



Case No. SCSL-2003-01-T

THE PROSECUTOR OF
THE SPECIAL COURT
V.
CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR

WEDNESDAY, 19 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
Ms Kate Gibson

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 Terry Munyard
Mr Morris Anyah

1 Wednesday, 19 August 2009

2 [Open session]

3 [The accused present]

4 [Upon commencing at 9.30 a.m.]

09:29:57 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, myself Brenda J Hollis, and our case manager, Maja
09:30:13 10 Dimitrova.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you, Ms Hollis.

12 Yes, Mr Griffiths.

13 MR GRIFFITHS: Good morning, Mr President, your Honours,
14 counsel opposite. For the Defence today, myself, Courtenay
09:30:24 15 Griffiths and with me, Mr Morris Anyah, Mr Terry Munyard, and
16 we're joined again today by Ms Amelia Montgomery.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you, Mr Griffiths.

18 Mr Taylor, I'll give you the usual reminder that you're
19 still bound by your declaration to tell the truth.

09:30:41 20 Yes, please continue, Mr Griffiths.

21 DANKPANNAH DR CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR:

22 [On former affirmation]

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

24 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, yesterday when we concluded we were
09:30:56 25 discussing a letter sent by you to the Secretary-General dealing
26 with the suggestion that you were involved with diamonds. Do you
27 recall that?

28 A. Yes, I do.

29 Q. Now, in the context of that letter I'd asked you about any

1 dealings you might have had - or it is suggested you had with
2 Foday Sankoh and diamonds in the year 2000. Do you recall that?

3 A. Yes, I do.

09:31:40

4 Q. Now, help us, Mr Taylor. After the early '90s, when was
5 the first time you set eyes upon Foday Sankoh?

6 A. The first time I set eyes on Foday Sankoh was in September
7 of 1999.

8 Q. Now, we've gone through that, haven't we, Mr Taylor?

9 A. That is correct.

09:32:02

10 Q. Because he came to Monrovia, did he not, in order that some
11 reconciliation could be forged between him and Johnny Paul
12 Koroma. Is that right?

13 A. That is correct.

09:32:23

14 Q. And it's in that context that you saw him in late September
15 1999, and we've gone through the documentation on that, haven't
16 we?

17 A. Yes, counsel. I'm sorry, I misspoke about seeing him in
18 September. Actually, I - that is incorrect. I saw him in July
19 in Lome.

09:32:44

20 Q. In Lome?

21 A. Yeah. If we look at the question, yes, I saw him in July.

22 Q. You saw him in July in Lome?

23 A. That is correct.

24 Q. And when was the next time you saw him?

09:32:53

25 A. In September.

26 Q. In September?

27 A. That is correct.

28 Q. And, again, we've looked at that, yes?

29 A. Yes.

1 Q. When was the next time you saw him after that, Mr Taylor?

2 A. The next time I saw him was a meeting that we held in
3 November trying to broach the disagreement between he and Sam
4 Bockarie on the issue of disarmament.

09:33:22 5 Q. And did you see him again after that?

6 A. Yes, I saw him again in December along with President
7 Obasanjo in Liberia, late December, where we concluded the final
8 extraction of Sam Bockarie from Sierra Leone.

9 Q. Mr Taylor, did you see Mr Sankoh again after that?

09:33:49 10 A. No, I have not to this point seen him. I did not see
11 Sankoh. Following that December meeting, January, February,
12 March, April, Sankoh did not come to Liberia to see me, and he
13 was arrested in May, and I never saw him after that meeting in
14 December. Never, ever saw him.

09:34:13 15 Q. So let's just be clear. In July in Lome?

16 A. That is correct.

17 Q. In late September in Monrovia?

18 A. That is correct.

19 Q. In November in Monrovia?

09:34:26 20 A. That is correct.

21 Q. In late December in Monrovia?

22 A. That is correct.

23 Q. But never again?

24 A. Never, ever again. Never.

09:34:36 25 Q. So, Mr Taylor, this suggestion that you received a 45 carat
26 diamond from him some time in the year 2000, is there any truth
27 in that whatsoever?

28 A. It's a blatant lie. Never saw Foday Sankoh. And if Foday
29 Sankoh had come to Liberia, there would be records of that.

1 Never came back to Liberia after the last week in December that I
2 saw him for the extraction of Sam Bockarie. Never.

3 Q. Now, before we move on, and can I say, for the assistance
4 of everyone, the suggestion regarding the giving of that 45 carat
09:35:20 5 diamond is referred to by TF1-567, pages 13012 to 13015 of the
6 transcript of 7 July 2008.

7 Now, Mr Taylor, there's one other matter that I want to
8 clarify with you and it is this: At the time when the UN
9 hostages were released, how were they transported from Foya to
09:35:58 10 Monrovia?

11 A. Via helicopter.

12 Q. And how many helicopter trips, just roughly, were required
13 to transfer those detainees from Foya to Monrovia?

14 A. Oh, boy. I do not know, but we probably could do some
09:36:26 15 brief calculations. The helicopters were UN Mi-8s. They take,
16 if I'm not wrong, no more than 20 persons. They are Mi-8s. And
17 so if we divide that, we could get an approximate number of
18 trips. I think we're talking about the first batch of about 240,
19 we're talking about 5, 10, close to 15 trips, I would say.

09:36:54 20 Q. Right. And who provided the helicopters?

21 A. The UN. The UN provided helicopters.

22 Q. So they were United Nations helicopters that were doing the
23 transporting?

24 A. Definitely, yes.

09:37:11 25 Q. What colour were they, Mr Taylor, do you know?

26 A. The UN helicopters were white - either blue and white or
27 white, but I think mostly white.

28 Q. And so they were flying in and out of Foya during that
29 period on a regular basis, were they?

1 A. Defini tely, yes.

2 Q. Now, you told us that there came a point when you asked
3 Issa Sesay, he having written to you that letter which we looked
4 at, you invited him to come to Monrovia so you could speak to
09:37:50 5 him.

6 A. That is correct.

7 Q. How did he travel to Monrovia?

8 A. Issa Sesay came by road into Foya. We sent our Mi -2, a
9 small helicopter, to pick him up and bring him to Monrovia.

09:38:11 10 Q. And help us, when he was returning to Sierra Leone, by what
11 means he did travel?

12 A. He flew back into Foya and then travelled by road back to
13 Sierra Leone.

14 Q. Flew in what?

09:38:26 15 A. Helicopter. Mi -2.

16 Q. And there came a time when he returned to Liberia, didn't
17 there?

18 A. That is correct.

19 Q. And, again, on that occasion, by what means did he travel?

09:38:43 20 A. He came again the same way by road. That's the rainy
21 season. And then came to Foya and then flew to Monrovia to meet
22 us.

23 Q. And did he return on that occasion to Sierra Leone by the
24 same means?

09:38:55 25 A. That is correct, yes.

26 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, we looked at that letter that Issa Sesay
27 wrote to you. Do you recall that letter?

28 A. Yes, I recall that letter.

29 Q. Now, can we remind ourselves of its contents, please. Can

1 we look, please, in binder 1 of 4, week 33, behind divider 47.

2 This is a document we looked at yesterday, Mr Taylor.

3 Now, Mr Taylor, prior to receiving this letter, Mr Taylor,
4 remind us, had you ever had any contact with an individual by the
09:41:03 5 name of Issa Sesay?

6 A. Issa and I had had no contacts.

7 Q. And when I speak of contact, Mr Taylor, had you had any
8 contact with Issa Sesay prior to 11 May 2000 by radio, by
9 telephone, by letter, by sight?

09:41:32 10 A. Never. Never. Never.

11 Q. Did you know of the existence of someone called Issa Sesay
12 before 11 May 2000?

13 A. Yes, I had heard the name, yes.

14 Q. But there'd never been any contact?

09:41:50 15 A. There'd never been any contact. Never.

16 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, what I want you to help us with is this:
17 Looking at this letter, "Dear Mr President, in view of the
18 developments unfolding in our country", et cetera, et cetera,
19 tell me, it is alleged against you that you were in control of
09:42:17 20 the RUF and that you were in regular radio communication with
21 them. You appreciate that, don't you?

22 A. Yes, I do.

23 Q. You appreciate that, for example, during the years when
24 Bockarie was in charge of the RUF, in the absence of Foday
09:42:37 25 Sankoh, you were the one who was supposed to be directing
26 operations directly through radio control. You appreciate that,
27 don't you?

28 A. Yes, I do.

29 Q. You were supposed to have been in constant contact with

1 them via those means. Is that right?

2 A. That is correct.

3 Q. So help us, Mr Taylor, can you explain why in these
4 circumstances Issa Sesay felt it necessary to write to you as
09:43:06 5 opposed to contacting you on the radio which you'd been using to
6 control them all these years? Why would he need to be writing to
7 you in May of 2000; can you explain?

8 A. Yes, I can come up with a probable answer. It is that
9 because we had not been in these radio contacts that are alleged.
09:43:32 10 As simple as that. There were no such radio contacts and control
11 that they're talking about. These are all mere fabrications, and
12 so Issa writes because this is again, with respect, just as
13 you're saying, if it was simple for him to get on radio and say,
14 "Guess what, here's our problem." It just is not true.

09:44:05 15 Q. Now let's put that letter away, please. Now, Mr Taylor,
16 still on the question of Issa Sesay, when he was returning to
17 Sierra Leone, having visited at your request, did you give him
18 arms and ammunition to take back with him?

19 A. No, I didn't. No, I didn't.

09:44:57 20 Q. On 7 July in the year 2008 a witness called by the
21 Prosecution said this. This is at page 13039 of the transcript
22 for 7 July 2008:

23 "Q. Did you learn why Issa Sesay was seeking advice from
24 Charles Taylor?"

09:45:26 25 A. Yes. After I went and met Issa Sesay, he told me it
26 was because Charles Taylor was our big revolutionary
27 father. So he said he went to him for him to give him
28 advice.

29 Q. Tell us what advice he received, if you know?

1 A. Well, after Issa Sesay met the Pa, Charles Taylor, he
2 said he told him that he, Charles Taylor, he would request
3 for the UN peacekeepers arrested by the RUF, for them to be
4 released. So he said they will serve as a help to him to
09:46:05 5 show to the world that when he says anything, that thing
6 will happen. So after he returned, the UN peacekeepers
7 were released through Charles Taylor's command. All of
8 them came to Foya, and from Foya they were airlifted to
9 Spriggs Field.

09:46:25 10 Q. When Issa Sesay left Monrovia to go back to Sierra
11 Leone, how did he travel from Monrovia?

12 A. They travelled on board a helicopter to go to Foya. It
13 was at Foya that the helicopter dropped him, and from there
14 he took a vehicle to return to Sierra Leone.

09:46:44 15 Q. If you know, whose helicopter was it?

16 A. It was Charles Taylor's helicopter.

17 Q. Did Issa take anything back with him to Sierra Leone?

18 A. Yes, when Issa Sesay was going he took with him
19 ammunition, but I can't recall the quantity that he took
09:47:01 20 with him.

21 Q. How do you know that he took ammunition with him?

22 A. When Issa Sesay used to come to Monrovia, I will be
23 with him for all the time until his return. I went with
24 him to Spriggs Field. I entered the helicopter and I saw
09:47:17 25 the materials. That was how I came to know that he went
26 with ammunition.

27 Q. Do you know from whom he received this ammunition?

28 A. At all times when ammunition were given, Benjamin
29 Yeaten will say it is his dad, Charles Taylor, who provided

1 them."

2 Now, Mr Taylor, when Sesay came to Monrovia when you were
3 busy trying to seek the release of those UN peacekeepers, did you
4 send him back with arms and ammunition to Sierra Leone?

09:47:54 5 A. The answer is bluntly no. Never did. And why is it - why
6 it can't be any other answer except no, let's look at - maybe one
7 of the things we ought to do - that I'm not sure if it can be
8 pulled up for the sake of the judges - an Mi -2 helicopter. We
9 need to probably get a picture of an Mi -2 helicopter. It's a
09:48:24 10 very tiny little aircraft that takes about six persons. It's a
11 small helicopter - very small helicopter that were being used by
12 us to ferry people up and down.

13 At Spriggs Payne Airport, where this was supposed to
14 happen, Spriggs Payne Airport contained what? At this particular
09:48:52 15 time because of the crisis there are UN personnel also at the
16 airport waiting in anticipation of all of these negotiations. So
17 maybe if we had a picture of this helicopter. Looking at Issa
18 Sesay, his bodyguards, and the number of persons that will fly on
19 the helicopter, these judges will see that it is impossible for
09:49:12 20 this nonsense that these little boys come and talk that. They
21 have no idea. And this is the tragedy of this whole situation
22 with me. Here are people that have no idea of what is going on.
23 Heads of State calling, you summons Issa Sesay, he comes, you are
24 negotiating trying to get people released, even Issa Sesay coming
09:49:37 25 back, meeting Heads of State. These boys don't know what's going
26 on. And they bring all these complex questions to them, and
27 they're trying to make people understand that they know what's
28 happening and have no idea of what's going on.

29 It's a blatant lie, and probably if we brought the

1 helicopter, the Mi-2 for - I think we should have pictures of
2 those helicopters, then these judges will see what we're talking
3 about. It's just not true.

09:50:12 4 Q. Now, the witness who said this about you, Mr Taylor, is the
5 same witness who claims that Foday Sankoh gave you a 45-carat
6 diamond. That's the same person. Now, the helicopter which flew
7 Sesay back to Foya, who owned it?

8 A. It is owned by the Liberian government.

9 Q. Was it painted in camouflage?

09:50:41 10 A. Yes, it's a military - it was used by the ATU, yes.

11 Q. And help us, Mr Taylor. How much attention was being paid
12 to you and Liberia at this time at the height of the negotiations
13 for the release of the peacekeepers?

09:51:12 14 A. A lot of attention. There are UN personnel on the ground
15 at the airport. Everybody is waiting in anticipation. These are
16 more than 500 United Nations personnel being held. The
17 international press have converged on Liberia. There's nobody -
18 everything is out in the open. I mean, every diplomat you can
19 think about involved with senior UN activities are all moving
09:51:37 20 around. There is nothing hidden about this. The world press is
21 covering it in full blast.

22 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, is it the case that in those circumstances
23 right under the nose of the UN you were giving Issa Sesay arms to
24 take back to Sierra Leone?

09:51:59 25 A. That's what makes it so incredible. The whole thought of
26 it is incredible that that would be happening. It's just - I
27 don't know, you know, maybe it's fate for me. I don't know how
28 these people come up with these things. I have no idea. It
29 would be stupid, it would be foolish, nonsensical that somebody

1 would want to - while trying to make peace, while trying to
2 release hostages with the United Nations, with the international
3 press, United Nations personnel at the airport, the military
4 people are in Liberia, I mean, waiting in anticipation, we're
09:52:43 5 trying to see if things are going to work, because the first
6 thing was to call Issa Sesay in. Once Issa accepted all systems
7 - and mind you, while this is going on these UN helicopters that
8 I'm talking about are also parked at Spriggs Payne Airport. So
9 Spriggs Payne Airport is not a deserted little airport where no
09:53:04 10 one is present. People are waiting in anticipation. All systems
11 are ready to go and fly these hostages once there is conclusion.
12 So once this thing is we done, we're rushing Issa Sesay back to
13 go across so we can begin to move the hostages. This is not like
14 somebody is hiding in a little corner and doing things.

09:53:22 15 Everything is in the clear view of the press, United Nations
16 military personnel, everybody is present. How is somebody
17 supposed to be trying to get - in fact, even if one were to
18 vaguely assume that arms are being loaded on an Mi-2 helicopter,
19 or ammunition, how much - what can you put on an Mi-2 with five,
09:53:55 20 six or more persons on board? Nothing. You can't. It's just
21 incredible, that's what I will call it, that they would think that
22 way or even make up this lie.

23 Q. Now, yesterday when we were looking at that letter
24 addressed by you to the Secretary-General relating to diamonds,
09:54:15 25 you will recall, Mr Taylor, that that was in June of 2000, yes?

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. Now, at this time, Mr Taylor, was Liberia still making
28 efforts to obtain overseas aid?

29 A. Oh, yes. We were still trying to get the EU and the

1 Bretton Wood institutions to think favourably about us. We were
2 trying to get assistance from the United States. We were trying
3 very, very hard to do so.

4 Q. And what about the European Union?

09:55:00 5 A. Yes, that's the EU.

6 Q. Yes.

7 A. But eventually - we were shocked when we received news that
8 because of allegations floating out there about our so-called
9 involvement in Sierra Leone, that the EU would suspend all its
10 activities and promised assistance to Liberia.

09:55:22

11 Q. And when was that decision made?

12 A. That reached to us somewhere in June and then we - we were
13 all very shocked. That's about - I would put it to about late
14 June or thereabouts.

