18th, at the DC convention centre where President Taylor also
will be a guest. It is my hope that you would meet briefly with
him in a private room or in the holding room prior to your
entrance into the hall."
Why should you see Charles Taylor?
(1) Because in recent weeks President Taylor has been
instrumental in bringing the rebels in Sierra Leone to the table
for diplomatic settlement of that country's horrible civil war;
he has just presided over the destruction of all the weapons
seized during Liberia's civil war; and next month he will mark
two years of his presidency with his country at peace. In my opinion, good deeds such as these should be reinforced by US commendation, just as less helpful actions have been criticised by us in the past.

(2) Because as the democratically elected President of the Republic of Liberia, he needs to demonstrate to his people that the United States recognises its special historic relationship with Liberia (the only country in Africa with such a distinction).

(3) Because despite the fact that President Taylor has already been received in formal state visits by President Chirac in France, President Mandela in South Africa, and President Obasanjo in Nigeria (with both the latter, as well as UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, recently visiting President Taylor in Liberia), to my knowledge, no high-ranking official of the United States government has indicated an interest to meet with Mr Taylor when he comes to Washington in September, even though it is an unofficial visit?

I respectfully suggest that an encouraging word from the President of the United States (as you did when you called Mr Taylor from Air Force One during your recent triumphant trip to Africa) will do wonders in helping to further the democratic process in Liberia. (You will recall that Hilary received the First Lady of Liberia, Jewel Taylor, at the White House last year, and in doing so, helped focus attention in that country on issues benefitting women and children, health and education.)

For the record, the past year I have tried to help Liberia on the road to recovery strictly on a pro bono basis. I know Charles Taylor probably better than any other American, and I
sincerely believe he possesses the intelligence, sophistication and political skills to lead his country in a constructive manner if only he is given some help and encouragement by the international community.

I think you know me well enough, Mr President, to conclude, that I would not recommend a meeting between you and President Charles Taylor unless I believed it would result in positive benefits for the people of Liberia, who are the sole reason I have been so involved with that country. I do hope you can grant my earnest request and looked forward to your response. Warmest regards."

Now, you have told us, Mr Taylor, that in due course you didn't make that trip.

A. That is correct.

Q. As far as you are aware, did President Clinton respond to that letter?

A. I think he did. In fact, there was such a mixup that things went a little bad. I think in the final analysis, something was worked out for such a meeting at the caucus that is mentioned here. But in these different messages getting across, I think in his response to Lester, I think he had mentioned that it probably just got caught up, I guess, along the way, and I did not get the time enough and really didn't go. Some people considered that a lost opportunity, but it was not intentional because the message just didn't get to me that, in fact, such a meeting could take place or would take place. And so I didn't make the trip.

MR GRIFFITHS: Before I move on, can I ask that that letter from Lester Hyman to President Clinton, dated 28 July 1999, be
mark**e**d for identification, please, MFI-93.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked for

identification MFI-93.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, just going back a couple of days to the

events on Independence Day when the arms were burnt, was that

ceremony reported in the media?

A. Yes. Mark Doyle of the BBC did a full article and

reporting on it in a written publication. Mark Doyle, yes.

Q. Let's look behind divider 43, please.

A. Yes, this is it. Mark Doyle did this.

Q. And we see it's dated Monday, 26 July 1999, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. By BBC West Africa correspondent Mark Doyle in Monrovia:

"Liberian President Charles Taylor has announced that his

country has closed a dark chapter in its history after almost a
decade of civil war.

Mr Taylor was speaking at a United Nations monitored

ceremony to mark the destruction of tens of thousands of weapons

and millions of rounds of ammunition collected from armed

factions at the end of the main hostilities in the civil war

two years ago.

The destruction of the large cache of weapons, held under

lock and key since the war, is one of the largest weapons
destruction programmes the world has seen in recent years.

Several African Heads of State attended the ceremony, and

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan sent a message

congratulating regional leaders on taking an important step

towards peace."
The Presidents of Sierra Leone and Nigeria, two countries that used to be firmly opposed to Mr. Taylor, arrived in Monrovia on its Independence Day for the colourful ceremony.

President Taylor came to office by being the most powerful warlord in a conflict which destabilised the entire West African region, leaving hundreds of thousands of people dead.

Now elected to office and keen to portray himself as a man of peace, he hopes that putting a lighted torch to the huge pile of weapons will send a message to the outside world."

Were you seeking to do that, Mr. Taylor, send a message to the outside world?

A. Yes. I don't know if the message got to them. Yes.

Q. What was the message you were trying to send out?

A. That we had put war behind us; that we wanted peace; and that we wanted to move our people forward in the direction of prosperity. This is the message we were trying to send. I don't think it got to them.

