



Case No. SCSL-2003-01-T

THE PROSECUTOR OF
THE SPECIAL COURT
V.
CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR

TUESDAY, 18 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 William Romans
Mr Tom Dannenbaum

For the Registry:

Ms Rachel Irura
Mr Benedict Williams

For the Prosecution:

Ms Brenda J Hollis
Mr Mohamed A Bangura
Ms Maja Dimitrova

For the accused Charles Ghankay
Taylor:

Mr Courtenay Griffiths QC
Mr Morris Anyah
Mr Terry Munyard
Ms Fatiah Balfas

1 Tuesday, 18 August 2009

2 [Open session]

3 [The accused present]

4 [Upon commencing at 9.30 a.m.]

09:29:50 5 PRESIDING JUDGE: Good morning. We'll take appearances,
6 please.

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

09:30:02 10 PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you, Ms Hollis. Yes, Mr Griffiths.

11 MR GRIFFITHS: Good morning, Mr President, your Honours,
12 counsel opposite. For the Defence today, myself Courtenay
13 Griffiths, with me Mr Morris Anyah, Mr Terry Munyard, and we're
14 joined today by Ms Fatiah Balfas who has been with us before.

09:30:27 15 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Taylor, just before you answer any
16 further questions I'll remind you that you're bound by your
17 undertaking to tell the truth.

18 DANKPANNAH DR CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR:

19 [On former affirmation]

20 EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR GRIFFITHS:

21 Q. Mr Taylor, yesterday when we adjourned I was asking you
22 about whether there had been any recurrence about these
23 accusations and counter-accusations about invasions of
24 Sierra Leone and Liberia. Do you recall that?

09:30:58 25 A. Yes, I do.

26 Q. Now, we're now still in the first quarter of 2000 and at or
27 about this time was there any recurrence of that?

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. What do you recall about that?

1 A. Well, we had a letter from President Kabbah really that was
2 sent - I mean in fact a press release that was done by President
3 Kabbah regarding what he saw as continuing problems with the
4 situation.

09:31:52 5 Q. So who was complaining about whom?

6 A. Kabbah was complaining that they were still getting reports
7 of my so-called involvement in Sierra Leone.

8 Q. Now, was there any counter-accusation being made by you?

9 A. Oh, yes. We also countered that it was not true and that
09:32:12 10 in fact we were suspecting that Liberians were gathering also to
11 stage attacks against us.

12 Q. And was this a matter of concern to you?

13 A. Of course, yes, it was a matter of grave concern to me.

14 Q. And is it a matter which you raised with the United Nations
09:32:36 15 in any way?

16 A. Yes, we did.

17 Q. With whom?

18 A. With the special representative. We raised it with him and
19 reported that we saw this as a grave problem, that this matter
09:32:55 20 seemed not to be going away.

21 Q. Could the witness please be shown in binder 1 of 4 for week
22 33, the document behind divider 40, please. Have you seen this
23 document before, Mr Taylor?

24 A. Yes. This is a document from Thomas that I saw, yes. It
09:33:57 25 deals with even a side bar meeting that Kabbah and myself even
26 subsequently had. Yes, I've seen this.

27 Q. Subsequently had where?

28 A. While we were in Cairo.

29 Q. In Cairo for what?

1 A. We were at a Heads of State meeting in Cairo and we talked
2 about the problems and I reassured him.

3 Q. Which meeting was that of?

09:34:36

4 A. It could have been an AU meeting in Cairo where just on a
5 side bar he and I talked about this and I told him that if he had
6 any concerns, his ambassador could be invited to the so-called
7 training sites and whatnot.

09:35:04

8 Q. Now let's have a look at this document, shall we. We see
9 that it follows the format to which we've now become used. It's
10 a code cable from Mr Downes-Thomas to Prendergast at the United
11 Nations and it's dated 6 April 2000. Is that correct, Mr Taylor?

12 A. That is correct.

13 Q. Now, the heading is, "UNAMSIL, Emergency Security Meeting."

14 A. Yes.

09:35:33

15 Q. "Thank you for your code of 4 April 2000 on the subject
16 above to which you attached a note of 31 March 2000 from UNAMSIL
17 regarding an investigation into a planned cross-border attack
18 from Sierra Leone on Liberia.

19 For UNOL the story was not new."

09:35:59

20 Pausing there, Mr Taylor. As we earlier observed, such
21 allegations were certainly not new, were they?

22 A. No, they were not.

09:36:24

23 Q. "We conveyed to headquarters on 18 November 1998 and on 20
24 December 1998 that the Government of Liberia had indeed advised
25 that Liberians were being trained at Zimmi (Sierra Leone). What
26 is novel, however, is the related confirmation by ECOMOG."

27 What does that mean?

28 A. Well, it simply means that ECOMOG agreed that this training
29 was going on in Zimmi.

1 Q. "The Government of Liberia's reaction to the report has
2 been measured and deliberately subdued. I've been reliably
3 informed that before his departure to Cairo on Sunday, 2 April
4 2000, President Taylor had knowledge of some of the matters which
09:37:09 5 the report has touched upon. He, however, advised that this
6 matter should be addressed without fanfare but coolly and
7 diplomatically."

8 Why?

9 A. Well, we did not just want to rush. We had the
09:37:28 10 information, it had been confirmed and there was no point in
11 making a whole lot of noise about it. I knew that we were
12 meeting. In fact my recollection is that I think this was France
13 Afrique summit in Cairo to be exact - I stand corrected on this
14 one - and not an OAU meeting. It was a France Afrique summit and
09:37:57 15 I knew I was going to meet with President Kabbah there so I
16 decided we should not go to the meeting throwing blows, that we
17 could handle it very carefully and while there I would discuss it
18 with him and maybe some of our other colleagues and bring it
19 under control. So I urged that we handle it diplomatically
09:38:17 20 without making a lot of noise and press reports and all that kind
21 of stuff.

22 Q. "Consequently, the Government of Liberia refrained from
23 reacting to the report, although the BBC's Focus on Africa had
24 aired stories on this issue on 4 April which were readily carried
09:38:36 25 by the major newspapers in Monrovia the next day.

26 It was not until late yesterday afternoon that the
27 government's position on the matter was expressed by President
28 Taylor at a welcoming ceremony held at the Executive Mansion. He
29 revealed that while in Cairo, he had extensive talks with

1 President Tejan Kabbah on matters relating to the peace and
2 security of the Mano River Union states and on the measures the
3 Sierra Leonean government had taken to foil an attempt to attack
4 Liberia."

09:39:17 5 Pause. What measures had been taken by the Sierra Leonean
6 government?

7 A. Well, what Kabbah had said to me in Cairo was that he too
8 had gotten this report and he had ordered that the people
9 involved be dispersed and some of them were arrested and I can
09:39:36 10 rest assured. So I'm just quoting what he told me, that he had
11 taken steps to resolve the problem.

12 Q. "In that regard he stressed that he thanked President
13 Kabbah for the steps he had taken against those Liberians in
14 Sierra Leone who were bent on destabilising Liberia. He assured
09:39:56 15 President Kabbah that the diabolical lies circulating within
16 certain intelligence circles alleging that the Government of
17 Liberia was training Sierra Leoneans were baseless."

18 Which intelligence sources are we talking about here
19 Mr Taylor?

09:40:15 20 A. Reports, they come in. They were telling Kabbah that I was
21 training people to fight him. They were coming to me, telling me
22 that Kabbah was training people to fight me, so they just keep
23 heads knocking. That's what they were doing. So I just told him
24 - after we met in Cairo, he said, "Listen, my brother, it is not
09:40:35 25 true. We heard of this report. We sent security to the area.
26 We investigated, dispersed the Liberians in the area." I told
27 him too that I had no problems with his ambassador in Monrovia
28 going to visit these alleged areas where they say that we were
29 training people. He agreed. So we just handled it amicably,

1 where we just believed in each other and put it behind us.

2 Q. Now, it continues:

3 "He further assured his counterpart that everything would
4 be done to secure peace and security in the Mano River area. He
09:41:21 5 then articulated the Government of Liberia's position as follows:
6 Emphasising that the allegations made within certain intelligence
7 circles could have been a ploy to justify their schemes relating
8 to the activities of Liberian dissidents in Sierra Leone, the
9 President announced that his country would never harbour any
09:41:45 10 dissident bent on destabilising any of the neighbouring
11 countries. He indicated that the Sierra Leonean ambassador to
12 Liberia would be invited to visit the country's military training
13 camp to assure himself of the fact that there was no Sierra
14 Leoneans being trained at the base."

09:42:09 15 But because there for a moment, Mr Taylor. Do you think
16 there was room here for a degree of misunderstanding to the
17 extent that there were some Sierra Leoneans being trained in
18 Liberia at the time, weren't there?

19 A. Well, I can say technically no. There were Liberians being
09:42:30 20 trained. Those several Sierra Leoneans that came with
21 Sam Bockarie were no longer Sierra Leoneans, they were Liberian
22 citizens, and they were so identified in that by getting there -
23 they had, from their intelligence sources, the individuals that
24 they were looking for. It would be very simple to meet all of
09:42:50 25 the - those former Sierra Leoneans that had come to Liberia. It
26 was simple to meet with them. So, technically, I would say no.

27 Q. But, Mr Taylor, it's a question of perception, is it not?
28 If you were in Kabbah's shoes and you knew that hundreds of
29 former RUF combatants had been recruited into the ATU, wouldn't

1 that be a matter of concern?

2 A. Well, of course, yes, to an extent, yes, but there was a
3 lot of transparency here. There's something funny that, you
4 know, for the outside world, they don't understand these kinds of
09:43:28 5 things. Look, the very Sierra Leoneans - or a lot of them,
6 before they got their citizenship, that came with Sam Bockarie to
7 Liberia in December of 1999 were very good friends with the
8 embassy people. It's very difficult to bring our regions that
9 like you look at other parts of the world. Okay?

09:43:51 10 The very Sam Bockarie that was in Liberia, who says that he
11 would not meet and speak to the Sierra Leonean ambassador or
12 members of the embassy? There was - you know, you hear it and
13 you think that there is war going - people don't behave that way.
14 Sam Bockarie was in Liberia for that time. He would talk to
09:44:11 15 Sierra Leonean officials. In fact, the very guesthouse of the
16 RUF, Sierra Leonean officials assigned at the embassy visited
17 there. These people were not trying to kill each other on the
18 streets of Monrovia.

19 So, from my standpoint, there was nothing being hidden.
09:44:31 20 The Government of Sierra Leone knew that Sierra Leoneans were
21 there. They - we did a complete accounting. Remember I had
22 mentioned to this Court that the first 30 or so days we were
23 dealing with immigration activities, identification processes.
24 Everybody knew who came. We did not hide the number of people
09:44:49 25 that came with Sam Bockarie. No, no, no, no, no.

26 Everybody knew that wanted to know. It was published in
27 newspapers - published them. So by inviting the ambassador to
28 the base, he would see the people and they would be able to
29 identify. The ambassador doesn't come alone. The ambassador

1 comes with intelligence people, let there be no mistake, no -
2 there's nothing I'm going to teach anybody here about. All
3 embassies have intelligence people. They may call them
4 vice-counsel or they may call them political officer. These are
09:45:24 5 all spies. Every embassy, everybody - whether you are some
6 officer at the embassy - is an intelligence officer. He is not
7 covered by that title, but everyone have spies at the embassy.
8 They collect intelligence. And so when the ambassador comes, he
9 doesn't come alone. He comes with people. There may be press
09:45:42 10 attache. Press attache is your title, but you could be a
11 military officer.

12 So it's very difficult to deceive people, but the exposure
13 and the transparency by inviting them to these areas would give
14 an assurance, at least, that there is transparency and the desire
09:46:01 15 to doing good. This is the whole purpose.

16 Q. Very well.

17 "Referring to his government's preferred course of action
18 in dealing with the issue, the President stressed that the
19 Government of Liberia will take no extra measures in the
09:46:21 20 deployment of troop along the border with Sierra Leone and that
21 every aspect of the relationship between the two countries will
22 be handled within the context of the Mano River Union. In this
23 regard, he said that the upcoming Mano River Union summit to be
24 held in Conakry on 7-8 May would offer ample opportunity to
09:46:44 25 pursue such delicate matters.

26 He stated that he will dispatch a high level delegation to
27 Freetown to address these and related matters.

28 He also took the opportunity to reiterate his willingness
29 to allow the United Nations to monitor the Sierra Leone-Liberia

1 border and to make the facilities of the Robert International
2 Airport available to the UN for its operations in Sierra Leone.
3 Again, this request for the monitoring of the border is not
4 novel. You may wish to recall that the Government of Liberia
09:47:22 5 renewed this request in its letter of 6 January 1999 to the then
6 President of the Security Council, Ambassador Celso L Amorim, a
7 copy of which we sent to headquarters by way of our code of the
8 same date.

9 Needless to say, we welcome both the swift measures taken
09:47:48 10 by ECOMOG and the Sierra Leonean government on this sensitive
11 matter, as well as the considered response of the Government of
12 Liberia to the reports regarding the activities of dissident
13 Liberians in Sierra Leone. These developments will auger well
14 for the success of the long awaited summit of the Mano River
09:48:10 15 Union to be held in Conakry and are bound to have a ripple effect
16 on Liberia-Guinea relations.

17 In a related development, you may wish to know that The
18 Inquirer newspaper, which is currently undertaking its own
19 investigation into the matter, has today published some findings
09:48:27 20 as follows:

21 One General Olpo Beennie of the defunct Alhaji Kromah's
22 ULIMO-K, and another identified as 'Jungle Fire', also of the
23 ULIMO-K, as well as General Amos Lincoln of the defunct Roosevelt
24 Johnson's ULIMO-J, are said to be amongst those arrested in the
09:48:55 25 Sierra Leonean town of Gendema."

26 Pause. We've encountered that name, Amos Lincoln, before,
27 have we not?

28 A. Yes, we have.

29 Q. Mention had been made of a complaint about his presence in

1 Sierra Leone, wasn't there?

2 A. Yes. This is that same Lincoln that was amongst the group
3 at the embassy from that attack in Monrovia, yes.

09:49:24

4 Q. And this General Olpo Beennie, is that someone you are
5 aware of?

6 A. No, I didn't know him.

7 Q. What about Jungle Fire?

8 A. I've heard the name - I had heard the name Jungle Fire,
9 yes.

09:49:41

10 Q. "A Lieutenant General Mohammed L Fofana of the defunct
11 ULIMO-K was positioned to effect the forcible release of
12 prisoners from the central prison in Monrovia.

09:50:09

13 Individuals identified as Philip Kamara (Sierra Leone),
14 Jeketaye Quanteh (Guinea) and Ma Musu Saysay (Cote d'Ivoire) are
15 said to be serving as contact persons.

16 That another group of dissidents from the Guinean side are
17 poised to launch an attack on Liberia at various entry points,
18 including the Loguato border in Nimba County.

09:50:32

19 Other mapped points of entry by the dissidents include
20 Gbadin (Nimba County), Mano River Kongo (Grand Cape Mount
21 County), Po River and (Montserrado County).

22 Finally, be assured that we have taken due note of your
23 observations relating to the exchange of information between UNOL
24 and UNAMSIL."

09:50:53

25 Pausing there. Mr Taylor, the newspaper report which the
26 writer refers to mentions a number of people identified as once
27 having been part of the ULIMO movement. Is that correct?

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. And was your government aware that such individuals were

1 apparently seeking to create further difficulties in Liberia
2 dissident activity? Were you aware of this?

3 A. Yes. Don't let's forget that this is an ongoing situation,
4 so we are getting a lot of reports. Remember, we had already
09:51:41 5 encountered - we've had two attacks. We had one in April; we had
6 one in August. So we were listening out, and we knew that these
7 attacks were coming from former ULIMO-J and K individuals that
8 had changed their names. Some of them were calling themselves -
9 they came in as Mosquito Spray. They come in as LURD. I was not
09:52:09 10 familiar with any of the - those ULIMO generals that did not
11 join us. We had heard of their names, but we were very aware
12 that people were preparing to attack at these levels.

13 Now, at the points mentioned here, these are strategic
14 points where you just read. Gbadin in Nimba County is a very
09:52:37 15 strategic - it is not a normal border entry point into Liberia,
16 but it joins Guinea at a very hilly, semi-mountainous area that
17 people could infiltrate into Liberia and probably be in that
18 region for a long time, maybe a year or more, and you wouldn't
19 even know. This is the - Nimba County is a section of the
09:53:02 20 country that you find mountains where we do iron ore mining and
21 that borders Guinea. So hearing of Gbadin, this is a very
22 strategic point.

23 When you talk about Mano River Kongo, in evidence led here,
24 that question came up about the possibility of there being
09:53:26 25 through-roads from Bomi Hills going into the forest area that
26 this witness talked about. And I did tell the Court that the
27 area called Kongo, there was a real link from Bomi Hills there,
28 but there was no exact train road. This is an old mining area
29 which is also fertile ground for people to infiltrate. That's

1 the border now with Sierra Leone, and this is also a forest area.

2 So Loguato was a little more difficult. This word has come
3 up before in the evidence before this Court. Loguato is that
4 section of the border with La Cote d'Ivoire that comes across
09:54:10 5 from an area in La Cote d'Ivoire called Binta [phon]. That is on
6 the record here, where it was stated that upon the return of
7 Sam Bockarie and his major force, that they tried to come through
8 Binta. So these are all strategic --

9 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Taylor, I'll interrupt you there.

09:54:32 10 Apparently the LiveNote is not working.

11 Do you have the same trouble?

12 MR GRIFFITHS: Mine has suddenly stopped now as well.

13 MS IRURA: Your Honour, there was a brief Internet
14 interruption and now the internet is working again, hence the
09:55:09 15 LiveNote - the lack of connectivity for some seconds, but it
16 should be working again.

17 MR GRIFFITHS: Mine seems to be reconnected.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes. Please go ahead, Mr Griffiths.

19 MR GRIFFITHS:

09:55:49 20 Q. What were you saying, Mr Taylor, when, unfortunately, we
21 had to stop?

22 A. Okay. I was just trying to say that the last point of
23 Loguato is also strategic and so yes, in direct answer to your
24 question we were aware of this information. We received the
09:56:08 25 information, and I'm using the word information more than
26 intelligence because for it to become intelligence you have to
27 check it and recheck and make sure it is true, so there is a big
28 difference between information and intelligence. But we had this
29 information of these possible entry points. Because they were

1 strategic we paid strict attention to it and tried to
2 double-check. But we were aware of this attempt on the part of
3 these former ULIMO people to destabilise the country. In fact
4 they had carried out two attacks already.

09:56:45 5 Q. Now, just start looking at that in a bit more detail,
6 Mr Taylor. We are now three years into your government, aren't
7 we?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And as we have examined earlier, you had made attempts to
09:57:04 10 reconcile the former warring factions by bringing some of those
11 combatants into your government and offering them posts. We've
12 looked at that?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Including, of course, individuals like Varmuyan Sherif,
09:57:23 15 yes?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. We now have a situation where even after you've brought
18 those former ULIMO fighters into your government, activity
19 sponsored by ULIMO is occurring on your borders, yes?

09:57:41 20 A. That is correct.

21 Q. Now, help us. Did that in any way affect your attitude
22 towards those former ULIMO personnel who you had brought into
23 your government?

24 A. Normally that would happen, but I was even more
09:58:04 25 conciliatory in dealing with them and let me tell you what I
26 mean. A lot of them could have been dismissed. We could have
27 thrown them out of the government but we did not do that. So it
28 did have some effect on - yes, on the overall attitude but you
29 learn to control it in the interests of reconciliation and

1 stability.

2 Q. But did it affect any sense of trust you might have had in
3 those individuals?

09:58:46

4 A. Oh, definitely. For example like in the case of Varmuyan,
5 we removed him from the Executive Mansion and sent him to
6 immigration.

7 Q. Why?

09:59:05

8 A. Well, there were two major problems. In the first instance
9 he had been involved with looting Mobil, this whole Mobil
10 problem. He was arrested and investigated for the looting of the
11 Mobil property. And then following that, we just moved him on to
12 immigration where he would be less of a threat to my person.

13 Q. What do you mean, a threat to your person?

09:59:33

14 A. Well, there's a former general that fought against me and
15 would have killed me if he had been able to do that. He was a
16 top senior general in ULIMO. We meet him in the Executive
17 Mansion. We keep him on. We make sure he is not armed, and most
18 Secret Service people are armed, but he is not armed around me.

09:59:54

19 He is not - he does not - unlike what he said here, which is
20 blatantly false, my general area of where I was, Varmuyan Sherif
21 was not permitted in that general area. And he could have caused
22 some harm to me, so all precautions were taken. Yes, a
23 reconciliation, but security first.

10:00:26

24 Q. And so what was your attitude then - general attitude to
25 individuals like Varmuyan Sherif and Abu Keita?

26 A. No, I didn't know Abu Keita at all. Never knew him. I
27 first saw the man here. No, I don't even want to talk about
28 Keita. I really did not know Keita. Keita was not at the level
29 for me to know. I knew Varmuyan. I knew when he got sick. I

1 knew I sent him to get treatment. I knew that I sent him to
2 Mali. I knew I sent him to Djenne in Mali. I knew Varmuyan. I
3 didn't know any human called Abu Keita until I saw him sit here.
4 No, I didn't know him.

10:01:05 5 But the general attitude was that, yes, we transferred him.
6 We did not disgrace him in any way because the whole point was to
7 encourage and to keep senior people from all of these
8 organisations around. That by moving in any negative way against
9 Varmuyan Sheriff would have discouraged others because Varmuyan
10:01:39 10 Sheriff was just one person that came from ULIMO. In the national
11 police we had another top ULIMO general that was assistant
12 director of the national police. And we had some other ULIMO
13 people in the national security agency, in the national bureau of
14 investigation. So they were spread throughout government and of
10:01:57 15 course they would observe. If you take harsh actions against one
16 of the senior people they all will begin to feel that it's a
17 threat to them. So we had to be very careful in how we dealt
18 with this matter.

19 And Varmuyan was - in terms of real employment in the
10:02:14 20 government, Varmuyan was at the bottom of the food chain.
21 Remember, Roosevelt Johnson was a rebel leader who led a group.
22 He was a minister in my government. Philip Kamah was a minister
23 in my government. That name has come before this Court. Who was
24 chief of staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia that fought against
10:02:33 25 me? Hezekiah Bowen was chief of staff of the armed forces that
26 fought against me. So I mean Varmuyan is really at the end of
27 the food chain when it comes to top officials. And we tried to
28 open our arms and embrace them. Even the commander of LPC
29 forces, George Boley, that name is also on the record. A lady

1 called Ruth Milton who was the principal commander of LPC forces,
2 she was a senior official in my government.

3 So we tried to bring people and even when they did wrong
4 things we took action but we tried not to disturb the really
10:03:13 5 fragile peace, because don't forget we have two attacks and you
6 begin to go after senior generals that you brought from other
7 factions in the government. That's only a recipe to pushing
8 everybody else out and you have a bigger war on your hands.

9 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, amongst the matters you had mentioned at
10:03:39 10 the address at the Executive Mansion attended by Mr Downes-Thomas
11 was again this issue of allowing the United Nations to monitor
12 the Sierra Leone border?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And, as Mr Downes-Thomas observed, this is a topic which
10:03:56 15 you had been raising with the United Nations for some years. Is
16 that correct?

17 A. That is correct.

18 Q. Now, there had appeared at an earlier stage in 2000 to be
19 some impetus coming from the United Nations to make that desire a
10:04:13 20 reality?

21 A. That is correct.

22 Q. Now, were there any further discussions in this month of
23 April regarding that topic?

24 A. Yes, there were some further discussions. What they then
10:04:34 25 tried to do, remember they tried to get specific. They were
26 calling upon us to become specific about what we wanted in terms
27 of quantity, positions and all of that. But we took a little
28 back step on that because what we anticipated at that particular
29 time as far as the United Nations assisting us, we did not figure

1 out that the UN was making this appear as though this was going
2 to be a burden on the Liberian government. We expected the UN,
3 in the interests of justice and fairness, to settle this matter.
4 But they took a position that we were not too happy with and we
10:05:24 5 made them understand that, look, yes, we want you to come, but
6 you know we are not in a position to shoulder the responsibility.
7 They were talking about housing and all that kind of stuff, so I
8 said, "Well, look, we want you to help us to clear up this mess".

9 Q. And with whom were you having these discussions?

10:05:43 10 A. Oh, with the - normally my main contact was the special
11 representative.

12 Q. And so far as your special representative is concerned,
13 what was he saying about the attitude of UN headquarters about
14 this idea?

10:06:00 15 A. Well, all UN personnel including him knew that there's
16 normally this bureaucracy. Bureaucracy will kill you. Foot
17 dragging and - so we were trying to - you know, we talked about
18 the foot dragging behaviour of the UN system and how we could try
19 to push it and make it move a little faster.

10:06:31 20 Q. Could you look behind divider 41, please. Have you seen
21 that document before, Mr Taylor?

22 A. Yes, yes.

23 MR GRIFFITHS: Before we come to look at it, could I ask
24 that that last code cable dated 6 April 2000 be marked for
10:06:54 25 identification, please, MFI-129.

26 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-129.

27 MR GRIFFITHS:

28 Q. Now this document we're looking at now, Mr Taylor, have you
29 seen it before?

1 A. Yes, I have.

2 Q. How did you come to see it?

3 A. This is one of the documents again from - that normally we
4 are presented from the special representative.

10:07:24 5 Q. Now we see --

6 A. It's part of my archives.

7 Q. We say the way round in which this communication has
8 occurred. It is from Mr Prendergast?

9 A. Yes.

10:07:34 10 Q. To Mr Downes-Thomas and it's dated 12 April 2000. Is that
11 correct, Mr Taylor?