09:55:48

15 Q. Now, did that decision have consequences for Liberia?

16 A. Serious consequences. Serious consequences. Our hopes
17 were dashed. We were just devastated by that, in the face of the
18 fact that these were just mere allegations. We had been trying
19 to get to the bottom of it, nobody was trying, and all of a
20 sudden we learned that the EU is going to do this. The United
21 Nations too was a bit disturbed by it, because we had been
22 working very hard with the office of the special representative,
23 the UNDP people in Monrovia. Everybody was just so devastated by
24 this because they, the UN people on the ground, knew that we were
25 doing everything possible to meet up with some of the outrageous
26 - and may I call it outrageous - conditionalities that normally
27 come from some of these countries and institutions. But we were
28 doing our best and still got slapped in the face.

09:56:16

09:56:42

29 Q. And tell us, was there any particular European country who

1 had prompted the decision to stop any aid package to Liberia?

2 A. Well, normally it would always be led by our good old
3 friend the British, who always lead the assault. So they would
4 be the first to come after us.

09:57:27 5 Q. And you mentioned that you'd been working with the office
6 of the special representative --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- on this issue?

9 A. Yes.

09:57:36 10 Q. Yes?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And so was the office of the special representative fully
13 briefed as to what was going on?

14 A. Yes. He was briefed and also devastated, and after maybe
09:57:52 15 almost hearing us cry about this for a couple of days, he fired
16 off a very long report to the Secretary-General, to his boss,
17 about the overall attitude of the Liberian government and how we
18 felt about this devastating act that had taken place.

19 Q. And did you see that report?

09:58:17 20 A. Yes, that's why I know it was - he fired it off at that
21 time to report that Liberia was devastated by this and that it
22 was unfortunate, as all of us were looking forward to turning
23 over a new page, as Liberia was doing her best to meet up with
24 these conditionalities and, unfortunately, this issue had come up
09:58:42 25 and that it was a terrible blow.

26 Q. I'd like you, please, to look at a document in binder 2 of
27 --

28 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, Ms Hollis.

29 MS HOLLIS: Yes, Mr President. We would suggest that, even

1 with the lowered foundational requirements, there still needs to
2 be a question about whether it was part of his archives.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Griffiths.

4 MR GRIFFITHS:

09:59:09 5 Q. Was it part of your archives, Mr Taylor?

6 A. It formed part of my archives.

7 Q. Mr Taylor, just so that we can deal with this issue of
8 archives once and for all, these documents that we're looking at
9 relating to the United Nations, how did we come in possession of
10 them if they were not in your archives? Help us.

09:59:35

11 A. Well, I don't know what other way the team could have -
12 there were some minor documents that were - that are public
13 documents that we accumulated, but there are some other
14 governmental documents that involved the activities of the

09:59:59

15 Liberian government at that time with the UN that we received
16 through that office in Monrovia. So there are different sets of
17 these documents that I'm aware of.

18 Q. Now, as I say, I am anxious to put this matter to bed.
19 What was the nature of the relationship with the UN special
20 representative in Monrovia, Mr Taylor?

10:00:23

21 A. We had a very good working - very good working
22 relationship.

23 Q. And, Mr Taylor, the documents generated by that special
24 representative that came to be in your archive, how did that come
25 about?

10:00:42

26 A. I've said before that what we had discussed with that
27 office and agreed with that office was as follows: Sensitive
28 information that did not involve conversations with me, messages
29 sent through me to the Secretary-General of the United Nations,

1 documents, response to my messages, form a part of Liberian
2 government information and should be provided to the government,
3 and that was done.

10:01:29 4 As regards personal comments, secret documents between the
5 special representative and his boss, we were not entitled to
6 those documents. But once it involved the Government of Liberia,
7 as it involves messages and discussions, it was a part of our own
8 right to have, and they were provided to us. That's how we got
9 them.

10:01:48 10 Q. And having been provided to you, Mr Taylor, what did you do
11 with them?

12 A. Those documents were kept - in fact, there are copies of
13 these documents also in Liberia. I kept a copy because I was
14 planning to build a presidential library. So I have copies in
10:02:07 15 some archives that I put together. In fact, the Court can be
16 reminded, I was in this Court when the Defence asked for a little
17 delay because several boxes of my archived documents were
18 evacuated even after my arrest and the Court was asked for some
19 time. I'm not sure if it was one or two weeks that was given for
10:02:32 20 those documents to be obtained.

21 So my documents that I put together, a separate set, were
22 for me, and these documents - there are some of these documents
23 that are still in the public Liberian government archives right
24 now. So these are not secret things that I received. It was
10:02:47 25 received by the Liberian government. In my attempt to set up a
26 presidential library, I evacuated most of my personal documents
27 when I left office. Those that I did not take with me in Nigeria
28 were subsequently removed while I was incarcerated here.

29 Q. And, Mr Taylor, did you in due course cause those archives

1 to be provided to your lawyers?

2 A. Yes, that's what I'm saying. You, Defence, asked this
3 Bench for I think a week or two at the beginning to review papers
4 that were given - I mean, that had come in late, so to speak.

10:03:26 5 Q. And, Mr Taylor, when we look at these documents relating to
6 the special representative, in these volumes of documents that
7 we're looking at, just help us, please, because, as I say, I want
8 to put an end to this, where do they come from?

9 A. Where what comes from, the documents?

10:03:54 10 Q. Yes.

11 A. They are coming from my archives. They're coming from my
12 archives.

13 Q. Thank you very much. Binder 2, week 33, please. Let's
14 look behind divider 60, please, Mr Taylor. Do you have it?

10:04:37 15 A. Yes.

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

17 A. We are looking at the very document that I'm talking about,
18 expressing the devastation on the part of the Liberian government
19 and everybody because of these decisions that have recently come
10:04:53 20 from the EU regarding stopping assistance to Liberia.

21 Q. Now, we see that it's dated 19 June 2000, yes?

22 A. That is correct.

23 Q. And the subject matter is President Taylor and Sierra
24 Leone. Is that right?

10:05:17 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. And it's addressed to the Under-Secretary-General. Is that
27 right?

28 A. That is correct.

29 Q. Copied at the same time to the special representative in

1 Freetown?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And it's from that gentleman with whom we've now become
4 familiar, Mr Felix Downes-Thomas. Is that right?

10:05:40 5 A. That is correct.

6 Q. "I refer to your code cable of 13 June 2000 on the subject
7 above. While it touched upon recent Liberia related decisions
8 taken by both the foreign ministers of the European Union and the
9 World Bank, it also requested by views on:

10:06:06 10 1. What appears to you as an emergence of tension between
11 Liberia and Sierra Leone;

12 2. The best ways of keeping President Taylor
13 constructively engaged in the Sierra Leone peace process; and

14 3. How the United Nations secretariat should react to the
10:06:28 15 ECOWAS initiative to lift the arms embargo on Liberia."

16 Pause for a moment. Now note, "I refer to your code
17 cable", that means to a code cable sent by Prendergast. Do you
18 appreciate that, Mr Taylor?

19 A. Yes, I do.

10:06:51 20 Q. And Prendergast, you remember, back in '99 had contacted
21 his special representative in Liberia suggesting that Liberia was
22 slipping back into disorder. Do you remember?

23 A. Yes, I do.

24 Q. So it's quite clear that this is a response to a cable sent
10:07:13 25 by Prendergast setting out further anxieties felt by him, yes?

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. Anxiety number one is that there is an emergence of tension
28 between Liberia and Sierra Leone. Now, help us, at this time,
29 was there such an emergence?

1 A. Yes, some tension. In fact, this is - just about this same
2 time I had received a letter from President Kabbah relating to
3 press reports out of Washington and other places. So there were
4 some tensions. There were some tensions.

10:08:04 5 Q. Now, the letter from Kabbah, Mr Taylor, if we just keep one
6 hand in that page, yes?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And just go back to the previous divider. Is that the
9 letter from President Kabbah?

10:08:32 10 A. Yes, this is it.

11 Q. Dated 19 June. And you see - just looking at the first
12 paragraph for now, we'll come back to this letter later - "I
13 thought I should, in accordance with the agreement between us,
14 share with you information contained in the attached documents
10:08:52 15 reflecting recent reports carried by the Washington Post. My
16 main interest in the report relates to the alleged movement of
17 arms into Sierra Leone territory which our intelligence agencies
18 have been noticing."

19 Yes?

10:09:11 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. We'll come back to that letter and we'll come back to the
22 Washington Post article as well, but for now, let's return to
23 this United Nations document, please. So there had been an
24 emergence of tension between Liberia and Sierra Leone. Is that
10:09:27 25 right, Mr Taylor?

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. And, no doubt, from (ii) Prendergast, was also anxious to
28 keep you constructively engaged in the Sierra Leonean peace
29 process, yes?

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. And, also, would it be right to say that ECOWAS was at that
3 time considering lifting the arms embargo on Liberia?

4 A. That is correct.

10:10:07 5 Q. "With regard to the specific matter of the human condition
6 in Liberia, the recent decisions by the European Union foreign
7 ministers and by the World Bank are likely to be far reaching in
8 their effects. Those decisions as well as the matters listed
9 above are linked consequentially to the allegation of Liberia's
10:10:28 10 complicity with the RUF. Unless this allegation is addressed
11 forthrightly, comprehensively and transparently, it will continue
12 to re-emerge only to make efforts towards a solution of the
13 Sierra Leone problem and the achievement of stability within the
14 area of the Mano River Union unnecessarily protracted."

10:11:00 15 So at this time, Mr Taylor, there were a lot of allegations
16 being made about Liberia, weren't there?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And it was in light of those allegations that the European
19 Union had made a decision to freeze a multimillion dollar aid
10:11:17 20 programme for Liberia. That's right, isn't it?

21 A. That is right.

22 Q. And this also at a time when you had, to borrow a phrase,
23 been constructively engaged in securing the release of the
24 peacekeepers, yes?

10:11:36 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. "Unless this allegation is addressed forthrightly,
27 comprehensively and transparently, it will continue to re-emerge
28 only to make efforts towards a solution of the Sierra Leone
29 problem and the achievement of stability within the area of the

1 Mano River Union unnecessarily protracted. These initial
2 observations will be amplified in the provision of the requested
3 views as follows:

4 Recent European Union and World Bank decisions.

10:12:22 5 Particular attention has been paid to your observation that
6 Britain's decision to prevail on European Union foreign ministers
7 to freeze a multimillion dollar aid programme for Liberia dashes
8 any hope for an early resumption of increase of international
9 assistance to that country. In the light of UNOL's mandate, and
10:12:51 10 against the continuous efforts by UN agencies in Liberia to
11 facilitate and mobilise the inflow of resources, the recent
12 decision by the European Union is most discouraging. The domino
13 effect this decision is likely to have on other donors'
14 perception of Liberia, as well as their response to Liberia's
10:13:15 15 present and future requests, cannot be discounted.

16 If indeed the recent decisions by the European Union and
17 the World Bank constitute a trend or, as you put it, could be
18 seen as an unfortunate trend, then it would not be farfetched to
19 assume that pressure is likely to be placed on our organisation
10:13:35 20 to effect a significant reduction of UN assistance and presence,
21 including that of UNOL in Liberia."

22 Mr Taylor, "pressure is likely to be placed on our
23 organisation", that is, on the United Nations, "to effect a
24 significant reduction of UN assistance and presence", where would
10:14:01 25 such pressure come from?

26 A. Well, only two places. Well, I could expand it to maybe
27 three. It would come from the United States, that is the largest
28 contributor to the UN budget. Now we have the European Union,
29 that would be Britain et al, and maybe some of the other major

1 donors that they may be able to bring pressure to bear upon them.
2 This is what happens when your country - when they want to break
3 you and destroy your government, these are the kinds of
4 pressures. So this is why it is described as unfortunate,
10:14:50 5 because this is a normal trend. There is nothing new happening
6 here that people don't - there is nothing new here. We see it,
7 we know it, it is the way - this is how we find things. So it
8 will come from these major countries. We said before here before
9 this Court the Bretton Wood institutions, the World Bank is
10:15:12 10 controlled by the United States, the International Monetary Fund
11 is controlled by Europe. So when you hear of the World Bank and
12 the IMF, you're talking about where? The United States already,
13 or may I just say combined North America, United States and
14 Canada. And when you talk about the IMF, you have already
10:15:30 15 included Europe. So once there is a decision - and these
16 decisions are not decisions that are taken in isolation. These
17 decisions are discussed at length. Once you hear one capital
18 make a decision, you hear it right across the Atlantic it is made
19 there. So you are just like a fly in molasses: You are
10:15:52 20 finished. So there is nothing new here, but this is where it's
21 coming from.

22 Q. "Were such a scenario to be actually played out, the
23 emergence of a humanitarian disaster in Liberia would be
24 concomitant. Despite the in vogue talk about reconstruction and
10:16:15 25 development in Liberia, the sad fact is that the very vast,
26 immediate and urgent needs of the country and its citizens can be
27 safely placed under the rubric of emergency or humanitarian
28 assistance."

29 Was that the position, Mr Taylor?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. "What is also known to UNOL as a fact is that informed
3 Liberians do hold on to the assumption that there is a causal
4 link between Britain's influence and the indefinite postponement
10:16:48 5 of the World Bank meeting which was to have decided on the
6 convening of a donor conference for Liberia. Within government
7 circles, where the assumption is more conspiratorial in
8 character, it is held that the recent decisions by the European
9 Union and World Bank are aimed at ensuring the economic
10:17:13 10 strangulation of Liberia. According to those who make this
11 assumption, such strangulation is to serve to effect a
12 non-electoral political transformation in Liberia. Assumptions
13 of these sorts seem to validate your own observation that these
14 decisions by the European Union and World Bank could be seen as
10:17:38 15 an unfortunate trend. The attached clippings from the local
16 press on the EU decision should provide a broader sample of local
17 reactions."

18 "Non-electoral political transformation in Liberia",
19 Mr Taylor?

10:17:58 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. What does that mean?

22 A. Popular uprising to throw you out. That's what it means.

23 Q. Regime change?

24 A. Fully. Non-electoral. Your people get despondent,
10:18:10 25 everything is cut off, and the people take to the streets and
26 throw you out. That's what this whole intention was set for,
27 yes.

28 Q. And going back to the beginning of that paragraph, "a
29 causal link between Britain's influence". Now, who had interests

1 in Sierra Leone, Mr Taylor? Which country?

2 A. Britain. Britain. Britain. In fact, the President of the
3 Court asked me yesterday if they had interests, and I talked
4 about British investment, old colonial masters, our own efforts -
10:18:48 5 they saw the efforts of ECOWAS, and especially Nigeria, as being
6 emboldened, and they wanted to stop Nigeria's influence. As a
7 result, they would not stop at anything but intervention, which
8 they did, even while the UN was there. So it's Britain.

9 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, so we have this combination of Britain's
10:19:07 10 influence, what appears to be efforts to achieve regime change,
11 and just at that time there is this upsurge in allegations about
12 your involvement in Sierra Leone?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Now, did you see a link between all of these things?

10:19:25 15 A. Oh, definitely. Definitely. Definitely. Definitely.

16 Q. "Assumptions of these sorts seem to validate your other
17 observation that these decisions by the European Union and the
18 World Bank could be seen as an unfortunate trend. The attached
19 clippings from the local press on the European Union decision
10:19:55 20 should provide a broader sample of local reactions.

21 The somewhat worrisome reactions, assumptions, as well as
22 the bleak scenarios described above, stem from an assessment of
23 the possible impact of the recent EU and World Bank decisions.
24 Most important, however, is the fact that the EU decision is
10:20:15 25 based on the allegation of Liberia's complicity with the RUF and
26 on the apparently unconvincing denial by the Government of
27 Liberia. While this allegation remains in a crucial sense
28 imprecise, its denial by the Government of Liberia continues to
29 be ineffectively general. In the light of the foregoing, there

1 should be significant merit in efforts to ensure that every
2 aspect of this allegation is examined and addressed openly;
3 perhaps publicly, so that it ceases to be, or be made, the source
4 of tragic consequences."

10:21:06 5 Now, what did you understand by those last few sentences,
6 Mr Taylor?

7 A. What he is conveying here is exactly what we had been
8 pressing his office, and he was under a lot of pressure. I mean,
9 he didn't let this special representative sleep. We were on him
10:21:23 10 24/7 to do something. What he's really pushing for is exactly
11 what we have been pushing for. Look, you have these allegations.
12 Let's investigate them. Put some mechanism into place. Let's
13 get to the bottom of it. But we cannot get to the bottom of it.
14 All we are getting are accusations, and now we get - these
10:21:54 15 publications became to come out, and they come out from two
16 strategic sources. We get this reference that we're going to
17 come back to, as you said, with President Kabbah.