Q. "Essentially, Mr. Taylor wants respect and crucial foreign investment." You've said that more than once during the course of your testimony, Mr. Taylor, so we won't dwell on that. "With peace deals now signed in Liberia and neighbouring Sierra Leone, it is just possible that this will happen." And the timely intervention of the letter from Mr. Hyman gave some optimistic hope of that, did it?

A. It did.

Q. "But Mr. Taylor's opponents, many of them in exile or otherwise silenced, say he has to show a greater and continuing commitment to democracy and human rights if Liberia is really to become a normal country once more."
1 Nigeria's General Felix Mujakperou, who has headed the
2 ECOMOG peace enforcement army in West Africa, told the BBC that
3 the weapons destruction programme was a mess and several weeks
4 behind schedule."
5 Is that true?
6 A. This is a man that is just coming in, so what does he know
7 about this? Don't forget, it was Shelpidi that was just
8 around - this man replaced Shelpidi in Sierra Leone. I don't
9 think he knows what he's talking about.

10 Q. "General Mujakperou said his peacekeeping troops, who have
11 been guarding the surrendered weapons, would leave Liberia within
12 days in accordance with the long-term plan.
13 The general, who has intimate knowledge of the situation in
14 Liberia, warned that the unarmed UN monitors were incapable of
15 protecting these weapons, not yet destroyed, from possible
16 seizure from armed groups which might want them."
17 A. Yes, Mr Taylor.
18 Yes, that's what he says.

19 MR GRIFFITHS: Can that BBC news report by Mark Doyle be
20 marked for identification, please, Mr President, MFI-94?
21 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked for
22 identification MFI-94.

23 MR GRIFFITHS:
24 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, I want to show you now a document and ask
25 for your explanation as to its origin. Could you look behind
26 divider 38-39, please. What is this document, Mr Taylor?
27 A. This is a commercial invoice for a satellite telephone.
28 Q. Where does it come from?
29 A. Quite frankly, I really - this, I really don't know.
10/07/99. I am not sure whether that is 10 July or --

Q. Well, if it's 10 July, then it's a couple of days after the Lome peace agreement, isn't it?

A. Yes, and that would not be practical. The 10th --

Q. Mr Taylor, was this document ever in your possession?

A. It's possible it could have been among my papers, but I really don't really know the origin of this document.

Q. Why would such a document be in your papers?

A. I don't know. I don't know. Because this is a collection of papers. I don't know.

Q. Because let's note what this is about. The consignee - that is the person who is to receive this item - is chairman Foday Sankoh, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Care of Pallo Bangura, Cape Sierra Hotel, Freetown, Sierra Leone, yes?

A. Uh-huh.

Q. And the date, as you have noted, if the middle digit is the month, is two days - well, three days after the signing of the Lome Peace Accord, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. And what's it for? It's for a satellite telephone.

A. Uh-huh.

Q. Did you provide Foday Sankoh with a satellite telephone?

A. No, I did not provide Foday Sankoh with a satellite telephone at this particular time, no. No.

Q. Is there any reason why you might have supplied Foday Sankoh with a satellite telephone?

A. Yes, there is reason why I might have.
Q. Such as?
A. To remain in contact with him. But if you look at the 10th here, Foday Sankoh is nowhere around Sierra Leone. In fact, we fight hard to get - to finally get Foday Sankoh to Sierra Leone. And this is why I have said that I - this particular document, I don't know how it could have gotten among my papers. But I cannot recall this, because Foday Sankoh doesn't get back into Sierra Leone in October. There should be no reason why I should provide him a satellite telephone bought and delivered in Freetown two days after the thing. I don't know. It could be just probably one of those documents that, as you compile documents - and I moved from the mansion with a bunch of papers, I don't really know how this got in there. But I did not provide this to him. I had reason to. But I did not, no.

Q. Yes, you had reason to because, as we noted in the notes of the meeting with the Secretary-General on 8 July, you said, amongst other things, that you would be establishing a hotline between Monrovia and Freetown?
A. Yes.

Q. And that hotline was to include Mr Sankoh?
A. That is correct.

Q. So was this - was the provision of such a phone part of that process?
A. No, no, I would remember very clearly if I gave Foday Sankoh a phone. I did not at this particular time. This hotline is for Foday Sankoh and for Tejan Kabbah, but I did not give him this particular phone - even though I had reason to, but I did not give him this phone. I want to believe that somebody in Freetown probably bought this phone for Sankoh but, no, I did
Q. Now you say, Mr Taylor, that Mr Sankoh was not in Freetown at this time, yes?
A. That is correct.

Q. But you will note that the consignee is not Sankoh himself.
A. Yes.

Q. It's care of somebody else. Do you see that?
A. I see it's in care of Pallo Bangura.

Q. Yes, which means, of course, doesn't it, that Sankoh not being in Freetown is somewhat irrelevant? Wouldn't you agree?
A. I would agree.