12 A. That is correct.

13 Q. We see that the heading is, "Proposed deployment of UN
14 observers on the Liberia-Sierra Leone border." Yes?

10:07:53 15 A. Yes.

16 Q. "We have read with interest your code cable of 6 April
17 providing a report of President Taylor's comments made in
18 Monrovia on 5 April."

19 That's the document we've just looked at?

10:08:13 20 A. That is correct.

21 Q. "Concerning his discussions with President Kabbah on
22 security issues in the Mano River Union and providing the
23 Government of Liberia's position on several security-related
24 matters concerning Liberia and Sierra Leone. We noted that
10:08:31 25 President Taylor reiterated his willingness to allow UN observers
26 to monitor the Sierra Leone-Liberia border.

27 As you will recall, President Taylor made a similar
28 statement in a meeting with you on 27 January and, as he had
29 requested, this information was conveyed to the Secretary-General

1 in a note from Mr Prendergast to Mr Ri za dated 11 February.

2 In your code cable of 10 February we had suggested that one
3 practical way to approach this issue was for the Government of
4 Liberia to set out in writing exactly what it wants the UN to do
10:09:13 5 and indicated a number of issues which the government should
6 address.

7 In your code cable of 14 February you had indicated that
8 you would seek appointments to discuss the matter with the
9 concerned authorities, including President Taylor. We would
10:09:32 10 appreciate it if you could let us know whether any progress has
11 been made along the lines suggested in your code cable 430."

12 Yes, Mr Taylor?

13 A. Yes, it may be important here to mention that our access to
14 this kind of information here, it's very good to get it very
10:10:00 15 clear. When you see something like this end up with my office,
16 what are they referring to here? There is a report on the 6th,
17 not quite a week before then. Kabbah and I meet in Cairo and
18 discuss these matters. It is reported.

19 Now, once it's coming from Prendergast, this must be
10:10:29 20 reflected that the special representative in Liberia has raised
21 these issues with his office. He is now responding, so we get to
22 know the response. I think it's important to get this straight
23 about the Prendergast or him and then we get it, because it
24 involves the issues that we have raised and have gone forward,
10:10:53 25 and the response from him now, we still get. I think it's
26 important to get this very clear, because here he is talking
27 about the meeting on the 6th in Cairo and then another memo of
28 ours requesting his assistance, and now he is now responding,
29 which we do again meet with Thomas to tell him what our own

1 shortcomings are regarding the deployment, which comes a little
2 later.

3 Q. Now, you mentioned the meeting you had had in Cairo. Have
4 a look at the document behind this one, please. Now, you see
10:11:40 5 that this document is also dated 12 April?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And it's been copied to Mr Downes-Thomas?

8 A. Uh-huh.

9 Q. Do you see that?

10:11:49 10 A. That is correct.

11 Q. And we see the subject matter of this document is
12 "Emergency Security Meeting", yes?

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. "Thank you for sharing with us" - and it's from Adeniji in
10:12:05 15 Freetown.

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. We've come across this individual before. He is the
18 special representative of the Secretary-General in Freetown.

19 A. Yes.

10:12:15 20 Q. Now, let's note what he says:

21 "Thank you for sharing with us code cable of 6 April 2000
22 in which Downes-Thomas provided his comments on our cable of 31
23 March regarding an investigation into a planned cross-border
24 attack on Liberia.

10:12:36 25 I wish to inform you that, in a discussion I had with
26 President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah on 9 April, he confirmed to me the
27 statement made by President Charles Taylor that Sierra Leone and
28 Liberia will continue to work together to thwart any plan by
29 dissidents to destabilise any country."

1 Had you and Kabbah come to such an agreement?

2 A. Yes, this is the Cairo agreement. Yes, we talked about it.
3 We pledged to each other that we would do everything to thwart
4 any attempt on the part of any dissidents, whether on his side or
10:13:22 5 my side, to destabilise the country. That's what we did in
6 Cairo, yes.

7 Q. "It appeared to me that President Kabbah is confident that
8 the close cooperation existing now between him and his Liberian
9 colleague will greatly help to keep the overall situation along
10:13:41 10 the border with Sierra Leone-Liberia under control."

11 Would you describe your relationship with Kabbah as one of
12 "close cooperation" at this time, Mr Taylor?

13 A. Yes. From my standpoint, yes.

14 Q. And just so that we get a flavour of matters, what did this
10:14:08 15 "close cooperation" involve?

16 A. Kabbah and I spoke regularly on the telephone. His
17 ambassador accredited near Monrovia met with me. He was also
18 meeting the foreign minister. Kabbah and I met at the Mano River
19 Union meeting. We met at ECOWAS meetings. Now we are meeting at
10:14:35 20 the France Afrique meeting. We are talking. And whenever there
21 is a problem, we solve it, so that's - I viewed that as a close
22 working relationship.

23 There are incidents where Heads of State doesn't even
24 communicate. He and I are communicating regularly. And so I've
10:14:54 25 sent several security delegations to Sierra Leone. Kabbah has
26 visited me so many times, you know. He was present in '99 for
27 the burning of the arms. I mean, I have no other way of
28 describing this except, from my standpoint, as being a close
29 working relationship.

1 Q. And it continues:

2 "From our assessment, the continued reports of planned
3 cross-border attacks on Liberia calls for increased vigilance.
4 However, there is no cause for alarm. We will, therefore,
10:15:38 5 continue to monitor all developments relating to possible
6 subversive activity of Liberian dissidents from Sierra Leone."

7 Now, there's a further document behind that, Mr Taylor.
8 Could you turn over, please. Yes?

9 A. Uh-huh.

10:16:06 10 Q. Now, you recall that in the first document behind this
11 divider that we looked at there was a request from Mr Prendergast
12 that this issue of UN monitors on the border be addressed with
13 your government, yes?

14 A. Yes.

10:16:24 15 Q. And Mr Downes-Thomas was requested to provide a response,
16 yes?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And we see that this document is dated now 4 April - 14
19 April, yes?

10:16:38 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And it's a code cable from Mr Downes-Thomas to Prendergast,
22 yes?

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. Which he says, "Thank you for your cable of 12 April on the
10:16:52 25 subject. I raised the matter with the foreign minister yesterday
26 afternoon. He provided me with a clarification to the effect
27 that the Government of Liberia was not desperately inviting UN
28 monitors/military observers or observers to Liberia. The
29 request, he said, was made against a background of what appeared

1 to be the international community's belief that Liberia was privy
2 to, permitted, and sometimes orchestrated, various untoward
3 cross-border activities that were inimicable to peace and
4 stability in Sierra Leone."

10:17:33 5 Let us pause there. "The request was made against the
6 background of what appeared to be the international community's
7 belief that Liberia was privy to, permitted and sometimes
8 orchestrated various untoward cross-border activities that were
9 inimicable to peace and stability in Sierra Leone." Now, help
10:18:04 10 us, Mr Taylor. We're in April of 2000 here, aren't we?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And that belief by the international community, is it still
13 prevalent?

14 A. Yes, it's still prevalent, yes.

10:18:21 15 Q. Now, let us just go back at a page to the previous document
16 we looked at from the special representative in Freetown,
17 Mr Adeniji. Do you see any reference in that document to the
18 kind of activities believed to be occurring by the international
19 community?

10:18:42 20 A. Well, they seem to be interested, as far as activities go.

21 Q. No. But do you see Mr Adeniji complaining in that document
22 of Liberia orchestrating, being privy to, or permitting untoward
23 cross-border activities?

24 A. No, no, no, no, he is not doing that.

10:19:01 25 Q. In your meetings with Mr President Kabbah in Cairo and
26 elsewhere, was he making those kinds of complaints to you at this
27 time in the year 2000?

28 A. No, not exactly. Not exactly, no. Left to Kabbah and
29 myself, I think there would not have been a problem. What would

1 happen when you meet like this - he told me that there had been
2 these reports. That's how Presidents - "Well, we have these
3 reports and we are looking into them." And I told him I had
4 reports that we he were looking into. But he had not made a
10:19:41 5 finger-shaking accusation. "We know that you are" - no. None of
6 this kind stuff, no. I mean, just sharing information. And
7 sometimes we say, "Listen, my brother, you know our security
8 forces, they have come up with this." And we tell them, "Go back
9 and check." All of these security forces do that.

10:20:01 10 There is information, information, information. Sometimes
11 there is nothing to it. Sometimes we used to laugh when these -
12 we say, when our security agencies get broke and need money, they
13 find a mission. That's what we used to sometimes used to laugh
14 and say.

10:20:21 15 Q. "Since the Government of Liberia's denials of such
16 activities fell on deaf ears, the minister stated, the Government
17 of Liberia's request was made simply to assist the UN and the
18 international community to engage in their own verification
19 exercise."

10:20:43 20 By "verification exercise", Mr Taylor, what are you talking
21 about? Them finding some evidence?

22 A. Finding and producing. Finding and producing, and maybe in
23 the way - if there is evidence obstructing the process. This is
24 the whole point.

10:21:06 25 Q. "The minister concluded by saying, it was up to the United
26 Nations to decide whether it was necessary for it to take
27 advantage of the opportunity offered by the request.

28 I apologise for inadvertently failing to relay the
29 President's reaction to the main elements of your code. It was

1 not very different from the foreign minister's explanation as
2 described above. He felt, however, that the matter raised in
3 paragraph 2 of your code reflected a measure of foot dragging on
4 the part of the United Nations.

10:21:37 5 My own view is that the question raised in your code can be
6 easily addressed and comprehensively so by a United Nations
7 technical survey team. Should the United Nations, in the light
8 of 1 and 2 above, decide that such a mission is necessary, kindly
9 advise accordingly, and that specific matter would be further
10:21:57 10 discussed with the Government of Liberia. In the meantime, I
11 believe that it is most important to note that to date there has
12 been absolutely no tension at the Sierra Leone-Liberia border.
13 In this regard, I share fully Special Representative Adeniji's
14 accurate observation that 'there is no cause for alarm'."

10:22:23 15 Now, was that the state of affairs on the border,
16 Mr Taylor?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Absolutely no tension?

19 A. After that discussion and before, yes, there was no tension
10:22:35 20 at that time.

21 Q. And would you regard the sending of arms and ammunition
22 over the border as a matter of tension or not?

23 A. Oh, that would be tension. That would be serious tension,
24 if arms and ammunition were going across the border. Of course,
10:22:57 25 that would be tension.

26 Q. So we have a situation here, do we not, in April of 2000,
27 where both the United Nations' special representative in Freetown
28 and his counterpart in Monrovia accept that there's no tension at
29 the Sierra Leone-Liberia border. That's the position we've

1 reached, isn't it?

2 A. That is it.

3 Q. And that is a position which has been reached because of,
4 to quote, the close cooperation between yourself and President

10:23:31 5 Tejan Kabbah?

6 A. That is correct.

7 MR GRIFFITHS: Before we move on, Mr President, could I
8 ask, please, that those three documents be marked for

9 identification. MFI-130A, the proposed deployment of United

10:23:52 10 Nations observers under Liberia-Sierra Leone border from

11 Prendergast to Downes-Thomas dated 12 April 2000.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-130A.

13 MR GRIFFITHS: And that the code cable from Adeniji to

14 Downes-Thomas and United Nations headquarters, dated 12 April

10:24:22 15 2000, be marked as MFI-130B.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes.

17 MS HOLLIS: Just for clarification, I think that document

18 actually is from Adeniji to Miyet, Prendergast, not to

19 Downes-Thomas.

10:24:44 20 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, I think that's correct,

21 Mr Griffiths.

22 MR GRIFFITHS: Okay. From Adeniji to Miyet copied to

23 Downes-Thomas, dated 12 April 2000, be MFI-130B, please.

24 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-130B.

10:25:01 25 MR GRIFFITHS: And, finally, the code cable from

26 Downes-Thomas to Prendergast on the proposed deployment of United

27 Nations observers on the Liberia-Sierra Leone border, dated 14

28 April 2000, be 130C.

29 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, marked MFI-130C.

1 MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful.

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12 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, to what extent were you keeping abreast of
13 the activities of ECOMOG and United Nations forces in
14 Sierra Leone at this time?

10:25:58 15 A. Well, we were. I was keeping abreast of what was going on
16 over there, because we were pushing forward and making sure that
17 the process from Lome would start and we did not want any
18 disruptions. We had some minor problems that we were focused on
19 and we wanted to keep on top of the situation. So we were - I
10:26:32 20 wouldn't say a hundred per cent on top of it, but we knew
21 sufficient that was necessary for our standpoint, at least my
22 standpoint as I would say the principal mediator at the time in
23 dealing with this problem.

24 Q. Now, did that involve, for example, any of your staff
10:26:55 25 meeting with senior ECOMOG and United Nations military figures in
26 Sierra Leone?

27 A. Well, we sent diplomats over there but not specifically
28 with UN personnel, no. Not directly.

29 Q. Do you recollect now who was in charge of the ECOMOG forces

1 in Sierra Leone at this time?

10:27:42 2 A. That name Majukperuo. I forget the Nigerian name, but it's
3 some Majukperuo who succeeded the general that I threw out of
4 Liberia. I think it's - I'm not calling the name correctly. I
5 think it's Majukperuo or something like that.

6 Q. And what about United Nations forces there, who was in
7 command of them?

10:28:02 8 A. I - at that time - they changed them. It could have been -
9 I'm using that word even more constructively "could" than one
10 might want. There was an Indian - I think an Indian general over
11 there at the time. If my recollection is correct, I think
12 Jetley. If it was not Jetley - I'm not too clear, but I think it
13 was an Indian that was commanding.

14 Q. And you mentioned a name Jetley?

10:28:26 15 A. Yes, it could have been the Indian general, yes.

16 Q. And given your concern for the peace process over there,
17 were you monitoring the relationship between the ECOMOG forces
18 and the United Nations forces deployed in Sierra Leone?

10:28:48 19 A. To an extent I would say yes, and I will be specific about
20 that. My interests - remember I mentioned that there was an
21 increase in I think it's UNAMSIL forces and there was this talk
22 about withdrawing some of ECOMOG forces and I had said we
23 shouldn't do that. So to that extent we were monitoring what was
24 going on. I was not aware of the military activities of the
10:29:15 25 units, but their overall function as far as the process was
26 concerned here, but not in touch with their day-to-day military
27 operations.

28 Q. I'm just interested in that overall - that overview which
29 you maintained?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Now, what was the state of the relationship as far as you
3 were aware from your vantage point between the ECOMOG forces and
4 the United Nations forces?

10:29:46 5 A. My recollection - I can only remember from a document that
6 was subsequently published by the general.

7 Q. Which general?

8 A. General Jetley. And it appears to me that while on the
9 surface they were getting along, there was some professional
10:30:14 10 concerns that the general - the UNAMSIL general had about the
11 overall I would say comportment of some of the ECOMOG senior
12 officers. It appears there was a little squabble that I didn't
13 know at the time but I got to know subsequently after. A report
14 was written by General Jetley that I developed an interest in.

10:30:37 15 Q. Why did you have an interest in it?

16 A. Well, I wanted to know what was going on because, for one
17 thing, we had been hearing about diamonds and Charles Taylor was
18 supposed to be getting diamonds out of Liberia - I mean out of
19 Sierra Leone. But we also were getting reports that there were
10:31:02 20 Lebanese business people and private business people and even
21 ECOMOG officers involved in diamond business and when I was told
22 that some of these principal concerns were raised in this general
23 report, I developed an interest in that.

24 For example, I also heard that he had talked about the
10:31:28 25 interests of individual member states that contributed to ECOMOG
26 and how the chain of command went from state back to the central
27 ECOMOG area, and I really wanted to know, especially on the
28 issues relating to the overall behaviour.

29 Q. So have you read that report?

1 A. Oh, I read Jetly's report, yes.

2 Q. And how did you come to get a copy of it?

3 A. Well, I heard that the report was out and in fact a copy
4 was sent out to a UN official but I had read it before I saw that
10:32:20 5 copy.

6 Q. Did you have a copy of that report in your archives?

7 A. I did keep a copy.

8 Q. Could the witness please be shown the document behind
9 divider 43, please. Have you seen this document before,

10:32:47 10 Mr Taylor?

11 A. I have seen the one that - this is the report, but I read
12 it on - this is a typed copy of it, but I read it off his page.
13 But I have seen this report. This is the report.

14 Q. Now, we see it's headed "Report on the crisis in

10:33:10 15 Sierra Leone":

16 "Background.

17 The Lome Peace Accord was signed in July 1999 to end the
18 eight-year-old bloody civil war in Sierra Leone. The primary
19 reason for the signing of the accord was that a stalemate had
10:33:26 20 been reached in the fighting and the ECOWAS states were finding
21 it extremely difficult to support their peacekeeping force,
22 ECOMOG, due to the extreme financial drain on their fragile
23 economies.

24 The accord called for the deployment of a peacekeeping
10:33:44 25 force comprising ECOMOG and UNOMSIL to oversee the peace process.
26 This was interpreted by the Nigerians (who formed the major chunk
27 of ECOMOG) that ECOMOG would form a major part of the UN
28 peacekeeping force and that this force would be headed by the
29 ECOMOG force commander Major General Kpamber. However, when

1 General Kpamber went to UN HQ New York he was very disappointed
2 to learn that he was not going to be the force commander of
3 UNAMSIL and that Nigeria would have three battalions as part of
4 UNAMSIL, out of this they had to concede one battalion to the
10:34:37 5 Guineans. The Nigerians therefore felt that they were not
6 getting a fair deal in the peace process in Sierra Leone despite
7 the sacrifices they had made to pave the way for the peace
8 process. This to a very large extent is the genesis of the
9 present crisis. It is my opinion that the ECOMOG force
10 commander, along with the special representative of the
11 Secretary-General and DCF, have worked hard to sabotage the peace
12 process and show Indians in general and me in particular in a
13 poor light."

14 Who was the special representative of the Secretary-General
10:35:14 15 at this time in Freetown?

16 A. It's still Adeniji. From the best of my knowledge it's
17 still Adeniji.

18 Q. "Relationship between ECOMOG and RUF.

19 It is well-known that public opinion in Nigeria was against
10:35:30 20 the continued deployment of Nigerian troops as part of ECOMOG in
21 Sierra Leone. However, the Nigerian army was interested in
22 staying in Sierra Leone due to the massive benefits they were
23 getting from the illegal diamond mining. Brigadier General
24 Maxwell Khobe was commonly known as \$10 million man. It is
10:35:55 25 alleged that he received up to \$10 million to permit the
26 activities of the RUF. The ECOMOG force commander Major General
27 Kpamber was also involved in the illegal diamond mining in
28 connivance with RUF leader Foday Sankoh."

29 Pause there. Now, Mr Taylor, you said earlier that you had

1 heard rumours to this effect, had you not?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. That in effect the Nigerian troops in Sierra Leone were
4 engaged in illegal diamond mining, yes?

10:36:37 5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And we here we have a United Nations general, Jetley,
7 making the same accusations, yes?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And you note also that he says that this was going on in
10 connivance with RUF leader Foday Sankoh. Do you see that?

11 A. I do.

12 Q. But, Mr Taylor, as we understand this indictment, the RUF
13 were sending their diamonds to you, not the Nigerians. So which
14 is right?

10:37:06 15 A. Well, they would be terrible partners if they were not
16 sending it to me, wouldn't they? This is total nonsense. There
17 is no such thing as Foday Sankoh sending me diamonds and they
18 know it. A lot of evidence I'm sure if it's not yet produced
19 will be produced to show that Foday Sankoh was his own man. He
10:37:28 20 dealt with his own people. We have documents from the OTP about
21 his dealings in Belgium, South Africa. We know this is all
22 false, so it's the fact that he was - I'm sure one will mention
23 the arms were not coming from me in Liberia. So it must show
24 that he was getting it from somebody and paying for it probably
10:37:54 25 through diamonds.

26 Q. Mr Taylor, we had looked at an earlier code cable reflected
27 by both the UN special representative in Sierra Leone and the UN
28 special representative in Liberia suggesting that there is
29 cooperation between yourself and President Kabbah and the border

1 is calm. Is that correct?

2 A. That is correct. Yes.

3 Q. We now have a United Nations general saying that it's the
4 Nigerians in ECOMOG who are benefiting from the diamond trade.

10:38:30 5 So when you put those two together, what do you conclude?

6 A. The only conclusion that one can get from here is that the
7 arms that the RUF are supposed to be using in Sierra Leone must
8 be coming from the people that are getting - they are giving the
9 diamonds to and that's the ECOMOG forces in Sierra Leone. That's
10 the conclusion I reach.

10:38:55

11 But let me just mention there is nothing new about that.

12 There is nothing new about that. I during the Liberian civil war

13 - I during the Liberian civil war bought material from ECOMOG

14 forces that were peacekeepers on the ground. There's nothing new

10:39:21

15 about ECOMOG selling arms to rebel groups. I, Charles Ghankay

16 Taylor, bought arms and ammunition from ECOMOG peacekeepers in

17 Liberia during the civil war even while we were fighting them.

18 That may sound like it's coming from off in space, but it's true.

19 You buy your material from this unit and you are fighting the

10:39:44

20 other unit, so there's nothing new about this. So I mean this is

21 - this is a constant.

22 Q. "After the initial fighting between ECOMOG and RUF, the

23 relationship had thawed when a stalemate had been reached

24 militarily. It is understood that a tacit understanding was

10:40:07

25 reached between the RUF and ECOMOG of noninterference in each

26 other's activities. The total absence of ECOMOG deployment in

27 RUF-held areas is indicative of this. I believe that the RUF

28 leader, Foday Sankoh, was also under the impression that the

29 United Nations peacekeeping force agreed to in Lome was primarily

1 a rehatted ECOMOG with Major General Kpamber as its boss. The
2 deployment of a neutral peacekeeping force (UNAMSIL) under an
3 Indian general, keen to implement the peace accord in letter and
4 spirit, was not what Sankoh had bargained for. He viewed UNAMSIL
10:40:58 5 as a big obstacle in his ambition of becoming the next President
6 of Sierra Leone."

7 Now, we've touched on this topic before, we have not,
8 Mr Taylor?

9 A. Yes, we have.

10:41:11 10 Q. Regarding the suggested withdrawal of ECOMOG?

11 A. That's correct.

12 Q. Remind us, why didn't you want ECOMOG to go?

13 A. Because I felt that this foot-dragging on the part of the
14 disarmament by Sankoh, the constant complaints even after we had
10:41:31 15 pulled Bockarie out, and knowing that, in effect - in effect,
16 that United Nation forces very rarely go into combat, very rarely
17 with member states permit Blue Helmets to go into actual combat,
18 that pulling out the ECOMOG forces at that particular time would
19 have opened the road to seizing power in Freetown.

10:42:04 20 Q. Who by?

21 A. By Foday Sankoh.

22 Q. "Relationship between force commander, special
23 representative and DFC.

24 The special representative and DFC had instructions from
10:42:18 25 Nigeria to pursue the agenda for which they had been sent by him.
26 Keeping the Nigerian interests was paramount, even if it meant
27 scuttling the peace process, and this also implied that UNAMSIL
28 was expendable. To this end, the special representative and DFC
29 cultivated the RUF leadership, especially Foday Sankoh behind by

1 back. "

2 Over the page, please.

3 JUDGE DOHERTY: Sorry, Mr Griffiths, just exactly, what
4 does DFC stand for?

10:43:01 5 MR GRIFFITHS:

6 Q. Mr Taylor?

7 A. This, I would daresay, could be deputy forces commander.

8 Q. "I was sandwiched between the two of them, which severely
9 hampered my functioning. Some instances which reflected my
10 predicament:

11 (A) The deputy force commander was sent to Nigeria in
12 January 2000 without my approval on the pretext of resolving the
13 equipment of Nigerian battalions, clearly a task not forming a
14 part of the charter of duties of the DFC. The DFC returned after
10:43:51 15 13 days and did not think it fit to meet me for two days
16 thereafter.

17 During the discussions on the rehatting of the Nigerian
18 battalions for 90 days, the DFC spoke openly against the logic
19 given by me. The special representative conducted the entire
10:44:10 20 conference with a pro-Nigeria bias. "

21 Pausing for a moment, Mr Taylor, what do you understand by
22 the phrase "rehatting"?

23 A. Rehatting of the Nigerian battalions, I don't want to -
24 this could be probably another word militarily for probably
10:44:37 25 reorganising. I can't be too sure. But this is the best I can
26 do with this. I can't help any further.

27 Q. Very well:

28 "Notwithstanding the fact that the special representative
29 had absolutely nothing to do with military matters, he insisted

1 on knowing the reasons why INDBAT" - Indian battalion - "could
2 not deploy on widely separated axis at Koidu and Kailahun as it
3 mistakenly planned off the map earlier. Even after my explaining
4 to him in detail, he insisted on arranging a meeting with the
10:45:23 5 DFC, COS" - Mr Taylor?

6 A. I surmise this is chief of staff.

7 Q. "... (observer) who had joined UNAMSIL just two days ago
8 and the chief of staff of the force; just to undermine my
9 position and embarrass me in front of my subordinates. In

10 hindsight, it appears that my decision has been vindicated. If I
11 had deployed, as the special representative was insisting, we
12 would have had the entire INDBAT either disarmed or decimated.

13 With a view to making inroads into the certain most
14 districts of Kailahun and Koidu, I sent strong patrols each of
10:46:12 15 Kenya battalion and Ghana battalion to Koidu and Indian battalion
16 to Kailahun respectively. While the Ghana battalion CO failed to
17 execute my order, Kenya battalion could only achieve partial
18 success. It was only India battalion which successfully reached
19 Kailahun. When I informed the special representative about the
10:46:38 20 above events, instead of complimenting the India battalion's
21 spectacular achievement, he, in the presence of my subordinate
22 staff officers, like the DFC and CMO, started questioning the
23 rationale of my actions, suggesting that I should have sent joint
24 patrols of all the three battalions to Koidu rather than the
10:47:07 25 individual unit identities. At the end, I had to categorically
26 ask him to leave the military matters to me since such plans are
27 made and decisions taken after due consultation with my staff.