18 Can you imagine? On 19 June the President of Sierra Leone
19 writes me and says, "Guess what my brother?" "What?" "Have you
10:22:16 20 seen what the Washington Post published yesterday about what
21 you're doing in my country?" The Washington Post in Washington
22 DC - sitting in Washington DC would tell you what I'm doing in
23 your country; you're President; you don't know? They have to
24 tell you? You don't know? So it's all this conspiratorial type
10:22:34 25 thing that you write me and tell me, say "The Washington Post
26 said yesterday that you're bringing arms into Liberia." The
27 Washington Post. You're the President sitting there, and you're
28 saying your security are saying. So it's this type of thing we
29 wanted open, we wanted public so we can get to the bottom of it;

1 but we never do. We just never get to that. I guess the die is
2 cast. The decision is taken for the people of Liberia to finally
3 come out on the street and throw me out and everything would be
4 done to cut the lifeblood off from my government, and it is done.

10:23:09 5 Q. "Sadly, tension has been the characteristic feature of
6 Liberia-Sierra Leone relations from the days of Liberian civil
7 war to date. As our first substantive code cables and numerous
8 other ones thereafter should indicate, the focus and energies of
9 UNOL have in large measure been directed towards the reduction of
10:23:35 10 such tensions. A review of exchanges between UNOL and HQ should
11 also confirm that regardless of the proximate genesis of the many
12 manifestations of tension, the allegations of Liberia's
13 complicity with the RUF has always been an underlying factor.
14 That, in turn, has always given rise to counter-accusations by
10:24:05 15 the Government of Liberia that significant numbers of the
16 membership of former faction ULIMO-K and ULIMO-J have been
17 co-opted into the Sierra Leonean security apparatus and these
18 persons, in association with comrades domiciled in Sierra Leone,
19 are engaged in plotting the overthrow of the Government of
10:24:32 20 Liberia.

21 This provides the basic background against which the news
22 stories alluded to in paragraph 2 of your code emerged. Those
23 particular stories should no longer be regarded as an indication
24 of tension between Liberia and Sierra Leone. If they were ever
10:24:57 25 such, the tension has been effectively defused. As you will see
26 from the attached newspaper clippings, and as UNOL reported in
27 previous codes, the Government of Liberia has denounced these
28 stories and President Taylor has gone public to state that the
29 views expressed by the ruling National Patriotic Party's

1 Secretary-General, John Whitfield, accusing Ivory Coast, Sierra
2 Leone and Guinea of harbouring Liberian dissidents, were his own,
3 that is, John Whitfield's, personal views and did not represent
4 the views of the Government of Liberia. Furthermore, according
10:25:43 5 to a press release issued by the Executive Mansion on this
6 matter, President Taylor stated that Liberia enjoyed very warm
7 and cordial relations with all its neighbours and was working
8 hard to improve those relations on a daily basis. It, however,
9 admitted that President Taylor had raised concern over the arming
10:26:07 10 of Sierra Leonean militias loyal to President Kabbah's government
11 but had received assurances that no such arms would fall into the
12 hands of Liberian dissidents based in Sierra Leone. As it has
13 always done, UNOL will continue to alert headquarters about those
14 situations that are truly tension creating with respect to
10:26:33 15 Liberia and Sierra Leone.

16 The essential aspects of the exchange of letter between
17 Presidents Taylor and Kabbah must also include the likelihood of
18 the re-introduction into the Sierra Leone situation of a
19 potentially volatile factor, Sam Bockarie, also known as Maskita.
10:26:57 20 As indicated in paragraph 7(ii) of the code of 27 January 2000,
21 and paragraph 10 of the code of 22 March 2000, there are
22 indications and reasons to believe that the anti-Taylor or
23 Liberia views could provide President Taylor with plausible
24 reasons for publicly disengaging from everything that smacks of
10:27:27 25 involvement, even constructive involvement, in matters related to
26 Sierra Leone."

27 Is that true, Mr Taylor?

28 A. That is true.

29 Q. So, Mr Taylor, were you considering effectively just

1 washing your hands of the whole Sierra Leone situation?

2 A. Yes, I was considering doing that. My colleagues finally
3 prevailed upon me not to and even strengthened the mandate, but,
4 like I said, I was - he is discussing the frustration that I have
10:28:03 5 expressed to him on so many occasions and I'd actually threatened
6 - I went to meeting, in fact, starting with the Mano River Union
7 meeting earlier and telling them, you know, this was it, that I
8 wanted to get out, and if these allegations persisted that I
9 would get out, yes.

10:28:26 10 Q. "Admittedly, UNOL's familiarity with the detailed and
11 important aspects of the Sierra Leone situation is quite
12 inadequate. Nevertheless, and even from such a vantage point,
13 UNOL is of the view that Sam Bockarie's return to Sierra Leone
14 (as opposed to Freetown) could have unwanted consequences with
10:28:53 15 respect to what appears to be a void in, or the quest for, the
16 leadership of the RUF."

17 Can we pause there. "A void in or the quest for the
18 leadership of the RUF." Bearing in mind, Mr Taylor, this is June
19 2000, at this time, where is Foday Sankoh?

10:29:13 20 A. Foday Sankoh is incarcerated by this time.

21 Q. And at this time is there a void in or a quest for the
22 leadership of the RUF?

23 A. In a way, yes. The RUF is without a leader and we are very
24 concerned. The entire international community, especially
10:29:41 25 ECOWAS, is concerned about this void and we are discussing how to
26 fill the void and we finally do, in a way.

27 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, it is quite clear from the sentiments
28 expressed by the writer, if we go back over the page, "also
29 include the likelihood of the re-introduction, into the Sierra

1 Leonean situation, of a potentially volatile factor: Sam
2 Bockarie." And when we go back over the page, "Sam Bockarie's
3 return to Sierra Leone could have unwanted consequences."

10:30:36 4 Mr Taylor, what was the United Nations' view as to the continued
5 presence of Sam Bockarie in Monrovia? Did they consider it a
6 good idea or a bad idea?

7 A. No, they considered it a good idea.

8 Q. Were you under pressure to keep him in Liberia, Mr Taylor?

9 A. A little later on, by this time, there is pressure for him
10:30:55 10 not be kept in Liberia.

11 Q. "The significance of Bockarie's past statements on, and
12 alleged activities regarding Guinea, should be taken into account
13 in the determination of whether or not he should be allowed to
14 return to Sierra Leone any time soon. Also, were he to be

10:31:19 15 allowed to return, it would not be unlikely that his activities
16 could provide a basis, even if circumstantial, for further
17 allegations of Government of Liberia's complicity with the RUF.
18 As you know, there are at present charges to the effect that
19 Bockarie's men are being trained by the Government of Liberia.

10:31:42 20 With all of this, and from the perspective they create, it would
21 not appear that the peace process, Liberia, Sierra Leone or even
22 Guinea would gain anything positive by the return of Bockarie to
23 Sierra Leone.

24 How best to keep President Taylor constructively engaged in
10:32:11 25 the peace process.

26 The publicity regarding the allegation of Liberia's
27 complicity with the RUF tends to overshadow the contributions
28 which the Government of Liberia and President Taylor have made to
29 the Sierra Leonean peace process. These contributions include

1 President Taylor's role in getting the RUF representatives to
2 Liberia and ensuring their constructive participation in the Lome
3 talks, his positive participation in these talks at critical
4 junctions, the airlifting of Johnny Paul Koroma et al to
10:32:58 5 Monrovia, ensuring that Johnny Paul Koroma and Foday Sankoh bury
6 the hatchet, as well as arranging their joint return to Freetown
7 (as opposed to Sierra Leone, which was the insistent and common
8 demand of these two men). Subsequently, President Taylor
9 established regular, if not weekly, direct communications with
10:33:20 10 President Kabbah. That 'confidence-building measure' seems to
11 have contributed not only to President Kabbah's announcement of
12 the detention or arrest of the 50 Liberian dissidents in Zimmi,
13 but also to President Taylor's decision to deliberately play down
14 the incident. More recently, the release of the detained UNAMSIL
10:33:45 15 personnel is linked directly, if not entirely, to the efforts of
16 President Taylor. It must, therefore, be assumed that these
17 documentably supported facts define what you mean by 'keeping
18 President Taylor constructively engaged'."

19 Let's look at that paragraph, Mr Taylor. Now, we're
10:34:16 20 looking there at a list of the positive contributions you made to
21 the peace process in Sierra Leone, aren't we?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And they're here being catalogued by the United Nations
24 special representative, aren't they?

10:34:32 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. And yet, despite all your efforts, as the writer states,
27 they were, nonetheless, overshadowed by the various allegations
28 being made about Liberia. That's right, isn't it?

29 A. Yes.

1 Q. And did you have weekly direct communications with
2 President Kabbah?

3 A. Kabbah and I were in - I would say yes, and even more, yes.
4 Kabbah and I were in constant touch.

10:35:07 5 Q. "It should be made known, however, that during a meeting
6 with the Liberian foreign minister on 15 June 2000, he informed
7 me that, with respect to the release of 460 detained UNAMSIL
8 personnel, the role of the Government of Liberia in assisting the
9 Secretary-General has now been used as a confirmation of its
10:35:34 10 complicity with the RUF."

11 You nod, Mr Taylor. Why?

12 A. That's what they said. After we fought all these years,
13 after we got these people out, they said, "Oh, okay. Fine. You
14 were able to get them out because you are controlling the
10:35:54 15 people." That's what they did.

16 Q. "He, therefore, advised that it would be extremely
17 difficult for Liberia to get involved in any similar situation in
18 the future."

19 Was that true?

10:36:11 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Why?

22 A. I said it just - nothing worked for us. Nothing worked.
23 The good was turned to bad. So we said, well, look, if we
24 fought - got these people released, even the bodies of these East
10:36:27 25 Africans that had been killed, we demanded that those bodies be
26 exhumed and that they be returned to the people. We did
27 everything, and then only to be told, "You were able to do that
28 because you are controlling them." So why would we want to do
29 anything else again? So I said, "Well, that's it. If anything

1 happens again, I'm out of it. We are not going to get involved.
2 Because now we are only able to accomplish things" - and this is
3 not the view only of the United Nations about what we are doing
4 constructively. This is - I must say that, even with Kabbah's
10:37:00 5 own little playing around that he used to do, because he was
6 under pressure, my colleagues in ECOWAS, and I can say the
7 African Union, never had this view that my activities in Sierra
8 Leone was as described by these two major Western powers. It was
9 not the view of Africa. Not then and not now. But maybe those
10:37:24 10 views don't really count.

11 Q. "This position was emphatically articulated by President
12 Taylor when his foreign minister and I met with him in Gbarnga on
13 16 June 2000. (That meeting will be the subject of a separate
14 communication).

10:37:48 15 Despite the position just described, it would seem that
16 assurances on at least two basic issues would go a long way
17 towards keeping President Taylor constructively engaged. These
18 issues relate to the role of ECOWAS/ECOMOG in Sierra Leone and to
19 the question of rewards for his efforts in Liberia and in the
10:38:13 20 peace process in Sierra Leone. President Taylor's own
21 perspective on these two issues follows:

22 ECOWAS/ECOMOG in Sierra Leone.

23 1. President Taylor continues to maintain that one of the
24 fundamental problems with respect to the implementation of the
10:38:38 25 Lome Peace Accord is the absence of the visible role of ECOWAS as
26 an overseer. Such an absence, he believes, is deliberate and
27 engineered by non-African states for what he claims to be
28 ulterior and strategic reasons that include his overthrow and the
29 arrest of what is perceived as Nigerian hegemonism."

1 Now, we've gone through that before, haven't we, Mr Taylor?

2 A. Yes, we have.

3 Q. But this idea to include his overthrow, so this was a
4 sentiment you were communicating to the special representative

10:39:23 5 way back in 2000. Is that right?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. That's three years before you were eventually forced to
8 step down?

9 A. That's correct.

10:39:33 10 Q. You were already prophesying that that was going to happen
11 to you, yes?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. "As I conveyed to headquarters on 2 November, what the
14 President was driving at became even clearer when he drew

10:39:58 15 attention to the central role of ECOWAS with respect to the Lome
16 Peace Agreement. As he put it, without ECOWAS featuring

17 prominently or in some significant way in the Sierra Leone
18 problematique, one could be faced with a situation where there

19 would not be a reliable and credible entity on which to fall back
10:40:21 20 should the Lome Peace Agreement unravel. In his words, 'Without

21 ECOWAS/ECOMOG, who will follow-up on the Lome Peace Agreement?'

22 2. President Taylor's ancillary point on the role of

23 ECOWAS seems to have a bearing on the issue of so-called

24 'Nigerian hegemonism'. The argument, or perhaps speculation, in
10:40:52 25 that direction relies basically on observations and related

26 deductions on the reasons for ECOMOG's withdrawal from Sierra

27 Leone, which include basically the lack of resources and other

28 required wherewithal. He places that in contradistinction to the
29 comparatively well-equipped and robust UN presence, financed from

1 sources which were made unavailable to a Nigerian-dominated
2 ECOWOG; and conclusion that the 'removal' of ECOWAS/ECOWAS from
3 Sierra Leone was indeed the game play.

10:41:34 4 If I understand President Taylor's thinking correctly, his
5 linking of the absence of ECOWAS/ECOMOG to 'ulterior' plans for
6 his overthrow or the destabilisation of Liberia, is somewhat
7 connected to the 'discovery' by ECOMOG of Liberian dissidents in
8 Sierra Leone who are bent on invading Liberia. In this
9 connection, he maintains that the recent re-arming of the
10:42:00 10 Kamajors (which, according to him, comprise a significant number
11 of dissident Liberians) is for the ultimate purpose of
12 destabilising Liberia. This is a point of view which he uses to
13 explain what he believes to be the excessive quantity of arms and
14 war materiel brought into Sierra Leone."

10:42:25 15 By whom?

16 A. We've had evidence led here in this Court by Britain, and
17 we were assured in the letter - remember there's a letter from
18 the ambassador that states that we should have no qualms about
19 the arms, it would be simply used for Sierra Leone. We are
10:42:43 20 concerned. There's a large amount of arms coming into Sierra
21 Leone. The Kamajors are being armed. But, in just a reminder to
22 the Court, the Kamajors that we are talking about - now, remember
23 we talked about Liberians, ex-combatants that had been recruited
24 as far back as 1997 when I was elected as President and I met
10:43:04 25 them. So a part of that whole Kamajor outfit, hundreds of
26 Liberians, ex-ULIMO-J and K. So that's what I'm referring to
27 here.

28 Q. And they're being armed by the British, are you saying?

29 A. Yes. Oh, yes.

1 Q. "Rewards for his efforts.

2 As indicated in paragraph 10 above, the matter of
3 non-recognition of positive efforts by President Taylor and the
4 Government of Liberia appears to be deeply felt by him and his
10:43:40 5 cabinet in particular. Also, while the letter alluded to in
6 paragraph 2 of your code expresses readiness and willingness to
7 effect the return of Bockarie to Sierra Leone, it also reflects
8 an impatience, if not anger, with what the Government of Liberia
9 openly describes as ingratitude for its effort to remove from the
10:44:03 10 scene, and at considerable expense, an acknowledged impediment in
11 the peace process."

12 Were you angry, Mr Taylor?

13 A. Yes. Yes. Frustrated also. Angry and frustrated, yes.

14 Q. "On matters that are essentially domestic, the same
10:44:29 15 impatience and anger can also be detected. It finds expression
16 in the popularly held view among Liberians of diverse backgrounds
17 that Liberia is being unfairly targeted for punitive economic
18 measures which are, in their effects, veiled variations of
19 economic sanctions. Government officials, particularly those in
10:44:56 20 the ministries of planning and finance, are quick to point out
21 that decisions regarding the delaying of assistance to Liberia
22 have emerged by and large on the eve of events that were to be
23 silver linings on the dark economic clouds which hover around
24 Liberia.

10:45:23 25 In light of the foregoing, it would appear that President
26 Taylor could be kept constructively engaged if ways and means
27 could be found to effectively support the decisions reached by
28 the last ECOWAS summit, particularly those which seek to give
29 ECOWAS a more prominent role in the Sierra Leone peace process.

1 If the United Nations could prevail on the international
2 community to employ a carrot-and-stick policy in their relations
3 with Liberia, it could begin to build the sort of leverage that
4 yields more results than what is now produced by the present
10:46:05 5 policy of apparently punitive discouragement. Such an
6 approach, carrot and stick, is also likely to encourage Liberia
7 to stay the course of positive engagement in the Sierra Leone
8 peace process.

9 Although two basic issues have been identified with regard
10:46:23 10 to ways of keeping President Taylor constructively engaged in the
11 Sierra Leone peace process, there is, in that regard, a third and
12 all-embracing issue: Liberia's alleged complicity with the RUF,
13 which is also fundamental to this matter for a number of
14 important reasons:

10:46:41 15 1. It provides a significant portion of the explanation of
16 the non-recognition or ingratitude that has been touched upon
17 above.