Q. Tell me, alternatively, Mr Taylor, if the month is in fact October and this date is 7 October, Sankoh would be back in Freetown by then, wouldn't he?
A. If it's October, yes.

Q. Now by October 1999, would you have good reason to provide a satellite phone to Sankoh?
A. I would have very good reason to provide a satellite phone for Sankoh, yes.

Q. Did you, Mr Taylor, provide a satellite phone or phones to any member of the RUF?
A. Oh, yes, I provided a satellite phone to Sam Bockarie. A handheld satellite phone.

Q. Can I pause you there. We will continue the list of names in a moment, but let's just clarify as we go along. When did you provide such a phone to Bockarie?
A. On his second trip to Liberia, as mentioned.

Q. Which was when, remind us?
A. Sam Bockarie came to Liberia, what we are talking about,
Q. Yes. And you told us the first trip was in September. Did you provide it to him on the first trip, the second trip?
A. I said the second trip I provided him a phone.

Q. Why?
A. Because we had to be in contact with him and we needed to talk to him when he left and went back into the bush, so we had to talk to him.

Q. Thank you. Who else did you provide with a satellite phone?
A. I also provided a satellite phone later on in 2000 to Issa Sesay.

Q. Why?
A. To be in contact with him after he was made leader of the RUF in July/August of 2000.

Q. Anybody else?
A. No, not that I can recollect right now. No.

Q. Now having admitted, Mr Taylor, that you have bought satellite phones for Sam Bockarie and Issa Sesay, yes?
A. Uh-huh.

Q. Do you have any reason to deny buying this phone for Foday Sankoh?
A. Listen, I don't know what the real issue is in trying to help the Court. I am in touch with Sankoh. I am calling him by landlines. I am calling him. If I had recollected that I had bought this phone for Sankoh I would say that I did it, because I had every reason to be in touch with him and I called him many times. I do not recollect buying a satellite phone for Sankoh. I am in touch with Sankoh and so that is not the issue for me.
If I had bought it, I do not recollect that I bought this phone for Sankoh.

I am calling Foday Sankoh in Freetown when he gets there.

I send him to Freetown from Liberia. I just don't recollect that I bought this phone. If I had bought it, I would say I did. I don't recollect. That's simple. I am on landlines with Sankoh every day calling him. Sankoh gets there. By the time he gets back into Sierra Leone we are talking about there is conflict on the ground. I am in touch with him. I just don't recollect this particular phone.

Q. Mr Taylor, understand my purpose. We have access to a large volume of documentation and it's my duty to give you an opportunity to comment on all relevant documentation. Do you understand that?

A. I do.

Q. So that's why I am asking you about this, to give you an opportunity now to explain if you have an explanation. Do you have one?

A. I do not recollect this phone. I've said it.

Q. Very well.

MR GRIFFITHS: Mr President, can I ask then that invoice for satellite phone, dated either 10 October 1999 or - no, sorry, 7 October 1999 or 10 July 1999, be marked for identification MFI-95. No, I am sorry, did I mark for identification the BBC news article?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes.

MR GRIFFITHS: That was 94, wasn't it?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that is 94.

MR GRIFFITHS: So this now becomes 95.
PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, this present document is marked MFI-95.

MR GRIFFITHS:

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, by this stage now we have reached the end of July of 1999, haven't we?

A. Yes.

Q. Now, as we recall, you had met with the Secretary-General on 8 July, the day after the signing of the Lome Peace Accord, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you have particular reason to want to speak to him at this time?

A. Yes.

Q. What was that?

A. Around the beginning of August, for some framework here, we have come from Lome and Foday Sankoh is still not in Sierra Leone.

Q. Can I just pause you for a moment.

A. Yes.

Q. Foday Sankoh is still not in Sierra Leone. Can we investigate that a little further, Mr Taylor?

A. Sure.

Q. Because, remember, he went to Lome as a convicted criminal.

A. That is correct.
Q. Following Lome and the signing of the accord, what's his status?
A. He is now free.
Q. He is now free.
A. He is now a free man.
Q. And now a free man and now according to the agreement appointed vice-president of Sierra Leone and ministry of lands and mines, or whatever the department is?
A. No, not minister. He is vice-president of Sierra Leone, but he is in charge of natural resources.
Q. Okay.
A. Yes.
Q. Why does he not return immediately to Sierra Leone, do you know?
A. Really I can't tell, but it is a source of discomfort for us. In our little circles, I mean the Heads of State, following that agreement our first thing is that we have to get Sankoh back into Freetown. Remember, as the UN is making arrangements to fly the delegates of the RUF to Lome, they insist on the use of a UN plane to make absolutely sure that quote unquote they do not go to other places. So our concern now is that we have got to get Sankoh into Freetown and not back into the bushes. That is he must not go into his controlled area of Kailahun, or whatever area of the country. We must make sure he returns to Freetown and returns as quickly as possible.
So the first thing is there is agreement that he will come through Liberia, but he will not go into Sierra Leone by road, because by road he will end up into his controlled area and God knows what could happen after that.
Now - but there is this lingering problem out there.