28 On numerous occasions, the DFC has not executed tasks given
29 by me. He has not even bothered to give a feedback weeks after

1 the scheduled date of submission of report of projects entrusted
2 to him.

3 Events leading to the present crisis and the conduct of
4 Nigeria during the crisis.

10:47:45 5 The present crisis has precipitated by the incident at
6 Makeni where 10 RUF cadres had voluntarily disarmed and joined
7 the DDR programme. However, this was not acceptable to the RUF
8 leadership which had its own agenda. The complexity of Nigeria
9 in the crisis is evident from the following:

10:48:11 10 (A) The RUF action is timed with the withdrawal of ECOMOG
11 troops from Sierra Leone.

12 The special representative was on leave at the same time
13 and could not be contacted for at least two days despite the best
14 efforts of New York.

10:48:29 15 RUF intercepts received by DHQ of the Republic of Sierra
16 Leone army clearly indicate the close relationship between RUF
17 and Nigerians."

18 Let us pause. "RUF intercepts", what do you understand by
19 that, Mr Taylor?

10:48:54 20 A. This could be one of two areas: Radio, the capacity to
21 intercept radio communication. It could also be telephone. So
22 it's the capacity to electronically take - get possession of
23 information being transmitted by radio signals and in most cases
24 telephone signals.

10:49:25 25 Q. What does this mean? It means that in 2000, at least,
26 independent military forces in Sierra Leone had the technical
27 capacity to intercept RUF messages, yes?

28 A. Oh, definitely. They had it before then.

29 Q. Now, help me, Mr Taylor. You are said to have been in

1 communication with the RUF. Have you ever been shown a single
2 intercept of a conversation you had with them?

3 A. Not one. Not one have I seen then or now, no.

4 Q. Now, on this - a related topic, go back to paragraph 7,
10:50:21 5 "precipitated by the incident at Makeni". What incident at
6 Makeni?

7 A. I was not on top of the situation of what was going on in
8 Makeni, but I - this could be referring to the incident of RUF
9 people that were supposed to - this is what caused the initial
10:50:49 10 trouble that I - this could be the initial trouble where some
11 members of the RUF may have been disarmed.

12 Q. And what did that lead to?

13 A. Oh, problems. Serious problems where the - they had
14 disarmed, I understand, voluntarily. But the details of this - I
10:51:10 15 even get the details because in May - very early May, I get a
16 letter from Issa Sesay complaining about it. So they complained
17 that it was not done voluntarily and that they were forcefully
18 disarmed, and so it brings about a problem.

19 Q. What was the problem that was raised?

10:51:30 20 A. Oh, serious trouble. A lot of exchange of gunfire. Some
21 of the UN individuals were taken. It was a very serious problem
22 that involved hostages and all that kind of stuff.

23 Q. And you say you received the letter from Issa Sesay?

24 A. Yes. In, I would say, early May, we received a letter
10:51:59 25 describing the problems.

26 Q. Tell you what you do, Mr Taylor, put a hand in that page
27 and just look quickly behind divider 47, because we're coming
28 back to this document. Divider 47, behind it, is that the letter
29 from Issa Sesay?

1 A. Yes. Yes.

2 Q. Let's go back. We'll come to that in due course.

3 "RUF intercepts received by DHQ of the Republic of Sierra
4 Leone army" - DHQ is what?

10:52:40 5 A. This could be defence headquarters of the Sierra Leonean
6 army. Okay. This rings a bell, yeah.

7 Q. So looking at this, the defence headquarters of the Sierra
8 Leonean army, yes?

9 A. Uh-huh.

10:53:01 10 Q. Have these intercepts, according to this, is that right,
11 Mr Taylor?

12 A. Yeah, but there is something more interesting about this.
13 There is something more interesting about this. At this
14 particular time, what is happening at Sierra Leonean

10:53:20 15 headquarters? They are being trained by the British. So this
16 is, in addition to - this is not just the technical capacity of
17 the Sierra Leonean armed forces. We're talking about an expanded
18 - I think we should probably look at the expanded capabilities of
19 this particular headquarters. So this raises a very interesting
10:53:39 20 point for me.

21 Q. It gets even more interesting, because the Government of
22 Sierra Leone was a party to the treaty which set up this Court,
23 wasn't it?

24 A. That is correct.

10:53:50 25 Q. And according to this, that government's defence
26 headquarters has radio intercepts with the RUF, according to
27 this. Is that your understanding of the situation, Mr Taylor?

28 A. Yes, that's my understanding. The only problem, when you
29 say that the Government of Sierra Leone was a party to the

1 creation of this Court, they were not - I mean, they created this
2 Court. They. This is a Sierra Leonean Court, so they created
3 this Court. So - but they do have these intercepts, and it looks
4 like this is with great technical capability.

10:54:34 5 Q. Over the page, please:

6 "Initially the RUF effort was directed only against Kenyans
7 and Indian. And when this aspect was discussed in the senior
8 staff meeting there was a symbolic gesture at Kambia against a
9 Nigerian battalion 2nd company located there.

10:55:02 10 The complete Nigerian company at Kambia was permitted to
11 move to Port Loko and the two Indian drivers with them were
12 detained. They were later released after I intervened.

13 No fight given by Nigerian troops of Nigerian battalion 2
14 to RUF at Lunsar and Rogberi, Rokel, Masiaka and Lai a Junction.

10:55:30 15 I was given confirmation that the Nigerian battalion 3rd
16 company was deployed at Newton, an important location on the
17 Masiaka to Freetown axis. However, when I personally landed
18 there during my reconnaissance I found no troops deployed.

19 The deputy force commander has been in constant touch with
10:56:01 20 Foday Sankoh throughout this crisis. He has probably also
21 compromised a lot of my operational plans.

22 It is popularly believed by the locals in Freetown that the
23 commanding officer Nigerian battalion took Foday Sankoh in his
24 APC when the demonstrators turned violent at his house. In fact,
10:56:32 25 eyewitnesses corroborated this. One of my source has also
26 confirmed above. He was reportedly kept in custody in the house
27 of the commanding officer of the Nigerian battalion 4 in
28 Freetown, a fact which have been hidden from me so far.

29 Other constraints in my functioning.

1 In addition to the above problems, I have also had the
2 following logistics difficulties in the mission to cope with.

3 Transport. The present capability of the mission does not
4 permit movement of one company at a time. Despite this, out of
10:57:13 5 the 20 UN trucks, ten had been given to the private contract
6 organisations called DynCorp. My staff officers were forced to
7 travel in minibuses and a few gypsies on the pretext that the
8 Indian guard and administrative CO was to provide the transport
9 whereas the MOU does not say so."

10:57:39 10 MOU, Mr Taylor?

11 A. I can't help with that, I'm sorry.

12 Q. Memorandum of understanding, I'm helpfully told.

13 "Communications. Even after months since the establishment
14 of peacekeeping mission I cannot talk directly to any battalion
10:57:58 15 commander. There are severe shortages of communication equipment
16 in a number of units which have not been made up despite several
17 reminders to the admin staff. Some battalions have only one
18 radio set in the company available with them. Most battalions
19 have no fax facilities to forward situation reports or reports
10:58:20 20 and returns.

21 Fuel. The fuel contract for the mission has not yet been
22 finalised. On numerous occasions I have had to cancel
23 operational moves because of non-availability of POL. The system
24 of fuel replenishment is based on a few POL bowsers held by the
10:58:42 25 UN. Forward dumping facilities or kerb side petrol pumps have
26 not yet been established."

27 Let's skip rations and water and camp infrastructure.
28 Let's look at, in light of the topics we're coming to, paragraph
29 9:

1 "Capability of units. Most units under my command other
2 than India, Kenya and Guinea, have very little or no equipment
3 with them. They have not been properly briefed in their country
4 about the application of Chapter 7 in this mission for certain
10:59:23 5 contingencies. It is for this precise reasons that the troops do
6 not have the mental aptitude or the will to fight the rebels when
7 the situation so demanded and resorted to handing over their arms
8 on the slightest danger to their life."

9 Handing over their arms. In the context of this paragraph,
10:59:50 10 handing over their arms to whom, Mr Taylor?

11 A. That would be the RUF.

12 Q. "This aspect enabled the rebels to gain a clear and moral
13 ascendancy and thereby emboldened them to take on the United
14 Nations in the manner in which they have done in the present
11:00:11 15 crisis. Guinea, Kenya and Zambia case in point. Also units
16 hoped that negotiations would help the rebels see reason. The
17 rebels took advantage of the gullibility of these units and
18 disarmed them."

19 Did you know about these such incidents, Mr Taylor?

11:00:34 20 A. Yes, I did. This came before us, in fact, and we dealt
21 with it and demanded that those weapons be returned.

22 Q. "Conclusion. United Nations peacekeeping operations are a
23 combination of diplomacy and tact. Generally in African
24 countries the peace accord signed is shaky and fragile. In a
11:01:05 25 mineral rich country like Sierra Leone, politics has a very major
26 role to play in finding solutions to civil wars. In my case, the
27 mission directive given to me and which I tried to follow
28 implicitly, directly conflicted with the interests of not only
29 the warring factions, but also of the major players in the

1 diamond racket like Liberia and Nigeria. As an Indian, and
2 having no hidden agenda to promote, I became a victim of the
3 machinations of these countries. By placing their stooges in the
4 right places they have not only tried to scuttle the peace
11:01:51 5 process but also try and denigrate me and the country I represent
6 to promote their own personal ambitions and personal interests."

7 Now, major player in the diamond racket like Liberia,
8 Mr Taylor?

9 A. Uh-huh.

11:02:08 10 Q. What do you say about that?

11 A. Well, I say that while I agree with a lot of things that
12 the general said here, but we didn't have anyone on the ground in
13 Sierra Leone. We didn't have any troops there. I can understand
14 what the general is talking about regarding the interest. One
11:02:31 15 thing that has escaped here, Adeniji mentioned here, the special
16 representative of the Secretary-General, is Nigerian. I know
17 Adeniji very well. In fact after that post he became foreign
18 minister under Obasanjo. I know Adeniji.

19 So there's some - I can understand his frustration in
11:02:51 20 dealing with that line. But what he is dealing with here again
21 would be - the only thing I can think about is the rumour again
22 because I don't have any diplomats assigned with the United
23 Nations in Sierra Leone. I don't have any troops on the ground
24 in Sierra Leone. My charge in Sierra Leone is not in direct
11:03:17 25 contact with their meeting. So I guess he is referring to the
26 allegation of alleged diamond trade across the border in Liberia
27 and whatnot, and again I don't have any fuss - I have no big fuss
28 with diamonds that may have been traded in Liberia. I don't
29 think that's --

1 Q. Were diamonds traded in Liberia?

2 A. I want to believe that diamonds were traded in Liberia
3 before the UN sanctions on diamonds and they are traded there
4 right now and nobody is going to stop that.

11:03:51 5 Q. Mr Taylor, historically was Monrovia a diamond trading
6 centre?

7 A. Historically, yes.

8 Q. When we say historically, for what kind of time frame are
9 we talking?

11:04:02 10 A. I'll go all the way back 50 years from a major diamond
11 buyer like De Beers. De Beers had headquarters set up in
12 Liberia, Monrovia, to purchase diamonds from Liberia and
13 Sierra Leone going back as far as 50 years. It's never ended.
14 It's never ended. It is going on now. The diamond trade in West
11:04:25 15 Africa, except now where you have the Kimberly Process put into
16 place - before United Nations sanctions and embargoes and
17 different things it's a regular livelihood of West Africans.
18 Sierra Leoneans, Liberians, mined their little diamonds in their
19 little back forest areas. They are not mechanised. It's
11:04:49 20 something that will never stop, okay. It will never, ever stop.

21 So this whole thing about trying to make it appear there's
22 some major problem on the planet like maybe a nuclear explosion,
23 it's none of this nonsense. Diamonds are being traded in
24 Sierra Leone and Liberia now. They are going across the border
11:05:12 25 from Sierra Leone today into Guinea and from Guinea into Liberia.
26 From Sierra Leone in Liberia the trade is going on. This is not
27 something like talking about manufacturing an aircraft or
28 something. So this matter here is as old as these countries are.

29 Q. So you accept, Mr Taylor, do you, that at this time Sierra

1 Leonean diamonds were being traded through Monrovia?

2 A. Through West Africa, yes. I have no qualms about that. I
3 don't think that's my fuss, and I would be a hypocrite if I said
4 here that Sierra Leoneans are not selling or were not selling -
11:05:53 5 my point here is that this was not with the involvement and/or
6 acquiescence of the Government of Liberia then. It is not with
7 the involvement or the acquiescence of the Government of Liberia
8 now, but it is happening. It is not with the acquiescence of the
9 Government of Sierra Leone. Even though they have a Kimberly
11:06:14 10 Process but diamonds are still going out. You can't stop
11 diamonds from going.

12 Q. Why not?

13 A. How do you control a little stone? And this is not
14 something like you got to go into the capital city to get. Where
11:06:29 15 are the diamond areas in West Africa - of Liberia. We'll look on
16 the map. We've seen them in Lofa, we've seen them in Cape Mount,
17 we've seen them in Bomi. We have diamond in Nimba. We showed it
18 on the map here to this Court, okay. The whole northern tip of
19 Liberia and southern tip of Sierra Leone coming from the whole -
11:06:53 20 that whole part of Sierra Leone with the border into Liberia,
21 those are the kimberlite areas. People are right - as we're
22 talking in this Court people are in these forests, they stay
23 there for months and on and dig diamonds. This is not something
24 where, you know, people try to make it appear as though it's
11:07:15 25 something so big and whatnot.

26 There's a way of life like gold. You go into West Africa,
27 you see every little boy with a gold chain on his neck. It
28 doesn't mean that he is doing something illegal. You can find
29 gold almost anywhere. You go any part of Guinea, Sierra Leone

1 and Liberia, people go in the creek, they take their little
2 calabash and they pan the gold and they go and make their gold
3 chains, you understand me? That's how it works in those areas.

4 So this theory that developed that the heart of the Sierra
11:07:48 5 Leonean crisis was because of so-called blood diamonds is
6 nonsense, total nonsense. So it's going on now, it will continue
7 to go on until we are all finished. It's going on today.

8 Q. Mr Taylor, was that trade going on with your consent and
9 encouragement?

11:08:04 10 A. Never, ever. It does not take my consent, Kabbah's consent
11 or even the President of Guinea. It doesn't take the consent of
12 even as low as a minister or even as low as a commissioner in a
13 village. It doesn't take anybody's consent. You don't even know
14 when they find the diamonds and where they take it. You don't
11:08:26 15 know. It's unofficial totally. In Sierra Leone, in Liberia, in
16 Guinea, totally unofficial.

17 JUDGE DOHERTY: Mr Griffiths, before you move on, to fully
18 understand this document could I have some information on the
19 background of the person who is referred to throughout as the
11:08:51 20 deputy forces commander?

21 MR GRIFFITHS:

22 Q. Mr Taylor, who was the deputy forces commander at this
23 time, do you know?

24 A. His name is Kpamber or something in here. He was the
11:09:06 25 deputy forces commander to Jetley. Okay, where you have the
26 Indian as commander, the deputy is Nigerian. He is mentioned in
27 here. Let me just --

28 Q. Have a look at paragraph 2 on the first page?

29 A. Yes, Kpamber. Major General Kpamber. So in a case, your

1 Honours, where you have the forces commander is an Indian, the
2 deputy is the Nigerian.

3 JUDGE DOHERTY: And he was previously - or part of ECOMOG.
4 Is that what is being conveyed in paragraph 2?

11:10:03 5 THE WITNESS: Yes.

6 MR GRIFFITHS:

7 Q. Mr Taylor?

8 A. Yes.

9 JUDGE DOHERTY: Thank you.

11:10:11 10 THE WITNESS: What they were trying to do here was to just
11 change hats. From the Nigerian hat you put on the blue and then
12 you are ECOMOG, you know, change your hat and you become a UN.
13 That's the way sometimes these forces operate.

14 MR GRIFFITHS:

11:10:25 15 Q. So what's rehatting thing?

16 A. The rehatting is just the blue - blue hats are United
17 Nations forces. You see where it says that ECOMOG would form a
18 major part of UN peacekeeping in paragraph 2?

19 Q. Yes.

11:10:53 20 A. So, in that case, when it says "ECOMOG will form a major
21 part of UN peacekeeping force", okay, what you would do is that
22 they will change their hat. If the Nigerian army at that
23 particular time - that section that is going to be performing
24 that duty, let's say if they were wearing the green berets, they
11:11:16 25 would take off the berets and then put on the blue berets.

26 That's what I mean by rehatting.

27 PRESIDING JUDGE: Justice Doherty has asked the question.
28 I'm not sure that matter has been clarified. If we look at
29 paragraph 2, you'll see that General Kpamber is referred to as

1 the ECOMOG force commander. And then in the last sentence of
2 paragraph 2, it says, "In my opinion, the ECOMOG force commander,
3 who was General Kpamber, along with the SRSG and DCF."

4 THE WITNESS: I don't know if I can respond. I don't know
11:12:10 5 if your Honours want me to respond.

6 MR GRIFFITHS:

7 Q. If you would, please.

8 A. Well, if we look at that paragraph fully, Mr President, we
9 see here that this general was supposed to become the forces
11:12:18 10 commander, but he is disappointed. He does not become the forces
11 commander. Jetley takes over as forces commander. But this
12 general is forces commander of ECOMOG, okay? But when they come
13 under UN authority, it is Jetley. So they still refer him here
14 to ECOMOG forces commander, along with the SRSG, because he's
11:12:49 15 commander of ECOMOG forces, but he's deputy commander of UN
16 forces under Jetley. That's my understanding of it.

17 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: If you read that last sentence in the
18 second paragraph, which reads as follows - or, rather, "It is my
19 opinion that the ECOMOG force commander" - that would be Kpamber
11:13:15 20 - "along with the SRSG and the DCF."

21 MR GRIFFITHS:

22 Q. DCF is different from DFC in paragraph 5.

23 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: What is it then? What is DCF? Because
24 these three have worked hard to sabotage the peace process,
11:13:37 25 et cetera. What is DCF?

26 THE WITNESS: I really can't - this is not - the DCF is not
27 the deputy forces commander, no.

28 PRESIDING JUDGE: Well, I'm not sure --

29 THE WITNESS: I'm not sure I can help.

1 PRESIDING JUDGE: -- that's not what was meant in paragraph
2 2, because there's quite a few typographical errors in this
3 document and also errors in English, and it seems to me as though
4 that "DCF" should have been "DFC".

11:14:11 5 MR GRIFFITHS: That may well be right, Mr President.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE: If I'm correct there, that it should be
7 DFC, then, obviously, Kpamber can't be both the ECOMOG force
8 commander and the deputy force commander.

9 MR GRIFFITHS: Not in the context of that sentence, no:

11:14:29 10 Q. Can you help us, Mr Taylor?

11 A. Short of the wrath of the President, I'm not sure that
12 there's a typographical - you know, we probably just need to
13 probably reflect on this, but this could be another military -
14 DCF could also be a civilian area. But I do not accept that DCF
11:14:55 15 could have meant DFC. I'm going to be honest about it. This
16 could be maybe another - because we're talking about the SRSG,
17 which is a civilian post, and we just have to try to figure what
18 the DC - it could be a civilian post, but I'll leave it at that.

19 MR GRIFFITHS: Is it possible to move on?

11:15:27 20 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, move on, please, Mr Griffiths.

21 MR GRIFFITHS: Before we move on, Mr President, could I ask
22 that this report be marked for identification, please? So it's
23 General Jetly's report, MFI-131, please.

24 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked --

11:16:02 25 MS HOLLIS: Excuse me, but I don't --

26 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, Ms Hollis.

27 MS HOLLIS: I don't see anywhere where it says that this is
28 Jetly's report. Perhaps I misheard, but I don't see anything
29 that indicates this is General Jetly's report.

1 MR GRIFFITHS: Final page.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE: You are referring, Mr Griffiths, to the
3 e-mail address at the bottom?

4 MR GRIFFITHS: Yes.

11:16:31 5 MS HOLLIS: I don't see that as meaning that's his report,
6 necessarily. I don't know how it comes into being. So, perhaps
7 it is; perhaps it isn't. I don't know.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE: It is part of Mr Taylor's evidence that
9 it is Jetly's report, so, obviously, that's a matter that can be
11:16:48 10 handled in cross-examination, Ms Hollis.

11 MS HOLLIS: Thank you.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE: But that document is marked for
13 identification MFI-131.

14 MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful:

11:17:02 15 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, what that document we've just been looking
16 at, would you agree, appears to illustrate - is a degree of
17 tension between the Nigerian ECOMOG forces and the United Nations
18 forces, yes?

19 A. Yes.

11:17:30 20 Q. And it appears to suggest that the RUF combatants were
21 taking advantage of that tension at this time?

22 A. Yes, it appears that way, that they are taking advantage
23 because of what the - UN General Jetley believing that there is
24 this business relationship, and so people are not executing their
11:17:57 25 missions, yes.

26 Q. Now, in this month of May, you will recall that at
27 paragraph 7(g) of the report we've been looking at, mention is
28 made of demonstrators turned violent at Foday Sankoh's house.
29 This is on the third page of the document in the middle of the

1 page. Do you want to go back and remind yourself?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Do you see that?

11:18:43

4 JUDGE DOHERTY: Mr Griffiths, there are two 7Gs. It
5 confuses us all.

6 MR GRIFFITHS: Yes, there is. It's the G after the H that
7 I'm looking at:

8 Q. Do you have it, Mr Taylor?

11:19:01

9 A. I'm trying to find the G after the H. Yes, that's on the
10 third page, starting with the D at the top, your Honour, and
11 coming down to G.

12 Q. Yes?

13 A. Yes.

11:19:19

14 Q. The second G on that page, "when the demonstrators turned
15 violent at his house", to what does that refer?

16 A. Well, to the best of my recollection, this is referring to
17 the famous situation in Sierra Leone where Foday Sankoh's house
18 is stormed and he disappears that we hear about.

19 Q. It's a matter about which this Court has heard evidence?

11:19:47

20 A. That is correct.

21 Q. On 8 May 2000, there was an incident outside Foday Sankoh's
22 house on Spur Road during which shots were fired and members of
23 the public lost their lives, yes?

24 A. Yes.

11:20:02

25 Q. And his house was eventually stormed, and it resulted in
26 his arrest and incarceration?

27 A. That is correct.

28 Q. Now, at or about that time, Mr Taylor, was there any
29 difficulty involving UNAMSIL troops in Sierra Leone?

1 A. Yes. As a matter of fact, there were some problems before
2 then. Because I can remember about the very early part of May,
3 when this started with this disarmament process with those people
4 that were suppose to be having forcefully disarmed, I sent one of
11:20:53 5 our former foreign ministers, Mrs Cooper, to Freetown to meet
6 with President Kabbah and Foday Sankoh on this issue and to hear
7 of - in fact, she had left. We were trying to get the first
8 problem resolved when this second issue evolved about the 8th.
9 In fact, this was a very bad time, because we had just - if I'm
11:21:24 10 not mistaken, we were preparing for a Committee of Six meeting on
11 the problem when this happened. So I was very aware, because we
12 had tried to resolve it a few days before it took this particular
13 direction.

14 Q. Now, you say that you had dispatched Mrs Cooper to
11:21:54 15 Sierra Leone. Is that right?

16 A. That is correct.

17 Q. Now, was this something you had made public, Mr Taylor?

18 A. Oh, yes. Former foreign minister Cooper, the late Cooper,
19 went there. We had talked to President Kabbah. I sent her. She
11:22:14 20 met with Kabbah, met with Sankoh in trying to resolve the initial
21 problem. There was an ongoing problem before the storming of
22 this house up country.

23 Q. And what was problem up country?

24 A. Where some of the UNAMSIL people had been taken and we were
11:22:32 25 trying to get them released.

26 Q. And it was in that context, was it, that you send
27 Mrs Cooper to Sierra Leone?

28 A. That is correct.

29 Q. Tell me, was there a statement issued by the Liberian

1 government about this?

2 A. Oh, yes. It was a public situation. We issued - there was
3 a press release from the Government of Liberia about the dispatch
4 of Mrs Cooper to Freetown to meet with Kabbah and Sankoh in
11:22:59 5 trying to resolve the initial pop up of the UNAMSIL problem.

6 Q. Have a look in divider 44, please. Do you recognise that
7 document?

8 A. Yes, this is the early document. This is about May 4.
9 That's why I'm saying before that incident. Yes, this is the
11:23:29 10 document.

11 Q. We see it's headed "Republic of Liberia Minister of State
12 for Presidential Affairs Executive Mansion.

13 Press release.

14 Executive Mansion, Monrovia, Liberia, Thursday, 4 May 2000.

11:23:48 15 The President of Liberia has called for a total ceasefire in the
16 Sierra Leonean conflict and urged all parties to adhere to the
17 Lome accord. The President also said that the best way to solve
18 the Sierra Leone conflict is not through violence but dialogue.

19 According to an Executive Mansion release, the President
11:24:15 20 said it is for this reason that he has dispatched his special
21 negotiator, former Foreign Minister Mrs D Musuleng-Cooper, to
22 Freetown to open up dialogue for the amicable solution to the
23 Sierra Leonean crisis.

24 Part of Mrs Cooper's assignment, according to the
11:24:39 25 President, would be for the immediate cessation of hostilities,
26 the release of the remains of the UN peacekeepers allegedly
27 killed by the RUF fighters, the freeing of United Nations
28 peacekeepers being held hostage, and the release of their
29 weapons.

1 Mrs Musuleng-Cooper served as special envoy and chief
2 negotiator at the Lome conference last July, which brought about
3 the peace agreement on Sierra Leone."