18 2. It also creates tremendous suspicion regarding
19 Liberia's offer to contribute troops to the envisaged ECOMOG
10:47:05 20 contingent to Sierra Leone.

21 3. That, in turn, makes even more suspect Liberia's
22 advocacy for a prominent ECOWAS role in the Sierra Leone peace
23 process.

24 This is, therefore, a matter that must be addressed
10:47:24 25 squarely and transparently, since it has the potential of
26 excluding Liberia from effective participation in the peace
27 process and thereby depriving the sub-region of an arguably
28 needed interlocutor with the RUF.

29 There is no denial about President Taylor's association

1 with Foday Sankoh and with the RUF. President Taylor himself has
2 gone public on record to confirm that Liberians are involved, and
3 actively so, in the Sierra Leone crisis."

4 Pause there. Now, had you ever denied, Mr Taylor, a link
10:48:14 5 with Foday Sankoh?

6 A. Never.

7 Q. Had you always acknowledged such a link?

8 A. I had always acknowledged, as I said here, that short link
9 over a period of close to year with Sankoh, yes. Always.

10:48:38 10 Q. And had you also publicly confirmed the involvement of
11 Liberians in Sierra Leone?

12 A. Yes. We had publicly said that there were Liberians
13 involved in the crisis in Sierra Leone; that they were Liberians
14 that were not sent there by Charles Taylor or my government.

10:49:02 15 These were Liberians that had gone into Sierra Leone and had been
16 contracted for by previous and so many Sierra Leonean
17 governments. We even went so far earlier than before the
18 publication of this document to grant amnesty under our laws
19 against mercenarism. So we had never said that Liberians were
10:49:37 20 not involved in Sierra Leone. What we had always said was that
21 they were there on their own volition; that they had been hired
22 by succeeding Sierra Leonean governments; and that we would do
23 everything that we can - instead of threatening them with being
24 tried for mercenarism - that would be would grant amnesty. This
10:49:59 25 is it. It has been public.

26 Q. Now, let's have a look now at what the writer goes on to
27 say in this important passage:

28 "How such a situation developed, as well as its various
29 ramifications, has been the subject of communications from UNOL

1 to HQ. What appears to be the crucial aspect of this omnibus
2 allegation is that:

3 1. The Government of Liberia and/or President Taylor
4 currently provides arms, ammunition, training and personnel to
10:50:36 5 the RUF.

6 2. The Government of Liberia and/or President Taylor is
7 able to assist in this manner because the RUF supplies illicitly
8 mined diamonds to the Government of Liberia or President Taylor,
9 who not only sells the gems, but takes a huge percentage of it
10:51:04 10 for personal and other purposes. As such, President Taylor has a
11 vested interest in the continuation of the crisis in Sierra Leone
12 or in the maintenance of a status quo that promises the
13 continuation of 1 and 2 above.

14 The basis and evidence for this crucial aspect of the
10:51:31 15 allegation continues to remain unavailable to UNOL. Since
16 headquarters - that is, UN headquarters in New York - has yet to
17 convey such a basis or knowledge of the evidence, it must be
18 presumed that it also remains unavailable to it. Both the
19 British newspaper The Guardian and the American Washington Post
10:52:06 20 have carried stories on this matter and have provided generalised
21 snippets of related information, which only whets the appetite
22 but offers nothing truly substantive."

23 Do you see that, Mr Taylor?

24 A. Yes, I see it, but that's the indictment. That's the very
10:52:29 25 indictment that we have on me.

26 Q. Now, let's just make sure we all appreciate what is being
27 said by the UN special representative. Now, by this stage,
28 Mr Taylor, how long had Mr Downes-Thomas been in Liberia?

29 A. We're talking about more than two years already.

1 Q. And were his movements around Liberia restricted in any
2 way, Mr Taylor?

3 A. No, no, no, no. No, no.

4 Q. Was he free and go and move around as he pleased?

10:53:11 5 A. Yes. Yes, he had diplomat status, flew the UN flag. There
6 were no restrictions whatsoever.

7 Q. So what he's saying here is he's got no evidence, his
8 headquarters have no evidence, but the newspapers are putting out
9 these snippets of information, but there's nothing truly

10:53:37 10 substantive available: Yes?

11 A. That is exactly what he's saying, yes.

12 Q. "It would be most useful for all concerned, as well as for
13 their reputations, to have the basis and evidence of this crucial
14 aspect of the allegation made public and let the chips fall where
10:54:16 15 they may."

16 Mr Taylor, "as well as for their reputations ... to make it
17 public". Have you ever seen any substantive evidence made
18 public?

19 A. Well, counsel, no. No, I have not. But isn't this is the
10:54:44 20 appropriate place where they even ought to bring it now? That's
21 the whole basis of this indictment as we have it. I have not
22 seen it then, and I'm praying that I will see it now. I'm in
23 jail. I'm in court. This is where if it was hidden, it should
24 come out now, okay? No, I haven't seen it. I have not.

10:55:04 25 Q. "One of the major arguments for publicising the evidence is
26 that in so doing, the opportunity will be offered to devise ways
27 and means to effectively put an end to the alleged trafficking in
28 a manner that will not visit hardships on innocent citizens. In
29 this connection, the United Nations could usefully prevail on the

1 international community to either:

2 1. Financially and technically support the ECOWAS
3 recommended team that is to make an inquiry into the diamond
4 trafficking from Sierra Leone; or,

10:55:54 5 2. Recommend that the Security Council undertake, with
6 respect to the Sierra Leone, an investigation along the lines of
7 the Fowler Group on Angola".

8 Mr Taylor, what's that, the Fowler Group on Angola?

9 A. I think there was a panel set up by the United Nations to
10:56:17 10 investigate Angolan diamonds.

11 Q. "Apart from the consideration of credibility, the weight of
12 either the United Nations or ECOWAS, placed four square behind
13 such an investigation or inquiry, is most likely, even during the
14 process, to send the appropriate signal to those involved in the
10:56:42 15 trafficking to significantly reduce their activities or even to
16 halt this illicit trade. This needs to be done quickly if an end
17 has to be placed on this operation which appears to be as
18 Hydra-headed as the RUF."

19 And then finally:

10:57:15 20 "How should the UN secretariat react to the ECOWAS
21 initiative to lift the arms embargo on Liberia?

22 It should be recalled that it was at the insistence of
23 ECOWAS that the Security Council placed an arms embargo on
24 Liberia. Consequently, the role of the secretariat on this
10:57:39 25 matter could be usefully limited to facilitating Mr Lansana
26 Kouyate's mission to New York. The intent of the mission is to
27 convey the collective decision of ECOWAS on this matter to the
28 Security Council. From discussions with the Liberian foreign
29 minister it appears that: (a), very little technical advice

1 would be sought from the secretariat; and (b), the mission is
2 fully aware of the anomalies of the embargo. These include the
3 absence from the regime of review dates or mechanisms,
4 benchmarks, and other stipulations for its termination.

10:58:21 5 Nevertheless, in its discussion with the ECOWAS mission, the
6 secretariat may wish to point out that it might not be prudent to
7 raise this matter at this juncture.

8 Best regards."

9 Now, before I move on, Mr President, I had omitted to mark
10:58:48 10 for identification, I think, the letter from President Taylor to
11 the United Nations Secretary-General dated 8 June 2000 dealing
12 with the allegations about diamonds. So could I ask for that to
13 be marked for identification, please, MFI-145.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE: Which one was that?

10:59:17 15 MR GRIFFITHS: It's from yesterday, Mr President.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE: I know the one. It's to Kofi Annan. Is
17 that the one?

18 MR GRIFFITHS: That's the one, Mr President, yes. Just for
19 reference sake it's behind divider 57 in this bundle that we're
10:59:34 20 looking at now, if we want to remind ourselves of it.

21 PRESIDING JUDGE: That document will be marked for
22 identification MFI-145.

23 MR GRIFFITHS: And could I ask that the code cable we've
24 just looked at from Felix Downes-Thomas to Prendergast on
10:59:57 25 President Taylor and Sierra Leone, dated 19 June 2000, be marked
26 for identification MFI-146, please.

27 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes. That document is marked MFI-146.

28 MR GRIFFITHS:

29 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, at this stage what was the nature of your

1 relationship with the British government?

2 A. I would say it was very bad. Very bad.

3 Q. Now, was the nature of that relationship a topic of
4 discussion between you and the UN special representative?

11:01:12 5 A. Yes. After Britain intervened with the EU in being
6 successful in stopping aid to Liberia, the special representative
7 at that time - you know, like I said, we were all devastated.
8 Knowing how these things occur diplomatically, I wrote a letter
9 to my chief of staff formally requesting a meeting with me so we
11:01:51 10 could discuss the issue and find ways of seeing how - what moves
11 we could make to begin to mend fences with the British, because
12 it was apparent that they were bent on destroying me, and so he
13 wanted to see how the UN, and using some diplomatic manoeuvres,
14 we could discuss it and make some overtures to the British.

11:02:24 15 Q. So did you meet with him?

16 A. Yes, I did.

17 Q. Let's have a look behind the next divider, please, divider
18 61. Let's look at the second page first so we can identify the
19 writer. It's Felix Downes-Thomas, yes?

11:02:55 20 A. That is correct.

21 Q. And it's dated 23 June 2000?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Is that correct?

24 A. That is correct.

11:03:02 25 Q. And if we go back to the first page it's addressed, is it
26 not, to the Honourable Dr Jonathan Taylor, Minister of State For
27 Presidential Affairs and Chef de Cabinet, yes?

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. And it's headed "Britain/Liberia"?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. "I have been trying to reach you by phone. That has been
3 unsuccessful. I would like to have a brief meeting with the
4 President at his earliest convenience. In that connection, it
11:03:37 5 should be useful for you to know that the issue I wish to bring
6 to the attention of the President relates specifically to
7 British/Liberia relations in the context of the allegation of
8 Government of Liberia complicity with the RUF.

9 In that regard, I would like to examine with him ways to
11:03:57 10 obviate what promises to be a drawn out altercation between the
11 two states and to minimise, if not completely arrest, any
12 negative fallouts. My views and suggestions on this matter are
13 principally two-fold:

14 1. The perception that the Government of Liberia is the
11:04:21 15 sole defender of Foday Sankoh is not helpful. It could be
16 altered effectively by a justified focus on what the Government
17 of Liberia considers to be a pivotal national concern; that is,
18 the re-arming of the Kamajors and its implications for Liberia
19 and for relations within and among member states of the Mano
11:04:45 20 River Union."

21 Now, Mr Taylor, had you been seeking to defend Foday
22 Sankoh?

23 A. No, no. I had been seeking only to making sure that peace
24 came in Sierra Leone as quickly as possible so I could have this
11:05:04 25 problem off my back and I could get my country running. Never
26 was the purpose of supporting Foday Sankoh. This was the view.
27 That's what they stick on you and make sure it sticks.

28 Q. Because you had earlier indicated to the same writer,
29 Mr Felix Downes-Thomas, your misgivings about Sankoh and his

1 commitment to peace, hadn't you?

2 A. Definitely. Definitely. I had made that very clear.

3 Q. "2. The Government of Liberia should consider contributing
4 positively to efforts aimed at granting safe passage to the
11:05:43 5 UNAMSIL personnel who are presently encircled by the RUF.

6 Concurrent action on 1 and 2 above is likely to pave the
7 way of what could be a very useful meeting between appropriate
8 representatives of Britain and Liberia where all the cards would
9 be placed on the table regarding the allegation of diamond
11:06:09 10 trafficking and gunrunning.

11 Against any possibility that it might not be possible for
12 me to meet with the President soon, I have brought these matters
13 to your attention and for discussion with him, given the urgency
14 which I believe is attached to them."

11:06:26 15 Did you in due course meet with him, Mr Taylor?

16 A. Yes, I did. Yes.

17 Q. Now, you were concerned, as indicated in both this document
18 and earlier documents, about the re-arming of the Kamajors,
19 weren't you?

11:06:47 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And help us, why was that?

22 A. Because of the - what we considered a large percentage of
23 that - at that time of being former ULIMO-J and ULIMO-K that had
24 begun the attacks on Liberia. Let's be reminded in April and in
11:07:14 25 August of the previous year we had had two attacks, one in
26 Voinjama and one on Kolahun in that particular areas - that's
27 already in the records - and so we knew that these were Liberians
28 that had been armed through that process that had gone through
29 the Guinean side, because there's a little connect right from

1 Sierra Leone into Guinea and back into Liberia. So we were
2 really concerned about that, yes.

3 Q. And after that last incursion, Mr Taylor - we're now in
4 2000 - where there any further incursions in 2000?

11:07:56 5 A. Yes, yes. A major one occurred again. Around about July
6 there was another major - July of 2000 there was another major
7 incursion.

8 Q. Now, let's just look at the timing of this, shall we. On
9 19 June, as President Kabbah brought to your attention, there's
11:08:23 10 this newspaper article in the Washington Post?

11 A. That is correct.

12 Q. Yes?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. We then have the freezing of that aid package from EU, yes?

11:08:36 15 A. Yes.

16 Q. We have these concerns being expressed by Felix
17 Downes-Thomas about British-Liberia relations, yes?

18 A. That is correct.

19 Q. And all of that has to be looked at in the context of that
11:08:55 20 letter you had received from the British ambassador the previous
21 year indicating that they would be providing lethal weaponry to
22 the Sierra Leonean army, yes?

23 A. That is correct.

24 Q. And then in July there is an incursion, you say, from
11:09:17 25 where?

26 A. Again from Guinea.

27 Q. Now did you write to the Secretary-General of the United
28 Nations about that, Mr Taylor?

29 A. Usually I did. Yes, I did. I wrote him explaining again

1 this major - in fact, it was a long letter I wrote to the
2 Secretary-General stating that first April attack, the August
3 attack of the previous year and now this attack and asked that -
4 in fact, we asked that it be published as a Security Council
11:09:47 5 document because of the seriousness of it, yes.

6 Q. Have a look behind divider 62, please.

7 Now, before we move on can I ask that that note to
8 Dr Jonathan Taylor from Felix Downes-Thomas regarding
9 Britain-Liberia relations be marked for identification, please,
11:10:10 10 MFI-147.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, marked MFI-147.

12 MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful.

13 Q. Is this the letter, Mr Taylor?

14 A. Yes, this is it.

11:10:46 15 Q. We see it's dated 14 July 2000:

16 "Mr Secretary-General, I am pleased to present my
17 compliments and to apprise you of the latest developments
18 occurring on the Liberian-Guinean border.

19 On 8 July 2000 a group of Liberian dissidents crossed from
11:11:13 20 Guinea and attacked Liberia. This third attack on Liberia
21 occurred in one of our provincial countries, Lofa, where similar
22 attacks also occurred from Guinea on 21 April and 10 August 1999
23 respectively, to which the Government of Liberia informed you and
24 also registered protest against the Government of the Republic of
11:11:42 25 Guinea to ECOWAS, the OAU and the United Nations.

26 These frequent attacks are causing untold suffering and
27 human misery on the Liberian people and tend to pose a threat to
28 the peace and security our sub-region. Moreover, against the
29 background of previous attacks, the government and people of

1 Liberia are left to believe that the latest incident is designed
2 to create insecurity and destabilise the country.

3 Mr Secretary-General, Liberia has done its utmost to
4 respect and Honour the protocols of the Mano River Union, the
11:12:28 5 Economic Community of West African States, the Organisation of
6 African Unity and the United Nations in assuring the
7 international community of its resolve to coexist with our
8 neighbours for sustained progress and development of our peoples.

9 Needless the say, the continued attacks on Liberia do not
11:12:54 10 augur well for good neighbourliness, given the fact that the
11 Guinean government has allowed its territory to be used as a base
12 for training, arming, and subsequent launching of attacks on the
13 nation and people of Liberia. Evidence in our possession support
14 our assertion that these dissidents have been recently armed with
11:13:17 15 new and modern weapons."

16 Armed by who, Mr Taylor?

17 A. Well, by Britain. The material that we seized, and we
18 published it in the press, had all the markings of the British
19 Ministry of Defence. We called the diplomat corps and showed it
11:13:40 20 to them. These were British armaments.

21 Q. "Furthermore, it is recalled that individuals involved in
22 previous attacks returned to the Republic of Guinea, where they
23 were given, and received, treatment at various medical
24 facilities.

11:14:02 25 Mr Secretary-General, as you aware, every sovereign nation
26 is required and expected under international law and convention
27 to protect its territory and to prevent the use thereof as base
28 or conduit for acts of aggression against another sovereign
29 state. International law, as well as the domestic law of

1 Liberia, obligates and permits Liberia, as well as all other
2 countries, the rights to self-defence in the face of apparent and
3 eminent threats to its security and stability.

