

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**



PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office

as at:

Thursday, 5 December 2013

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
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Outreach and Public Affairs

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Exclusive

Thursday, 5 December 2013

Taylor Starts Sentence In British Jail

Former Liberian warlord and president, Charles Taylor, who was sentenced to 50 years for war crimes and crimes against humanity, has been moved from The Hague, where he had been since the start of his trial in 2007, to Her Majesty's Prison Frankland in Britain.

Frankland houses 800 of the most dangerous offenders in the prison system, including murderers, terrorists and paedophiles.

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Taylor Starts Sentence In British Jail

From front page

The 65-year-old former president lost his appeal in September over a catalogue of gruesome crimes committed by the Sierra Leonean rebels he aided and abetted during that country's bloody civil war.

The conflict claimed 120,000 lives and featured mutilations, drugged child soldiers and sex slaves.

In 2006, the British government agreed to jail Taylor in the UK in the event that he was convicted by the Special Court for

Sierra Leone (SCSL) at his trial.

The verdict in 2012 ruled that he was guilty of all 11 counts of "aiding and abetting" war crimes and crimes against humanity. Judges ruled that during his presidency from 1997 and 2003 and in exchange for "blood diamonds" mined by slave labour, Taylor provided the rebels with arms and ammunition.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Justice said it would not confirm the locations or individual prisoners.

Independent Observer
Thursday, 5 December 2013

PRESS RELEASE Freetown, Sierra Leone, 3 December 2013

Justice Philip Waki elected President of the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone

The Judges of the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone (RSCSL) have elected Justice Philip Nyamu Waki of Kenya as President of the Residual Special Court. The Judges also elected Justice Jon Kamanda of Sierra Leone as Vice President of the Court.

Justice Waki joined the Special Court in 2012 as an Alternate Appeals Judge for the Taylor appeal. Before joining the Special Court, Justice Waki served as a judge of the Kenya Court of Appeal in 2003, after having been a Judge of the High Court of Kenya for nine years. Prior to 1995, he was in private law practice in Kenya since he was called to the Bar in 1975. Justice Waki has worked actively for reform within the Kenyan judiciary. In 2008 he was named Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry into the Post-Election Violence in Kenya, also called the "Waki Commission," to look into the political violence committed during Kenya's 2007 elections. In 2008 the International Commission of Jurists (Kenya) conferred the "Jurist of the Year Award" upon Justice Waki. He has served as Vice President of the East African Judges and Magistrates Association, and in 2012 was appointed by the Director of UNEP as a member of the International Advisory Council on Environmental Justice.



Justice Jon Kamanda served as an Appeals Judge of the Special Court for Sierra Leone from 2007 to 2013. He was educated in Sierra Leone and in the UK. He trained as a Barrister at the Inns of Court School of Law in London, and was called to the Bar at the Middle Temple in 1975. From 1976-80 he worked as State Prosecutor in the Government Law Office, rising to the rank of Senior State Counsel. In 1980 he entered private practice in criminal law. Justice Kamanda has served as an Appeals Court Justice in the Sierra Leone judiciary since 2004, and is the Presiding Judge in criminal appeals. He has also served as a High Court Judge in the Civil Division. In 1982 he was elected to Parliament, and he has served as Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources and Minister of Health, and also as Managing Director of the National Diamond Mining Company (NDMC). Justice Kamanda previously served three terms as President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.



#END

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone. It is mandated to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996.

INFORMATION FOR MEDIA - NOT FOR ADVERTISING
Produced by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office
Special Court for Sierra Leone



Special Court for Sierra Leone

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From Page 5

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Special Court Closes Down

The activities of the Special Court in Sierra Leone have been formally closed down by His Excellency President Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma.

The Court which started operations in 2002 indicted and sentenced those who carried out the greatest responsibilities in the eleven years civil in Sierra Leone, including the former Liberian president, Charles Taylor.

At the special ceremony at State House, attended by the United Nations, ministers, diplomats, parliamentarians, national and international legal experts, the Head of State stated that the country was making history in International Humanitarian Law and celebrating the contribution of the Special Court to the rule of law throughout the world.

As a trail blazer and pace setter in international justice, he observed, the Special Court succeeded in

establishing peace and security in the sub-region and beyond.

Describing the partnership with the United Nations as achieving peace, justice and prosperity, he paid tribute to the UN system, the Judges, Registrar, Lawyers, staff, as well as the Sierra Leone judiciary.