4 Now, you already mentioned that, did you not, Mr Taylor?

11:25:15 5 A. That is correct.

6 Q. "Meanwhile, according to the release, President Taylor has
7 spent the last several days in constant contact with the United
8 Nations Secretary-General, a number of world leaders, and
9 authorities of the Economic Community of West African States
10 sub-region, particularly President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and
11 Corporal Foday Sankoh, in an attempt to solve the crisis."

12 Pause there. Were you doing that?

13 A. Oh, definitely. We would not put out a Presidential press
14 release on a lie. We had done all of this.

11:26:00 15 Q. "Moreover, calls have come from a number of western nations
16 calling on the Liberian leader to personally intervene in the
17 Sierra Leonean crisis in order to keep the peace process on
18 course."

19 Is that true?

11:26:18 20 A. Of course. This is 100 per cent true. Every time - and
21 this Court must believe this. Every time there is a problem
22 developing in Sierra Leone, I'm called immediately to do whatever
23 I can. Every time.

24 Q. You remember when we looked at that Mano River summit,
11:26:44 25 Mr Taylor, the report of that, yes, yesterday afternoon?

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. You remember there again that phrase appeared, "personally
28 get involved," do you remember?

29 A. That is correct.

1 Q. Now, that was a report dated March 2000. They requested
2 the President to get personally involved. Now, that was your
3 colleagues within the Mano River Union. Here it's western
4 nations. Which western nations?

5 A. You name the biggest of the biggest. Of course, the first
6 two governments that would be having their ambassadors call would
7 be the United States/Britain. United States/Britain. What is
8 Liberia doing? Convey to President Taylor that we expect his
9 leadership in this matter. This is a very serious issue. We
10 want him to do the best that he can. That's it. And you're busy
11 on the phone. In fact, this issue as it evolves - we will soon
12 stop, I'm sure - will show that it was so serious, I asked and
13 obtained a Falcon 900 jet from the Libyan government to help will
14 shuttle diplomacy in West Africa on this particular crisis here.

15 MR GRIFFITHS: Pause there. We'll come back to it. I note
16 the time.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, I think there is almost no tape
18 left. We'll adjourn now and resume at 12 o'clock.

19 [Break taken at 11.30 a.m.]

11:58:40 20 [Upon resuming at 12.00 p.m.]

21 PRESIDING JUDGE: Please continue, Mr Griffiths.

22 MR GRIFFITHS: May it please your Honours:

23 Q. Mr Taylor, before we adjourned we were looking at the
24 document behind divider 44. Could it be placed before the
12:00:11 25 witness again, please. I had invited your attention to the last
26 three lines of the press release which makes reference to:

27 "Calls have come from a number of western nations calling
28 on the Liberian leader to personally intervene in the Sierra
29 Leonean crisis."

1 Now help us, who was it who was asking you to become
2 personally involved?

3 A. The United States, Britain, other western countries.

4 Q. Your microphone isn't on, Mr Taylor.

12:01:08 5 A. I'm sorry.

6 Q. Right. Could you start again, please.

7 A. The United States through their embassy and their
8 representative Britain and other western governments, including
9 whoever who had a direct interest, would call upon me to use my
10 good offices to do whatever I could do get the crisis resolved.
11 They knew I was responsible in a way. By "responsible in a way",
12 I mean I was in charge of, not - okay.

13 Q. Let me pause for a moment here, Mr Taylor. Now, these were
14 the same people, the United States and Great Britain, whom you
15 had accused in the past of being involved in a conspiracy against
16 your country.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Do you remember that statement which was read out in
19 London?

12:02:00 20 A. That is correct.

21 Q. Yes?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And the same people who are now asking for you to get
24 involved in Sierra Leone, yes?

12:02:13 25 A. Yes, but more than that now, counsel. Even if we go back
26 to the original trips by the special envoy of President Clinton,
27 Reverend Jesse Jackson, and even what he said in trying to
28 resolve this matter about a year or so before then. So this is
29 an ongoing process where they are encouraging the involvement to

1 help to resolve the problem, yes.

2 Q. But what I'd like your assistance with is this
3 contradiction: That on the one hand, these countries are
4 accusing you of meddling in Sierra Leone, supplying the RUF with
12:03:00 5 arms and ammunition; and now on the other hand, they're asking
6 you to get involved. So how did you take that request coming
7 from them?

8 A. Well, frankly, I was hoping in that process that they were
9 coming to reason and that they were seeing in fact that what they
12:03:28 10 had been saying - since they really knew they had no proof - I
11 saw that as what you call a positive development in that they are
12 making these calls because somewhere in their minds they must
13 know they are saying the wrong things and they are beginning to
14 realise that there's no truth to what they are saying, and
12:03:54 15 they've realised that I'm playing a constructive role, so they
16 keep calling on me to do it. I didn't look at it from a negative
17 point. I looked at it just as I have explained it.

18 Q. Now, let us just pause for a moment, then, and take stock
19 of where we are in light of this request by a number of western
12:04:14 20 nations. Now, you recall, Mr Taylor, last week we dealt with the
21 transportation of the RUF delegation to Lome, yes?

22 A. That is correct.

23 Q. And the involvement of your government in that process?

24 A. Yes.

12:04:30 25 Q. And in the peace talks in Lome which took place thereafter?

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. And that whole process began in and around April of 1999,
28 didn't it?

29 A. That is correct.

1 Q. We're now just over a year later in May of the year 2000,
2 aren't we?

3 A. That is correct.

12:04:58

4 Q. So that for somewhere approaching 12 months - well, more
5 than 12 months, you have been directly involved and personally
6 involved in what's going on in Sierra Leone, yes?

7 A. That is correct.

12:05:22

8 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, you're aware, aren't you, that during this
9 same period it is alleged that you were, in effect, supplying and
10 arming the RUF in return for diamonds? What were you doing in
11 Sierra Leone during that 12-month period: Were you arming the
12 RUF in return for diamonds, or were you pursuing peace; which is
13 right?

12:05:45

14 A. I was pursuing peace, and they know I was pursuing peace.
15 Because if I had not been pursuing peace, for heaven's sake there
16 is no need for them to have called on me, and not just for Lome.
17 We did not just stop with Lome about what I did for Lome. After
18 Lome, immediately following Lome, in August what do we have? We
19 have a problem again. What is that problem? We have the Okra
20 Hills situation. Mr Taylor, here we have another problem. Okra
21 Hills with the West Side Boys, where some other UN personnel are
22 taken there, the peace process is about to start, we had to get
23 involved. They're calling upon me at that time. What do we do?
24 We manage to get Johnny Paul Koroma out of Sierra Leone into
25 Liberia, release all the UN people before - we're talking about
26 August now in 1999.

12:06:37

27 Q. But, Mr Taylor, suppose it's suggesting that, in effect,
28 that was just a cover, that you were really playing a double
29 game?

1 A. Well, my God, if they believe that, then there's something
2 wrong with them. Then I'm telling you that I can see why I'm
3 here, and this could be the same level of thinking that has got
4 me here fighting for my very life because of this type of what I
12:07:12 5 will call irrational thinking. How would anyone believe such a
6 thing? How could you believe that, okay, when - so, okay, I had
7 something to do with the West Side Boys. I know where Okra Hills
8 is in Freetown. Do I know? So we bring these people, you work
9 with me all along, diplomats are coming in and out, everything is
12:07:34 10 transparent. We resolve the matter. We get all of them involved
11 in putting this peace together finally to go to Freetown. When
12 Foday Sankoh finally comes to Monrovia to meet Johnny Paul
13 Koroma, who is involved? Everybody. United States ambassador
14 meets with Foday Sankoh. The United Nations representative,
12:07:56 15 other diplomatic representatives near Monrovia meet. All of this
16 is transparent. So they're using me - Obasanjo sends a
17 presidential plane to take them. We continue. We get into
18 another problem with disarmament, and I'm warning them all along
19 the way, okay, that I'm seeing some problems that we need to
12:08:17 20 address in this way and do that. Even when Sankoh begins to mess
21 up, I warn them again that I see some problems. I don't know how
22 people can think that way. I don't understand it. If they
23 thought that way, it's not just regrettable, but it's evil. I
24 just don't understand it. That's the best I can say. I do not
12:08:35 25 understand it.

26 Q. Now, as a result of this developing situation in Sierra
27 Leone, did you meet to discuss the situation with any of your
28 colleagues in the sub-region?

29 A. Yes. In fact, you asked this question just before we went

1 for break about this situation that starts on the 8th in Sierra
2 Leone. Immediately - in fact, as I recollect, we had a scheduled
3 meeting of the Committee of Six on Sierra Leone and that meeting
4 occurred on the very 9th, the next day after this problem in
12:09:28 5 Sierra Leone where the Committee of Six meets to discuss and all
6 of us are there. Kabbah is there. I'm there. In fact, I leave
7 Monrovia on about the same day of the 8th of this situation in
8 Sierra Leone, and we all meet for a Committee of Six meeting.

9 Q. Turn over the page, please, and have a look at the document
12:09:49 10 behind divider 45. We're not going to dwell overlong on this,
11 but we'll just pause and take a little diversion to look at
12 something here. What we have here behind this divider is what,
13 Mr Taylor?

14 A. This is the list of officials going to the Committee of Six
12:10:11 15 meeting in Abuja on the 9th.

16 Q. Now, I divert to look at this so that we can consider this
17 question: How much planning is involved in a President attending
18 a meeting such as this, Mr Taylor?

19 A. Serious planning. Weeks before you know the issues, you
12:10:32 20 know the agenda items that are supposed to be discussed, and this
21 again is about Sierra Leone. We don't know about this
22 development, but the developing situation with the UNAMSIL
23 soldiers that get killed up-country and all of that we already
24 know is an issue for discussion at this meeting, because this
12:10:56 25 happens - this particular situation up-country occurs a little
26 earlier than this, so - but we are not aware of the 8th
27 situation. It's not a part of the agenda, but it is discussed.
28 A lot of planning go through it. Security, advance parties,
29 foreign ministers on the phone. It's a lot of planning.

1 Q. And let's have a look at some of the individuals who
2 accompany you on this particular trip. There's your minister of
3 foreign affairs, Monie Captan, yes?

4 A. That is correct.

12:11:26 5 Q. Then we have your minister of defence Daniel Chea?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Your deputy minister for public affairs and your press
8 secretary?

9 A. That is correct.

12:11:38 10 Q. The special assistant to the President, yes?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And then we see a name which has cropped up many times in
13 this trial: Benjamin Yeaten, director of the SSS?

14 A. Yes.

12:11:51 15 Q. Musa Cisse, your chief of protocol?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Major General Musa N'jie, your senior aide-de-camp?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And your butler?

12:12:04 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Your religious leader?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And then we see Colonel Yanks Smythe?

24 A. Yes.

12:12:14 25 Q. Assistant director of the SSS?

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. Where is he from, Mr Taylor?

28 A. Colonel Yanks Smythe, Yanks is also a Liberian now but
29 originally Gambian.

1 Q. And how does he come to be your assistant director SSS?

2 A. Yanks Smythe is a naturalised Liberian now, but he's worked
3 with me for a number of years. He is one of the Special Forces
4 that were brought in all the way back at the beginning of the
12:12:55 5 crisis when Dr Manneh came to Liberia and he served with me very
6 closely throughout that time. Naturalised, married, got Liberian
7 children and he's worked - he's a very trained man.

8 Q. And then we see Richard Salebia, Edward Thomas, security, a
9 video cameraman and a still photographer, yes?

12:13:21 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Now, you go to the meeting and as we know, such meetings
12 conclude with a final communique, is that right?

13 A. That's is correct.

14 Q. Turn over the page, please, behind divider 46, and can I
12:13:39 15 pause to ask first of all that the press release of the Republic
16 of Liberia dated 4 May 2000 be marked for identification MFI-132.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE: That document is marked MFI-132.

18 MR GRIFFITHS: Grateful. And that the list of delegation
19 accompanying the President to Abuja, 9 May 2000, be marked for
12:14:13 20 identification MFI-133, please.

21 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, marked for identification MFI-133.

22 MR GRIFFITHS:

23 Q. Yes, now let's look at the final communique following the
24 summit of ECOWAS Heads of State, members of the committee on
12:14:32 25 Sierra Leone of the Lome Peace Agreement, Abuja, 9 May 2000. Now
26 let's go to the second page, please, Mr Taylor.

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. "At the initiative of the current ECOWAS chairman, His
29 Excellency Alpha Oumar Konare, President of the Republic of Mali,

1 a summit meeting of ECOWAS Heads of State, members of the joint
2 implementation committee of the Lome Peace Agreement on Sierra
3 Leone was held at the executive secretariat, Abuja, on Tuesday 9
4 May 2000.

12:15:13 5 Present at the meeting were: His Excellency General Robert
6 Guei, President of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire; His Excellency
7 General Lansana Conte, President of the Republic of Guinea;
8 yourself; His Excellency Alpha Oumar Konare, President of Mali;
9 President Obasanjo; President Kabbah; President Eyadema; and also
12:15:47 10 the Minister of State, Foreign Affairs, Mr Youssouf Oudraogo,
11 representing Blaise Compaore; and in the absence of President
12 Rawlings, His Excellency James Victor Gbeho, Minister of Foreign
13 Affairs. Is that right, Mr Taylor?

14 A. That is correct.

12:16:13 15 Q. Also in attendance the Secretary-General of the
16 Organisation of African Unity, the ECOWAS Secretary-General, and
17 the special representative of the Secretary-General of the United
18 Nations in Sierra Leone. That's Mr Adejini, isn't it?

19 "Heads of State deeply concerned about the latest
12:16:38 20 developments in Sierra Leone listened to the reports presented by
21 President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, President of the Republic of Sierra
22 Leone, and Ambassador Adejini, special representative of the
23 Secretary-General of the United Nations in Sierra Leone.

24 They strongly condemned the action of the Revolutionary
12:17:10 25 United Front rebels who had taken hostage soldiers of the United
26 Nations mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and called for the
27 immediate and unconditional release of the captured soldiers as
28 well as all their equipment, arms and ammunition. In this
29 regard, they approved the mandate given by the current ECOWAS

1 chairman and by the Heads of State of the Mano River Union to the
2 President of the Republic of Liberia, His Excellency Dankpannah
3 Dr Charles Ghankay Taylor, to involve himself personally to
4 ensure the liberation of the hostages and the resumption of the
12:17:59 5 application of the Lome Peace Agreement."

6 Pause there. "In this regard the mandate given to you."
7 Explain that to us, please, Mr Taylor?

8 A. It's always - remember I mentioned that we had met at the
9 Mano River Union meeting just before this, and I had said that I
12:18:28 10 was fed up and no longer wanted to be a part of any committees
11 and that that was it. They prevailed upon me to remain and then
12 at that meeting mandated me to get personally involved. Now,
13 that's at the Mano River Union level. That's the heads of state
14 of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. But also present at that
12:18:53 15 meeting, if we will recall, was the chairman of ECOWAS, Alpha
16 Oumar Konare.

17 So what is happening now is that now this is a bigger
18 delegation. If you see here, we have an expanded mini summit of
19 ECOWAS Heads of State, even though this was scheduled to be a
12:19:16 20 meeting of the committee on Sierra Leone, but it's expanded at
21 this level, and they are all seeing again all along the
22 contribution I have made, and they are aware of my anger and my
23 wanting to get out. I again say, "No, no, no, you can't, we
24 agree with our colleagues, get involved, make sure that this is
12:19:42 25 happening." This is what is going on.

26 Q. Now, why were you being given this particular mandate,
27 Mr Taylor?

28 A. Well, this goes all the way back to 1997. This is nothing
29 new. We get on the Committee of Five and we begin to work, and

1 my colleagues in ECOWAS, most of them are saying what maybe
2 people that are 15,000, 20,000 miles away are saying. They're
3 seeing it from two different levels. While on the outside people
4 are saying one thing, in ECOWAS it is not as it is being
12:20:24 5 interpreted out there. So they are calling upon me, based on the
6 work that I continued to do and the level of transparency
7 involved, because I'm not doing it alone.

8 This matter, just for you - you know, for the Court to
9 understand, UN soldiers being taken hostage is not a hush-hush
12:20:47 10 matter. There are telephone calls from almost diplomatic
11 mission, and especially the troop-contributing countries. In
12 this case there are just troops from Kenya, there are troops from
13 Uganda, if I'm not mistaken. In fact, not too long I'm sure the
14 Kenyan defence minister and a Parliamentary delegation come to
12:21:11 15 Liberia, former General Daniel Opande. So it's not a hush-hush
16 matter. Everybody is involved in trying to see who can best
17 resolve a problem. That's why they called upon me all the time.

18 Q. "Heads of State considered the hostage taking as a
19 deliberate violation of the Lome Peace Agreement which had been
12:21:33 20 painstakingly negotiated under the auspices of ECOWAS. Heads of
21 State warned the RUF leadership that it runs the risk of
22 revocation of the amnesty earlier granted to the members of the
23 movement under the Lome Peace Agreement as well as being tried
24 for war crimes if they continue to flout the Lome Peace
12:22:01 25 Agreement."

26 Now, that reference to them being tried for war crimes,
27 Mr Taylor, were you party to that suggestion?

28 A. Well, I didn't take it that way at the time. But I'm here
29 for that now, am I not? I didn't even figure from my wildest

1 dreams that I would be one of those that would be sitting before
2 the Court to answer questions for war crimes in Sierra Leone.
3 Because as far as I was concerned, I was working with my
4 colleagues. We were working together to bring about peace, and
12:22:35 5 my contribution is very clear from the United Nations reports,
6 from ECOWAS reports, from my colleagues. So I didn't think about
7 it at that time in that way.

8 Q. "Heads of State reaffirmed their total support for the
9 peace process in Sierra Leone as set out in the Lome Peace
12:22:57 10 Agreement, which remains the most appropriate framework for the
11 resolution of the armed conflict that has been responsible for so
12 much bloodshed in Sierra Leone for more than ten years.

13 Heads of State also reaffirmed that UNAMSIL's presence in
14 Sierra Leone is in accordance with the Lome Peace Agreement on
12:23:16 15 Sierra Leone, supported by the United Nations Security Council.
16 Consequently, UNAMSIL must be allowed to freely operate
17 throughout the territory of Sierra Leone without hindrance.

18 Heads of State considers as unacceptable all attempts to
19 challenge the provisions of the Lome Peace Agreement and
12:23:39 20 reaffirmed their determination to take every necessary measure to
21 counter any such attempt.

22 They announced that party leaders would be held personally
23 responsible for actions or behaviour of their supporters which
24 might undermine the peace process in Sierra Leone and delay the
12:24:01 25 return to stability in the country."

26 Pause. Who was that aimed at?

27 A. Well, I would say it must be aimed at those that were
28 responsible that were not working for peace. I didn't think it
29 was referring to me.

1 Q. Was it aimed at Foday Sankoh?

2 A. I'm sure. I'm sure it was aimed at Foday Sankoh and
3 probably a few other people, yes.

12:24:30

4 Q. "Heads of State expressed their determination to use all
5 means at their disposal, including the military option, to foil
6 any attempt to take over power through the use of force, by
7 ensuring the defence of democratic institutions in Sierra Leone.
8 To this end, they reiterated their unshakable determination to
9 restore peace to Sierra Leone by all means."

12:24:55

10 MR GRIFFITHS: Now, can I pause at this stage,
11 Mr President, because a difficulty arises at this stage. Because
12 if you turn over the page, you see that there's been a
13 photocopying error. Do you have a page which says "done in
14 Bamako on 2 March 2000"?

12:25:16

15 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes.

16 MR GRIFFITHS: Well, it's not the page which follows from
17 the page I've just been referring to. So we need to replace
18 that, and I will seek to do that, hopefully by this afternoon.
19 It's a photocopying error.

12:25:34

20 PRESIDING JUDGE: What are you proposing, Mr Griffiths?
21 That we leave this document for now and come back?

22 MR GRIFFITHS: Let's leave this document for now and come
23 back to it at a later stage:

24 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, we'll come back to that document later.

12:26:11

25 Now, Mr Taylor, earlier you told us that you had received a
26 letter from Issa Sesay, yes?

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. And we looked briefly at that document in the context of
29 that reference by you?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Now let us note the following: The meeting in Abuja takes
3 place on 9 and 10 May?

4 A. Yes.

12:26:43 5 Q. As we noted from the list of the delegation, yes?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Let us go behind divider 47 now, please. What is that?

8 A. Let me get to it.

9 Q. Behind divider 47?

12:27:07 10 A. Yes, this is a letter from General Issa Sesay.

11 Q. Dated, as we see, 11 May 2000?

12 A. That is correct. This is right after we return from the
13 Abuja meeting. We meet this letter complaining about attacks on
14 their forces by UNAMSIL and other complaints.

12:27:33 15 Q. As far as you're aware, Mr Taylor, did Mr Sesay or General
16 Sesay, to give him his full title, write to any other Head of
17 State?

18 A. I'm sure he did. I'm sure he did. This is just mine. I'm
19 sure he did.

12:27:49 20 Q. Now, what was Mr Sesay's status at this time, bearing in
21 mind that Foday Sankoh had been arrested following the incident
22 in Spur Road on 8 May?

23 A. At this time, quite frankly, I don't really know the direct
24 title. I know that he was the most senior general following the
12:28:22 25 departure of Sam Bockarie. So this would mean now he's probably
26 the commander of the forces on the ground. This is my
27 understanding at the time.

28 Q. And help us, by this date, 11 May 2000, had you met
29 Issa Sesay?

1 A. Never. Never had met him in my entire life. Never.

2 Q. Now, we see that the letter is addressed to you, President
3 of the Republic of Liberia:

4 "Dear Mr President, in view of the developments unfolding
12:29:07 5 in our country, the violations of the Lome Peace Accord by the
6 United Nations which attacked our positions at Makeni, Magburaka
7 and Lunsar, driving us to the current situation, the
8 non-compliance by President Kabbah and his government of the Lome
9 Peace Accord, refusing to appoint RUF representatives to
12:29:31 10 designated government positions, refusing to create a commission
11 to be chaired by the RUF, while insisting that the United Nations
12 maintain conditions creating a personal army minus RUF
13 participation, by including the other factions (Kamajors,
14 SLA-AFRC), refusing to issue a diplomatic passport to our leader
12:30:03 15 in his capacity as Vice-President of our country, plus numerous
16 other affronts, and despite repeated protests by our leader to
17 the international community, the United Nations and especially
18 the ECOWAS, we have never received the slightest response, even
19 negative.

12:30:20 20 It is in this environment of complete indifference and
21 abandonment by all parties the United Nations orchestrated and
22 executed their unwarranted attack on our positions.

23 Mr President, due to the inability of the United Nations to
24 guarantee our leader's security, as well as that of our other
12:30:46 25 members in Freetown, and the inability of the government to
26 control its own militias, Kamajors and SLA-AFRC, we now face a
27 situation that is more complicated than ever, especially with the
28 direct involvement of the British army."

29 What's that about, "the direct involvement of the British

1 army"?

2 A. Well, this is another track of the whole conflict. I think
3 we need to get it straight. You have now in Sierra Leone ECOMOG
4 forces. You have some combined with the UN forces, UNAMSIL. But
12:31:34 5 Britain decides that she's going to bring forces into Sierra
6 Leone, but they will not operate under UN auspices. They will
7 operate on their own. And so this is - now we have British
8 forces now on the ground too in Sierra Leone.

9 Q. And what are they doing?

12:31:53 10 A. I'm sure, like they always do, pursuing Britain's
11 interests. Because they were not part of the UN forces. They're
12 a permanent member of the Security Council that had approved
13 UNAMSIL forces in the country. They could have even commanded
14 those forces. They did not do that. They said they were not
12:32:18 15 going to be a part of the UNAMSIL under UN command, so they
16 brought their own forces. So I'm sure it was to pursue their own
17 interests.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE: What does that mean, pursuing their own
19 interests?

12:32:32 20 THE WITNESS: Well, your Honour, safeguarding British
21 investment, British personnel, their diplomats in the country,
22 because there was no other reason that they gave.

23 MR GRIFFITHS:

24 Q. "Mr President, we have the firm conviction that the
12:32:58 25 situation in our country can only be resolved by the ECOWAS and
26 not by the United Nations whose involvement was never envisaged
27 in the Lome Peace Accord."

28 Is that true?

29 A. Not altogether.

1 Q. Why do you say that?

2 A. Because we had envisaged some UN involvement in Sierra
3 Leone in Lome.

4 Q. Over the page, please:

12:33:39 5 "Here below, Mr President, are the demands we make on
6 behalf of our movement.

7 One, the unconditional release of our leader who we
8 consider to be detained by the United Nations."

9 Sankoh, of course, after the incident of Spur Road having
12:34:01 10 been kept in custody, yes?

11 A. Yes, it appears this way, yes.

12 Q. "The halt to the distribution of weapons to the militia by
13 the United Nations." Were you aware of any evidence of that?

14 A. No evidence. Just allegations.

12:34:24 15 Q. "The convening of an ECOWAS summit to restart the dialogue
16 with the participation of all parties.

17 Four, the immediate re-examination of the Lome Peace Accord
18 in Monrovia."

19 Were you amenable to that, Mr Taylor?

12:34:45 20 A. No. The meetings of Heads of State are decided among us
21 and I would probably - at this particular time, if it had been
22 requested by my colleagues, I wouldn't be opposed to holding one,
23 but the decision for when meetings are held is a matter that we
24 all decide. So this would not be something I would pay too much
12:35:11 25 attention to.

26 Q. "The creation of a National Council of State to govern the
27 country during a transition period until elections are held.

28 The complete disarmament of the country, including the
29 so-called national army, created by President Kabbah, comprising

1 the other factions, without the RUF.

2 The immediate cessation of hostilities followed by the
3 establishment of a verification committee directed by the
4 ECOWAS."