4 The inherent right of a member state and its people to
11:14:48 5 defend themselves against armed attacks and aggression is a
6 fundamental principle of our organisation as guaranteed under
7 Article 51 of the charter of the United Nations.

8 These persistent attacks on Liberia, we believe, are
9 precipitated and encouraged by the knowledge these dissident
11:15:09 10 forces have of the existence of the United Nations arms embargo
11 on Liberia, which leaves Liberia vulnerable to such callous and
12 unwarranted attack on its nation and people by dissidents outside
13 of the country.

14 Certainly, Mr Secretary-General, you will understand and
11:15:32 15 appreciate the urgency and validity of Liberia's request that the
16 Security Council act so that the United Nations embargo be lifted
17 without delay to allow our nation and people provide for their
18 defence and security needs and prevent a reversal of the peace,
19 stability and democracy that we have achieved."

11:15:59 20 Now, before we move on, can I ask, please, that that letter
21 dated 14 July from President Taylor to the Secretary-General be
22 marked for identification MFI-148.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE: That document is marked MFI-148.

24 MR GRIFFITHS:

11:16:37 25 Q. Now, that attack upon Liberia, Mr Taylor, you raised it, of
26 course, with the Secretary-General, as we've just seen.

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. Now, did you raise it with, for example, the American
29 ambassador?

1 A. Yes. What we would do, once we did it with the
2 Secretary-General, it was published, in fact, as a Security
3 Council document later on. But we raised it with all the
4 diplomats accredited near Monrovia. In fact, what the US
11:17:17 5 ambassador - we raised it with him, and what he had said - we
6 always accused them of the training purposes and he had said that
7 no, the United States had US marines that were training Guinean
8 regular units in an area of the country called Nzerekore, which
9 is near Liberia, but they felt that these were Guinean regulars
11:17:42 10 and could not account for where those trainees went after their
11 training programme. But this was a training programme for the
12 Government of Guinea.

13 Q. Now, in July, apart from the American ambassador, who you
14 mentioned you spoke to, did you meet with any other
11:18:12 15 representative of the United States government?

16 A. Within the month of July following this I don't recollect
17 meeting any other official. Because around this time, this is
18 around 18 July, we are preparing for our 26 July celebration and
19 the invitation to Heads of State for the meeting on Sierra Leone
11:18:45 20 and who would become the leader. But I'm more concerned at this
21 particular time with another propagandist document that comes out
22 of Britain, this time by Mark Doyle, who brings up again this
23 arms business out of Sierra Leone and having reports. I don't
24 recall specifically who I meet from the United States government,
11:19:14 25 but we're meeting a lot of people though. But I'm more concerned
26 with 26 July, this Issa Sesay business, and trying to fight off
27 Mark Doyle again with having found proof that Liberia is involved
28 in Sierra Leone.

29 Q. Now, what Issa Sesay business are you talking about,

1 Mr Taylor?

2 A. Well, before us is the issue of leadership in Sierra Leone;
3 who is in charge. We are still trying to resolve the issue of
4 who is in charge in Sierra Leone and who do we talk to. So I
11:19:53 5 talk to my colleagues, and they agree that I should convene a
6 mini summit in Monrovia to deal with the issue of Issa Sesay and
7 the RUF so we can make absolutely sure the agreement is not
8 thrown away. So I organised this meeting quickly for them to
9 come in about a week later to discuss Sierra Leone and who will
11:20:24 10 be in charge and who can we talk to to make sure that Lome does
11 not get torn up.

12 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Do you mean in charge of the RUF or of
13 Sierra Leone?

14 THE WITNESS: The RUF. Who is in charge in Sierra Leone of
11:20:38 15 the RUF, your Honour.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Taylor, you said you discussed it with
17 your colleagues. What colleagues are you referring to?

18 THE WITNESS: Okay, Mr President. I'm talking about the
19 Committee of Six. Even though we've gotten the hostages
11:21:03 20 released, there is the open question of who is really in charge
21 of the RUF in Sierra Leone. So we decide to convene a meeting in
22 Monrovia to discuss that and really put to rest somebody that
23 will be in charge of the RUF that we could talk to that the peace
24 process will continue; that is, the disarmament and
11:21:30 25 demobilisation should continue.

26 MR GRIFFITHS:

27 Q. And so you organised this meeting and who attended?

28 A. We had attending the President of The Gambia, Yahya AJJ
29 Jammeh tended that meeting then; the chairman of ECOWAS then,

1 Alpha Oumar Konare, came to the meeting; the President of
2 Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, came to the meeting; the President of
3 Togo, Gnassingbe Eyadema, attended the meeting; the President of
4 Burkina Faso attended that meeting; and if my recollection is
11:22:16 5 correct, I also think Ivory Coast attended that meeting. And we
6 had decided to invite Issa Sesay back to Monrovia to meet with
7 us, and he came.

8 Q. Now, who was the President of Burkina Faso at the time?

9 A. Blaise Compaore.

11:22:37 10 Q. And who was the President of Ivory Coast?

11 A. Ivory Coast - at this particular time they're going through
12 the transitional period - it is still Guei Robert.

13 Q. But was that person at the meeting, the President of the
14 Ivory Coast?

11:22:52 15 A. Guei Robert attended the meeting.

16 Q. Now, help us with the timing of that meeting, Mr Taylor?

17 A. The meeting was hosted on 26 July.

18 Q. And was someone present from the RUF?

19 A. We invited Issa Sesay. Issa Sesay was present for the
11:23:22 20 meeting.

21 Q. And how did he travel to Sierra Leone?

22 A. To Sierra Leone?

23 Q. Sorry, to Liberia?

24 A. The same way. He came by road into Foya, and we flew him
11:23:43 25 to Monrovia to meet all of us. I didn't name myself, but I was
26 present in the meeting.

27 Q. And what happened at the meeting?

28 A. At that meeting we confronted General Sesay with the
29 proposition that we needed to know who was in charge of the RUF

1 because Foday Sankoh was incarcerated. General Sesay made us to
2 understand that he was the most senior officer, so after we threw
3 it around and we said, "Well, then, of course you are in charge
4 and you will be the new leader. Can we assume that?" He said,
11:24:26 5 "No." He said, "Your Excellencies, it will require two things
6 for me to take over the leadership of the RUF." One, we will
7 have to get approval from what he called a War Council; but, even
8 more importantly, he said that it would take the approval of
9 Foday Sankoh, who - he would have to get the permission from
11:24:50 10 Foday Sankoh to take over at least the interim leadership of the
11 RUF and that he could not make that decision, and he asked that
12 we give him some time to return, consult the War Council, and
13 asked that we find a way to get a message from them to Foday
14 Sankoh. And we accepted that we would be able to get a message
11:25:16 15 in the form of a letter - if a letter was written, that it would
16 be sent to Foday Sankoh, and he did go back and do such a letter,
17 and we moved from there.

18 Q. Now, did Sesay arrive alone, or did he come as part of a
19 delegation?

11:25:35 20 A. He came with a delegation.

21 Q. And another detail: Was President Kabbah present at this
22 meeting?

23 A. No, President Kabbah was not present at this meeting.

24 Q. Why not?

11:25:49 25 A. Well, he was not - Kabbah was not a member of the Committee
26 of Six. This was mostly a Committee of Six meeting on Sierra
27 Leone. So in fact, he's a party to the conflict, so he couldn't
28 be present.

29 Q. And where in Monrovia was the meeting held?

1 A. At the Executive Mansion in the conference room that I
2 used.

3 Q. And where was Sankoh at this time?

11:26:24

4 A. Sankoh was incarcerated. He was still being held by the
5 Sierra Leonean government.

6 Q. So how was contact going to be made with him?

11:26:46

7 A. Well, that a letter would have to be taken to him, and a
8 letter was taken to him by both Obasanjo and Alpha Konare, the
9 chairman of ECOWAS, agreed that they would take the letter.

10 They, following that meeting about a week or so later, flew into
11 Sierra Leone with the letter from Issa Sesay; that they met with
12 Tejan Kabbah; Foday Sankoh was brought to that meeting; he
13 received the letter; approved the interim leadership of Issa
14 Sesay; and that was brought back; and Issa Sesay subsequently
15 returned to Liberia for the confirmation of his interim
16 leadership of the RUF.

11:27:16

17 Q. When the meeting took place in Monrovia, Mr Taylor, did
18 President Kabbah know: One, that such a meeting was occurring
19 and; two, the purpose of the meeting?

11:27:37

20 A. Yes, yes. He knew, definitely. Definitely.

21 Q. And who do you say conveyed the letter to Sankoh?

22 A. The chairman of ECOWAS at the time, Alpha Oumar Konare,
23 along with the President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, flew into
24 Freetown and met with Sankoh while he was incarcerated during
25 that period. That would be about - I would put that meeting to
26 about the first week of August, they met with Sankoh with Kabbah
27 in Freetown, delivered the letter to Sankoh. The two Presidents
28 did.

11:28:07

29 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Griffiths, despite what that clock

1 says we've got much less than two minutes of time left. I think
2 the clock is running slow.

3 MR GRIFFITHS: Very well. That's as good a point as any.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE: All right. We will resume at 12 noon.

11:28:40 5 [Break taken at 11.30 a.m.]

6 [Upon resuming at 12.00 p.m.]

7 MR GRIFFITHS:

8 Q. Yes, Mr Taylor. Before we adjourned we were dealing with
9 the appointment of Issa Sesay as interim leader of the RUF.

12:00:43 10 A. That is correct.

11 Q. Now, you told us, Mr Taylor, that the initial meeting took
12 place on 26 July.

13 A. That is correct.

14 Q. And at that meeting, remind us, who was present apart from
12:01:00 15 yourself?

16 A. We had the Presidents of The Gambia, Burkina Faso, Mali,
17 Nigeria, and Togo. I do recall that I mentioned earlier that
18 Ivory Coast did not attend. These were the five states, and I
19 made six.

12:01:25 20 Q. Now, Bockarie - sorry. Sesay at that stage said: Firstly,
21 he would need to consult with the War Council, is that correct?

22 A. That is correct.

23 Q. Secondly, he would want Foday Sankoh's sanction first?

24 A. That is correct. That's what he said at that meeting, yes.

12:01:47 25 Q. And it was decided that a letter would be taken to Sankoh?

26 A. That is correct.

27 Q. Who wrote the letter?

28 A. Issa Sesay, to the best of my knowledge, wrote the letter.

29 Q. And who took it to Sierra Leone?

1 A. The chairman of ECOWAS, Alpha Oumar Konare and the
2 President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo.

3 Q. And how did they travel to Sierra Leone?

4 A. They flew, I think, on the Nigerian President's plane.

12:02:20 5 They flew into Sierra Leone.

6 Q. And where did they meet Mr Sankoh?

7 A. They met him in Freetown. I was not present. I don't know
8 the precise location, but they met him in Freetown along with
9 President Kabbah.

12:02:34 10 Q. And Sankoh then approved his appointment?

11 A. That is correct.

12 Q. Now, the letter that was written by Issa Sesay, did you see
13 that letter, Mr Taylor?

14 A. Yes, I saw the letter. I had a copy of the letter.

12:02:55 15 Q. Was it a typed document, or what?

16 A. No, it was a handwritten document by Issa Sesay.

17 Handwritten.

18 Q. Let us have a look behind divider 76 in this volume,
19 please. Do you have it, Mr Taylor?

12:03:41 20 A. Yes, I do.

21 Q. Is this the letter, Mr Taylor?

22 A. Just one minute. Yes, this is the letter.

23 Q. Now, I have caused to be distributed a better copy of this.
24 Does everyone have the better?

12:04:00 25 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, we have that, thank you,

26 Mr Griffiths.

27 MR GRIFFITHS: Because the original was rather illegible.

28 Q. Now, let's see if we can make sense of this letter,
29 Mr Taylor. We see it's dated 1 August 2000, top right-hand

1 corner.

2 A. That is correct:

3 Q. "RUF. Dear Papay, We greet you in the name of Allah and
4 the revolution, and the high command of the RUF. Your children
12:04:37 5 are still committed and loyal to you and the revolution. In this
6 respect, and all honour bestowed upon you, we held a general
7 forum inviting all senior commanders and officers of the
8 RUF" - I am having difficulty with that word - "when we came to
9 a final decision for the revolution to still be moving, both
12:05:18 10 politically and militarily, until your release from detention;
11 that Brigadier General Issa Sesay will head the RUF as interim
12 leader until your return and all instructions should be taken
13 from him, both politically and military for the success of the
14 RUF until you are released, which we are all praying for. We
12:05:50 15 would like to inform you about such development and your advice
16 and instruction, which will be carried out fully through the high
17 command of the RUF. We hope upon your release you will meet the
18 revolution more strong, both militarily and politically. We wish
19 you well and hope to see you in good health on your return, when
12:06:29 20 we are trying to exploit all means for your release through the
21 diplomatic channel which we are presently going through. We wish
22 you all the best and hope to see you soon."

23 It is signed and then we see, "Your children of the
24 revolution, signed on behalf of the high command of the RUF",
12:07:01 25 and then we see the word "interim".

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. Was this the letter, Mr Taylor?

28 A. This is the letter that Obasanjo and Konare took from Sesay
29 to Foday Sankoh while he was in custody in Freetown, yes.

1 Q. And how do you come to have a copy of the letter?

2 A. I was supplied a copy by the RUF after this letter went to
3 Sankoh. Obasanjo had a copy, Konare had a copy.

4 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, who signed this letter?

12:07:46 5 THE WITNESS: It is signed by - we can't see the signature,
6 but it is signed by Issa, the interim leader. Where you see it
7 up there - but you can't really. This copy is not quite clear.
8 Maybe --

9 MR GRIFFITHS:

12:08:02 10 Q. Where do you see a signature, Mr Taylor?

11 A. Well, I see some markings between "decision" and here. The
12 signature is in here, but I know it's Issa because I was told
13 that Issa signed the letter as interim leader. That's
14 contestable, but I was told that Issa signed it as interim
15 leader.

12:08:24 16 MR GRIFFITHS: Now, can I ask that that document be marked
17 for identification, please.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE: Document is marked for identification
19 MFI-149.

12:08:53 20 MR GRIFFITHS:

21 Q. Now, following the decision by Sankoh to appoint Sesay -
22 General Sesay as the interim leader, Mr Taylor, was that decision
23 made public?

24 A. That decision was finally made public after the Heads of
12:09:21 25 State - two of them - after Konare and Obasanjo returned, we
26 discussed Sankoh's agreement by phone. They did not come back to
27 Liberia, because this is all happening around the first week now
28 in August when this happens. They go and we arrange for a
29 meeting to be held three weeks later. They come back to Liberia,

1 and both Alpha Konare - that's what I mean by "they" - and
2 Obasanjo late - about around about the 21st, 22nd, somewhere of
3 August, for the formal confirmation and we invite Issa Sesay back
4 to Liberia. That confirmation is done, and there is a press
12:10:14 5 statement done at that particular time at Roberts International
6 Airport where the three Heads of State meet. The formal
7 announcements are made. There are press reports, and a press
8 release is done by the RUF at that particular time.

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

12:10:36 10 A. Yes, I did. It's - they call it - a press communique, they
11 call it.

12 Q. Have a look behind divider 74, please.

13 Can I inquire, Mr President, did I ask for the letter - the
14 handwritten letter to be marked for identification?

12:11:20 15 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that is MFI-149.

16 MR GRIFFITHS: I am grateful.

17 Q. Now, is this the press communique, Mr Taylor?

18 A. Yes, this is the press communique as done by the RUF
19 following that situation.

12:11:34 20 Q. Now, we see handwritten at the top "Presidential Papers
21 2000"; whose handwriting is that?

22 A. That could be one of my staff personnel where they are
23 going to make this a part of our publication.

24 Q. Of the presidential papers, yes?

12:11:52 25 A. That is correct.

26 Q. "Press communique.

27 Press communique issued by the Revolutionary United Front,
28 RUF, following a meeting with His Excellency Alpha Oumar Konare,
29 President of the Republic of Mali and Chairman of ECOWAS; His

1 Excellency, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, President of the Federal
2 Republic of Nigeria; and His Excellency Dankpannah
3 Dr Charles Ghankay Taylor, President of the Republic of Liberia,
4 Monrovia, Liberia, August 21, 2000."

12:12:33 5 Now, this meeting, Mr Taylor, you say, took place at
6 Roberts International Airfield?

7 A. That is correct.

8 Q. And the three Presidents named here were present?

9 A. Yes.

12:12:46 10 Q. Along with?

11 A. Issa Sesay.

12 Q. Issa Sesay?

13 A. Yes, and the spokesperson was there too.

14 Q. Whose spokesperson?

12:12:56 15 A. At that time they were using a fellow called - Gibriil
16 Massaquoi was also present.