Meanwhile, a Residual court has been established to sustain the legacies and other activities of the closed Special Court.

At the same time, President Koroma also received the symbolic golden key for the closing of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and warmly congratulated and received the sixteen standby judges of the residual court, for Sierra Leone and The Hague, in the Netherlands.

Sierra Leonean judge and current president of the Special Court, Justice Gelaga King, narrated the history, nature, challenges and



successes of the Special Court, which have all made positive contributions to International Humanitarian Law.

The State House ceremony, chaired by the Minister of Information and Communications, Hon.

Alhaji Alpha Khanu, was also addressed by the traditional ruler and parliamentarian from the Moyamba district, Paramount Chief Kavura.

Credit: State House Communications Unit

STATEMENT FOR THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE

**Mr. Vice-President
Our Lady the Chief Justice
Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares,
Under Secretary-General
for Legal Affairs,
Present and Past Presidents
and Honourable Judges and
Members of the
Special Court,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

Today, Sierra Leone is making another significant history in international humanitarian law. We became the first country to establish an independent hybrid court to bring to justice persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law and national criminal law, with the seat of the court located within the territory of the country where the alleged crimes were committed. Now we are at the closing ceremony of this Special Court, but we are putting in place a residual mechanism in recognition of the fact that justice is a continuing commitment.

This closing ceremony reiterates our commitment to fight impunity, and it also underscores our respect for the promotion of the rule of law and preservation of peace and stability. In Sierra Leone today, we aspire to sustain our country's growth rates, amongst the highest in the world, and become a middle-income nation in 22 years. But we know that trade, investment, innovation and economic development all benefit from a stable, predictable and rule-based business climate. The economy cannot thrive in a society where human rights are violated, corruption is widespread and government revenues are misused. Sustainable prosperity depends on a robust, legitimate and reliable legal order. We still face challenges, but the Special Court has been a great contributor to the idea and practice of the rule of law in

Sierra Leone.

As we rejoice the milestones of this unique institution, and as we applaud the excellent cooperation between the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations, we are keenly aware of the extraordinary circumstances that pushed us to pursue this uncharted course in the dispensation of justice. At no time in the history of Sierra Leone have we experienced horrific brutality against innocent civilians as in the 1990s. Those horrendous acts branded and tarnished the image of our nation. But the 1990s in Sierra Leone were also moments of resilience, of bravery, and of faith by the overwhelming majority of Sierra Leoneans. It was that narrative of the efforts for peace, justice and prosperity that established the partnership for the Special Court. The narrative of the Special Court is thus not only a story about horrific crimes, it is also, and more importantly a narrative of the better values of hope, justice, resilience, peace, and the supremacy of law.

The Special Court was a partnership for the assertion of the better ideals of our common humanity. It was an acknowledgement of the intrinsic link between reconciliation and justice. The Government of Sierra Leone decided to work in partnership with the United Nations Security Council for the establishment of the Special court shortly after the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Sierra Leone is proud to be a pioneer that put into practice the two transitional justice mechanisms. We took this unfamiliar path due to our genuine desire to consolidate peace and equally seek justice for victims. Undoubtedly the two mechanisms boded well for the country.

We know all was not smooth sailing for the Special Court, the court had its own challenges,

and there were many valid criticisms against it. But though to be less than perfect is all too human, the Special Court was a demonstration of our will to create a more perfect system of justice, one that is better than what obtained before it came into existence. It is against this backdrop that we consider the Special Court a success, a trailblazer, a pacesetter in international humanitarian law. The Special Court has made unprecedented contributions to gender justice and laid the foundation in international criminal jurisprudence for acts of forced marriage, sexual violence, sexual slavery and the recruitment and use of child soldiers during the conflict as punishable. It has also successfully established that wanton attacks on United Nations peacekeepers are proscribed and perpetrators liable to prosecution.

Furthermore, the Special Court's jurisprudence underscores the importance of understanding gender-related traumas from the point of view of those who experienced them, and their suffering within local cultural contexts. It also made critical contribution to national reconciliation efforts and to the restoration and maintenance of international peace and security in the sub-region.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the violent conflict in Sierra Leone in the 1990s was an aggressive war that was aided and abetted by a network of international dealers of illegal diamonds and illegal arms that took advantage of the absence of an international legal order prohibiting the illegal transfer of arms and ammunition. In this regard, my government applauds the efforts of the international community that culminated in the recent adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty.