12:35:49 5 I suppose that should - at number eight should be "the
6 travel ban should be lifted on all RUF and walk forward to the
7 Lome Peace Accord.

8 Mr President, we are convinced that your mediation will
9 achieve an end to the war in our country, given your experience
10 and your abilities, which are recognised by all."

11 Pause there. Let's just examine that, shall we. Because
12 we know by this stage, Mr Taylor, you've got a mandate from
13 ECOWAS to get personally involved, yes?

14 A. Yes.

12:36:32 15 Q. Which has been repeated more than once, yes?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. We also know that certain western countries have also asked
18 you to get personally involved, yes?

19 A. Yes.

12:36:46 20 Q. Here we now have the RUF also asking you to get personally
21 involved, in effect, yes?

22 A. Yes, and I guess here, what we might point out too is, just
23 reiterating the recognised position historically that I have -
24 the part I have played coming throughout all of the agreements
12:37:13 25 from the ceasefire, coming to Lome on, I think it's a
26 recogni ti on.

27 Q. Which are recognised by all?

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. "Mr President, we are at your complete disposal to enable

1 you to bring peace back to our country. We assure you of our
2 complete cooperation as well as our profound desire to assist you
3 in attaining this objective.

4 Respectfully yours, General Issa Sesay, RUF field
12:37:46 5 commander."

6 Yes?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, can I pause at this point to inquire about
9 a detail. At the time of this letter, 11 May 2000, is the RUF
12:38:03 10 guesthouse in Monrovia still operational?

11 A. It is still operational, yes.

12 Q. Is it still staffed by RUF personnel?

13 A. Yes, there are a few individuals. Nobody of any
14 significance, but there are a few people there.

12:38:20 15 Q. On that note, Mr Taylor - now, given the passage of time,
16 it may be difficult to recall - can you recall now how this
17 letter was delivered to you?

18 A. This - well, this letter could have been faxed in because
19 the date of this letter, I am probably just returning from Abuja
12:38:52 20 because this meeting is from the 9th to the 10th. So this is
21 dated on the 11th. I could have gotten this letter maybe
22 sometimes even a little later than the date. I'm sure it would
23 have come through to my office. The date of this letter doesn't
24 definitely mean that I received it on the same date, but I'm sure
12:39:15 25 it probably came through maybe a fax to Monrovia to either maybe
26 the foreign ministry under Tambakai Jangaba. I don't - because I
27 don't see the stamp on it here, but I do know that's - I don't
28 see how it came through, but it had to come through after 11 May.

29 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Griffiths, your question was: Can you

1 recall now how this letter was delivered to you? I take it by
2 Mr Taylor's answer that he doesn't know. Is that correct?

3 THE WITNESS: Well, the way the question is asked, do you
4 recall how it was delivered to me, normally, a President receives
12:40:10 5 things through the ministry of state. I'm just trying to go
6 through the process here. This had to come through my office
7 through the ministry of state, but I do not know how it got into
8 the country.

9 MR GRIFFITHS:

12:40:21 10 Q. That's the specific aspect that I was inquiring about.
11 That's why I prefaced that question with the previous question
12 about whether the RUF guesthouse was still operational.

13 A. It was operational.

14 Q. And maybe it's my fault, and perhaps I ought to ask a more
12:40:40 15 direct question. Was it the case that this letter was delivered
16 by hand by someone coming over the border from RUF territory in
17 Sierra Leone? Do you know?

18 A. No, I don't know. I don't know. But it would not - it
19 would not be that way. It would not be that way. A letter of
12:41:00 20 this kind could probably be faxed in, okay. It could be faxed
21 in.

22 Q. Do you remember, Mr Taylor; yes or no?

23 A. No, I don't.

24 Q. Very well. In any event, we now have a situation where
12:41:18 25 you're being requested from a number of different viewpoints to
26 get involved.

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. And do you?

29 A. Yes.

1 Q. And what does that involve?

2 A. Well, I'm not sure how you want this handled, counsel, but
3 we have to put this in context of the time. Even though this
4 letter is coming, on the 8th, Foday Sankoh is arrested. I leave
12:41:52 5 Monrovia. By the 9th, 10th, ECOWAS has met on this particular
6 meeting. We've been briefed. There's a complaint written by the
7 11th to me also on this matter. What we do now, when I return to
8 Monrovia, because it's involving delicate matters now, I request
9 some assistance from the Libyan government in terms of an
12:42:18 10 aircraft because it involves a lot of shuttle diplomacy around
11 West Africa to resolve this matter.

12 After we conduct consultations with our colleagues -
13 because during this period a major question arises. What is it?
14 Foday Sankoh is now incarcerated. We have gotten a letter from
12:42:45 15 an individual calling himself the field commander. The RUF, for
16 all intents and purposes now, is without a leader. We don't know
17 who to talk to, and so consultations are held and decisions are
18 taken now as of May to get this Issa Sesay in to talk to.

19 Q. Into where?

12:43:10 20 A. Into Monrovia. In consultations with my colleague we
21 invite Issa Sesay, this field commander, to come to Monrovia for
22 consultations in getting the hostages released and pursuing Lome.
23 So this is generally the process that takes place.

24 Q. And did Mr Sesay come to Monrovia?

12:43:34 25 A. In May he made the first trip to Monrovia to discuss the
26 hostage release, yes.

27 Q. To your knowledge had he been to Monrovia before?

28 A. To my knowledge I would say definitely no. I had never
29 known of Issa Sesay coming to Monrovia, because I had never met

1 him. If he had, I did not know.

2 Q. And when he came to Monrovia in that month of May,
3 Mr Taylor, where did he stay?

4 A. He stayed right at the RUF guesthouse.

12:44:14 5 Q. And when he came, did he come by himself?

6 A. No, he brought several individuals. Normally as field
7 commander he travelled with a number of bodyguards to come to
8 Monrovia.

9 Q. And what was his purpose in coming to Monrovia?

12:44:30 10 A. To arrange the - to discuss the holding of the UN hostages
11 at this time, and we're talking about quite a few of them.

12 Q. Now, I just want to be sure that I understand. As you
13 mentioned earlier, Sankoh, by this stage, had been arrested?

14 A. Yes.

12:44:52 15 Q. So from the viewpoint of yourself and the other West
16 African leaders, would it be fair to depict the situation that
17 there was a vacuum at the top of the RUF?

18 A. It is not only fair, it is factual. This was our
19 discussions at the time, that there is a vacuum and in order to
12:45:18 20 solve this hostage problem - and let's expand it beyond the West
21 African leaders. Kofi Annan himself was on the phone with me
22 several times on these hostage matters.

23 Q. We'll come to Mr Annan in a moment.

24 A. Okay. So this is factual. This was our conclusion, that
12:45:36 25 there's a vacuum, we have to resolve this. In order to get these
26 hostages we must know, first of all, who to talk to and who is in
27 charge. Yes, that's what happened.

28 Q. So that's the purpose for Sesay coming to Monrovia?

29 A. Exactly.

1 Q. Was it to bring you diamonds, Mr Taylor?

2 A. Sesay came to Monrovia to talk about hostages, not to bring
3 me diamonds.

4 Q. Mr Taylor, you know why I ask --

12:46:08 5 A. I know why you ask. It's just that - I know why you ask,
6 but that was not the case. Only to come to discuss these
7 hostages and to see who was in charge and how can Lome continue
8 with Foday Sankoh now under arrest.

9 Q. Now, you spoke of the vacuum at the head of the RUF. Now,
12:46:32 10 as a result of your concerns about this situation in Sierra Leone
11 which you've expressed, Mr Taylor, did the Government of Liberia
12 release any press release at about this time?

13 A. Yes, we did about two or three. We talked - yes, about -
14 at least a minimum of two or more press releases. As we made
12:47:01 15 progress, we would announce the number of hostages, the
16 discussions that were ongoing, who was released from what
17 country. We did regular press releases on them at different
18 intervals.

19 Q. During this period?

12:47:12 20 A. That is correct.

21 MR GRIFFITHS: Now, before we come to the press release
22 could I ask, please, that the letter from Issa Sesay dated 11 May
23 2000 to President Taylor be marked for identification MFI-134,
24 please.

12:47:36 25 PRESIDING JUDGE: That document is marked MFI-134.

26 MR GRIFFITHS:

27 Q. Go behind the next divider, please, Mr Taylor, divider 48.
28 Do you have it?

29 A. Yes, I do.

1 Q. Now, we see that this is a press release dated 13 May 2000,
2 issued by the Republic of Liberia, Ministry of State For
3 Presidential Affairs, yes?

4 A. That is correct.

12:48:23 5 Q. Executive Mansion, Monrovia, Liberia, Saturday, May 13,
6 2000. So, Mr Taylor, we're talking about now, what, three days
7 after the Abuja meeting, which ended on the 11th?

8 A. That is correct.

9 Q. So what have you been concentrating on during this period
12:48:45 10 after you return from Abuja on 10 May?

11 A. How to resolve this problem in getting the UN hostages
12 released. Consulting, manoeuvring in whatever we could to try to
13 get this matter resolved, because this was a very serious matter
14 of more than - I think some 500 plus UN soldiers and others that
12:49:11 15 had been taken, and so I was very, very, very tied up with this
16 particular situation.

17 Q. Let's just pause for a moment and get clear in our minds
18 the sequence of events during that week. You're in Abuja on
19 Tuesday, 9 May, and you leave Abuja on the Wednesday, yes?

12:49:36 20 A. That is correct.

21 Q. On the Thursday you receive the letter - well, there's a
22 letter dated 11 May, the Thursday of that week, from General Issa
23 Sesay, yes?

24 A. Yes.

12:49:53 25 Q. We then have Friday and by the Saturday now, 13 May, this
26 press release is being put out, yes?

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. "The President of Liberia has expressed optimism that the
29 current United Nations hostage crisis in Sierra Leone will be

1 resolved.

2 According to an Executive Mansion release, the President
3 made the statement today following a round of intensive
4 negotiations with RUF representatives in Sierra Leone and a
12:50:23 5 series of high level consultations with the National Security
6 Council and opinion leaders in the Liberian society.

7 The President expressed concern over the whereabouts of
8 Foday Sankoh and the fact that he has not surfaced for a week
9 now. He, however, hoped that with the high level of involvement
12:50:45 10 in the process, some positive results will be forthcoming."

11 So at this stage, help us, "a round of intensive
12 negotiations with RUF representatives in Sierra Leone"; who's
13 that that we're talking about?

14 A. We're talking about Issa Sesay. He's still not in Liberia,
12:51:06 15 that's why it's in Sierra Leone. On the telephone, national
16 security people are really involved in these talks in trying to
17 negotiate where it is made very clear that these people must be
18 released.

19 Q. Now help us. Are you in telephone contact at this stage
12:51:26 20 then with the RUF?

21 A. At this stage for these negotiations I did speak to Issa
22 Sesay at least once and made it very clear to him that the United
23 Nations personnel had to be released unconditionally and voiced
24 the outrage of the international community about holding United
12:51:50 25 Nations personnel.

26 Q. Now, can we pause and just deal with one or two more
27 details regarding Mr Sesay. Now, you told us that you invited
28 him to Monrovia. Who did you speak to before issuing that
29 invite?

1 A. All of my colleagues knew.

2 Q. Give us the names, please?

3 A. The members of the committee knew. Kofi Annan knew.

4 Downes-Thomas, his representative in Monrovia knew, that because

12:52:23 5 of the issue that had been raised and agreed by all of us that

6 there was a question in Sierra Leone of who to deal with. Who do

7 we talk to? We had found the field commander and that he would

8 be invited to Monrovia to discuss this. The members of the

9 Committee of Six knew. In fact, other ECOWAS leaders that were

12:52:43 10 not a member of the committee were informed. The United Nations

11 personnel informed. The very United States embassy in Monrovia,

12 they knew. This is nothing secret. Every one of them knew that

13 he was coming to Monrovia for these negotiations. After he came

14 and when we made progress, we announced that we had made

12:53:04 15 progress.

16 Q. "The President expressed concern over the whereabouts of

17 Foday Sankoh."

18 Now, you recall, Mr Taylor, following the incident at Spur

19 Road, Mr Sankoh disappeared for a while before he was eventually

12:53:18 20 arrested. At this stage had he been detained as far as you're

21 aware?

22 A. I don't know. We don't - no one had any real information.

23 What had reached me, and I'm sure a lot of my other colleagues,

24 was that he couldn't be found. No one knew precisely over these

12:53:40 25 first few days. If he was in custody, I surely didn't know.

26 Q. Now, can I pause again and deal with another matter of

27 detail, please. Now, you tell us that General Sesay eventually

28 accepted the offer to come to Monrovia?

29 A. That is correct.

1 Q. And you told us that he stayed at the RUF guesthouse?

2 A. That is correct.

3 Q. Now, already in Liberia at this time, of course, is Sam
4 Bockarie?

12:54:15 5 A. That is correct.

6 Q. So where was Sam Bockarie and his combatants who he had
7 come with from Sierra Leone when Sesay gets there?

8 A. I have mentioned to this Court that Sam Bockarie was not up
9 put at the guesthouse. We were at a three - we leased a place I

12:54:39 10 mentioned in Paynesville where Sam Bockarie was placed. From

11 that guesthouse to where Sam Bockarie lived would be

12 approximately, I would say, three to four miles far apart. They

13 were - they did not come into contact at all. This is why that

14 guesthouse was there, but it was secured. Any time RUF personnel

12:55:04 15 came there, they were guarded by the Secret Service. So there
16 was no contact.

17 Q. Why didn't you want any contact between them?

18 A. Well, remember now when Bockarie went against Sankoh, Issa
19 Sesay took Sankoh's side, and I did state in evidence here that

12:55:31 20 rumours were that Issa Sesay was amassing to attack Bockarie. So

21 even though Bockarie left in December not under direct gunfire,

22 but there was some animosity between them. So there was no

23 reason for them to get together.

24 Q. Okay. Now you mentioned earlier, Mr Taylor, that amongst

12:55:59 25 those whom you consulted with at this time was the

26 Secretary-General of the United Nations. Is that correct?

27 A. Yes, through his representative, yes.

28 Q. That being Kofi Annan?

29 A. That is correct.

1 Q. Look behind divider 49, please. What's this?

2 A. This is the statement that was released by Kofi Annan on my
3 role played in beginning the process of releasing the hostages.

12:56:49

4 Q. Now, let's look closely at the details of this document
5 bearing in mind the chronology starting from the Tuesday, the
6 9th, yes?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. The press release we've just looked at by the Liberian
9 government is the Saturday, that's the 13th?

12:57:03

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. This document now, "press release by the
12 Secretary-General", is on the Monday, the 15th, yes?

13 A. That is correct.

12:57:17

14 Q. So events are happening fairly rapidly over these days,
15 aren't they, Mr Taylor?

16 A. That is correct.

17 Q. "Secretary-General acknowledges Liberian President's role
18 in peacekeepers' release."

12:57:31

19 The following statement was issued today by the spokesman
20 for Secretary-General Kofi Annan:

21 The Secretary-General would like to acknowledge the
22 important role played by President Charles Taylor of Liberia in
23 the release of detained United Nations peacekeepers in Sierra
24 Leone. 139 peacekeepers are in Liberia today and will soon be
25 brought back into the mission area in Sierra Leone.

12:57:59

26 The Secretary-General will shortly be talking with
27 President Taylor, who has been tasked by West African governments
28 to facilitate the release of the United Nations detainees.

29 He is gratified by the progress made thus far and will

1 encourage President Taylor to press on until the roughly 350
2 remaining detainees held by the Revolutionary United Front are
3 freed and their weapons and equipment recovered."

4 Yes, Mr Taylor?

12:59:05

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. So Kofi Annan knew you were involved?

7 A. Of course, Kofi - yeah, of course, he knew. Yes.

8 Q. And why you were involved?

9 A. Yes.

12:59:18

10 Q. And, Mr Taylor, tell me, when you met with Issa Sesay to
11 discuss this, the release of these peacekeepers, over 400 of
12 them, what did you say to him?

13 A. I was very firm. I had never met the gentleman before, as
14 I said, but I was very firm because I was not just speaking as

12:59:46

15 Charles Taylor. I was speaking for ECOWAS; I was speaking for
16 the African Union; I was speaking to a great deal for the UN at
17 that time in, really, conveying to the RUF what were the demands
18 of the international community. We use the word "negotiations",
19 but I was very firm. I told Issa, "Listen, the worst place to
20 play with is the United Nations. To hold UN hostages, this is so
21 stupid and so crazy." In fact, I regret so much that the late D
22 Musuleng-Cooper is dead because when this first started, the
23 message that I sent to Foday Sankoh in Freetown by D
24 Musuleng-Cooper, she would have been the best person to convey.

13:00:50

25 I was very upset because I felt it was stupid, you know, for them
26 to be doing what they were doing. And I made it very clear to
27 Issa that the United Nations people had to be released
28 unconditionally and any other discussions had to be held after,
29 but, first and foremost, release the UN people, release the

1 bodies of the soldiers that had been killed, release their
2 weapons. And this was the demand of the international community
3 and that had it to be done. This was not a friendly chat between
4 Issa and myself. I didn't know him before, and that's what I
13:01:19 5 told him.

6 Q. What was his response?

7 A. Well, he brought - he mentioned almost the same thing that
8 he had mentioned in the letter, that the leader is being held by
9 the UN. I said that was not my concern. My concern, "You don't
13:01:31 10 take hostages. Release the people. And if you release the
11 people, this matter, ECOWAS will be prepared to look into your
12 discussions. I will ask for a Heads of State meeting to discuss
13 some of the issues that you are complaining about, but that comes
14 later." And true to my word, I did request a meeting which
13:01:56 15 happens later in May. By the last week in May, a formal ECOWAS
16 full meeting is called to again discuss a Sierra Leone based -
17 this is during our what we call, I think it's the Silver Jubilee,
18 but it is raised.

19 But this was not something where two friends were meeting,
13:02:17 20 talking. He received it straight. He appeared - and I must
21 admit, he appeared to be slightly - I mean, an intelligent young
22 man, and he understood where the international community was
23 going. And he said that he would go back, and he was not the
24 leader, but he would discuss it with their council and that they
13:02:38 25 would release the UN personnel.

26 Q. Now, did you see Mr Sesay again thereafter in 2000,
27 Mr Taylor?

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. When?

1 A. Because of the question of leadership in the RUF and the
2 international community not knowing what to do, I convened a
3 meeting of Heads of State in Monrovia in July, a few months - in
4 July in Monrovia to discuss the matter of Sierra Leone, where
13:03:21 5 several Heads of State attended that meeting to discuss the
6 leadership of the RUF and who do we talk to. In July. That was
7 the second time that I saw him. He was invited to that meeting
8 and he met all of the Heads of State in Monrovia in July.

9 Q. And we'll come to it. But just to give us a preview, what
13:03:40 10 was the upshot of that meeting?

11 A. Well, you know, we had the hostages released and we just
12 wanted to make sure that we had a leader.

13 Q. And so was there any change in status for Mr Sesay
14 following that meeting?

13:04:09 15 A. Definitely. Definitely. The discussions that we had been
16 holding with Issa Sesay, up to that, he was not the leader of the
17 RUF. Following that meeting - and maybe when we get to it, I
18 don't want to go beyond the question that you asked, but later on
19 Sesay becomes the leader and the ECOWAS, myself and two other
13:04:32 20 Heads of State present later on in August name Issa Sesay as
21 leader of the RUF. ECOWAS.

22 Q. Who named him?

23 A. ECOWAS. Present at that meeting, Obasanjo of Nigeria; the
24 chairman of ECOWAS, Alpha Konare; and Charles Taylor at Roberts
13:04:53 25 International Airport in August of 2000 following the approval of
26 Foday Sankoh. And this, we will come to that. Following the
27 approval of Foday Sankoh, named Issa Sesay as leader of the RUF,
28 unlike what I have heard that "Charles Taylor designated Issa
29 Sesay". That is not true.

1 Q. We'll come to it, but let's not get too far ahead of
2 ourselves.

3 MR GRIFFITHS: Before we move on, can I ask, please, that
4 the press release by the Government of Liberia, dated 13 May
13:05:26 5 2000, be marked for identification MFI-135, please.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE: That document is marked MFI-135.

7 MR GRIFFITHS: And the press release by the
8 Secretary-General of the United Nations on 15 May 2000 be marked
9 for identification MFI-136, please.

13:05:53 10 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, marked MFI-136.

11 MR GRIFFITHS:

12 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, you mentioned that the Libyan government
13 had kindly assisted your peace efforts with the provision of an
14 aircraft?

13:06:33 15 A. That is correct.

16 Q. Go behind the next divider, please. Now, we see here, do
17 we not, a press released dated 16 May 2000. Is that right?

18 A. That is correct.

19 Q. Issued again by the Republic of Liberia, Minister of State
13:06:51 20 for Presidential Affairs. Is that correct, Mr Taylor?

21 A. That is correct.

22 Q. "The President of Liberia will today hold a special press
23 briefing on developments regarding the freeing of United Nations
24 hostages and his efforts to broker resolution of the Sierra
13:07:08 25 Leonean crisis.

26 According to an Executive Mansion release, the briefing
27 will be held in the parlours of the Executive Mansion at 3 p.m.
28 all heads of National Security Agencies, local and international
29 correspondents and the Executive Mansion press corps are expected

1 to be seated by 2.30 p.m.

2 Meanwhile, the government has extended thanks to the
3 Government of Libya for providing a Falcon 900 executive jet to
4 assist in carrying out its shuttle diplomacy throughout the
13:07:49 5 sub-region in fulfilment of the ECOWAS mandate.

6 In another development, the Kenyan government is sending a
7 special delegation to Liberia later this week to hold discussions
8 with the Liberian government on the Sierra Leonean crisis. The
9 delegation includes the Kenyan defence minister, the former head
13:08:16 10 of UNOMIL, General Daniel Opande, and two members of the Kenyan
11 parliament. A large contingent of Kenyans are among the UN
12 hostages being held in Sierra Leone."

13 Tell us, Mr Taylor, apart from the provision of the Falcon
14 900 executive jet, did you receive any other assistance from the
13:08:46 15 Government of Libya?

16 A. During this - well, yes, in terms of they did not - they
17 bought the fuel at the various stopovers. To that extent, yes.
18 They assisted in providing fuel for the movement throughout the
19 region.

13:09:10 20 Q. And the talks with that Kenyan government delegation, they
21 were held in Monrovia, were they?

22 A. Yes, they were held in Monrovia.

23 Q. And what was the upshot of that?

24 A. Well, because there were Kenyan soldiers involved in that
13:09:31 25 they had been taken hostage, General Opande - we see UNOMIL -
26 General Opande, when he was commander before of UN forces in
27 Liberia and we knew him very well, and I guess the Kenyan
28 government felt that someone like Opande that knew Liberia and
29 had made a lot of friends in Liberia would be somebody good to

1 come. And he came along with some members of the parliament to
2 just probably renew old links and meet with him, because I knew
3 him personally.

13:10:24 4 Q. Now, by this stage, as we noted from the press release put
5 out by the Secretary-General, there were still over 300
6 peacekeepers still being detained?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Is that right, Mr Taylor?

9 A. That is correct.

13:10:36 10 Q. So were there ongoing efforts being made to secure their
11 release?

12 A. Yes, yes. We were doing it in some way piecemeal. And as
13 we got them, we released them. And it was ongoing.

14 Q. And help us, Mr Taylor, on that topic. As they were
13:11:03 15 released - no. Let me start again.

16 What arrangements were made for their transport?

17 A. As they were released, the United Nations had UN
18 helicopters available.

19 Q. Where?

13:11:24 20 A. In Liberia.

21 Q. Yes.

22 A. The United Nations sent helicopters. In fact, they came
23 across the border from Sierra Leone into the Foya area that we've
24 talked about, and we used - by this time, we had a small
13:11:43 25 helicopter that we were using. The UN provided, I think, two or
26 so helicopters to keep ferrying them to Monrovia. The injured
27 ones, we took care of in our hospitals. We sent doctors and
28 nurses to take care of them as they came. But the UN was
29 involved.

1 As they came into Liberia, the UN was involved in their
2 movement to Monrovia, Spriggs Payne Airport, and they made
3 aircrafts available there to fly them from Spriggs Payne Airport,
4 and that's in the record, in Monrovia on to Lungi.

13:12:18 5 Q. So that they'd been ferried by helicopter from Foya to
6 Spriggs Payne and then on to Sierra Leone?

7 A. That is correct.

8 Q. So they there would then be helicopters landing in Foya?

9 A. Definitely. Yes, yes, yes.

13:12:36 10 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Excuse me, Mr Griffiths. These hostages
11 were released from where - or, rather, where were they handed to
12 the authorities?

13 THE WITNESS: Okay, your Honour. These hostages, from what
14 we understand, were being held in, I think, Kailahun. I don't
13:13:02 15 know the Sierra Leone towns very well across the border. Some
16 400 or 500 of them. They would drive them to the Liberian border
17 at a place we've mentioned, Mendekoma, and hand them over at
18 Mendekoma. They would be driven to Foya and airlifted from Foya
19 to Monrovia. Mendekoma is the last border point in our evidence
13:13:23 20 between Sierra Leone and Liberia.

21 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: So they were handed to who exactly?

22 THE WITNESS: The Liberian authorities.

23 MR GRIFFITHS:

24 Q. And then handed over to whom?

13:13:32 25 A. To the UN.

26 MR GRIFFITHS: Before I move on, that press release by the
27 Government of Liberia dated 16 May 2000, can I ask that that be
28 marked for identification, please, MFI-137.

29 PRESIDING JUDGE: Marked MFI-137.

1 MR GRIFFITHS:

2 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, had the taking of these hostages resulted
3 in any conflict within Sierra Leone?