17 Q. He was also present, Gibriil Massaquoi?

18 A. That is correct.

19 Q. Now let's look at this:

12:13:14 20 "The high command of the RUF today met with His Excellency
21 Alpha Oumar Konare, President of Mali and Chairman of ECOWAS; His
22 Excellency Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, President of the Federal
23 Republic of Nigeria; and His Excellency Dankpannah
24 Dr Charles Ghankay Taylor, President of the Republic of Liberia.

12:13:40 25 The meeting was a sequel to the one held in Monrovia on 26
26 July 2000 and the high command's letter dated 1 August 2000 to
27 the chairman Foday Sankoh on developments connected with the
28 peace process in Sierra Leone."

29 Now, we have just looked at that letter, haven't we?

1 A. That is correct.

2 Q. Dated 1 August, and you have already mentioned this initial
3 meeting on 26 July, yes?

4 A. That is correct.

12:14:08 5 Q. "His Excellency President Konare and His Excellency
6 President Obasanjo brought a handwritten and signed reply to our
7 letter addressed to chairman Foday Sankoh. We are convinced that
8 the letter, which confirmed Brigadier General Issa Sesay as the
9 interim leader of the RUF is authentic.

12:14:33 10 As the high command of the RUF, we are fully appreciative
11 of the advice provided to us by the three ECOWAS Presidents and
12 we pledge our readiness to cooperate with ECOWAS in the
13 achievement of lasting peace in Sierra Leone.

14 The RUF cherishes the hope that the government of President
12:14:55 15 Tejan Kabbah will fulfil its total obligations under the Lome
16 Accord.

17 We welcome the decision of His Excellency President
18 Ahmad Tejan Kabbah to release about 171 of our comrades in
19 detention in various cities in Sierra Leone as a mark of
12:15:18 20 confidence building and in the new spirit of peace in our
21 country.

22 As a mark of our sincerity, and in reciprocity, we have
23 also decided to release, as early as arrangements can be made
24 with UNAMSIL field commanders, the equipment captured by our
12:15:36 25 fighters.

26 Furthermore, the RUF high command calls for the early
27 deployment of UNAMSIL troops from the sub-region in our areas of
28 operation in Sierra Leone and assures of our readiness to
29 cooperate with them in order to ensure the success of the DDR

1 programme in particular and the peace process in general as
2 mandated in the Lome Peace Accord.

3 The high command expresses gratitude to all the leaders of
4 ECOWAS. In particular to Presidents Alpha Konare, Olusegun
12:16:17 5 Obasanjo and Charles Taylor for their untiring efforts in
6 bringing durable peace and stability to our dear country
7 Sierra Leone.

8 Done in Monrovia, Liberia, this 21st day August AD 2000."

9 Whose signature follows that, Mr Taylor?

12:16:35 10 A. That's Issa Sesay's.

11 Q. Before we move away from this document, the third paragraph
12 on that second page, Mr Taylor, "We have decided to release the
13 equipment captured by our fighters", yes?

14 A. Yes.

12:16:56 15 Q. Were you and the other Presidents involved in bringing
16 about that decision?

17 A. Yes, we discussed it with them and told them that they had
18 to release the equipment.

19 Q. Now, was this the equipment which had been seized from the
12:17:18 20 UNAMSIL troops who had been held hostage?

21 A. That is correct.

22 Q. Where Kabbah had been asking for not merely their physical
23 release, but also the return of their equipment?

24 A. That is correct.

12:17:34 25 Q. So this is the equipment we are talking about?

26 A. That is correct.

27 MR GRIFFITHS: Now, before we move on can I ask, please,
28 that this document be marked for identification. So it's the
29 press communique issued by the RUF regarding the appointment of

1 Issa Sesay as interim leader, dated 21 August 2000.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked for
3 identification MFI-150.

4 MR GRIFFITHS:

12:18:18 5 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, there are two matters that I want to deal
6 with before we leave this topic - well, three matters. Firstly,
7 was President Kabbah kept abreast of all of these developments
8 regarding the appointment of Sesay as the interim leader?

9 A. Kabbah was fully kept abreast and we know how. He was
12:18:50 10 informed from the initial discussion. Kabbah received the
11 chairman of ECOWAS Alpha Konare and Obasanjo in Freetown. He,
12 Kabbah, brought Foday Sankoh to the meeting. He was there when
13 Sankoh read the letter from the RUF and approved Issa Sesay as
14 interim leader. So he knew. Every step of the way, he knew.

12:19:46 15 Q. The other matter I want to ask you about because I want to
16 understand clearly what the situation is, you told us yesterday,
17 Mr Taylor, that your first meeting with Issa Sesay took place in
18 May 2000 with regard to the release of the UNAMSIL peacekeepers.
19 Is that right?

12:20:09 20 A. That is right.

21 Q. The next meeting takes place, am I right, on 26 July?

22 A. That is correct.

23 Q. He returns again in early August?

24 A. No. That's late August now.

12:20:28 25 Q. Late August. What date in August?

26 A. About the 21st we have this meeting.

27 Q. Okay. So is it correct that that would be his third visit
28 to Monrovia?

29 A. That is correct.

1 Q. So May, 26 July, 21 August, yes?

2 A. That is correct.

3 Q. Does he come back to Monrovia thereafter?

4 A. In later months, yes.

12:21:01 5 Q. On how many occasions?

6 A. Depending on the situation. I can't be sure on the exact
7 numbers, but I am sure between - you know, if there's a crisis he
8 would come, but I would say a few times before the end of the
9 year.

12:21:24 10 Q. So May, July, late August, yes?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. During that period, three trips?

13 A. That is correct.

14 Q. Now, in light of that, Mr Taylor, I now want to ask you, or
12:21:39 15 put to you for your comment, testimony given before this Court on
16 2 September 2008 by TF1-338, okay?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Because I want you to have an opportunity to comment on the
19 account given by that witness of these meetings with Sesay. Do
12:22:08 20 you understand me?

21 A. Yes, I do.

22 Q. 2 September 2008 in an open session, and I begin at page
23 15141, the witness was asked this question by counsel opposite,
24 Ms Hollis:

12:22:36 25 "Q. Now, just to be clear, can you tell us in what month
26 in 2000 this trip occurred?

27 A. The first trip was in May that we brought materials."

28 Now, Mr Taylor, was Sesay given any materials by you in May
29 when he came to discuss the release of the UNAMSIL peacekeepers?

1 A. No, not an ounce of material, no.

2 Q. "Q. And again, Mr Witness, I wanted to remind you that we
3 are in open session, so when you give your answers, please
4 do not indicate in any way your identity. Now, Mr Witness,
12:23:31 5 in 2000, did Issa Sesay travel any other times outside of
6 Sierra Leone?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And when was the next trip that he made outside of
9 Sierra Leone?

12:23:44 10 A. It was at the end of May.

11 Q. Where did he go?

12 A. He went to Liberia, Monrovia.

13 Q. And why did he go there?

14 A. According to him, he went there because Charles Taylor
12:24:02 15 had invited him to discuss how to be able to release the
16 United Nations peacekeepers.

17 Q. How did he travel to Monrovia?

18 A. He used a vehicle from Koidu to Foya and from Foya he
19 flew using helicopter to Monrovia.

12:24:24 20 Q. And do you know what kind of helicopter he used?

21 A. It was the same Weasua helicopter he had used."

22 Is that true?

23 A. No, he used an ATU helicopter.

24 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Sorry to ask this question totally out of
12:24:48 25 ignorance, is this Weasua not a type of helicopter?

26 THE WITNESS: No, your Honour. Weasua here is an air
27 transport company registered in Liberia. It's called the Weasua
28 Air Transport company, your Honour. They do have - they did have
29 a helicopter that the UN used to lease from them from time to

1 time.

2 MR GRIFFITHS:

3 Q. Mr Taylor, how many times did Issa Sesay come to Monrovia
4 in May 2000?

12:25:30 5 A. Once Issa Sesay came, and if you read this as I am looking
6 at the statement, he says he came in May and the end of May. So
7 sometimes these boys don't even know what they're talking. But
8 he came in May upon my invitation. Once in May, returned,
9 released all the hostages and, like I said, came back in July.

12:25:52 10 He did not come twice in May, no.

11 Q. Because, let's just be clear, this witness is saying, the
12 first trip was in May that we brought materials. And he is then
13 asked when was the next trip and he says the end of May, which
14 suggests two trips in May. Did that happen, Mr Taylor?

12:26:15 15 A. That did not happen. Issa Sesay came once on my invitation
16 in May. Once.

17 Q. Now, the same witness goes on to say, and this is at page
18 15143, and the learned justice, Judge Sebutinde, asked my learned
19 friend opposite, Ms Hollis, this question: "Should we for not
12:26:45 20 take it that this is not hearsay evidence at least?" Ms Hollis's
21 response was: "Your Honours, for now, you should take it that
22 much of this evidence is not hearsay." The witness is then asked
23 this question:

24 "Q. Let me go back to my question. What happened when
12:27:05 25 Issa Sesay arrived in Monrovia?

26 A. He arrived in Monrovia because he said Charles Taylor
27 had invited him to negotiate the release of the UN
28 peacekeepers and when he got there, Benjamin Yeaten picked
29 him up and took him to the Congo Town guesthouse."

1 Pause there. Did he stay at the guesthouse?

2 A. Oh, yes. Issa Sesay would stay at the RUF guesthouse, yes.

3 Q. Was he taken there by Benjamin Yeaten?

12:27:42

4 A. I really don't know who would have picked him up to take
5 him there. It very well could have been Benjamin, but I wouldn't
6 know the details of that.

7 Q. "Q. And just to be clear, what guesthouse are you speaking
8 of?"

12:28:00

9 A. We had a guesthouse in Congo Town which was rented
10 by Charles Taylor for the leader who would come from the
11 peace accord.

12 Q. And what happened after Issa Sesay arrived at this
13 guesthouse?

12:28:16

14 A. It was at night around ten to 11 that Benjamin Yeaten
15 came to receive him and took him to Charles Taylor at the
16 Executive Mansion, Charles Taylor's place."

17 Was he taken to the Executive Mansion at ten to 11 at
18 night?

12:28:32

19 A. No, he would not be taken there at that time, no, because I
20 didn't meet with the leaders at that time, no.

21 Q. It continues, page 15144:

22 "Q. Mr Witness, what happened when Issa Sesay arrived to
23 meet with Charles Taylor?"

12:28:52

24 A. They discussed the release of the United Nations
25 peacekeepers, those that they had arrested.

26 Q. And what was that discussed?

27 A. Charles Taylor said that the United Nations was after
28 him to talk to the RUF to release the UN peacekeepers. He
29 said because he had even been promised that if he

1 spearheaded the release of the UN peacekeepers, he would be
2 made the ECOWAS Chairman."

3 Did you say that, Mr Taylor?

4 A. Total nonsense. The ECOWAS chairmanship is not determined
12:29:28 5 by vote, so it has a rotating style. We have three groups in
6 ECOWAS: Anglophone, Francophone, Lusophone, and it changes every
7 year. From Anglophone it comes to Francophone, Lusophone, and
8 back. It doesn't call for any good deal or somebody says, "Oh,
9 you take it." It doesn't work - he's talking to the - he doesn't
12:29:54 10 know what he is talking about. Total nonsense. That's not the
11 way ECOWAS works. That's a lie.

12 Q. "Q. And what else was discussed during this meeting?

13 A. He discussed that he should help to release the UN
14 peacekeepers that he had under - that he had with him.
12:30:12 15 That was Issa. And so if Issa released him, he will help
16 Issa in the struggle."

17 Did you say that?

18 A. No, how would I say - no, never said that. But I am not
19 sure if this witness - is this witness in the meeting?

12:30:27 20 Q. Well, from the suggestion at the top that this is not
21 hearsay, it would suggest that he was.

22 A. Well, when I met Issa Sesay - in fact, even when Issa Sesay
23 met with the Heads of State, the individual that was present in
24 the meeting has not testified before this Court. The only person
12:30:50 25 that met with us with Issa Sesay in that meeting or met with me
26 was the very - he is a very smart, educated boy. I think he has
27 a little bit of education, a fellow called Gibril Massaquoi was
28 present. But none of the little boys were in that meeting. Only
29 Gibril Massaquoi was present, even when we met the Heads of

1 State. So he cannot be in this meeting, no.

12:31:28 2 Q. Now, let's be clear, Mr Taylor, because we want to be sure
3 what it is you are telling us. This witness is talking about the
4 initial meeting in May with regard to the release of the
5 peacekeepers, yes?

6 A. That's what I am talking about, yes.

7 Q. Now, first of all, was your meeting with Issa Sesay, on the
8 occasion you tell us in May, at the Executive Mansion?

9 A. It was at the Executive Mansion.

12:31:45 10 Q. Was it late at night?

11 A. It was not late at night.

12 Q. Help us. What kind of time of day did the meet take place?

13 A. This meeting took place, I would say - Issa Sesay arrived
14 in the evening, slept. The next morning I met with him and his
15 spokesperson. I remember that very clearly.

16 Q. And the spokesperson was who?

17 A. Gibriil Massaquoi. So this person is talking - this is
18 hearsay. The - only Issa Sesay and this gentleman, I remember
19 him very well, he is somewhat educated from the way he spoke, but
12:32:22 20 that was the only person with Issa Sesay in that meeting.

21 Q. This is the meeting about the release of the peacekeepers,
22 Mr Taylor?

23 A. That is correct.

24 Q. How many people are actually in the room?

12:32:35 25 A. I, as President, I am in the room. If I am not mistaken,
26 my chief of staff is also present in the room with Issa Sesay and
27 a fellow called Gibriil Massaquoi.

28 Q. It says:

29 "A. If Issa released him, he will help Issa in the

1 struggle.

2 Q. And was it discussed in what way Charles Taylor would
3 help Issa in the struggle?

4 A. He said he would help him by - with anything that he
12:33:12 5 asked for because he had been promised to become the ECOWAS
6 chairman."

7 Is that true?

8 A. That is a total lie. That's a lie.

9 Q. Mr Taylor, just tell us: As best you can recollect, how
12:33:27 10 did the meeting actually go, this first meeting with Issa Sesay?

11 A. I met Issa Sesay. He impressed me as a fairly reasonable
12 young man. I told him - in fact, it was almost like a delivery
13 of the position of the international community regarding the
14 issue of these hostages. It was very blunt; it was very clear.

12:33:59 15 Issa talked about the problems of the attacks. He talked about
16 some of the difficulties that they were having, but I made it
17 very clear to him that, look, all of these problems can be looked
18 at by ECOWAS, and I am prepared to bring your concerns at the
19 next meeting to Heads of State. But what is important now that
12:34:23 20 the international community wants and must have, these men must
21 be released unconditionally. These were my clear words to Issa
22 Sesay.

23 Q. Mr Taylor, did you see it as a negotiation, or did you see
24 it as the statement of a position?

12:34:46 25 A. I would say both. I would say both. We made the position
26 very clear, but I was careful that it did not - that it did not
27 appear as though that these were threats that were - this is
28 this. It was a very - what we call a very clear, sound
29 statement, but we made it - I made it very clear to them that we

1 were prepared to listen to their concerns, but the issue of the
2 release was not negotiable. Yes, that's what I mean by "both".

3 Q. Did you make a deal with him: If you release the hostages,
4 I will help you as, as suggested, anything that he asked for?

12:35:34 5 A. Categorical ly, no. Never, never, never made a deal, and
6 would not have and could not have made a deal. I was not
7 speaking from a - listen, I was not speaking from a weak
8 position. I was speaking from a very, very strong position; not
9 just as President of Liberia, I was speaking as the principal
12:35:53 10 mediator. I had at my back ECOWAS, the African Union, and the
11 full force of the United Nations. So I was not negotiating. I
12 made it very clear, but I also said that we were prepared to
13 listen to whatever concerns that they had and I would take it to
14 the next meeting of ECOWAS leaders.

12:36:14 15 Q. "Q. And what happened after that discussion?

16 A. After the discussion Issa accepted, and from there he
17 went back to his lodge where he was in Congo Town. And
18 when he got there, he had a radio - the VHS radio that he
19 had with him. He communicated directly at the base,
12:36:40 20 telling them to prepare the Zambian peacekeepers and bring
21 them to the riverside.

22 Q. And what happened after that?

23 A. After that the following day he himself got into the
24 helicopter and flew to Foya, and he was in Foya himself and
12:36:59 25 Benjamin Yeaten and sent someone to go and receive the
26 first convoy in Pendembu, Manowa crossing point, and bring
27 them to Foya."