Finally, let me, on behalf my People and Government of

Sierra Leone, and in my own name, take this opportunity to express sincere thanks and appreciation to the Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, which on the instructions of the Security Council calibrated the plan for the creation of an independent hybrid ad hoc court to bring to justice those persons who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations to international humanitarian law and Sierra Leone laws during the decade-old armed conflict. We also applaud our development partners, international non-state actors and local NGOs. I must also recognize the role of the Judges, the Registrar and staff of the Court, the Judiciary of Sierra Leone, the Office of the Honourable Attorney-General and Minister of Justice and all Government officials who in diverse ways made significant contributions, to the success of this historic institution. The members of the Management Committee also deserve sincere thanks and gratitude of the Government and people of Sierra Leone for their relentless support and oversight function. It is the combined efforts of this network of stakeholders that will make the Court go down in history not only as the first modern tribunal to achieve its mandate but also for its transition to a residual court that will address the legal obligations of the Special Court.

I am delighted to see the representatives of all these excellent agencies present at this ceremony. We look forward to this constructive network in managing the affairs of the residual court; in pushing forward the ideals of justice and reconciliation; and in asserting our common aspirations for peace, development and prosperity.

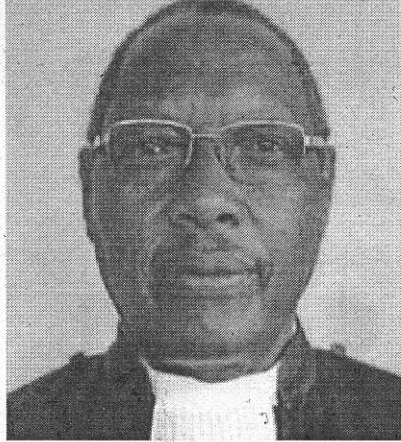
I thank you for your attention.

Justice Philip Waki Elected President of the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone

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Government of Sierra Leone Hosts Formal Closing Ceremony for the Special Court



The Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations - the two parties which created the Special Court eleven years ago - formally closed the Special Court at a ceremony late Monday held at State House in Freetown and hosted by the President of Sierra Leone, H.E. Ernest Bai Koroma.

In a symbolic handover, uniformed Special Court security officers formally handed over the Special Court's flag to a contingent of the Sierra Leone Police in the presence of President Ernest Bai Koroma, and Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, who represented the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Mr. de Serpa Soares hailed the closing of the Special Court as "very much a landmark, not only for the Special Court, but also for international criminal justice in general."

"The Special Court is the first of the United Nations and United Nations-assisted tribunals to complete its mandate and to fully hand over its rights and responsibilities to its successor residual institution," he said.

Mr. de Serpa Soares noted the Court's jurisprudence, especially with regard to its first-ever convictions for the use of child soldiers, and of forced marriage as a crime against humanity. He also pointed to the Court's contributions to international jurisprudence on aiding and abetting international crimes. "On all of these levels, I very much believe that the work of the Special Court has the strength to last and will readily stand the test of time," he said.

Mr. de Serpa Soares said that the Special Court's legacy would benefit both national courts in the region and around the world in dealing with these issues. "It is no understatement to say that the body of international criminal law as a whole is substantially richer for the deep vein of jurisprudence in all these areas that the Court had rendered," he said.

Mr. de Serpa Soares paid tribute to the witnesses who, he said, stepped forward and allowed the Court "to inscribe their experiences in the history of this country."

"In the most fundamental sense, this Court is their court," he said. "Its success validates their accounting of the most horrendous crimes known to humanity. I salute their courage and their conviction in speaking out, in order that justice could be done."

President Koroma said that the closing ceremony "reiterates our commitment to fight impunity, and it also underscores our respect for the promotion of the rule of law and preservation of peace and stability."

The President recalled the "horrific brutality against innocent civilians" during Sierra Leone's civil war in the 1990s which brought about the creation of the Special Court, but also of the "moments of resilience, of bravery, and of faith by the overwhelming majority of Sierra Leoneans."

"The narrative of the Special Court is thus not only a story about horrific crimes, it is also, and more importantly, a narrative of the better values of hope, justice, resilience, peace, and the supremacy of law," he said.

President Koroma noted the Special Court had made "unprecedented contributions to gender justice" and laid the foundation in international criminal jurisprudence in the prosecution for acts of forced marriage, sexual violence, sexual slavery, the recruitment and use of child soldiers, and attacks against UN peacekeepers.