Remember the AFRC, or the armed forces people, are not a part of this agreement and they are making small noises in the background. Of principal concern - and I am going to your question did I speak to Kofi Annan.

Q. Take your time so that we get the full picture, please, Mr Taylor.

A. Yes. And these are all things happening behind - this is not newspaper stuff I am talking. I am talking about internally

Heads of State telephone calls going from Monrovia to Abuja, Monrovia, Freetown, Freetown, Abuja, up and down. We have a situation now where there is a group of these - remember when the junta or the SLA attacked Freetown on 6 January, based on the evidence before this Court I think a day or so ago now they were all not driven back into the interior. A group evolved calling themselves the West Side Boys that take a position around the hills around Sierra Leone called Okra Hills.

Now early in August they had been asking for Johnny Paul Koroma, who does not show up outside of Sierra Leone. He is somewhere up country. Nobody knows - at least I don't know and the Heads of State don't know - where he is. He is up country and these boys from the SLA want to speak to him to ask him why was it he was not involved in the negotiations in Lome.

It erupts into a problem where the West Side Boys arrest some United Nations officials in Sierra Leone around Okra Hills. They arrest some ECOMOG soldiers and some journalists and whatnot and said that they would not release them until they could speak to and account for their leader, Johnny Paul Koroma.

So this is happening now coming towards the end of July.
All of this problem is evolving. We begin exchanging messages and --

Q. Who is "we"?

A. The Heads of State of the members of the Committee of Six.

"What can we do about it?" I am told again to get into high gear. We begin this process of negotiating to try to get the UN officials released.

We practically work out the modalities of getting them released, but the West Side Boys are saying that they cannot and President Kabbah is involved every step of the way. This is a direct coordination with Kabbah. There is a direct coordination with Sankoh, even though Sankoh is not yet in Sierra Leone by August. He remains in Togo. I am on the phone. I talk to him in Togo. I talk to President Eyadema.

After we work out the details on one thing, what we would remove Johnny Paul Koroma from Sierra Leone and bring him to Liberia, and upon getting to Liberia, the release of these officials would occur. The difficulty here is that Johnny Paul Koroma is on a travel ban. He and his people cannot travel. So then I call the special representative of the Secretary-General and tell him to get a call to New York right away, I need to speak to the Secretary-General. And so we finally get to speak, after I have spoken to Kabbah, to Sankoh and everybody else, to get the okay for Johnny Paul Koroma to be able to move from Sierra Leone to come to Liberia, thereby resulting to the release of the UN and other officials that are being held by the West Side Boys at Okra Hills. So I speak to Kofi Annan, and he agrees, and that process now gets into motion.

Q. Can we have a look behind divider 44, please. Now, we have
another of these code cables from Felix Downes-Thomas to someone called Riza for the Secretary-General?
A. That is correct.
Q. We see it's marked "urgent and immediate", yes?
A. Yes.
Q. It's dated 6 August 1999.
A. That is correct.
Q. "Further to our telephone conversation" - no. "Subject: Sierra Leone, urgent issues, President Taylor's request for telephone conference with the Secretary-General."
Further to our telephone conversation, I wish to confirm that President Taylor telephoned me just now requesting that I arrange for him and the Secretary-General to talk to on the telephone about the detention of UN officials, ECOMOG soldiers, journalists in Sierra Leone by ex-members of the Sierra Leonean army."
That's the West Side Boys you referred to?
A. That is correct.
Q. Yes, Mr Taylor?
A. That is correct.
Q. "President Taylor informed me that he had already spoken twice to President Kabbah." Yes?
A. Yes.
Q. "Once to Foday Sankoh"?
A. Yes.
Q. "And once to President Obasanjo on the matter"?
A. Yes.
Q. Which what you have just told us?
A. That is correct.
Q. “On learning that the RUF commander in charge of the area in which the abduction and detention has taken place was in Liberia.” Was he?
A. Yes.

Q. Who was that?
A. Gee, I don't quite remember. This is one of Foday Sankoh's officials. They come, they go to Lome, some of them come back to Liberia waiting for Sankoh to return en route to Freetown. But this is one of his senior commanders. I don't remember the name.

But when this issue arose, one of them said that he knew this area and could go back.

Q. “On learning that the RUF commander in charge of the area in which the abduction and detention has taken place was in Liberia, he, President Taylor, with the knowledge and consent of President Kabbah, has chartered an airplane to transport this particular commander from Monrovia to Lungi Airport, Freetown, for the commander to assist in defusing the crisis.”