28 Pause. As far as you are aware, Mr Taylor, did Sesay
29 communicate with the RUF on a radio from the guesthouse?

1 A. I am sure, yes. I am sure he had to. There was a
2 radio - remember, I have said - at we had installed at the
3 guesthouse, a long-range radio for communication. I do not know
4 when he communicated, but there was a radio and he should have
12:37:40 5 communicated. I was not present there, but I am sure - at that
6 meeting at the mansion he said that he would order the release of
7 the hostages and that that process would be begin. But it's good
8 that this witness mentions this, because if you go back to page
9 15144, he says something interesting there. He says that he
12:38:05 10 communicated that the people should be brought. That's what I
11 mentioned to this Court earlier.

12 All systems were in place, and these people were supposed
13 to be brought to Spriggs Payne Airport. UN personnel are in
14 place at the airport so if a deal is struck, that there can be
12:38:27 15 movement of these people. So it brings to focus the point that
16 this is not a deserted airstrip where some other witness said
17 that ammunitions are being - that we have ammunition being loaded
18 on the plane. So this process is happening fast, but let there
19 be no mistake: We anticipate this, and the UN has every system
12:38:48 20 in place in preparation for this, including the helicopters to
21 fly them back to Freetown with their personnel. They have
22 brought personnel in on ground to handle this movement of the
23 personnel once they are received. So I am glad he mentions that
24 part.

12:39:05 25 Q. And help us with another detail. The witness mentions that
26 Sesay flew to Foya with Benjamin Yeaten; is that true?

27 A. I don't know. It could be true. I am not sure who went
28 back with him. I really don't know. I can't help you with that.
29 It's possible that Benjamin - they were good friend and Benjamin

1 was responsible for his security, and because of the movement of
2 these UN people, it's possible that Benjamin could have gone.
3 Because the ministry of defence is also involved here, so I don't
4 see why he doesn't mention defence ministry people, because the
12:39:50 5 ministry of defence was involved in this evacuation too. So I am
6 not sure who exactly went on the helicopter.

7 Q. Now continuing with the testimony of this witness:

8 "Q. Now, when Issa Sesay traveled in this helicopter to
9 Foya, did he take anything with him?

12:40:10 10 A. He did not go with anything.

11 Q. Now, what happened after these peacekeepers were - the
12 Zambians were brought to Foya?

13 A. When they were brought to Foya, they airlifted them to
14 Monrovia to meet with Charles Taylor."

12:40:34 15 Pause. When they were released Mr Taylor, did you meet
16 with the peacekeepers?

17 A. But how this - how would he know? How - these are the type
18 of things that destroy people. How - if this little person,
19 whoever he is, is on the helicopter with his boss, Issa Sesay,
12:40:58 20 they have flown to Foya, and he has the nerve now to say that
21 when we are brought to Foya, they airlifted them to Monrovia to
22 meet with Charles Taylor. How does he know? That's why these
23 boys just talk nonsense. How does he know? How does he know?

24 Q. Well, did you?

12:41:15 25 A. I did not meet with them. I did not. He doesn't know.

26 Q. Who took custody of them after they were brought to Foya,
27 Mr Taylor?

28 A. These people came to Foya. A United Nations chopper was
29 flown to Foya, took them and flew them straight to the airport in

1 Monrovia at Spriggs Payne Airport. I did not meet them in little
2 pieces and groups and different things. No, I didn't meet them.

3 Q. "Q. And what did Issa Sesay do after that?

4 A. After that he crossed back into Sierra Leone.

12:41:50 5 Q. When Issa Sesay went from Foya back into Sierra Leone,
6 did he take anything with him?"

7 Second time he is asked the same question.

8 "A. He did not take anything with him.

9 Q. Did Issa Sesay travel outside of Sierra Leone at any
12:42:12 10 other time in 2000?

11 A. Yes, in 2000, July, he travelled to Liberia again.

12 Q. And to what location in Liberia did he travel?

13 A. He came to Monrovia.

14 Q. Why did he travel to Monrovia in July of 2000?

12:42:32 15 A. Well, sometime in July, while we were in Koidu Town,
16 Charles Taylor invited Issa Sesay to go with a delegation.
17 He said they had an occasion in Liberia, so they should go
18 and celebrate that occasion. So Issa went with his
19 delegation to meet him."

12:42:54 20 Pause. Breaking it down into pieces, firstly, the
21 invitation to Issa Sesay to come to Monrovia in July, who did
22 that come from?

23 A. It came from me.

24 Q. Yes?

12:43:10 25 A. Yes, not to come and celebrate with me. Issa Sesay was no
26 President to come and celebrate with me. He was told that the
27 ECOWAS delegation were coming and the Heads of States were coming
28 and wanted to meet with him, and he should come. He was not
29 invited to come and celebrate with me.

1 Q. Now, of course, Mr Taylor, Independence Day in Liberia is
2 when?

3 A. July 26.

4 Q. Now, had you invited him to come to those celebrations?

12:43:41 5 A. No, not at all. No. No.

6 Q. Did he come with a delegation?

7 A. Yes, he did.

8 Q. "Q. How did Issa and his delegation travel to Monrovia?

9 A. They took a vehicle from Koidu Town and travelled to
10 Foya and from Foya they were airlifted to Monrovia."

11 Is that true?

12 A. Yes. This is the rainy season. The roads are terrible,
13 impassable and to cut short the travel time, that would take
14 maybe seven or eight hours to travel from Foya to Monrovia, they
15 would just hop them from Foya straight to Monrovia and back.

12:44:28

16 Q. "Q. And you said they were airlifted. What type of
17 aircraft was used to air lift them?

18 A. It was Weasua that took them."

19 True or false?

12:44:46

20 A. False.

21 Q. What helicopter took them?

22 A. We always used the ATU Mi -2.

23 Q. "Q. And what happened when Issa Sesay and his delegation
24 arrived in Monrovia?

12:45:00

25 A. When Issa Sesay and his delegation arrived in Monrovia,
26 I can still recall the date, July 26. When they arrived
27 there, around 4 o'clock, they were taken to the Executive
28 Mansion, sixth floor, to Charles Taylor."

29 Is that true?

1 A. That is not true. That is not true.

2 Q. What's untrue about it?

3 A. In the first instance the part that is not true is the
4 floor. It says sixth floor. These are all bedrooms on the sixth
12:45:34 5 floor. My office is on the fourth floor. They are taken to the
6 fourth floor at my office where the Presidents were.

7 Q. And were they taken straight from the airport to the
8 Executive Mansion?

9 A. I am not sure. I am not sure. I would suspect that they
12:45:50 10 probably arrived a little earlier and probably went, maybe
11 showered and changed because they were coming to meet the Heads
12 of State and they had to probably get properly attired. So I
13 would doubt if they were just taken straight to us coming from
14 the bush, without taking a shower and all that kind of stuff. So
12:46:13 15 I would surmise they probably came a little earlier.

16 Q. "A. When they went there, they met other four Heads of
17 State and Charles Taylor at the mansion ground.

18 Q. And who were these other four Heads of State who were
19 there with Charles Taylor at the mansion ground?

12:46:34 20 A. They met Obasanjo, who was the former President of
21 Nigeria, and we had Eyadema, Yahya Jammeh, and they also
22 met Oumar Konare who they said was the Malian President."

23 Pause. How many Presidents were present, Mr Taylor?

24 A. There were five.

12:46:57 25 Q. Can you name them for us?

26 A. Yes. These four, plus - he left Blaise Compaore out.

27 Q. And of course, yourself?

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. So six?

1 A. Six, that is correct.

2 Q. "Q. Mr Witness, you mentioned Eyadema. Who is Eyadema?

3 A. Eyadema was the Togolese President. Sorry, he was the
4 Gambian President.

12:47:29 5 Q. And who was Yahya Jammeh?

6 A. Eyadema was the Togolese President and Yahya Jammeh was
7 the Gambian President.

8 Q. And what happened at this meeting?

9 A. When they entered the place, Charles Taylor welcomed
12:47:48 10 them and introduced Issa's delegation to other delegations
11 who had been there already, the four Presidents. That he
12 had invited Issa's delegation, that he invited everybody to
13 come and celebrate that occasion and to change the RUF
14 Leadership. "

12:48:09 15 Pause. How many members of the RUF met with the six
16 Presidents who were present?

17 A. To my recollection, as far as I remember, there were only
18 two individuals, Sesay and Massaquoi. There was nobody else that
19 was in that room from the RUF delegation.

12:48:33 20 Q. And was there any other delegation present apart from the
21 RUF delegation?

22 A. There was no other delegation, but I think he is referring
23 to the Heads of State as a delegation. There was no other
24 delegation. No other delegation.

12:48:48 25 Q. And the witness says, "He invited everybody to come and
26 celebrate that occasion". Which occasion? What was the occasion
27 for celebration?

28 A. I don't know what occasion he is saying that they were
29 invited to celebrate. 26 July is the independence of Liberia and

1 we used this occasion to hold this meeting. Issa Sesay, as the
2 leader of the RUF, was not invited by me to attend the 26 July
3 celebrations. He was invited and he was told a week before this
4 that he will be coming to meet with the Heads of State present to
12:49:40 5 determine and decide this issue of the leadership of the RUF
6 since Sankoh was incarcerated.

7 Q. Now, you say that, as best you recall, there were only two
8 members of the RUF in the meeting, but do you know how many
9 people accompanied Issa from Sierra Leone?

12:50:05 10 A. No, I do not. I do not. Because of the size of the
11 helicopter - an Mi-2 is a very small helicopter. Assuming that
12 the two pilots, they could not coming to Monrovia - there could
13 not have been more than five persons on his delegation coming on
14 that helicopter because when you add the pilot and the security.

12:50:32 15 So reaching Monrovia, most of the people that came probably
16 stayed in Foya because the vehicles did not drive to Monrovia.
17 They stayed in Foya. So I would just say, just from the size of
18 the chopper, that he could not have brought more than five
19 persons, including maybe his chief of security and one or two
12:50:52 20 other persons.

21 Q. "Q. And what happened then?"

22 A. From there the Nigerian President Obasanjo was the
23 first person who talk to the delegation."

24 Was he?

12:51:08 25 A. No, Obasanjo was not the first. In a case like this, the
26 chairman of ECOWAS would speak first.

27 Q. And who was that?

28 A. Alpha Konare.

29 Q. And what did he say?

1 A. Well, exactly what we had been discussing, that they had
2 come and remember Alpha Konare was one of the two individuals, so
3 he was not strange to Issa. Remember, they had met with Issa to
4 get this letter to take to Sankoh. So they expressed what we
12:51:46 5 all - what the whole international community was concerned about,
6 who is in charge? Who do we talk to? These kinds of problems
7 come up. Who do we get? We need somebody that will be in charge
8 at least at an interim level while Sankoh is incarcerated. What
9 do we do? Are you the one in charge? This is when he said, "No,
12:52:10 10 Your Excellencies, I am not fully in charge. I am the commander
11 but I am not the leader."

12 Q. Now, according to the witness, Obasanjo is the first to
13 talk and he says that what Obasanjo said at that meeting was
14 this, Mr Taylor:

12:52:32 15 "He" - that is Obasanjo - "also thanked the delegation that
16 had come from the RUF end and told them that they were to
17 continue with the good relationship that they had with
18 Charles Taylor."

19 Did Obasanjo say that?

12:52:48 20 A. This boy is dealing with hearsay. I don't know the exact
21 word of Obasanjo. This is 1999. But Obasanjo would have
22 probably told him you all need to keep working with ECOWAS. I
23 don't know the exact words, and I doubt if he knows because he
24 was not there.

12:53:10 25 Q. Let me give you the full content of what he claims Obasanjo
26 said:

27 "He thanked the delegation that had come from the RUF end
28 and told them that they were to continue with the good
29 relationship that they had with Charles Taylor. He said, because

1 Charles Taylor was doing good things to them, and he continued
2 saying that Charles Taylor was a good leader. If Africa could
3 only get ten of his type, then the unity Africa is fighting for,
4 they will be able to achieve it."

12:53:42 5 Do you recollect anything like that being said?

6 A. Not to my recollection. I don't recollect - I mean, these
7 great accolades. I don't recall Obasanjo saying these exact
8 words. He may have said that President Taylor is doing a great
9 job, like they always commend me, but I don't recall these exact
10 words from Obasanjo.

12:54:05

11 Q. "Q. And what happened after that?

12 A. After that, Oumar Konare also spoke but he spoke in
13 French that I couldn't understand and Eyadema also spoke in
14 French and from there, Yahya Jammeh too spoke.

12:54:23

15 Q. And what did Yahya Jammeh say?

16 A. Yahya Jammeh also thanked the RUF delegation and he
17 said it was Charles Lord who had invited them to come and
18 talk to the RUF delegation for them to have a new
19 leadership so that they will be able to carry on with the
20 peace process so peace and stability will return to
21 Sierra Leone. He said he himself, the same thing had
22 happened to him when he overthrew in Gambia. People spoke
23 to him to transform his organisation to a political party
24 and that was what he did. And at that time, he was ruling
25 in Gambia as a young man. So if the RUF took that
26 initiative to have a young leader who would be able to
27 carry on with the process, then they would achieve their
28 objective."

12:54:41

12:55:02

29 Do you recall Yahya Jammeh saying anything to that effect,

1 Mr Taylor?

2 A. Yahya Jammeh did talk about his own experiences in The
3 Gambia, but this French that Alpha Konare is speaking and
4 Eyadema, how does he understand this French if there is not an
12:55:36 5 interpreter? I don't see anything - maybe the questions didn't
6 go then. I mean, this man spoke in French, he says he doesn't
7 understand French, so how did he hear what Eyadema said? How did
8 he hear what Konare said? So normally if these people spoke in
9 French if he was in this meeting he should have known that there
12:55:52 10 was an interpreter, so then he should be able to interpret what
11 these other Presidents say. Do you see the point I am trying to
12 drive at?

13 This man is - I know how these children behave. They go to
14 a meeting, come back. Their chief, their bosses sit down and
12:56:05 15 explain to them what happened and they just make a long story as
16 though they were there. Well, how did he understand this French?

17 Q. "Q. What happened after that?"

18 A. After that, Charles Taylor himself said that it was
19 necessary to change the leadership of the RUF because he
12:56:24 20 said Foday Sankoh was too old and that he was too stubborn
21 and he was always being arrested and that he was a lazy
22 leader so that he should be changed. It was necessary that
23 he been changed."

24 Did you say that?

12:56:39 25 A. I wouldn't say anything so stupid to Issa. I know the
26 relationship between Issa and Sankoh. That alone would have
27 spoiled the whole programme. I wouldn't say anything. When you
28 started insulting the man's leader, saying he is too old and too
29 stubborn and too stupid, I am not that stupid to do that. So I

1 didn't say any such thing.

2 I did say in that meeting that there was a problem of a
3 void in leadership and that we could not let the agreement stop,
4 that we needed somebody to talk to.

12:57:17 5 Q. He then goes on: "Augustine Gbao and Issa emphasised that,
6 no, that shouldn't happen." Was Augustine Gbao present?

7 A. I don't recall Augustine Gbao being present.

8 Q. Who do you recall being present, Mr Taylor?

9 A. Gibril Massaquoi. I recall Gibril very well.

12:57:41 10 Q. "But Charles Taylor spoke with them to listen to what the
11 leaders were telling them. So they went on and appointed Issa."
12 Was Issa anointed as leader at that meeting?

13 A. But even the evidence that we have led, no, he was not
14 appointed leader at that meeting. That's why Issa had to go

12:58:06 15 back, the letters had to be written, the letter had to be taken
16 by Obasanjo and Konare to Freetown. And when is Issa appointed?
17 21 August, almost a month after this meeting. Almost a month.

18 Because Issa made it very clear in that meeting that he
19 could not accept the leadership at that particular place and
12:58:28 20 claim that he was the leader, that he needed the blessing of the
21 War Council and Sankoh himself. That's why it took almost a
22 month to settle all of these things, but he was the principal --

23 Q. And, Mr Taylor, the witness himself at page 15146 recalls
24 the date as being 26 July?

25 A. Yes.

26 Q. And we have seen the letter and that bears the date
27 1 August. And then we have the communique dated 21 August, don't
28 we?

29 A. That is correct.

1 Q. The witness goes on:

2 "First he" - that is you, Mr Taylor - "suggested that he
3 would want to take Mosquito back, and Issa said no. And he
4 said, 'Ah, but Issa, if you would take care as a commander
12:59:22 5 as a leader.' Then Issa said except if he returned and
6 informed the RUF family, he said, because RUF was a
7 family."

8 Now, did you suggest that Mosquito be taken back?

9 A. No, I did not suggest that.

12:59:38 10 Q. What was your knowledge of the relationship between
11 Mosquito, that is, Sam Bockarie, and Issa Sesay?