13:14:31

4 A. Well, conflict as far as the delay of the peace process, I
5 would say, yes. And even internally the Johnny Paul Koroma
6 people were very upset by all of this, so that's the only little
7 part that I know. Because remember, I had already done an
8 analysis on Johnny Paul Koroma. To that extent I can say there
9 was some disagreements, because Johnny Paul now and the SLA - or
10 what they were calling themselves at this particular time - was
11 not very happy with what they claimed the RUF was doing at this
12 time to the best of my knowledge.

13:14:56

13 Q. Now, you mentioned that there were a number of press
14 releases issued by your government during this period, Mr Taylor?

13:15:16

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Is that right?

17 A. That is correct.

18 MR GRIFFITHS: Could I ask that everyone takes up now,
19 please, volume 2 of 4 for week 33. Mr President, I wonder whilst
20 we're sorting out the papers, if Mr Taylor could leave the room
21 briefly for the usual reason.

13:16:11

22 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, certainly. He can be escorted out.

23 MR GRIFFITHS:

24 Q. Yes?

13:19:13

25 A. Yes.

26 Q. Do you recognise that document?

27 A. Yes, I do.

28 Q. What is it?

29 A. This is really one of, I think, two documents that we

1 issued about this time on the - asking for a ceasefire and the
2 whole hostage problem.

3 Q. Now, we see that it's dated 22 May 2000, yes?

4 A. Yes.

13:19:39 5 Q. And it reads as follows:

6 "The President of Liberia has reiterated his call to all
7 parties in the Sierra Leone conflict for an immediate ceasefire
8 in order to allow his mediation efforts at freeing the remaining
9 hostages to proceed without difficulties."

13:20:04 10 What was going on, Mr Taylor, which you're describing
11 there?

12 A. The fighting. Attacks. The UN and ECOMOG forces are in
13 full blast and there are attacks from them, attacks by the RUF on
14 them. It's a very scary situation because you have hundreds of
13:20:27 15 hostages; where do you keep them? The chances of more lives
16 being lost exists, and so I'm trying to say well, let's - try and
17 cool it, let's get the hostages out, you know, before you
18 continue this.

19 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, before we go further with this document,
13:20:46 20 can I ask you something? Tell me, this jet which you'd been
21 provided with by the Libyan government, where were you travelling
22 to by use of that jet?

23 A. Well, "you", I hope is not just me personally. It was for
24 the use. So that is being used by the foreign minister; not
13:21:16 25 necessarily me. I hardly move again. But it's for the
26 mediation. So the foreign minister is mostly moving up and down
27 consulting. That would be Nigeria, that would be Bamako, that
28 would be Accra.

29 Q. Freetown?

1 A. I want to believe he went to Freetown, but it was a
2 shuttling. He had to - he should have gone there, I would say.
3 I don't quite recall if he stopped into Freetown, but I see no
4 reason why he would not have. But it was a shuttle, you know,
13:21:51 5 diplomacy. I don't remember the exact end of the reports in a
6 number of countries, but several countries were - I'm sure he
7 went to The Gambia. I'm sure he went to The Gambia.

8 Q. Why to The Gambia?

9 A. Because we are now talking about this leadership problem,
13:22:10 10 and we wanted to get as many countries involved, in fact, and to
11 extend an invitation to the President of The Gambia to be present
12 at this meeting in July, which he attends.

13 Q. "According to an Executive Mansion release, the President
14 has expressed his dissatisfaction over the slow pace of the
13:22:33 15 release of the United Nations hostages owing to the continuing
16 attacks against the Revolutionary United Front by government
17 forces.

18 'The longer these attacks are carried out,' the Liberian
19 leaders said, 'the more difficult it will become in mediating a
13:22:52 20 successful release of the remaining hostages.'

21 He is therefore calling on the United Nations and the
22 international community to impress upon the Sierra Leonean
23 authorities the prudence of a ceasefire for the success of his
24 mediation efforts."

13:23:12 25 Yes, Mr Taylor?

26 A. Yes.

27 MR GRIFFITHS: Now, you say there were a number of press
28 releases at this time. Before I move on could I ask, please,
29 that the press release by the Government of Liberia dated 22 May

1 2000 be marked for identification MFI-138, please.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE: That document is marked MFI-138.

3 MR GRIFFITHS:

13:23:54

4 Q. Now, you said there were a number of such press releases
5 during this period, Mr Taylor?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Go behind divider 52, please. Do you recognise that
8 document?

13:24:12

9 A. Yes, this is the one now that is - what I mentioned before
10 that gets into nationalities and areas where the peacekeepers are
11 coming from, the numbers released. This is a detailed account
12 now.

13:24:37

13 Q. Okay. "Monrovia, Liberia, May 2, 2000. Fifty-four
14 additional United Nations hostages have been released by the RUF
15 in Sierra Leone and given passage through Liberian territory.
16 This brings to 204 the number of UN peacekeepers set free to date
17 since President Taylor was given the mandate to mediate their
18 release by the ECOWAS authority.

13:25:02

19 According to an Executive Mansion release, the 54 UN
20 personnel arrived by helicopter in Monrovia late Sunday evening
21 from Foya, Lofa County, after being airlifted from Sierra Leonean
22 territory.

13:25:26

23 Three of the United Nations soldiers, who were badly
24 wounded on arrival, received medical care by Liberian doctors,
25 while all the others were given routine check-ups and supplied
26 Liberian army uniforms before being turned over to the United
27 Nations authorities.

28 Detailed information on the statistics, including
29 nationality and rank of the released UN peacekeepers, has been

1 made available by the Liberian government as follows:

2 Out of the 204 personnel, 180 are Zambians, 22 are Kenyans,
3 one Malaysian, one Norwegian. In terms of rank, there is one
4 naval commander, seven majors, 13 captains, ten lieutenants, 15
13:26:17 5 staff sergeants, 24 sergeants, 50 corporals, 39 lance-corporals,
6 and the rest are privates and troopers.

7 Commenting on the latest development, President Taylor said
8 he is optimistic that more hostages will be released in the
9 coming days in spite of the difficulties of the mediation process
13:26:42 10 and the logistical problems faced by the Liberian mediators."

11 What were those logistical problems?

12 A. How to get the hostages that were released inside Sierra
13 Leone - how to get them out because of the fighting. This was a
14 major challenge for us, how to get them out, because in the
13:27:09 15 process you could fall into an ambush. So it was a very
16 difficult process for us.

17 Q. And tell us, Mr Taylor, during this time you've spoken of
18 Issa Sesay having coming to Liberia to meet with you, yes?

19 A. Yes.

13:27:25 20 Q. And you speak of a further visit by him in July, yes?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Is the visit in July the second visit he makes?

23 A. Yes, that's the second visit.

24 Q. Now, in between times how is this mediation process being
13:27:41 25 conducted if he's not in Liberia?

26 A. It's mostly by telephone and by radio.

27 Q. And are you directly involved in that process, or what?

28 A. No, no, no. We have mediators. No. At the beginning of
29 the crisis, before Issa comes, I speak to him by phone. The RUF

1 has phones over there. They have radios. There is a radio also
2 at their guesthouse in Monrovia. So following that particular
3 time, it's just the mediators that are involved. I don't get
4 involved again unless there a hitch up. But I don't talk to Issa
13:28:23 5 again until he comes to Monrovia in July.

6 Q. All right. So just so that we're clear, you speak to him
7 initially on the phone?

8 A. That is correct.

9 Q. He then visits Monrovia in May?

13:28:32 10 A. That is correct.

11 Q. Thereafter, the negotiations are being conducted by
12 mediators, not by you personally?

13 A. That is correct.

14 Q. And the next time you have contact with him is in July?

13:28:44 15 A. Yes.

16 Q. "The Liberian leader praised the United Nations
17 Secretary-General Special Representative Felix Downes-Thomas and
18 his staff for their cooperative efforts in airlifting, processing
19 and transferring the freed hostages back to Freetown.

13:29:05 20 The President, however, lamented the lack of assistance
21 from the United States government, which he said is surprising in
22 view of that country's often expressed concern for humanitarian
23 assistance and interest in the protection of human rights."

24 Pause there. Did you get any assistance from the United
13:29:30 25 States?

26 A. No, we did not. I guess I was just --

27 Q. That answer will do, Mr Taylor, because I note the time.

28 PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you, Mr Griffiths. We'll break for
29 lunch now and resume at 2.30.

1 [Lunch break taken at 1.30 p.m.]

2 [Upon resuming at 2.30 p.m.]

3 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, please go ahead, Mr Griffiths.

14:29:21

4 MR GRIFFITHS: Yes. Mr President, can I deal with some
5 housekeeping matters before we resume.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes.

14:29:40

7 MR GRIFFITHS: You will recall that we were looking at the
8 final communique following the 9 May summit of ECOWAS Heads of
9 State in Abuja, the last page of which had been photocopied
10 wrongly.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes.

14:30:11

12 MR GRIFFITHS: Well, can I ask, please, that we dispose of
13 that rogue page and replace it with the page which is now being
14 handed out. So it goes behind divider 46. We remove the current
15 last page and replace it with this page. It's in the previous
16 binder. As I say, we can dispose of the rogue page.

14:31:17

17 Now, for completeness then, can we just look at the
18 continuation of the document. When we initially looked at this
19 document we stopped at the end of paragraph 12 on the penultimate
20 page. So going on then to paragraph 13:

14:31:43

21 "They also expressed concern over the situation of the
22 civilian population and humanitarian organisations and issued an
23 appeal that urgent measures be taken to ensure their protection
24 inside Freetown and throughout Sierra Leone. In this regard, the
25 Heads of State warned that any invasion of the capital Freetown.

26 They expressed their gratitude to the United Nations
27 organisation for its efforts to restore peace to Sierra Leone and
28 welcomed the close cooperation between the OAU and ECOWAS
29 throughout the negotiation process leading to the adoption of the

1 Lome Peace Agreement.

2 They expressed their gratitude to member states which have
3 contributed troops to ECOMOG in Sierra Leone. They paid homage
4 to the memory of the soldiers who had lost their lives on the
14:32:20 5 battlefield while defending democracy and peace in the
6 sub-region."

7 And then they requested the special representative of the
8 Secretary-General in Sierra Leone to transmit immediately to the
9 UN Secretary-General all the decisions taken at the summit and
14:32:45 10 there was to be a further meeting of defence and chiefs of staff
11 on 17 May 2000 in Abuja and I don't think there is any need to
12 deal with the remainder of that.

13 Now, having done that, Mr President, can I now ask, please
14 that the final communique dated May 2000 following the summit of
14:33:13 15 ECOWAS Heads of State in Abuja on 9 May be marked for
16 identification, please, is it 139?

17 PRESIDING JUDGE: 139 is correct, Mr Griffiths. That
18 document is marked MFI-139.

19 MR GRIFFITHS: I am grateful. Finally, Mr President, I
14:33:38 20 think we can put this volume away for now and revert to volume 2
21 which we were looking at before the luncheon adjournment:

22 Q. Now, before the luncheon adjournment, Mr Taylor, we were
23 looking at a press release behind divider 52, yes?

24 A. Yes.

14:34:27 25 Q. And we had almost finished going through this document.
26 Indeed, we had gone through to the second paragraph:

27 "The President, however, lamented the lack of assistance
28 from the United States government, which he said is surprising in
29 view of that country's often expressed concern for humanitarian

1 assistance and interest in the protection of human rights.

2 Securing the release of the UN hostages from Sierra Leone
3 is a tedious and costly undertaking, the President added. This
4 burden should not be borne by the Liberian people alone, but
14:35:16 5 shared by all member states of the United Nations, particularly,
6 the major western democracies."

7 Did you, in the event, receive any assistance from any of
8 these bodies, Mr Taylor?

9 A. No, not exactly. From the UN, yes, but the other
14:35:38 10 individuals you have spoken about. The UN and Libya, yes.

11 MR GRIFFITHS: Can I inquire, Mr President, whether
12 your Honours have behind this page another copy of the same
13 document? Has it been duplicated?

14 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, it's been duplicated.

14:36:01 15 MR GRIFFITHS: I have no intention of marking the second
16 copy for identification, so of course we can remove that.

17 Now, before I go on, can I ask that this press release,
18 bearing the same date as the previous press release we looked at,
19 22 May, dealing with the disposition of those UNAMSIL soldiers
14:36:34 20 released by the RUF be marked for identification MFI-140, please.

21 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-140.

22 MR GRIFFITHS:

23 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, if we just go back, please, behind divider
24 1 to an earlier document we had looked at, this earlier press
14:37:00 25 release - no, behind divider 51, looking at the earlier - the
26 press release for the 22 May, yes?

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. You see that in the last paragraph, the release says this:
29 "Is therefore calling on the United Nations and the

1 international community to impress upon the Sierra Leonean
2 authorities the prudence of a ceasefire for the success of his
3 mediation efforts."

14:37:40 4 Now, help us, Mr Taylor. Did that provoke any kind of
5 response from the Sierra Leonean government?

6 A. Yes, it did. President Kabbah issued a press statement to
7 counter what we had said here, saying that in fact what we were
8 saying about Sierra Leonean forces attacking the RUF was not
9 true, but still thanked me for all the work that I'm doing.

14:38:05 10 Q. Now, as we have noted, the press release we have just
11 looked at is dated 22 May, yes?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Now, this press release from President Kabbah, do you
14 recall now when it was dated?

14:38:24 15 A. Yes. The exact date, it come a little after here. I would
16 put it to about a little later, a few days before the end of May
17 he responds.

18 Q. And his response, was that a public document?

19 A. Yes. He responded publicly. It's an official - what he
14:38:55 20 did was, from himself, normally - this was a presidential
21 response that he said categorically that what I had alleged was
22 not true, but went on to say, well, he thanked me very much
23 because we had been doing a very good job in releasing the
24 hostages and we should continue. But it was his personal
14:39:19 25 response.

26 Q. Let's look behind divider 54, please. Let's look at the
27 second page that document. Do we see the letterhead of the
28 Sierra Leonean government?

29 A. Yes, yes.

1 Q. And is the document headed "Office of the President,
2 government statement, 23 May 2000"?

3 A. Yes.

14:39:59

4 Q. So this is the day after that press release by your
5 government?

6 A. He responded immediately, yeah.

7 Q. Government statement, 23 May, 2000:

14:40:14

8 "Government wishes it is to be known that it has seen the
9 press release issued by the Government of Liberia indicating that

10 the Sierra Leone government forces are attacking the RUF

11 positions in our country. This is not true. Government further

12 wishes to make it known that it has only been defending its

13 positions and that in defending the position of its forces, they

14 have used the defensive strategy of taking over any position from

14:40:38

15 which an attack has been launched on the position of its forces

16 in order to neutralise the capacity of the enemy to continue

17 attacking from that position.

18 Government does not, therefore, see the connection between

19 defending the position of its forces and the release of the UN

14:40:59

20 peacekeepers who were illegally abducted. It should be recalled

21 that the ECOWAS Heads of State, and indeed the entire

22 international community at large, had indicated that there should

23 be no precondition for the release of United Nation peacekeepers

24 who are to be released without delay. This global position was

14:41:22

25 indeed endorsed by President Charles Taylor at a recent ECOWAS

26 summit in Abuja.

27 The Government of Sierra Leone wishes to acknowledge the

28 positive role which President Taylor of Liberia has already

29 played in securing the release of some of the UNAMSIL hostages.

1 It is the wish of government to continue to cooperate in
2 whatever way possible with President Charles Taylor of Liberia to
3 ensure that he carries out fully the mandate entrusted to him by
4 the ECOWAS Heads of State with the hope that lasting peace will
14:42:07 5 finally return to Sierra Leone, the Mano River Union and the West
6 African sub-region. "

7 Now, that swift response from President Kabbah, Mr Taylor,
8 was there any further exchange of correspondence between the two
9 of you on this topic?

14:42:36 10 A. Yes. I would say about another week and a half, a little
11 later on, I write him because this is the open-ended - this is
12 the open part of this, all these niceties, but under there we
13 still have little difficulties. So I write him a full letter
14 later on detailing and reminding him of how we had been
14:43:12 15 cooperating and how I would expect for us to keep cooperating and
16 reminding him of telephone conversations that he has held with me
17 from my office where he spoke to Sam Bockarie and raising some
18 other things as reminders to him that he would not forget.

19 Q. We will come to that letter in due course. But before we
14:43:41 20 move on.

21 Can I ask, please that, this document, Government of
22 Sierra Leone statement dated 23 May 2000 be marked for
23 identification MFI-141.

24 PRESIDING JUDGE: That document is marked MFI-141.

14:44:03 25 MR GRIFFITHS:

26 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, you have already told us that the President
27 of the United States of America had assigned Jesse Jackson, the
28 Reverend Jesse Jackson, to be a special envoy to West Africa. Is
29 that right?

1 A. That is correct.

2 Q. During this period of crisis in Sierra Leone, did you see
3 Mr Jackson?

14:44:35

4 A. Yes. There was a brief meeting we held while we were
5 negotiating the crisis, yes.

6 Q. Now, where did that meeting take place?

7 A. At the Executive Mansion.

8 Q. Is that in Monrovia?

9 A. Monrovia, yes.

14:44:49

10 Q. And about when was that meeting?

11 A. That meeting took place somewhere in the very beginning, I
12 say, about the - I would say about the - between the 20th to the
13 22nd, somewhere there, because the ambassador acknowledges the
14 meeting sometime later. But it's very, very stormy part of the
15 negotiations for these hostages I speak to Reverend Jackson.

14:45:23

16 Q. And you say the ambassador acknowledged it later?

17 A. Yes, the following the meeting, the ambassador wrote,
18 thanking me for receiving the special envoy and also thanking us
19 for the work that we had been doing in trying to get the hostages
20 released.

14:45:47

21 Q. And who is the ambassador at the time?

22 A. This is still the ambassador Bismarck Myrick.

23 Q. Have a look behind divider 53, please. Is that the letter
24 you are talking about?

14:46:19

25 A. Yes, this is it.

26 Q. And we see it is dated 23 May, is that right?

27 A. Yes, that is correct.

28 Q. 2000?

29 A. Yes.

1 Q. And we see it bears the seal of the United States, and the
2 address is the embassy of the United States of America, Monrovia,
3 Liberia.

4 "Dear Mr President:

14:46:45 5 I am writing to thank you for the warm reception you
6 accorded President Clinton's special envoy for the promotion of
7 democracy in Africa, the Reverend Jesse Jackson. I appreciate
8 your affording him so much of your valuable time."

9 And, of course, time was very valuable at this time, wasn't
14:47:06 10 it, Mr Taylor?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. "We found the talks quite productive. Reverend Jackson was
13 pleased to have the opportunity to receive your views on how to
14 resolve the crisis in Sierra Leone at first hand. As he said,
14:47:23 15 your efforts to secure the release of the United Nations
16 personnel being held by the Revolutionary United Front are to be
17 applauded. We note with appreciation their continuing success.
18 We hope you will be able to secure the release of all those being
19 detained.

14:47:45 20 As you know, my government is committed to restoring the
21 Sierra Leone peace process. We have just announced the provision
22 of an additional \$20 million to UNAMSIL to support the effort.

23 I expect that, as has been the case since my arrival, the
24 embassy and the United States government as a whole will continue
14:48:08 25 our engagement with you and your government regarding
26 Sierra Leone and other issues of mutual interest.

27 Signed, sincerely, Bismarck Myrick."

28 Can I ask that that letter be marked for identification.

29 So that's the letter of thanks from Ambassador Bismarck Myrick to

1 President Taylor dated 23 May 2000, MFI-142, please.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, marked MFI-142.

3 MR GRIFFITHS:

14:48:58

4 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, at the end of that summit of Heads of State
5 on 9 and 10 May, it had been announced, had it not, that there
6 would be a further meeting?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And in fact, you mentioned that there was an ECOWAS silver
9 jubilee meeting?

14:49:14

10 A. That is correct.

11 Q. Now, help us, did that meeting result in the normal
12 publication of a final communique?

13 A. Yes, yes.

14 Q. Have a look behind divider 55, please. Is that it?

14:49:42

15 A. Yes, this is it.

16 Q. As we see, this is the ECOWAS silver jubilee anniversary
17 celebration, 23rd summit of the Authority of Heads of State and
18 Government, Abuja, 28-29 May 2000, and it's the final communique.

14:50:20

19 Let's go to the first page and see who attended. Now, we
20 see that on this occasion we have the President of Benin?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Kerekou. We also have the President of Ghana.

23 A. Yes.

14:50:38

24 Q. His Excellency, Flight Lieutenant Rawlings; you are there;
25 along with Alpha Konare of Mali; Mamadou Tandja; President
26 Obasanjo; Wade from Senegal; Tejan Kabbah; Eyadema, yes?

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. Also the President of the Cape Verde Islands. Sorry, the
29 Prime Minister of the Cape Verde Islands; the Prime Minister of

1 Guinea representing Lansana Conte. I take it Lansana Conte
2 wasn't present, Mr Taylor?

3 A. That is correct.

4 Q. Was this about those concerns he had about travelling?

14:51:32 5 A. I am sorry, counsel, I can't help. It could have been one
6 of so many things.

7 Q. And also we have the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Burkina
8 Faso representing Blaise Compaore; likewise, Cote d'Ivoire is
9 represented by their Minister of Foreign Relations; likewise The
14:51:59 10 Gambia; and likewise Guinea-Bissau. And then we have a number of
11 observers who were present, including, if we go over the page,
12 the Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity; the
13 Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, who is
14 representing the Secretary-General; and then there was a list of
14:52:28 15 other participants which need not concern us.

16 So let's then get down to "Topics under Discussion". As we
17 see at paragraph 7, a minute's silence was observed in memory of
18 all victims of civil wars throughout Africa and also a special
19 appreciation for ECOMOG. Over the page, please. We then have
14:52:59 20 celebrations of the 25th anniversary of ECOWAS, and I don't think
21 we need trouble with paragraphs 8, 9, 10 and 11.

22 Noting in passing at paragraph 12, the suggestion that
23 there be an ECOWAS passport - Mr Taylor, has that been
24 implemented yet?

14:53:36 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. And then we see under "Community Court of Justice" that the
27 authority urged all member states to communicate to the executive
28 secretariat the names of their candidates for judges to sit on
29 the Community Court of Justice as soon as possible.

1 And then we see similar considerations towards a Community
2 Parliament. Is that correct?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And then at the bottom of the page, "Trafficking in
14:54:07 5 Children. The authority requested the Minister of Foreign
6 Affairs of Benin to establish contact with the executive
7 secretariat and provide it with the necessary information
8 required by the community for adopting concrete measures on
9 controlling child trafficking.

14:54:28 10 The authority recalled the declaration of ECOWAS ministers
11 of 28 April 2000 at Accra on war-affected children and directed
12 the executive secretary to establish a mechanism to monitor the
13 implementation of the said declaration. He was also directed to
14 submit proposals for the adoption of sanctions to ensure that
14:54:53 15 offenders receive appropriate punishment."

16 And then we see measures to establish a criminal
17 intelligence bureau. Now to the subject in hand:

18 "Regional peace and security:

19 (1) Situation in Sierra Leone. The Heads of State and
14:55:22 20 Government endorsed the conclusions of the committee of Heads of
21 State and Government on Sierra Leone, which met in Abuja on 27
22 May 2000. They strongly condemned the taking of hundreds of the
23 members of the United Nations mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)
24 hostage by members of the Revolutionary United Front. They
14:55:50 25 congratulated President Charles Ghankay Taylor on the speed and
26 the effectiveness of his actions in the execution of the mandate
27 given to him by his colleagues. They expressed their gratitude
28 to the Liberian President for sparing no effort in securing the
29 release of a large number of the hostages and renewed his mandate

1 to use his good offices in obtaining the release of the remaining
2 hostages and the recovery of the arms seized."

3 Is that correct, Mr Taylor?

4 A. That is correct.

14:56:40 5 Q. So by renewing your mandate, did that mean that you were
6 still in the frontline so far as this topic is concerned?

7 A. That was my understanding, yes.

8 Q. Over the page, please:

9 "Heads of State and government decided to ensure the safety
14:57:06 10 of Corporal Foday Sankoh outside the territory of Sierra Leone."

11 What does that mean?

12 A. That if it became necessary for Foday Sankoh to be taken
13 outside, that that would be done and placed in a secured
14 environment.

14:57:29 15 Q. So are we to understand by that that if Foday Sankoh's
16 continued presence in Sierra Leone, even in custody, was seen to
17 be a hindrance he was to be removed from the country altogether?

18 A. That is correct.

19 Q. And housed in another state?

14:57:50 20 A. That is correct.

21 Q. "They called for the immediate and unconditional release of
22 all hostages and their equipment.

23 They also demanded the disarmament, demobilisation and
24 reintegration of all unofficial armed groups.

14:58:10 25 The Heads of State and Government agreed that the
26 Revolutionary United Front Party should participate fully in all
27 political activities, since it is a registered political party.

28 They further called on the Government of Sierra Leone to
29 exercise its authority and control over the entire country.

1 The Heads of State and government expressed the hope that
2 Sierra Leone will maintain fraternal and cordial relations with
3 its neighbours."

4 Why was it found necessary to state that, Mr Taylor?

14:58:56 5 A. I think this was more of us encouraging this brotherliness,
6 I think. Where the Mano River Union countries really surround
7 Sierra Leone, that, in other words, try to be friends with your
8 neighbours, I guess. This is it.

9 Q. Then it continues:

14:59:19 10 "Heads of State and government expressed their appreciation
11 to all friendly countries which, in one form or the other,
12 assisted Sierra Leone and the sub-region to maintain security in
13 Freetown during the recent resurgence of fighting in that
14 country. They expressed the wish that, in the future, any
14:59:39 15 intervention by friendly countries should be endorsed by the UN,
16 OAU and ECOWAS."