Pause again. As suggested there, was Tejani Kabbah kept abreast of everything you did?
A. Fully. Fully. They are landing at Lungi Airport. This is no private matter. This is no private matter. Tejani knows. We are in contact with everybody. Yes, the Secretary I am trying to get in contact with, and we do charter a light aircraft to take this commander, because of the urgency of this matter, to Lungi for him to be able to get to the area to try to get these people released. Yes, he knows.

Q. “President Taylor also informed me that according to his own sources, an element in the ongoing crisis in Sierra Leone is the contention that Johnny Paul Koroma (AFRC) is being held...
against his will by Sierra Leonean authorities in Sierra Leone."

Pause there. Where had you learnt that from?

A. Well, there is an error here in this: Not by Sierra Leonean authorities, but by really RUF. When - during the process of putting together this whole thing, in the investigation the RUF people at the guesthouse in Monrovia had informed us that, in fact, Johnny Paul Koroma was being held in detention. For the first time, I think everybody got to know that Johnny Paul Koroma was being held against his will, okay?

And this was the first time that we get to know this.

Q. So, Mr Taylor, we should cross out "Sierra Leonean authorities" and put in "RUF"?

A. "RUF". It should be "RUF authorities". He made an error here.

President Taylor feels that if Johnny Paul Koroma could be brought to Liberia for related discussions, that could contribute significantly to defusing, if not ending, the crisis. He also informs me that he has discussed this idea with both Presidents Kabbah and Obasanjo, who do not seem to have any problem with it."

Had you?

A. Oh, yes. Counsel, yes. These matters - that's why I was sitting over here and I am hearing these boys talking about things that they do not know. This boy, I forgot his name who sat here who eventually came to Monrovia after Johnny Paul, these boys don't know. They see things happening, and maybe OTP people are talking to them, and they are trying to make up stories about things that they have no knowledge of.

We are dealing at a level - everything open, aboveboard on
the table, and they are speculating, talking about things that they do not know. They have no idea about what's going on. We are - this thing is aboveboard. All the movements, communications, agreements between and amongst officials, the United Nations know, I know, Tejani Kabbah knows, Obasanjo knows, Eyadema knows. Everybody is aware of what is going on. So I have been hearing some things here that are very strange. They do not know what they are talking about. Everyone knows, counsel. Everyone.

Q. "President Taylor wishes to discuss with the Secretary-General this current crisis in Sierra Leone, his efforts at contributing towards ending it, as well as of Johnny Paul's travel. The President is apprehensive about moving ahead with arrangements for Johnny Paul Koroma's travel, in the light of the Security Council travel ban currently in force on Sierra Leoneans."

A. Yes.

Q. And then we see a contact number for you.

A. Uh-huh.

Q. So, Mr Taylor, did you make the telephone call, or did the Secretary-General make the telephone call?

A. The Secretary-General finally got in touch with me and we discussed the matter, and the arrangement for the Security Council, that committee - in fact, the lifting of the ban doesn't require going back to the council. There is a sanctions committee responsible, and the Secretary-General arranged the modalities. That same day - the same day we talked, we - by the - I think a day or two after my discussion with the Secretary-General we were able to move Johnny Paul Koroma into
Q. We will come to that in a second.

MR GRIFFITHS: But can I just conduct a little clean-up
operation here, please, Mr President. Firstly, can I ask that
this code cable, dated 6 August 1999, marked "urgent and
immediate" from Felix Downes-Thomas, be marked for identification
MFI-96, please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-96.

MR GRIFFITHS: Now, can I invite your Honours' and
everybody's attention behind divider 45 in order to clear
something up. Behind divider 45 you should have the identical
document we have just looked at. Yes? So what I suggest we do
is discard that so it doesn't cause later confusion.

Q. So you say that you managed to get, Mr Taylor, a response
from the Secretary-General the same day?

A. The same day, yes.

Q. Which enabled his movement?

A. Which enabled - by "his", the movement of Johnny Paul
Koroma, yes.

Q. Let's go to behind divider 46, please. Here we have
another outgoing code cable, don't we, Mr Taylor?

A. That is correct.

Q. And we see again it's marked "immediate", suggesting some
urgency, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. It is from Felix Downes-Thomas again, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. And it's to Miyet Prendergast - you explained who that was?