The President hailed all of those who "in diverse ways made significant contributions to the success of this historic institution."

"It is the combined efforts of this network of stakeholders that will make the Court go down in history not only as the first modern tribunal to achieve its mandate, but also for its transition to a residual court that will address the legal obligations of the Special Court."

BBC Focus on Africa
Wednesday, 4 December 2013

Special Court Wraps Up Operations in Sierra Leone

By Victor Sylver

The Special Court for Sierra Leone has now wrapped up its operations in the country after more than a decade during which it tried those alleged responsible for massive human rights violations. The court convicted among others top operatives of the Foday Sankoh Revolutionary United Front, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council of Johnny Paul Koroma, and former Liberian head of state Charles Taylor. A new court is now in place, called the Residual Special Court of Sierra Leone.

The Economist

Wednesday, 4 December 2013

Final Gavel

By T.T. | FREETOWN

ELEVEN years after the end of Sierra Leone's civil war, the special tribunal set up to pursue the worst of the perpetrators has closed. It will be replaced by a residual court tasked with overseeing the protection of witnesses as well as any applications for the early release of convicts.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone, which launched its first indictments in 2003, will be best remembered most of all for the trial and successful conviction of Charles Taylor, the former Liberian president and warlord. Sentenced to 50 years in prison for aiding and abetting what the presiding judge termed "some of the most heinous and brutal crimes recorded in human history", he lost his appeal in late September and is starting his sentence in the UK. He was the first head of state to be convicted of war crimes by an international tribunal since the Nuremberg trials of former Nazi leaders.

At the closing ceremony in the capital, Freetown, Sierra Leone's president, Ernest Bai Koroma, described the court as a "trail-blazer in international criminal law". It achieved the first ever convictions by any such tribunal for the use of child soldiers, attacks against UN peacekeepers and forced marriage as a crime against humanity--legal precedents that have shaped the work of subsequent tribunals.

With Mr Koroma brandishing a giant ceremonial key to signal the handover of the court, whose premises will now house Sierra Leone's supreme court, Alpha Kanu, the information minister, announced "the end of impunity in Sierra Leone".

This may be a little far-fetched. The court tried only a handful of "those who bear the greatest responsibility" for the atrocities committed, while all others enjoyed an amnesty. It was also hoped that the court would help to rebuild the country's shattered judicial system, but it remains wracked by delays and shortfalls.

Both the court and the concurrent Truth and Reconciliation Commission have faced questions from anthropologists over their cultural relevance in a country where many pushed for a "forgive and forget" approach. Reactions to Mr Taylor's conviction last year were muted in the capital. Some have argued that the money spent by the court may have been better used to rebuild Sierra Leone, which remains one of the world's least developed countries.

The Star (Kenya)

Wednesday, 4 December 2013

Justice Waki elected President of Special Court in Sierra Leone

Judges of the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone yesterday elected Kenya's Justice Philip Waki as President of the Residual Special Court.

Justice Waki joined the Special Court in 2012 as an Alternate Appeals Judge, prior to that he served as a judge in the Kenya Court of Appeal after having been a judge for the High Court for 9 years.

As Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry of the Post-Election Violence, well known as the 'Waki Commission' in 2008, he looked in to the political violence committed during the 2007 elections. His findings were later published a document known as the "Waki Report" In the same year conferred the Jurist of the Year Award by the International Commission of Jurists.



The United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone jointly established the Special Court to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities. The Judges also elected Justice Jon Kamanda of Sierra Leone as Vice President of the Court.

Sudan News Agency
Wednesday, 4 December 2013

Desalegn Affirms Firm Position of Africans Against International Criminal Court

Khartoum — The Ethiopian Prime Minister and Chairman of the African Union, Haile-Mariam Desalegn, has affirmed the firm stand of the Africans against the so-called International Criminal Court.

At a joint press conference he held with the President of the Republic, Field Marshal Omer Al-Bashir, at the Friendship Hall Wednesday evening, the Ethiopian Prime Minister announced that the General Council of the African Union will meet before the coming African summit in next January to adopt a stance based on outcome of the coming meeting of the Security Council in this connection.

He said that the African countries will adopt a clear-cut position and will consider its coming step depending on the reaction of the UN Security Council to the proposals of the African committee, set by the African Union, for communication with the International Criminal Court and the Security Council.

The Ethiopian Prime Minister said that African is speaking in one language and with one tongue concerning the issue of the International Criminal Court.