17 To whom is that directed? "In the future any intervention
18 by friendly countries should be endorsed by the UN, OAU and
19 ECOWAS." Was there a friendly country in Sierra Leone at the
15:00:10 20 time not endorsed by the UN, OAU and ECOWAS?

21 A. I can say so, yes.

22 Q. Who was that?

23 A. Britain was there. That's the reference. Because she had
24 refused to be a part of the UN. If anybody, it's Britain.

15:00:25 25 Q. "They agreed that the security of Sierra Leone would
26 gradually be transferred to the country's armed forces and all
27 foreign troops and agencies would be withdrawn.

28 Heads of state and government agreed to conduct a regional
29 inquiry into the renewal of hostilities. They also agreed to

1 undertake a regional study on the illegal trade in diamonds."

2 Now, correct me if I am wrong, Mr Taylor, had ECOWAS
3 hitherto identified this issue, diamonds, as one worthy of
4 discussion at this level?

15:01:16 5 A. No.

6 Q. What had prompted its inclusion on this agenda?

7 A. All of a sudden, I would put it back to maybe about one or
8 two publications in June and in July, going on, and one a little
9 before then, the diamond has now crept in as the main cause of
10 this conflict in Sierra Leone. So ECOWAS decides at this time,
11 way in 2000, okay, let's see if we can investigate and see if
12 there is any truth to that.

15:01:46 10 this conflict in Sierra Leone. So ECOWAS decides at this time,
11 way in 2000, okay, let's see if we can investigate and see if
12 there is any truth to that.

13 Q. But is that necessarily accurate, Mr Taylor? Because, if
14 you recall, there had been mention of diamonds in the course of

15:02:10 15 some correspondence between the United Nations representative and
16 UN headquarters back in 1999. You recall that, don't you?

17 A. Yes, I do.

18 Q. And you recall concerns being expressed at that stage by
19 the special representative to Liberia as to the potential damage
20 such unsubstantiated rumours might engender?

15:02:33 20 such unsubstantiated rumours might engender?

21 A. That is correct.

22 Q. Following that exchange of memos or cables, had the topic
23 remained topical?

24 A. Not really. Not really. No one ever considered that to be
25 anything serious at the time. No one - diamonds, nobody
26 considered it to be such an issue that would become topical for
27 every day discussion. Nobody ever talked about it.

15:02:58 25 anything serious at the time. No one - diamonds, nobody
26 considered it to be such an issue that would become topical for
27 every day discussion. Nobody ever talked about it.

28 Q. So what prompted its inclusion at this stage?

29 A. At this stage, there are outside players. If you look at

1 this - if you look at the different players in Sierra Leone, it's
2 a whole bunch of different players in Sierra Leone. This
3 issue --

15:03:32 4 Q. Help us with them. Let's just pause. Let's not go too
5 quickly, please. Who are the different players in Sierra Leone
6 to whom you are referring?

7 A. We have ECOWAS on the ground. We have the United Nations
8 separate on the ground. We have the British government with its
9 armed forces separate on the ground. So three different groups
10 on the ground operating independent of the other. So these are
11 major players.

12 If you add to the diplomatic strength of some of these
13 countries and diamonds now becoming a new subject matter, it was
14 arms before, it was personnel. Now --

15:04:15 15 Q. Liberian fighters?

16 A. Exactly. Now it is gradually now slipping into diamonds.
17 ECOWAS Heads of State are aware that this is not true. So we
18 say, fine, okay, if this is the case, let's look at it and
19 investigate it and see if there's any truth to it. So now
15:04:36 20 ECOWAS, seeing the argument moving in that direction, decides,
21 okay, let's look into it and see if there is anything to it.

22 Q. And, of course, Mr Taylor, if we remind ourselves of some
23 of the terrain we covered this morning, we will recall that in
24 that four-page report by General Jetley, an accusatory finger had
15:05:05 25 been pointed at Nigeria and its troops in Sierra Leone?

26 A. That is correct.

27 Q. So that when this topic being raised at the end of May in
28 Abuja, Nigeria is also in the firing line in terms of involvement
29 in this illegal trade, or are they?

1 A. They are.

2 Q. Who else is in the firing line at this stage?

3 A. Liberia.

4 Q. Anybody else?

15:05:37 5 A. Not that I know of, but I know Nigeria and Liberia are the
6 two in the firing line.

7 Q. "In order to enable ECOWAS to fix a date for a ceasefire,
8 designed to put an end to the fighting in Sierra Leone, it was
9 agreed that a Committee of Six ECOWAS member states, namely,

15:06:03 10 Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria and Togo, as well as the
11 ECOWAS executive secretary, will be sent to Sierra Leone without
12 delay."

13 Was it so sent?

14 A. Yes, yes.

15:06:27 15 Q. "The committee was mandated to make contact with all the
16 parties concerned and prevail on them to redeploy to the
17 positions held as at 7 July 1999, the date of signature of the
18 Lome Peace Accord. Heads of State and Government called on the
19 RUF forces to disarm and demobilise voluntarily.

15:06:59 20 Heads of State and Government also reaffirmed their full
21 support for the peace process in Sierra Leone, as provided for by
22 the Lome Peace Accord. They called on the RUF party to abide by
23 the terms of the accord which provides an appropriate framework
24 for the resolution of the Sierra Leonean conflict. They decided
15:07:28 25 that troops should be provided from the sub-region to beef up the
26 United Nations Mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and that the
27 current chairman should prevail upon member states which had
28 pledged to provide contingents to honour their commitment. They
29 requested that the UNAMSIL mandate should be changed from

1 peacekeeping to peace enforcement and also expressed the desire
2 to have the command of UNAMSIL given to a West African officer."

3 What's that an echo of, Mr Taylor?

4 A. War.

15:08:16 5 Q. "Also expressed the desire to have the command of UNAMSIL
6 given to a West African officer", what's that a ripple from?

7 A. Well, this is definitely coming through Nigeria now. This
8 is definitely coming through Nigeria.

9 Q. Yes.

15:08:40 10 "Situation in Cote d'Ivoire.

11 Heads Of State and government took due note of the
12 timetable announced by the Ivorian government for the holding of
13 elections" - and it sets that out, there having been of course,
14 Mr Taylor, a coup that in country, yes?

15:09:03 15 A. That is correct.

16 Q. "Heads and State and government expressed their readiness
17 to assist Cote d'Ivoire to keep within the established timetable.
18 They requested the Ivorian government to create an enabling
19 environment within the country for the successful organisation of
15:09:21 20 these elections."

21 Over the page, please:

22 "Situation in Guinea-Bissau.

23 Heads of State and Government expressed concern over the
24 tension between His Excellency Koumba Yala Nhanca and the former
15:09:44 25 junta. They recalled that the President of the Republic of
26 Guinea-Bissau had come to power following elections recognised as
27 free, fair and transparent by the international community.

28 Heads of State and Government decided to dispatch a
29 fact-finding mission to Guinea-Bissau as early as possible and

1 requested the current chairman to take necessary action in this
2 regard.

3 The chairman of the mediation and Security Council at Heads
4 of State and Government level informed the authority of the
15:10:16 5 outcome of the inaugural meeting of the council which took place
6 in Abuja on 27 May 2000. Essentially, the meeting discussed the
7 rules of procedure of the council, the lifting of sanctions
8 imposed on Liberia, the transfer of the powers of the ad hoc
9 committees to the mediation and Security Council and the military
10 awards for military personnel who participated in peacekeeping
11 operations in Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone. Heads of State
12 adopted the recommendations of the security and mediation
13 council."

14 Now, one matter in that paragraph which I would like your
15:10:54 15 assistance with, please, Mr Taylor. The lifting of sanctions
16 imposed on Liberia, was that still a hot issue for the Liberian
17 government?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Why?

15:11:10 20 A. Because these sanctions had us really, really, really
21 clogged up. You couldn't do thinking. You had the arms embargo.
22 They had also now extended other sanctions on the country and we
23 could not move. But the irony of this here, the bigger countries
24 outside, knowing it all, are piling up sanctions on Liberia while
15:11:45 25 the people that are in the region, the colleagues in West Africa
26 that do not understand exactly what they are doing, saying,
27 listen, lift this sanction, but no one ever listens to them
28 because they always know better.

29 Q. Yes. Then we have the various votes of thanks which need

1 not detain us. Can I ask, please, Mr President, that that
2 document be marked for identification. Final communique, ECOWAS
3 silver jubilee anniversary celebration, 23rd summit, Abuja, 28-29
4 May 2000, MFI-143, please.

15:12:37 5 PRESIDING JUDGE: Marked for identification MFI-143.

6 MR GRIFFITHS:

7 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, earlier this afternoon you mentioned the
8 letter that you had written to President Tejan Kabbah sometime in
9 June; do you recall that?

15:12:54 10 A. Yes, I do.

11 Q. What had prompted you to write that letter?

12 A. Several things. We had - in the background Kabbah was
13 talking about still these attacks on Liberia - proposed attacks
14 on Sierra Leone. Sam Bockarie was still hanging around in

15:13:21 15 Liberia as though he didn't know. So what I did was to try to
16 set the record straight, I immediately - in June I wrote him a
17 long letter, some three, four pages, if I recall, outlining to
18 him that he - first of all, he knew Sam Bockarie was there,
19 telling him that he had spoken to him in Liberia; also reminding
15:13:51 20 him that other senior world officials from the United States
21 government, from the United Nations had met with Mr Bockarie in
22 Liberia and that we posed - that Liberia is posing no threat to
23 Sierra Leone. This is what I did.

24 Q. Have a look behind divider 56, please. Is that the letter,
15:14:31 25 Mr Taylor?

26 A. This is it.

27 Q. We see that it bears the seal of the office of the
28 President and it's dated 5 June 2000.

29 "Your Excellency and dear brother,

1 With much appreciation, I am pleased to acknowledge your
2 letter of 2 June 2000 and the kind words you have expressed about
3 our humble efforts in mediating the speedy release of all UN
4 personnel who were held hostage in Sierra Leone."

15:15:08 5 Now, Mr Taylor, we don't have that letter before us, do we?

6 A. No, we do not. I do not know how it skipped my documents.

7 Q. But in any event, that letter of 2 June to which you refer
8 in this letter, the kind words that had been expressed by
9 President Kabbah were to what effect?

15:15:38 10 A. They had to do with the release of the hostages and
11 thanking me - that I had been working very hard and thanking me.

12 Q. So that was the gist of the letter, was it?

13 A. Yes. While at the same time raising some of the so-called
14 intelligence reports about new activities on the part of Sam

15:16:06 15 Bockarie, but it was not a hostile letter. It was a friendly
16 letter raising some new issues, by the same token thanking me for
17 the good work done.

18 Q. "I am also grateful that the ECOWAS authority gave us the
19 opportunity, through its mandate of 10 May 2000, to be part of a
20 process that has brought success and pride to our sub-region.

15:16:32 21 While the ECOWAS mandate was clear in regard of securing
22 the release of the hostages, which we gladly accepted, it is not
23 our understanding that we were expected to have assumed the
24 responsibility for also securing the release of arms, ammunition
15:16:59 25 and equipment, which we agree must be returned."

26 Now, what's that a reference to?

27 A. When the hostages were taken they were virtually stripped
28 of everything, even down to their uniform. If you see in the
29 previous document, we state that we gave them Liberian uniforms.

1 They were stripped. Their guns, their rifles, artillery,
2 everything was taken away from them. And my first - the first
3 appeal to me was to try to get them released and not to get
4 equipment. I don't have men in Sierra Leone. So when they
15:17:36 5 started pressing me for equipment, I said, oh, no, hold on. My
6 understanding first was to get the hostages. That process would
7 have to follow, but I am not responsible to return equipment that
8 I have no control over on the ground in Sierra Leone.

9 Q. Now, bearing in mind this is a letter addressed to
15:17:56 10 President Tejan Kabbah?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And apparently in response to an earlier letter written by
13 him, was it also Kabbah who was suggesting that you should have
14 also secured the return of the UNAMSIL arms and ammunition?

15:18:13 15 A. Yes. Well, there were suggestions - well, he was - he was
16 pushing this. Not as saying that it was a part of my mandate, he
17 was at least pushing the idea that everything should be done and
18 I am telling him, "Well, don't lay this on my doorstep."

19 Q. Now, did you have the ability from where you were,
15:18:40 20 Mr Taylor, to obtain a return of the arms and ammunition?

21 A. No, I did not. And that's why I did not encourage any
22 arguments along those lines, because it's a process, from what I
23 know, that is a very difficult process. When it was first
24 broached with me, I said, "No, I will try to get the hostages."

15:19:04 25 Because my experience with guerrillas is so - I mean, these are
26 not structured armed forces, it would be the most difficult
27 thing. And the next thing they would say is Mr Taylor failed to
28 get the arms. So I told him I want to deal with the hostage
29 problem.

1 Q. "Nevertheless, I do share the belief that we should
2 continue to nurture our working relationship for the final
3 resolution of the crisis in your country, an effort that calls
4 for fairness and frankness on all sides. I am fully aware of the
15:19:41 5 travel ban imposed on certain individuals in Sierra Leone and
6 have faithfully respected and abided by the precepts of those
7 restrictions.

8 However, in the case of Mr Sam Bockarie, I wish to recall
9 that he was allowed to come to Liberia in consultation with, and
15:20:04 10 acquiescence of, the UN Secretary-General, Your Excellency, some
11 leaders of our sub-region, as well as the United States
12 government, following a request that we intervene to keep the
13 peace process on course in Sierra Leone."

14 So, Mr Taylor, I am asking you what at first blush appears
15:20:31 15 an obvious question: Kabbah knew and agreed to Bockarie going to
16 Liberia?

17 A. Of course. Of course Kabbah knew. He knew.

18 Q. Now, just so that we understand. We see, when we go back
19 to the previous page, that mention of Bockarie is in the context
15:21:01 20 of the continuing travel ban imposed by the United Nations, yes?

21 A. That is correct.

22 Q. Now, from the content of the first paragraph then, over the
23 page, was it the case that President Kabbah, in his letter to you
24 of 2 June, was expressing concerns about Bockarie's presence in
15:21:28 25 Liberia?

26 A. That is correct.

27 Q. What was he saying?

28 A. Well Bockarie is there and plotting and planning and
29 training to attack. All these new accusations, and I tried to

1 just remind him that you know how he got here, and we intend to
2 keep our word on retaining an eye on him, that he will not
3 trouble Sierra Leone.

15:22:02 4 Q. "Furthermore, Mr Bockarie did not seek asylum, nor did we
5 grant him asylum in Liberia; rather, his presence in Liberia,
6 even against his will, was a necessary measure to keep the
7 process from being derailed by any possible disagreement in the
8 implementation of the Lome Accord."

9 That phrase "even against his will", what does that mean?

15:22:28 10 A. Well, to remind the Court, I mentioned that Bockarie was
11 virtually threatened. When Obasanjo came, we made it very clear
12 to Bockarie: This disarmament process, this peace process, Lome,
13 will happen. You either accept it, or you will be kept out of
14 the process and you will be held here. He was told. Voluntarily
15:22:56 15 Sam Bockarie would have never left Sierra Leone. He was
16 virtually - and I say virtually - threatened by Charles Taylor,
17 and Obasanjo sat with Bockarie and made it very clear to him in
18 December: This is the way it's going to be and if you do not
19 accept it, the outcome, you would not want to know. This is what
15:23:17 20 I am talking about here. And Kabbah and every one knew about it.
21 Every one of them.

22 Q. "Regarding the press interviews of Mr Bockarie to which you
23 referred" - what's that a reference to?

24 A. He complained that Bockarie had done an interview, I think
15:23:35 25 on the BBC, and I am trying to tell him, in fact I did approve of
26 the interview because what had been said, that Bockarie - that we
27 did not know where Bockarie was, he had left the city, and he was
28 now in the bush preparing for war. And --

29 Q. Who had said that?

1 A. These were, you know, little snippets of information coming
2 in newspapers in Sierra Leone, radio reports. This is how they
3 do it. And we are now trying to say: Well, fine. You don't
4 know where Sam Bockarie is. The BBC is in town. Let them
15:24:14 5 interview him. Because he was supposed to be somewhere deep near
6 the Sierra Leonean Jungle trying to attack. This is the way they
7 just spread rumours.

8 Q. And so you had decided to allow Bockarie to meet with the
9 international media in order to dispel those rumours?

15:24:32 10 A. That is correct.

11 Q. "I remind you that there were numerous concerns raised by
12 your government and other members of the international community
13 about his whereabouts and/or activities. During one of our
14 conversations, in order to allay your concerns, I invited
15:24:54 15 Mr Bockarie to speak with you on the telephone, which he did."

16 Is that true?

17 A. That is true.

18 Q. Now, let's just examine that a little further. When you
19 say "I invited Mr Bockarie", does that mean that the two of you
15:25:14 20 were in the same room, you are on the phone to Kabbah and then
21 you hand the phone to Bockarie, or what?"

22 A. President Kabbah and I had spoken about Bockarie's presence
23 in Monrovia, had told him that Bockarie was right in Monrovia and
24 that he was not in any jungle preparing to attack him and if he
15:25:37 25 wanted to speak to Sam Bockarie, I would be very, very happy to
26 have him speak to Sam Bockarie. We arranged that Sam Bockarie
27 would be called from his house. I told him I would get back to
28 him. We sent for Sam Bockarie. He came my office at the
29 Executive Mansion. I get on my phone that Tejan Kabbah knows. I

1 called Tejan Kabbah. This is in the matter of about an hour
2 between my first conversation with Tejani and this particular
3 call. We get on the phone, I call him. Say "Here is Bockarie."
4 He, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, spoke to Sam Bockarie from my office.
15:26:19 5 Based on my statement to him I was sent to Bockarie's house and
6 called him and you can speak to him, and he did.

7 Q. "Secondly, during the visits to Liberia of the United
8 Nations Secretary-General special representative to Sierra Leone,
9 Ambassador Oluyemi Adeniji, the United States President special
15:26:51 10 envoy, Reverend Jesse Jackson, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of
11 State for Africa, Howard Jetter, similar concerns were also
12 raised about the activities of Mr Bockarie. The special envoys
13 requested to speak with him and, once again, we were pleased to
14 make him available."

15:27:11 15 Is that true?

16 A. 100 per cent true.

17 Q. So Bockarie, whilst in Monrovia, met with Jesse Jackson?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Met with the Deputy Secretary of State for Africa of the
15:27:28 20 United States of America?

21 A. Howard Jetter, yes.

22 Q. Met also with the special representative of the
23 Secretary-General from Sierra Leone?

24 A. Adeniji, yes.

15:27:42 25 Q. And had an opportunity to speak to Bockarie?

26 A. Yes, they had a meeting. Bockarie met with them and not
27 even at the presidency. They met with him, I want to believe,
28 either at UN headquarters - it was not at the presidency. Here
29 is Bockarie, he is here, whenever you all make an arrangement.

1 And they got together and met whenever they wanted to.

2 Q. Let's just look at that in a little bit more detail,
3 please. When those stated individuals met with Bockarie, was
4 there any representative of the Liberian government present?

15:28:19 5 A. No, no.

6 Q. Was Bockarie under any kind of imposed restraint as to what
7 he could say to them?

8 A. No, not at all, no, no.

9 Q. Was any limitation placed on those who were desirous of
10 meeting him as to what they could ask him?

11 A. No. That would not even be possible. None of these
12 diplomats would even accept any conditionalities at this level.

13 You wouldn't tell the deputy Assistant Secretary of State of
14 America, "Oh, you can meet with Mr Bockarie, but you can't say

15:28:57 15 this." No, that's not a possibility. That's not even a remote
16 probability. So there are just no strings attached. Bockarie is
17 in town, they contacted him, met, discussed with him as long as
18 they wanted to. No representative of the Liberian government, no
19 conditionalities, nothing.

15:29:14 20 Q. And so they were free to ask him about whether he is
21 raising an army, where he's living, all those kinds of topics?

22 A. Definitely, yes.

23 Q. Nothing off limits?

24 A. Nothing whatsoever off limits.

15:29:30 25 Q. So they could ask, for example, about mayonnaise jars of
26 diamonds being delivered to you?

27 A. Of course they could, yes.

28 Q. They could have asked him about all of those things?

29 A. Yes, yes.

1 Q. Now, can we pause for a moment, please, Mr Taylor, while
2 we're on the topic of Mr Bockarie, because this letter is dated 5
3 June.

4 A. Yes.

15:29:59 5 Q. Of 2000.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. So by this stage Mr Bockarie has been in Liberia for almost
8 six months?

9 A. That is correct.

15:30:09 10 Q. What's he been doing?

11 A. Bockarie really is - from what was reported to me, Bockarie
12 was beginning a little process to get additional income by trying
13 to mine. He was trying to engage in a little diamond mining
14 project in Liberia.

15:30:33 15 Q. And when you say he was trying to engage in, what do you
16 mean by that? Are we talking about him employing staff or what?
17 What are we talking about?

18 A. No, no. Diamond mining in Liberia, you don't need staff.
19 Finding a place - a good place where people are mining and trying
15:30:53 20 to get what we call in Liberia a claim to a little place and
21 trying to get some people to go and work.

22 Q. And so he had been engaged on that, had he?

23 A. Yes, for additional income, yes.

24 Q. And how had you come to discover that?

15:31:08 25 A. That was reported to me. We watched every move of
26 Bockarie. He also was involved in - it was a little project to
27 cut timber. I think he got a little power saw and was engaged in
28 cutting timber and sawing timber for sale on the market for extra
29 income.

1 Q. Right. And were you happy for him to be engaging in these
2 activities?

3 A. For additional income, yes. What we were giving him
4 was all we could afford, and he needed the additional income.

15:31:54 5 For me it was fine. I had no problem with that.

6 Q. Now, what about him being engaged in any kind of military
7 activities?

8 A. Not at all. Not a bit. Even Bockarie was not permitted to
9 participate in the ATU programme, and I have made it very clear.

15:32:19 10 We separated the men that he brought that we had put into the ATU
11 training programme from his command. Once they got into Liberia,
12 they were no longer a part of his command. He was not and could
13 not and in fact would not have been permitted to engage in any
14 military activities or even associate because it would have been
15:32:50 15 construed as being involved in military activities.

16 So even a witness that appeared before this Court - and I'm
17 sure there is evidence led in this Court to the fact that he was
18 not on the ATU base and that he had nothing do with the command
19 of the ATU, based on what a Prosecution witness said here. For
15:33:08 20 fear that he might - I don't think that he is protected but I
21 don't want to take a chance, but I think we know who that ATU
22 person is.

23 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, during this almost six month period, is
24 Mr Bockarie still being kept away from the RUF guesthouse for the
15:33:28 25 reasons you have outlined already?

26 A. Yes, there is no relationship between Bockarie and the RUF,
27 and so he's not - if he is going to that guesthouse, it doesn't
28 come to my attention. But there is nothing friendly about the
29 two groups.

1 Q. Now, help us, who is responsible for keeping surveillance
2 on Mr Bockarie at this time?

3 A. Bockarie has assigned with him Secret Service personnel.

4 Q. From which unit?

15:33:59 5 A. From the SSS. From the SSS.

6 Q. And the same SSS headed by Benjamin Yeaten?

7 A. That is correct.

8 Q. So it's Benjamin Yeaten's department who is responsible for
9 the dealings with Bockarie?

15:34:14 10 A. Well, yes. All VIPs in Liberia are secured by the Special
11 Security Service, whether it was Bockarie when he came, or
12 whether it was Issa Sesay, and before that Foday Sankoh. All
13 VIPs are secured by the SSS.

14 Q. But whereas in the case of an Issa Sesay who comes for a
15:34:41 15 short period of time and then returns, in terms of Bockarie, we
16 are talking about a programme of surveillance over several
17 months, aren't we?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. By the same SSS?

15:34:57 20 A. That is correct.

21 Q. Let's go back to the letter, shall we:

22 "It was during these high profile meetings and with the
23 presence of a large corps of members of the local and
24 international press, who were also inquisitive about
15:35:19 25 Mr Bockarie's activities, that he was pressed by the media into
26 the interviews in an attempt to remove the doubts.

27 I have often given my commitment, and I hereby reiterate
28 that I will do all I can to move the peace process in
29 Sierra Leone forward, but such commitment must be matched by

1 understanding and trust on all sides.

2 If the issue of Mr Sam Bockarie continues to be of concern,
3 we are prepared to take steps to arrange for his immediate return
4 to Sierra Leone, as much as we see such a move not being in the
15:36:07 5 best interest of the peace process. We would hate to do anything
6 that would tend to be in violation of UN Security Council
7 resolution. Moreover, it is important that we maintain the close
8 ties of friendship and cooperation between us, which ultimately
9 will auger well for peace in your country and sustain stability
15:36:32 10 in our sub-region. "

11 And then the normal salutation. Now, Mr Taylor, help us
12 with this: Were you seriously willing to let Bockarie go back to
13 Sierra Leone?

14 A. Seriously, no. This was a way of really pushing Tejani to
15:36:54 15 stop his nonsense. That's as simple as that. Stop this every
16 day Bockarie, Bockarie. You want him? Okay, I'll make
17 arrangements to send him. But seriously I was not going to do
18 that. I mean, it was just a way to push him to just stop, stop
19 this. You and I are talking on the phone. We are meeting at -
15:37:13 20 stop this. But seriously I was never going to let that happen.

21 Q. Why not?

22 A. Just as I said, it would have caused major problems. Sam
23 Bockarie getting back in Sierra Leone would have caused problems.

24 MR GRIFFITHS: Now I ask, please, that that document,
15:37:39 25 letter from President Taylor to President Kabbah, dated 5 June
26 2000, be marked for identification.

27 PRESIDING JUDGE: That document is marked for
28 identification MFI-144.

29 MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful:

1 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, we saw from the final communique following
2 the silver jubilee meeting of Heads of State of ECOWAS in Abuja
3 that for the first time diamonds appeared on the agenda, yes?