A. Uh-huh.
Q. And also coping Riza for the Secretary-General, whose name appears on the previous code cable we looked at, yes?
A. Yes.
Q. It's dated 7 August 1999; is that right?
A. That is correct.
Q. And the subject matter is "The arrival the Johnny Paul Koroma in Liberia"?
A. That is correct.
Q. "Further to my code cable to Riza for the Secretary-General dated 6 August", that's the previous day?
A. Uh-huh.
Q. "I wish to advise that President Taylor called me at 11 p.m. and requested that I convey the following to the Secretary-General:"
Johnny Paul Koroma arrived in Monrovia around 5.30 p.m. today, and arrangements were made for him to talk with the BBC and, among other things, he called for the unconditional release of those detained at Okra Hills."
Now, let us pause. Two things: Firstly, how had you managed to get the RUF to release him?
A. These negotiations went on for more than a week. They had come before and coming to that time. Foday Sankoh was involved in Lome. We were talking to Sam Bockarie on the other side. We told them that this was a major obstruction to the peace process and that they could not hold United States personnel - when I say United States, excuse me - United Nations personnel; they should release the people; and if the issue - if the issue was Johnny Paul Koroma, we would do everything to convince the RUF to release him outside of Sierra Leone. Because they were saying
that they would accept nothing short of Johnny Paul Koroma
getting totally out of that area. For them it was not just a
matter of release - I am talking about the West Side Boys now -
because I have heard things going on to - look, there is
conflict. I don't know how people were able to bunch up the SLA
and the RUF.

There was no love between these two organisations as far as
I can see; you understand me? There were problems, okay? There
were problems over many months, and just the mere fact that these
guys were brave enough to hold Johnny Paul Koroma meant that
there were problems. So they, the West Side Boys, said that they
were not going to accept any information where Johnny Paul Koroma
was released. They wanted him out of Sierra Leone. They wanted
to come and see him physically, and so we told the RUF that they
had a peace agreement now; Sankoh needed to come back to
Sierra Leone and they needed to start work; that this was not
helpful to the process and that they should release him, and they
consented.

Q. Now, there is a lot in there which I would like to unpack.

First of all, we note that the code cable from Felix
Downes-Thomas to the Secretary-General is dated - the first one
is dated 6 August. Now, the discussions which had been taking
place, Mr Taylor, had they preceded that date?
A. Yes.

Q. By how much?
A. Oh, I would say - this had been going on for maybe a week
of negotiations. I did not get to the Secretary-General to speak
to him about getting the acquiescence of the sanctions committee
until we had a deal. That's the whole point of talking to the -
I did not call him to say, "Well, guess what? I am negotiating here." No, no, no, no, no. When we get to the Secretary-General we have a deal, and it's only to get the immediate action on the part of the sanctions committee to move the men out as quickly as possible. Because there are UN personnel being held also, so they are anxious, okay? So it precedes this.

Q. Now, Mr Taylor, were you able to so swiftly obtain the release of Johnny Paul Koroma because you were in charge of the RUF?

A. No, no, no, no, no. I said - first of all, it takes about a week or more. But because of my position as - I am not speaking ever or dealing with the RUF ever as President of Liberia alone. No, no, no. If not, I would have nothing do with it. Nothing. And I don't want to veer off here.

Listen, my long life ambitions were never going to be thrown away, messing around with some rebel group in Sierra Leone. Listen, I had goals and desires throughout my life and I was not about to throw it away trying to control some group in Sierra Leone. No, no, no, counsel. No.

I am dealing as a member of Committee of Six, the principal person responsible for the Sierra Leone crisis. That's what how I am dealing.

Q. Mr Taylor, was there something surreptitious or underhand about this?

A. Nothing. Nothing. Everything is in the open.

Q. Why did you allow him to speak to the BBC if this was all hush-hush?

A. Well, you know, because it was not hush-hush, that's why we told him to speak. He did not come to Liberia in custody. He
was a free man. Everybody knows - by so speaking I mean the international community, the Secretary-General knows, West Africa knows, everybody knows. So there is no point in hiding him. So he had access to the BBC to speak his piece about what had been going on, the conditions and what were some of his concerns about this whole peace situation.

Q. Let's move on: “Appropriate radio facilities have now been made available by the Government of Liberia to Mr Koroma who is expected to use those facilities to communicate to his people tomorrow morning when he will repeat his call for unconditional release.”

Q. Is that true?

A. That is true.

Q. A small detail here, Mr Taylor. What were the appropriate radio facilities provided?

A. This is a long range radio to be able to call. Johnny Paul Koroma has not been seen or heard from these people for some time, the boys at Okra Hill. His own means of communicating with them, first of all they have to be assured, not by BBC reporting, they want to talk to him. So what we did was make available a long range radio. Maybe we should add, when Johnny Paul comes he doesn't come alone. He has a few of his bodyguards with him, he has radio operators. So this is internet to link Johnny Paul Koroma directly with the boys at Okra Hill to tell them, first of all that he is free, he's in Liberia and to give them these instructions that all of us wanted because even though he is released, he is now in Liberia on this day, but the UN people are still being held, okay. So we need contact.

Q. Where was this radio located?
A. The radio was located at where Johnny Paul Koroma was put up at the hotel. We installed a radio.