Huffington Post

Wednesday, 4 December 2013

Opinion

Are Heads of State the Real Victims in Africa?

By Diana Jenkins

The current President and Vice President of Kenya are being tried by the International Criminal Court (ICC) on charges of organizing post-2007 election violence that killed more than a thousand, including a group of women and children who were burned to death huddling together in a church in Kiambaa that was intentionally set on fire. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the pair is using their considerable political power to fight back against the ICC and the possibility of going to jail for crimes against humanity. Kenya, under their direction, has been leading the attack in the African Union against the Statute of Rome -- a treaty signed by 122 countries around the world which established the ICC. In the last few months, the animosity against international justice as delivered by the ICC has risen to a fever pitch.

The African Union, led by Kenya, met in early October to discuss withdrawing en masse from the Statute of Rome. When that effort failed, Kenya got the African Union to urge the UN Security Council to intervene for the benefit of heads of state accused of war crimes. The UN Security Council has declined to do so. Now Kenya is arguing before the Assembly of States Parties -- the group of nation states which signed the Rome Statute and exercise control over the Court -- that the Rome Statute should be amended to shield sitting heads of state from trial at the ICC.

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta's main argument against the ICC is that it engages in selective prosecution -- that all eight of the conflicts currently being scrutinized by the ICC are within Africa. But perhaps that claim requires closer examination. Of the eight situations, the ICC Prosecutors used their discretion to open investigations in only one -- that of Kenya. The other seven cases were either referred to the ICC by the Security Council or by the involved nation itself. Furthermore, the ICC is bound by the Statute of Rome and has limited jurisdiction. It can't go after crimes committed by those who haven't signed the treaty, including China, Syria, and Russia. While universal criminal justice is a goal for the future, there's very little argument that fugitives like Omar al-Bashir or Joseph Kony or the others on the ICC Prosecutor's arrest list shouldn't be there.

The ICC's vocal opponents point fingers at the organization -- "The ICC is racist," they say. "It's on an African witch hunt; it's the new face of Western Colonialism." All their outrage seems to be focused on the national and racial identities of the powerful men accused -- and none focused on the hideous crimes these men are accused of committing against powerless victims. Why aren't we hearing more voices in support of the African victims of these atrocities? Kenyatta has yet to be proved guilty of the charges he faces at the ICC. But who can question the seriousness of the events which led to those charges -- murder, rape, forced deportation, and other crimes against humanity against thousands of people in villages that supported his political opponents? Aren't those victims entitled to a measure of justice?

This is not the first time in history that powerful men cried "racism" when charged with war crimes. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) was accused of racism by the Serbs after its generals were charged with genocide for the horrors committed on the Bosnian civilian population. "Racism" seems to be a preferred emotional claim to try to attract sympathy against an international institution. But shouldn't that sympathy be reserved for the victims of these crimes?

International criminal justice tries not to be diverted by the politics of nations. When the worst of the worst are at large, their victims are not free to make their voices heard. The claims of the powerful that they are the victims of the ICC ring hollow. The real victims are the millions who have been savaged by a handful of villains. Those victims have suffered through the worst that modern humanity has witnessed. The ICC steps in when a state has no means to tackle the grievous crimes committed by those in power. The people of Darfur, Uganda, DRC, Kenya -- which of these aren't deserving of the ICC's help? Shouldn't our sympathy go to those victimized by these crimes rather than the powerful men accused of perpetrating them?

Powerful men create news. When Kenyatta goes before the African Union and urges countries to withdraw en masse from the ICC, that's news. The news sets the agenda for the discussion that follows -- the ICC's attention on situations in Africa; the unfairness of requiring sitting heads of state to face prosecution in the ICC. Maybe the victims were mentioned in the news when their village was first overrun, and their people were murdered or raped. But the victims have no power to set the agenda. Those who are still alive get to stand by and watch the world's discussion turn to the unfairness of prosecuting the powerful. Let's not let the political manipulations of powerful defendants distract us from the ICC's noble purpose of seeking justice for the real victims of atrocities.

I'm a survivor of war and have first hand experience of what it means to be a victim of mass atrocities. Being a victim made me feel powerless and pushed to the brink. But when powerful men who terrorized me and my family were finally brought to justice, it meant a lot. Justice is not revenge. Beyond punishing the guilty, justice under the law gives back to the victims a part of their soul previously crushed by war. Justice gives voice to the powerless. Justice forever writes into human history our cries in the night.