4 A. Yes.

15:38:39 5 Q. And we have already addressed how that had come about.
6 Now, at or around this time, were there any allegations being
7 levelled directly at Liberia regarding this trade?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Who by?

15:39:15 10 A. We had a report. In fact, there was several reports. Two
11 that come to light. There was a mischievous report done back in
12 say around June by a Douglas Farah of the Washington Post
13 dilly-dallying around their normal journalistic foolishness about
14 diamonds and Taylor hands in this and this passed. But in July
15:40:08 15 we have a report that is done by the BBC reporter Mark Doyle,
16 Mark Doyle, claiming that he had seen a secret report from - the
17 Sierra Leonean internal security felt that they had, for the
18 first time, some indications of Liberia's involvement in diamonds
19 in Sierra Leone and certain documents that had been found at
15:40:49 20 Foday Sankoh's house. He writes this long article talking about
21 diamonds. Even he interviews an official at the United States
22 embassy accredited near Monrovia and that official gives his own
23 interpretation. So things are beginning to hot up a little bit
24 about these diamond things again.

15:41:22 25 Q. Now, did you communicate any of your concerns about this to
26 the United Nations?

27 A. Yes. I wrote the Secretary-General expressing that we had
28 no connections with diamonds. They had come up with an arbitrary
29 figure of about nine hundred and some odd thousand,

1 whatchamacallit, diamonds, kilo - not kilos, I forgot, carats of
2 diamonds that had been exported from Liberia. This was
3 impossible. Liberia could not have exported almost a million
4 karats of diamonds. So I write explaining to him that we are not
15:42:13 5 involved with diamonds and go through the whole details of the
6 accusations and that if they know of any such thing, to let us
7 know about it.

8 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, have a look behind divider 57, please.
9 Now, you see this is a letter dated 8 June 2000 addressed to the
15:43:26 10 Secretary-General. Is that right?

11 A. That is correct.

12 Q. And if we go over the page, we see it's from you.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. "I am pleased to present my compliments and bring to your
15:43:40 15 attention the current wave of allegations against Liberia for
16 involvement in the illicit trading of Sierra Leonean diamonds.

17 These allegations are false, unfounded and baseless. My
18 government categorically denies any involvement in the illicit
19 trading of diamonds from Sierra Leone. As a matter of fact,
15:44:10 20 Liberia is known to have huge untapped deposits of diamonds,
21 confirmed by United States geological surveys. As far back as
22 1960, Liberia's official export of diamonds totalled 976,437
23 karats."

24 But let's just pause there for a minute, Mr Taylor. That
15:44:48 25 figure is misleading, isn't it?

26 A. If this figure is misleading about what Liberia did at that
27 time?

28 Q. Uh-huh.

29 A. No, we had been comportsing large amounts. In recent times

1 it would be misleading.

2 Q. Pause. It's my fault for not asking a clear question.

3 Help us. Back in 1960, these diamonds coming through
4 Liberia, are they all produced in Liberia?

15:45:29 5 A. No, they were not all produced in Liberia.

6 Q. So why is Liberia exporting this quantity when it's not
7 being produced in the country?

8 A. Well, De Beers, one of the world's largest buyers of
9 diamonds, is headquartered in Liberia. They have offices,
10 official buying stations. So diamonds are coming in from
11 Sierra Leone, a little bit from Guinea, and they are being bought
12 in Liberia and exported as products of Liberia. They don't
13 differentiate.

14 Q. And help us, what currency was Liberia using at that time?

15:46:19 15 A. The United States dollar.

16 Q. And so far as that trade in diamonds is concerned, did that
17 fact have any advantages?

18 A. Yes, I think there were advantages. The presence of hard
19 currency, yes, there are advantages.

15:46:37 20 Q. What advantages?

21 A. Well, who wants to sell you a diamond in Sierra Leone or in
22 Guinea where you get local currency? You want hard, strong,
23 currency that you will be able to input into other things that
24 you want to do. So local currency, for the most part, would not
15:47:03 25 be desirable.

26 Q. Was there any other country in West Africa - in that West
27 African region at the time which used the US dollar as its
28 official currency?

29 A. No. No, even today the United States dollar is still legal

1 tender today in Liberia, legal tender.

2 Q. And so when you place - when you say as far back as 1960,
3 so Liberia had, did it, this historic role as an outlet for
4 diamond production in that part of West Africa?

15:47:48 5 A. That is correct.

6 Q. "It is important to note that the allegations against
7 Liberia is based on disclosure of sellers of diamonds and not
8 documentary evidence such as certificates of origin or export
9 permits from the country of origin."

15:48:13 10 That sounds like double Dutch to me, so you are going to
11 have to help me. What does that mean?

12 A. Well, let's start with based on the sellers of diamonds.

13 What we got to find out - and we come - we send in to Belgium.

14 We meet with the World Diamond Council. At this particular time

15:48:39 15 of the world, it is a little confusing to a lot of people. There
16 are diamonds coming from Russia that are syndicated diamonds,

17 stolen or what, I don't know. They are coming into Europe and

18 being sold as Liberian diamonds. There are diamonds coming out

19 of Angola. There are diamonds coming out of the Congo. Because

15:49:03 20 at this time there are no restriction and Liberia has a

21 reputation for diamonds, all of the crooked diamonds around are

22 coming into Europe as Liberian diamonds. Not for a minute would

23 Liberia be able to produce the large amount of diamonds that are

24 recorded in the years - let's say beginning 2000 or there before.

15:49:26 25 We didn't have those kinds of diamonds. But every crooked

26 diamond that came into Europe, into Belgium to sell, Liberian

27 diamonds. And they got through because most of these other

28 countries at that time, there were restrictions, okay, on the

29 comport of those diamonds. So everybody just came under the

1 cover of Liberia, and the World Diamond Council knew, and it's
2 covered in reports. But still people were saying, "Oh, you can't
3 produce these amounts of diamonds, so they must be coming from
4 Sierra Leone."

15:50:00 5 Q. So Liberia was being used almost as a flag of convenience?

6 A. That is exactly what happened. Exactly what happened, yes.

7 Q. And when you go on to say, "and not documentary evidence
8 such as certificates of origin or export permits from the
9 country of origin", explain that, please?

15:50:21 10 A. Under the process that we subscribed to further - it's
11 called the kimberlite process - all diamonds must be certificated
12 before they are exported, and normally it is done through the
13 Central Bank. All the buyers would go - they would go through
14 the Central Bank. If there is 100 or 100,000 of karats of

15:50:47 15 diamonds, they would be certificated that these diamonds are
16 coming from this country, they have been viewed by the official
17 standards that are set up or under the regime, and then they are
18 sent out and they are packaged and parceled and sealed, and then
19 there are no problems as to the origin.

15:51:07 20 The diamonds that were coming into Europe at that time, in
21 Belgium, they never required a certificate of origin until very
22 lately before it was required, okay? But you will be - it's
23 almost like exporting any goods where you have to have export
24 documents and certificated.

15:51:28 25 Q. Now, going back to the letter:

26 "Liberia strongly recommends that buyers of diamonds in
27 countries such as Belgium and South Africa are required to obtain
28 certificates of origin and export permits issued by countries of
29 origin before sales transactions are permitted."

1 Now, pause there, Mr Taylor. Can you assist as to when
2 this kimberlite process came into - the Kimberly process came
3 into being?

4 A. I can't give you the exact year, but this - some countries
15:52:13 5 started before others. In our case, I know Sierra Leone and
6 Liberia started about the same. Sierra Leone came on-line before
7 we did. I would put it to around 2000 or about a year or two
8 before then. Other countries had it already. For example, I
9 think South Africa had already instituted it and some of the
15:52:42 10 other diamond producing countries had it. But for Liberia, even
11 when I left office we were deeply involved in putting the process
12 together. My late minister of lands and mines who just passed
13 away, what, a month ago, Jenkins Dunbar, started the process. It
14 may be in place in Liberia right now, I am not certain. But we
15:53:07 15 had gone a long way of getting it established, so I would put it
16 in short to around '89 - I mean, '99, 2000.

17 Q. So that when you were making these recommendations, this
18 was a system already adopted and understood in certain countries?

19 A. Yes, yes, yes.

15:53:35 20 Q. Over the page:

21 "The Liberian government welcomes the emerging consensus in
22 the international community about the necessary steps that must
23 be taken to monitor the diamond trade. Liberia has, for many
24 years, found it difficult to manage the activities of large
15:54:01 25 numbers of petty miners who have exploited our diamond resources
26 without direct benefit to our tax revenue base. Measures to
27 curtail the illegal trading of diamonds will undoubtedly
28 contribute to our government's institutional capacity in managing
29 its precious mineral resources."

1 Now, when you say "Liberia's for many years found it
2 difficult to manage to activities of a large number of petty
3 miners", what are we talking about there?

4 A. There is this problem - you don't know who is mining. You
15:54:58 5 really don't know. This is no industrial - you don't know. A
6 little guy - a man and his family in a village decide today that
7 they'll go in the bush to go and try their luck. They may go and
8 find a piece of diamond. They don't come and report it to
9 government. They probably get to a bigger town and they have
15:55:20 10 buyers there - there are buyers all in the bushes with the
11 miners. A little guy on his motorcycle, some guys are walking.
12 A miner goes and he mines and he finds a piece of diamond, there
13 is somebody to buy it from him right there. That guy who buys
14 come into Monrovia, he may meet anyone, and so there is no
15:55:41 15 control.

16 For me as President at that time - and let's forget about
17 it. Even being an economist, that is a sector of the economy
18 that, in fact, we were losing millions of dollars from. And the
19 same thing is happening in the sister Republic of Sierra Leone.
15:56:01 20 You really don't know who is mining. Some of these boys are
21 mining to find diamonds. You don't even know when they pick up
22 the diamond. These guys we got to find - they will pick up a
23 diamond, they will swallow it. Any guy could walk away from the
24 mine like nothing has happened, and later on when he goes to the
15:56:19 25 bathroom he gets the diamond, he sells it to - there is no
26 control over these things.

27 And so if a mechanism is put into place where people are
28 educated to the level where they are told: Okay, if you find a
29 diamond, bring it forward to the authorities and this will help -

1 through the income, it will help to get schools built for you and
2 your children maybe, the educational process. But we are talking
3 about a way of life for some of our people. This is an industry,
4 for example, in Liberia - and I can't speak for Sierra Leone -
15:56:56 5 that may involve 300,00, 400,000 people. An entire family goes
6 out to go and dig. So I am trying to say if we manage - and I
7 like this whole process of - the Kimberly process. If we manage
8 to educate our people sufficiently where they will find whatever
9 they find and centralize the activities, it would mean building
15:57:21 10 our capacity in terms - our institutional capacity. That helping
11 would even bring income towards African governments.

12 Q. Now, I would like some more details, please, about the way
13 in which the trade operates in Liberia. Who controls it then?

14 A. Nobody controls it in Liberia; nobody controls it in
15:57:48 15 Sierra Leone; nobody controls it in Guinea. Because we are
16 talking about, I'd say, hundreds of thousands of people that just
17 go to try their luck to make ends meet. This is not in a
18 centralized, coordinated, industrial set-up. No.

19 Q. Very well. The preponderance of the main buyers, who are
15:58:13 20 they?

21 A. That's another problem. You have buyers that come from The
22 Gambia, from Senegal, from Mali, from Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria.
23 Anyone can come into the bush area and buy. There is no --

24 Q. What about in Monrovia?

15:58:37 25 A. Oh, yes. Foreigners travelling, tourists. Sometimes - a
26 lot of tourists have bought diamonds on the street of Monrovia.
27 Tourists, European tourists can be walking in Monrovia and a guy
28 comes and says, "I have got a piece of diamond. You want to
29 buy?" He may look at it, like it and buy it. Anybody. It is

1 not centralised. Tourist buy diamonds too.

2 Q. Yes. And are the main dealers in Monrovia from any
3 particular social or ethnic group?

15:59:17

4 A. Yes. Some of the - the biggest diamond dealers in Monrovia
5 are the Mandingo. They are Fulanis and the general Hausas from
6 Nigeria. The Hausas, the Fulanis, and the Mandingos are the
7 three principal groups I would say that buy a lot of diamonds.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE: What are the spellings of those second
9 names, the Fulanis and the Hausas, do you know, Mr Griffiths?

15:59:50

10 MR GRIFFITHS:

11 Q. Fulanis?

12 A. The Ful a. They have Hausa.

13 MR GRIFFITHS: Hausa is H-A-U-S-A, Mr President. Fulani,
14 F-U-L-A-N-I. Also know as the Ful a, F-U-L-A.

16:00:06

15 THE WITNESS: That's correct.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you.

17 MR GRIFFITHS: Not at all. Whilst I am dealing with that,
18 I am helpfully informed that the Kimberly certification process
19 was agreed in November 2002 and came in force in 2003:

16:00:30

20 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, in the context of this letter about
21 diamonds, I want to ask you quite bluntly about one or two
22 questions. Do you accept that diamonds played a role in the
23 conflict in Sierra Leone?

24 A. I don't accept that. No, I don't.

16:01:00

25 Q. Why not?

26 A. The historical nature of diamonds and conflict in West
27 Africa, Sierra Leone in particular, there is not sufficient
28 evidence to really make such conclusions. That conclusion was
29 drawn by the famous Heart of the Matter report that was done by

1 Ian Smillie. You know before Smillie did that - and it's one
2 thing, it was a research - it was a research job that Smillie and
3 a Sierra Leonean and somebody else put together. For those of
4 all of us who have gone through higher education, research
16:01:59 5 results on this planet now, listen, you can call any number of
6 experts and tell them what results you want and they will give it
7 to you on the very same subject matter.

8 So that Ian Smillie report that diamonds was at the heart
9 of the matter in Sierra Leone, I mean for me, from an educated
16:02:23 10 standpoint, it does not hold water. The only way it can hold
11 water, unless we can agree that no conflict existed in
12 Sierra Leone prior to the present conflict. That no conflict
13 existed in Liberia prior to the conflict. That no conflict
14 existed prior in the Congo until - look. Conflicts in Africa
16:02:46 15 have never been mineral wealth. So, from my educated standpoint
16 also, I have seen these different reports and it's just a cop out
17 that someone will say that somebody fought in Sierra Leone over
18 diamonds. Total nonsense.

19 Diamonds have been in Sierra Leone for millions of years.
16:03:05 20 It will be there for another one million years. There have been
21 crises in Sierra Leone. There were coup d'etats. People died.
22 People got killed in Sierra Leone. Were they fighting for
23 diamonds? People don't fight in Africa for mineral wealth.
24 People fight in Africa because of tribal, ethnic and other
16:03:28 25 confusion. Not because - the thing is so widespread that nobody
26 has to fight over it. So this new western concept has gotten a
27 lot of traction, but I am telling you, if we had an opportunity
28 to debate it from an academic standpoint, it has no traction to
29 begin to say that every war that occurs in Africa is because

1 somebody is looking for gold, looking for diamonds. That's total
2 nonsense. It is not. So I do not believe that the crises in
3 Sierra Leone were a result of a fight over diamonds. I do not.

16:04:09

4 Q. I am still going to ask you a few more questions about it,
5 though.

6 A. Sure.

7 Q. Did you launch and sustain a war in Sierra Leone in order
8 to control its mineral wealth, Mr Taylor?

16:04:25

9 A. No, I did not. To do so would have been stupid because
10 that meant that I had not even looked at my own. And I had more
11 on my plate in terms of natural resources in Sierra Leone - I
12 mean in Liberia than what they have in Sierra Leone. And that is
13 factual.

16:04:42

14 Q. Now, I asked you earlier whether you felt that diamonds
15 played a role in the conflict in Sierra Leone. Let me ask you a
16 much more specific question. Did the warring factions in
17 Sierra Leone use diamonds to finance the purchase of arms and
18 ammunition?

16:05:13

19 A. Quite frankly, I don't know. They could have, but I
20 don't - I have no idea. The people that would be - there are
21 other people that may be better capable of helping the Court. I
22 really don't know. But it would not be unusual if they had done
23 so, but I really don't know.

24 Q. Why would it not be usual?

16:05:30

25 A. Because you had Lebanese, you had people going in and out
26 of Sierra Leone. In fact, the Lebanese controlled the diamond
27 trading in Sierra Leone for a long time. And I am sure if people
28 were mining, as I had seen here, of course they would generate
29 some income.

1 Q. And why do you single out the Lebanese?

2 A. Well, in that part of the country, and most of the reports
3 that I have seen, including the released intelligence reports
4 that have come from the OTP through here that I have read, most
16:06:09 5 of the names are Lebanese names out of Sierra Leone and different
6 things dealing in Belgium and different things. So the Lebanese
7 have always controlled business in most of our little countries.
8 The biggest businessmen in Liberia, Sierra Leone have been
9 Lebanese.

16:06:33 10 Q. Mr Taylor, were you, whilst leader of the NPFL and
11 President of Liberia - were you at any stage dealing in diamonds?

12 A. None whatsoever. I stayed away from it. Never dealt in
13 diamonds, no.

14 Q. Were you at any stage in possession of diamonds?

16:07:13 15 A. No, I was not in possession of any diamonds.

16 Q. Did you, whether as leader of the NPFL or as President of
17 Liberia, have contact with diamond dealers?

18 A. No, none whatsoever. None.

19 Q. Did you, whether as leader of the NPFL or as President of
16:07:51 20 Liberia, knowingly allow the RUF to use Monrovia as a market for
21 so-called conflict diamonds?

22 A. Knowingly, no, no. I did not. I did not.

23 Q. Did you connive with the RUF in such a trade?

24 A. No. The President of Liberia would not connive with
16:08:20 25 anybody to do such a trade, especially once it was a UN ban I
26 would not, no.

27 Q. Did you specifically connive with Sam Bockarie in such a
28 trade?

29 A. Never, never, never did.

1 Q. Did you connive with Issa Sesay in such a trade?

2 A. Never did, and Issa has not claimed that either. Never
3 did.

4 Q. Have you ever connived with Foday Sankoh in such a trade?

16:08:53 5 A. Not ever, no.

6 Q. Have you ever connived with Ibrahim Bah in such a trade?

7 A. No, never did, and I hope he can be brought before the
8 Court. Never did.

9 Q. Have you ever connived with Eddie Kanneh in such a trade?

16:09:12 10 A. Never did, no.

11 Q. Specifically, were you the outlet for diamonds mined
12 illegally by the RUF in order for them to purchase arms and
13 ammunition?

14 A. No, not at all. No, no, no.

16:09:37 15 Q. Let's go back to the letter, shall we. We had finished the
16 second paragraph:

17 "However, as this matter has raised international attention
18 and speculation, and because of the potential loss to government
19 of essential tax revenue, Liberia proposed at the recent ECOWAS
16:10:00 20 summit held in Abuja on 27 May 2000 that a regional inquiry in
21 the illegal trade of diamonds be conducted."

22 Now, that's the reference in the final communique of the
23 ECOWAS meeting in Abuja towards the end of May, yes?

24 A. That is correct.

16:10:20 25 Q. "This recommendation was accepted and embodied in paragraph
26 30 of the final communique of the 23rd summit of the authority of
27 Heads of State and Government.

28 The Liberian government, as a matter of urgency, is
29 prepared to cooperate with the international community and

1 regional governments in tracking and controlling any illicit
2 trade of diamonds in our sub-region. We believe that an
3 acceptable mechanism can be developed for this purpose."

4 And then the usual salutation. Again, let us pause for a
16:11:11 5 moment and consider a couple of matters with regard to that last
6 paragraph. So there you are, Mr Taylor, asking for some kind of
7 verification process to be put in place.

8 A. That's correct.

9 Q. And this is in June 2000, yes?

16:11:32 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Likewise, for some years you had been asking for a
12 verification process to be put in place on the border. Is that
13 right?

14 A. That is correct.

16:11:45 15 Q. That the border between Liberia and Sierra Leone be policed
16 in order to counter accusations that you were supplying arms and
17 ammunition and other supplies to the RUF. Is that right?

18 A. That is correct.

19 Q. Now, help us, we know that in the year 2000, the
16:12:08 20 United Nations Under-Secretary Prendergast was still asking
21 questions of the Liberian government regarding the stationing of
22 military observers, et cetera, on the border, yes?

23 A. That's correct.

24 Q. So far as your suggestion here made that some regional
16:12:34 25 system be set up to control the illicit trade in diamonds, was
26 that ever taken up during the currency of your presidency?

27 A. No. The only thing that everybody finally settled with was
28 the Kimberly process where diamonds would be certificated as to
29 the country of origin before they are exported or they would not

1 be bought. Because after all, if you look at it, this is
2 something like the drugs business, the whole issue of supply and
3 demand. You are worried about the guys who grow in the poppy
4 field and you can't sleep without buying the drugs from them.

16:13:24 5 There is supply and there is demand. The real demand for diamond
6 is not in West Africa. Our little people, our poor people going
7 into the bushes and take these diamonds, and they come and buy
8 them and bring them to Europe. So we are trying to say that if
9 we put in the mechanism - and we agreed with the kimberlite
16:13:45 10 process - we would see. So people are complaining about the sale
11 of diamonds; they are buying. So what actually happens after
12 this, counsel, in direct answer, is we settled for the kimberlite
13 process and put that into motion.

14 MR GRIFFITHS: Could I have a moment, please, Mr President.

16:14:50 15 Q. Mr Taylor, I want to ask you about a specific allegation
16 that was made against you on this topic of diamonds. On 7 July
17 2008, at page 13014 of the transcript, Witness TF1-567 said that
18 he went with Foday Sankoh to White Flower and Sankoh told him
19 later on that he, Sankoh, gave you a 45-karat diamond and you
16:15:25 20 were very happy. Is that true?

21 A. That is totally, totally false. He went with Foday Sankoh
22 to White Flower and Foday Sankoh gave me - told him that?

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. Total nonsense. This is totally untrue.

16:15:47 25 Q. And this was said to have occurred in the year 2000,
26 Mr Taylor, by that witness.

27 A. 2000?

28 Q. Help me. Did Foday Sankoh go to Liberia in the year 2000?

29 A. Let me see. 2000?

1 Q. This is the year we are currently deal with.

2 A. I'm coming, yeah. I am trying to figure it out. The last
3 meeting that I held with Foday Sankoh was in December of 1999
4 with Sam Bockarie in trying to settle their dispute - that I
16:16:34 5 don't get settled - and we extract Bockarie. Now, in 2000 prior
6 to the May 8 situation, no, I do not recollect Foday Sankoh
7 coming to see me in Liberia. I do not. I have no recollection
8 of that.

9 Q. Let's be very careful, Mr Taylor. In the year 2000 we have
16:17:13 10 the situation with the UNAMSIL soldiers who were kidnapped, don't
11 we?

12 A. Yes.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE: It looks as though the LiveNote's crashed
14 again.

16:17:33 15 MS IRURA: Your Honours, the internet appears to have
16 stopped working temporarily, hence the LiveNote being down. I am
17 trying to see whether it's coming back on.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you, Madam Court Manager.

19 MR GRIFFITHS: Can I inquire, Mr President, whether we are
16:17:44 20 still recording? Because if so, I am able to proceed without the
21 need for --

22 PRESIDING JUDGE: I think we are. But I will let Madam
23 Court Manager answer that question.

24 MS IRURA: Your Honour, the internet is back on and we have
16:17:58 25 been recording, because my LiveNote is functional.

26 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, we are still recording.

27 MS IRURA: A message should probably appear on your screens
28 asking you to reconnect to your LiveNote shortly.

29 PRESIDING JUDGE: Do you have internet - LiveNote there?

1 MR GRIFFITHS: Mine's working. It's just come back now.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mine's just come on as well as.

3 MR GRIFFITHS: It's just scrolling.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE: I think we are all right now.

16:18:50 5 MR GRIFFITHS: Very well.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE: You can go ahead, please.

7 MR GRIFFITHS:

8 Q. I was asking about the presence of Foday Sankoh in Liberia
9 in the year 2000, Mr Taylor. Mine stopped again, Mr President.

16:19:20 10 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mine's stopped too. Put it this way,
11 it's still recording and it's unlikely that anything will come up
12 in the text that would be contested, but if it does, we won't
13 have any point of reference.

14 MR GRIFFITHS: And I also note the time, Mr President, so I
16:19:48 15 am just wondering whether, given this technical difficulty, if we
16 ought to draw stumps early so that the technicians can have a
17 look at what has been a recurring problem today.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE: Madam Court Manager if we adjourn now,
19 can you please get the technicians to look at the LiveNote.

16:20:11 20 MS IRURA: Your Honour, appears to be the fluctuating
21 connectivity of the internet. The internet comes on and goes
22 off, and the user's LiveNote is governed by the internet, except
23 my own, which is directly connected to the stenographer. But I
24 will pass on the message, your Honour.

16:20:29 25 PRESIDING JUDGE: I am not quite sure what you are saying.
26 You are saying there is nothing that can be done about it, or --

27 MS IRURA: Your Honour, something can be done about it. It
28 has do with the internet. There is a problem probably with the
29 server, which is why the LiveNote is fluctuating. But I will

1 pass on the message to the technicians.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE: It looks as though it might be all right
3 now. Nothing seems to be happening, so, look, we will adjourn.
4 We will adjourn a little early and we will ask the technicians,
16:21:24 5 through Madam Court Manager, to please see what they can do about
6 having the LiveNote up and running in good order for tomorrow
7 morning.

8 Just before we adjourn, Mr Taylor, I'll remind you that you
9 are ordered not to discuss your evidence with any other person,
16:21:43 10 and we will adjourn the Court till 9.30 a.m. tomorrow morning.

11 [Whereupon the hearing adjourned at 4.22 p.m.
12 to be reconvened on Wednesday, 19 August 2009
13 at 9.30 a.m.]

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I N D E X

WITNESSES FOR THE DEFENCE:

DANKPANNAH DR CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR	26963
EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR GRIFFITHS	26963