Q. Which hotel?

A. When he first came, he was he have put up at Hotel Africa.

Q. In?

A. In Monrovia. Just in Virginia just outside of Monrovia a little bit.

Q. I have good reason for asking about these details, Mr Taylor. Was he housed at the RUF guesthouse?

A. No, no, no, no. We did not put him up there.

Q. Why not?

A. Because they were not friends. Oh no, in fact Johnny Paul was a very angry man. Johnny Paul was being held against his will. He was a very angry man. He made that very clear to me.

Q. With whom?

A. With the RUF people, with Foday Sankoh, everybody. He was angry. He was very angry. Very angry.

Q. According to President Taylor, Mr Koroma's problems seem to be minor. Koroma contends that the Lome Peace Agreement makes a distinction between the RUF and the group which is of concern to him. This distinction, according to Mr Koroma, expressed itself by omission in the text of the Lome Peace Agreement of appropriate and explicit references to his group.

In this connection, President Taylor assured him that the facilitators at the Lome meeting did not intend to make any such distinction and 'RUF' as used in the text is meant to be inclusive, embracing, so to speak, Mr Koroma's group. He also informed Mr Koroma that the text of the Lome Peace Agreement will
not be rewritten or redrafted."

Pause. We have already gone through this to an extent, Mr Taylor, but I would like to revisit it in light of this paragraph here. Was there any reference to the AFRC in the Lome Peace Agreement?

A. Not directly. Not directly, no. And it was intentional because it would have meant negotiating with the AFRC on another term. So we just - we put "RUF" and we say that it included everybody.

Q. So when you're saying to Mr Koroma here that the "RUF" as used in the text is meant to be inclusive, were you telling Mr Koroma that the use of that phrase also included the AFRC members who he, Koroma, had led?

A. In a way, for this purpose, yes. But you can see I added a caveat. I said it's not going to be rewritten. We are trying to really - let's be honest here. We are playing with words here. I was really playing with words with Koroma because Koroma was saying we, the armed forces and AFRC, "We want this and they should have put it in this way". And I am saying to him, really playing around with words, "Oh no, this really means that it includes everything. You know, we didn't have to put RUF and AFRC, but, as it is written, it means everybody. But listen, we are not going to change this for you or anybody else. Forget it. There is no way ECOWAS it going to convene a new meeting to change this". So actually if you look at it, it's really playing with words and trying to soften the situation.

Q. Be a politician?

A. I am an economist, not a politician.

Q. Over the page, please:
President Taylor was not able to reach President Eyadema today. He intends to do so tomorrow when he will also talk to President Obasanjo to obtain the concurrence of both Presidents with regard to President Taylor's interpretation that the use of RUF in the text is meant to be inclusive, incorporating the category of persons of concern to Mr Koroma."

Why did you feel that was necessary?

A. Because we never do things in isolation. Never. You will be left out there and I - even though I was charged with a responsibility by ECOWAS, but I had to keep everybody informed, okay. Koroma's concern is, "What's going to happen to my people?" And I am trying to tell him, no, everybody is included. Now this kind of conversation will be repeated. So I have to now spread the word, and get the concurrence because don't let's forget now, who is Obasanjo now? Obasanjo takes over now as the new chairman. So it's important for --

Q. Chairman of what?

A. Of ECOWAS. Of ECOWAS. So it's important now to inform him, and the outgoing chairman who was instrumental in getting this agreement together, to get them on board, and they would help to spread the word and once we agreed that this was the method that we could use to appease Koroma and get his concerns allayed, I think this is what I am doing here. I can't do it alone.

Q. Yes:

"Johnny Paul Koroma has expressed a desire to travel to Lome to meet with Mr Foday Sankoh so as to establish that there is unity within the ranks."

Can we pause there. Now, as far as you are aware,
Mr Taylor, had there been prior contact with between Sankoh and Johnny Paul Koroma?

A. No, no. As far as I am aware I am not aware of that, no.

Q. For example - I want to explore that further. You appreciate, of course, that on 25 February 1997, when the AFRC took power through that coup, a request was sent out to the RUF to join them?

A. Yes.

Q. And you recall that a message was received from the then incarcerated Foday Sankoh in Nigeria that they should?

A. Yes.

Q. To your knowledge, following the communication of that order by Foday Sankoh, was there any communication between Koroma and him?

A. I really can't say. I have no knowledge. I really don't know. We got to hear about the radio - the recording that was played on the radio. I have no knowledge. I can't help.

Q. Now, Johnny Paul Koroma, what was he wanting to discuss with Foday Sankoh?

A. All the problems, he said, about - we didn't let him go though. But all of the problems, his incarceration, how the RUF boys behind there treated him, their disrespect to him. He wanted - and this anger in him, he felt that he wanted to meet with Sankoh to thrash it out. But we assured him - I assured him that Sankoh would be coming through and that could be taken care of in Monrovia. Instead of him going all the way to Lome, that he should wait in Monrovia.

This was just a way of holding him in Monrovia you know for Sankoh to come, because just to add a little bit, not to take too
much of the Court's time, we are sitting on pins. We want Sankoh
to get out of Lome and come and go on to Freetown. So we didn't
want to start a new set of discussions in Lome that would prolong
this process. So we all agreed the best thing was no, no, no,
you can't go. He's coming, so you wait here for him. Because
that would have been another reason for Sankoh to delay being
outside of Freetown and we thought - and by "we" I am still
referring to the committee thought that the fastest way of
getting this agreement working was to get Sankoh back into

Freetown.

Q. Mr Taylor, can I just push you a little further on that.
What reason was Sankoh giving you Heads of State as to why he
wasn't hot footing it back to Freetown in the wake of that
agreement on 7 July?

A. Well, he had said, and some of us agreed, in fact Eyadema
agreed, he was in prison all this time, he had nothing, before he
goes back to meet the boys he needs a little something. So what
Presidents Eyadema and Obasanjo were trying to do, I think they
did end up putting together a little envelope for him.

Q. What do you mean by a little envelope?

A. Some money. They made some money available to him, buying
little clothes and having things together. He had not seen his
family, getting them to him. There were a lot of little things.
And he had a delegation with him in Lome. So they decided that
there was good reason not to delay too long, but to find him some
money. And I think they did. Eyadema did give him some money.

Q. Hold on a second, Mr Taylor. We are now in August, a month
after the agreement.

A. Yes.
Q. You don’t need four months to do a bit of shopping in Lome.

So what was going on?

A. Well, to the best of our knowledge, these were some of the things - the man is a free man now and of course we are using some psychology to hurry him up. And as it goes, he still doesn’t come in August. He manages to go to a couple I think of other countries. He is assisted by President Eyadema in getting to these places with the hope that he can hurry up and get back, you know, to Freetown. So he travels out. But his biggest thing is that he wants to put his house in order and he is permitted to do so.

Q. Very well. Going back to this note: “President Taylor conveyed this to President Kabbah.” Why?

A. Well, before Johnny Paul Koroma came to Liberia, like I say, Kabbah knew and it’s a part of this exchange of information. Tejan Kabbah is not outside of the loop. As the elected President of Sierra Leone that is recognised, we feel at that particular point - surely I do - everything that is going on in Sierra Leone he is informed, he is a part of it and it is done with his acquiescence. Whether it had to do with moving Johnny Paul Koroma out, moving him in, or whatever, even the desire for Johnny Paul Koroma to travel, we felt that it would not be proper to move Johnny Paul Koroma from Liberia and send him to Lome without Kabbah knowing, because Kabbah is the President and we recognise him.

Q. “During the telephone conversation which the two Presidents had this evening, President Kabbah has no objection to Johnny Paul Koroma’s travel to Togo. President Taylor is making arrangements accordingly.”
So, hold on. So Kabbah was happy for Johnny Paul Koroma to go to Togo?

A. Well, I wouldn't quite describe it that way. Kabbah had no objections once it was in line of getting this process moving. I will put it that way.

Q. Did Johnny Paul Koroma in due course go to Lome?

A. We found sufficient reason to have him wait for Foday Sankoh in Monrovia.

Q. And just help us, so that we have an idea where we are going, for how long did he remain in Monrovia?

A. Up until October 2. Sankoh comes in September, there are all the meetings, I make peace between them, all of our colleagues are happy about it and eventually I put the two of them - along with Obasanjo, who helps, he sends a presidential plane to Monrovia, Sankoh and Johnny Paul Koroma are put on a Nigerian plane, Obasanjo sends money, $25,000, to me for them, they board a plane with the US ambassador, Sankoh and Johnny Paul Koroma, and on October 2 they leave Monrovia. I charter a second plane for their families and they fly into Freetown on or about October 2, 1999. So he was there up until that time.

MR GRIFFITHS: Now we will come to the next stage in events tomorrow, if that's convenient, Mr President, although can I ask that this document, code cable from Felix Downes-Thomas dated 7 August 1999 on the arrival of Johnny Paul Koroma in Liberia, be marked for identification MFI-97, please.

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-97.

MR GRIFFITHS: And would that be a convenient point, Mr President?

PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's a convenient time. We will
adjourn now until 9.30 tomorrow morning.

Again, Mr Taylor, I remind you that you are ordered not to speak about your evidence with any other person.

THE WITNESS: Thank you, your Honour.

PRESIDING JUDGE: We will adjourn now. Thank you.

[Whereupon the hearing adjourned at 4.28 p.m. to be reconvened on Thursday, 13 August 2009 at 9.30 a.m.]
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