12 A. Oh, there was - they had problems. From the issue
13 involving the - what they call disrespect to Sankoh back in 1999
14 that led to Issa coming - I mean, excuse me, Sam Bockarie leaving
13:00:13 15 Sierra Leone, they had problems. In fact, Issa was very, very
16 close to Sankoh and I have no proof, but it was even believed
17 that Issa was some distant relative to Sankoh. I have no proof
18 of that, but Issa was extraordinarily close to Sankoh and there
19 was no love between Issa and Sam Bockarie.

13:00:37 20 Q. And let's just analyse that a little further, shall we.
21 Here is a meeting designed to find a leader for the RUF, yes?

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. In order to promote the peace process and, according to
24 this witness, you are seeking to inject into that equation
13:01:06 25 Mosquito, who had had problems with the same organisation?

26 A. That is correct.

27 Q. Do you see any sense in that, Mr Taylor?

28 A. None whatsoever.

29 Q. "... he said, because RUF was a family. When he would

1 inform the RUF family, then he will respond whether he
2 would take the position or he would appoint somebody else.

13:01:42 3 Q. Now, Mr Witness, let's clear up some of things you
4 said. You said first he suggested that he would take
5 Mosquito back. Who suggested that?

6 A. Charles Taylor suggested that he wanted to send
7 Mosquito back. He suggested that he wanted to send him
8 back to Sierra Leone as RUF leader."

9 Did you do that?

13:01:59 10 A. I did not ever, ever do that, no.

11 Q. And the witness himself accepts that there were other
12 Presidents present. Do you see any sense in making such a
13 suggestion in front of the other Presidents who were present,
14 Mr Taylor?

13:02:19 15 A. Total nonsense. No, no sense whatsoever.

16 Q. "Q. And then you said, 'But Issa, if you take care as a
17 commander, as a leader.' Who was saying that to Issa, 'If
18 you take care as a commander or as a leader'?

19 A. Charles Taylor was saying that to Issa.

13:02:41 20 Q. Then you said that except if he returned and informed
21 the RUF family, then he will respond whether he would take
22 the position. Who is this who is speaking?

23 A. Issa was the one speaking to the delegation.

24 Q. Now, what happened after this exchange at this meeting?
13:03:00 25 What happened next?

26 A. Later Issa and others returned to the guesthouse where
27 they were in Congo Town."

28 Now, listen to this, please, Mr Taylor, and listen
29 carefully.

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. "Q. And what happened then?

13:03:29

3 A. At night, around 11 to 12, Benjamin Yeaten came to
4 receive Issa and Augustine Gbao and one other person who
5 joined hem to go and meet Charles Taylor at night.

6 Q. And what happened after Benjamin Yeaten came and got
7 those people?

13:03:47

8 A. When they went they met with Charles Taylor, and
9 Charles Taylor said that Issa should bear in mind that the
10 people who were talking to them were British elected
11 Presidents and he should not - the witness - he said he was
12 not to listen to the Sierra Leone government because the
13 Sierra Leone government was a British elected government
14 and they were remote controlled by the British and so he
15 should not listen to them."

13:04:11

16 Now, taking that in stages. First of all, you appreciate,
17 of course, don't you, Mr Taylor, what is being suggested here:
18 That you are playing a double game; that there is this meeting
19 during the day with the other Presidents, and then at night you
20 sneaked these people into your residence to have a cozy little
21 private chat with them. You understand this, don't you?

13:04:35

22 A. I understand.

23 Q. Did that take place?

13:04:52

24 A. No, but he is saying that the Presidents - it did not
25 happen, first. It did not happen that way. But he says that the
26 Presidents are British elected Presidents. How could Alpha
27 Konare be British elected? How could Eyadema be British elected?
28 There was no such thing said to anybody of such that these people
29 should not be listened to, that they were British elected. This

1 is some of their concoction. No such thing was said.

2 Q. And he continues:

3 "And so any time he" - that would be Issa - "would be
4 asked to disarm, he should just say yes, but he should not
13:05:38 5 do it in reality."

6 You understand what the witness is saying about you,

7 Mr Taylor, don't you?

8 A. Yes, I do.

9 Q. That you are here playing a double game; you understand
13:05:49 10 that, don't you?

11 A. I do.

12 Q. That you are talking peace in public, but in private in
13 these midnight meetings, you are telling Issa Sesay not to
14 disarm. You understand that, don't you?

13:06:02 15 A. I understand that very well.

16 Q. Were you doing that?

17 A. No, I was not doing that, and the records are very clear.

18 The records are very clear to what - this - what do I do in this
19 process? Remember, I get concerned that Sankoh does not want to
13:06:22 20 disarm and that he is playing games, and I am pushing for this
21 process to continue. I alert colleagues. It is reported to the

22 United Nations that I am not too satisfied with these excuses by
23 this man. I think we need to put more pressure for him to
24 disarm. So for someone to come back and talk this type of thing
13:06:44 25 here, I don't know who put them up to this kind of stuff, but
26 everything is being done to get the disarmament going.

27 Q. Tell me, Mr Taylor, what would you have gained from playing
28 the double game suggested by this witness?

29 A. Absolutely nothing to gain on my part or Liberia's part.

1 Nothing.

2 Q. And the witness goes on: "And in that case, he,
3 Charles Taylor, will continue to assist the RUF as he was doing
4 before." Did you say that?

13:07:19 5 A. Never, never would I have said that. Never.

6 Q. "From there he gave Issa \$15,000 US and Issa returned
7 home." Did you?

8 A. I did give Issa Sesay and his delegation some money on that
9 trip, as is usual. I had done it with every delegation. We do
10 that in Africa. That's our style, and we are not western
11 Presidents. You come to visit us - Issa Sesay came with a
12 delegation; I did give Issa Sesay some money --

13 Q. How much?

14 A. I'm not too sure. It could have been probably in the
13:08:01 15 neighbourhood of \$5,000 to \$7,000. I don't remember the exact
16 amount, but I would give money on these trips, yes.

17 Q. And help us, the money that you gave to Issa Sesay, was
18 that in a clandestine midnight meeting?

19 A. No, no, no, no, no, no. No. This is - when - the
13:08:22 20 delegation, before they left, I gave them this money, and I am
21 sure they had bought small items in Monrovia. This was no
22 secret, and in the presence of - at this time I met Issa the
23 morning of the 27th, if I am not mistaken, because the Heads of
24 State left - some of them left that evening; some left the next
13:08:48 25 morning. I met him the next morning with most members of the
26 delegation, about three or four other persons came along, and I
27 gave them money in an envelope so they could do some shopping
28 before returning.

29 Q. Shopping for what items?

1 A. Well, normally these boys come to Monrovia they would buy
2 sneakers, jeans, and any little thing that they couldn't find in
3 the bush. I did it, remember? There is evidence before this
4 Court. It is true I did it with Johnny Paul Kromah when he came.

13:09:18 5 We always gave - Sam Bockarie came to Liberia, we gave money.
6 Most times in Africa, Heads of State receiving these little boys
7 or little delegations will give them envelopes. That's a part of
8 our custom, and I did it at that time, yes.

9 Q. Now, the witness was then asked this question:

13:09:43 10 "Q. Now, you said that Issa should bear in mind that the
11 people who were talking to him before then were British
12 elected Presidents. Who is that that they were being
13 referred to, these people?

14 A. He was referring to the four other four Heads of
13:10:07 15 State."

16 Now, were they British elected?

17 A. Well, that just shows you. This boy, I don't know what he
18 is talking about. Except he is assuming that these French
19 speaking individuals are supposed to be elected by Britain.

13:10:23 20 These boys just - they ask them questions and they come up with
21 what they want to come up with. How would I say Alpha Konare
22 and - I know the problem between Nigeria, and I know Yahya very
23 well - Yahya Jammeh. In fact, at that particular time even Yahya
24 Jammeh and the British were at loggerheads. In fact, Yahya had
13:10:45 25 almost more problems with the British than Nigeria. Because
26 Yahya went downtown and dug up all old British cemeteries and
27 told them to carry their dead from his city. So he is hardly
28 someone that the British would elect, so this boy is talking
29 nonsense. I said no such thing. Alpha Konare is French. The

1 French have always had a very good relationship with Francophone
2 countries. Eyadema? Eyadema is a personal, personal, personal
3 friend of Chirac and the French and all preceding French
4 governments from Mitterrand to Valery Giscard d'Estaing, all of
13:11:20 5 these people. So these little boys don't know what they are
6 talking about.

7 Q. And it continues:

8 "Q. And then you said that Charles Taylor said that Issa
9 should not. Issa should not what?

13:11:37 10 A. That Issa should not listen to them. He said today,
11 for example, they would embrace him, and the other day they
12 will just deny him."

13 Did you say that?

14 A. Total nonsense. Never said any such thing.

13:11:49 15 Q. "Q. And now you indicated that Charles Taylor - he said he
16 would continue to assist the RUF. Did he indicate in what
17 way he would continue to assist the RUF?

18 A. He just said that he would assist them just as he had
19 been assisting them before."

13:12:06 20 Did you say that?

21 A. I did not say that.

22 Q. "Q. Now, you indicated that Charles Taylor told Issa that
23 any time he was asked to disarm he should just say yes.

24 Was it indicated who would be asking him to disarm?

13:12:22 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. And who was that?

27 A. He said any time the UN would tell him to disarm, he
28 would accept but would not actualise it. He will not
29 follow the instruction. He will just say yes for the

1 moment and not do it in reality."

2 Did you say that, Mr Taylor?

3 A. Never said that, no. I was - this very thing - this boy is
4 talking about what's - what I had criticised Foday Sankoh for;
13:12:53 5 that there was a delay, and he was wasting time, and he should
6 get on with the disarmament.

7 Q. "Q. You said that after this Charles Taylor gave Issa
8 \$15,000 and Issa returned home. What do you mean? Where
9 did Issa go?

13:13:11 10 A. He went to the lodge, the guesthouse in Congo Town."
11 Was the RUF guesthouse still in operation at this time,
12 Mr Taylor?

13 A. Yes, it was. Yes, it was.

14 Q. And did Issa Sesay and his delegation stay at that
13:13:26 15 guesthouse?

16 A. Yes, they did.

17 Q. "Q. And what happened after that?

18 A. From - he spent 26 July, and the follow day he flew
19 back to Sierra Leone."

13:13:39 20 Is that true?

21 A. Yes, Issa flew back on the 27th, yes.

22 Q. "Q. When you say he flew back to Sierra Leone, how did he
23 fly back to Sierra Leone?

24 A. I think you did not get me clearly. He did not fly to
13:13:54 25 Sierra Leone. He flew to Foya, then he went to
26 Sierra Leone. He took a flight from Monrovia and he
27 disembarked in Foya and from Foya he took a vehicle to
28 Sierra Leone.

29 Q. What type of aircraft did he take from Monrovia to

1 Foya?

2 A. He used Weasua."

3 Did he?

4 A. No, he did not.

13:14:19 5 Q. "Q. Did he take anything back to Sierra Leone with him
6 from Monrovia?

7 A. Issa bought drinks using the money Charles Taylor had
8 given to him and some other things and they were loaded in
9 the chopper, but he was not given anything else from

13:14:36 10 Monrovia to be brought to Sierra Leone."

11 Do you know what, in fact, he bought, Mr Taylor?

12 A. No, not in details. But, like I said, these boys, you give
13 them money, they will buy sneakers, jeans. But, counsel, am I
14 not right, there was another witness that described these same
13:14:59 15 trips and said that there were ammunitions on the choppers.

16 Q. Oh, yes.

17 A. There was another witness.

18 Q. We discussed that.

19 A. Yes. And so --

13:15:07 20 Q. TF1-567. We discussed that earlier.

21 A. Exactly, saying that I took back ammunition. Here is this
22 other one saying there was nothing on the plane except for drinks
23 and other things. So that shows how consistent these statements,
24 I mean, are.

13:15:27 25 Q. "Q. When Issa returned from Foya to Sierra Leone, did he
26 take anything with him from Foya to Sierra Leone?

27 A. He took the things he had bought in Monrovia to
28 Sierra Leone.

29 Q. What happened after Issa arrived back in Sierra Leone?

- 1 A. He convened a meeting, an RUF meeting in Lebanon,
2 Koidu Town, and he briefed his colleagues what
3 Charles Taylor had told him, and all of them said, yes, we
4 will accept that to happen. But even there we would want
13:16:06 5 to have a message from the Pa and Issa said okay. But
6 that had already been in place because Obasanjo had
7 already volunteered to meet with the Pa and to know his
8 view, whether they would have a leadership to be working on
9 his behalf. So he had just come to ask who should be the
13:16:27 10 leader. But the colleagues told him they will only appoint
11 someone if they saw a letter from the Pa himself.
- 12 Q. Now just for clarity, when you refer to the Pa, who are
13 you referring to?
- 14 A. That was Pa Sankoh.
- 13:16:47 15 Q. What happened after this? From there within two to
16 three days, Issa said Charles Taylor had invited him again
17 to go over."
18 Is that true?
- 19 A. That's not true.
- 13:17:01 20 Q. "... That Obasanjo was to return to Liberia and Issa went
21 again to Foya and flew to Liberia.
- 22 Q. When he flew from Foya, where did he go?
- 23 A. He was dropped at the international airport in Liberia,
24 RIA."
- 13:17:19 25 Is that true?
- 26 A. Yeah, but you see what he's talking. He says a few days
27 later. He came on 21 August. We are talking about weeks later,
28 not a few days.
- 29 Q. And did he go into RIA?

1 A. Yes, that's why I said he met the three of us at RIA.

2 That's where we met him.

3 Q. And was that the occasion of the communique?

4 A. That's the occasion of the communique, yes.

13:17:42 5 Q. Which we looked at this morning?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Which bears a date?

8 A. The 21st, yes.

9 Q. "A. From there, within two to three days, Issa said
13:17:53 10 Charles Taylor had invited him to go over. He flew from
11 Foya and was dropped at RIA.

12 Q. When he flew from Foya and was dropped at RIA, what
13 type of aircraft flew him from Foya?

14 A. He used the same Weasua."

13:18:14 15 Mr Taylor, just help me. What is this Weasua?

16 A. I responded to the honourable justice on this. Weasua is a
17 company. It's an aircraft company in Liberia that have - they
18 had a helicopter and they had a couple of fixed wing aircrafts,
19 Russian type planes, that flew short flights between Monrovia and
13:18:42 20 Abidjan. It's an air transport company.

21 Q. Now help us, Mr Taylor. Was it a government owned company
22 of what?

23 A. No, no, no, it's privately owned.

24 Q. And did the Liberian government use Weasua?

13:18:59 25 A. The fixed wing aircraft, yes sometimes. The UN leased
26 their helicopters. But all of these trips are undertaken by
27 Liberian government helicopter.

28 Q. And help me, when was Weasua operational?

29 A. Weasua became operational in Liberia as far back as the

1 Tubman years. I would say Weasua has been operational in Liberia
2 for more than 25 years.

3 Q. Are they still operational?

13:19:39

4 A. To the best of my recollection, Weasua, yes, could still
5 be. I am not too sure. I have been away for so long. I am not
6 too sure. But I see no reason why they wouldn't still be in
7 operation.

8 Q. "Q. And what happened at Roberts International Airport?

13:19:58

9 A. At Roberts International Airport he met Obasanjo and
10 Oumar Konare."

11 Did he meet them at RIA, Mr Taylor?

12 A. Do you mean Issa?

13 Q. Yes.

14 A. Yes, yes.

13:20:06

15 Q. "They were taken to the waiting room in RIA." Is that
16 right?

17 A. Yes, well - yes, they had a waiting room, yes.

18 Q. "That was where the meeting was held. Obasanjo handed the
19 letter over that he had taken from Freetown from Charles Taylor."
20 What letter is that?

13:20:27

21 A. I don't know what he is talking about here. This is
22 probably an error. He is talking about a letter he had taken
23 from Freetown from Foday Sankoh, not from Charles Taylor, because
24 Sankoh responded to Issa. I think this is an error in the
25 transcript.

13:20:41

26 Q. And indeed, the witness goes on to correct it and says:

27 "The letter he had brought from Sierra Leone, that is from
28 Pa Sankoh, was given to Charles Taylor. And Pa Sankoh - sorry,
29 he, Charles Taylor himself, gave the letter to Issa."

1 Did you?

2 A. The letter was brought to the meeting and it was handed to
3 Issa, yes.

4 Q. Now, just for clarity, was it you who handed it to Issa?

13:21:17 5 A. Yes, I read the letter because Obasanjo came and brought it
6 to him, gave it to me and I handed it to Issa.

7 Q. "Q. Now, you said the letter was handed to Charles Taylor
8 and then Charles Taylor handed the letter to Issa Sesay.
9 What happened when Issa Sesay received the letter?

13:21:33 10 A. Issa Sesay passed the letter on to his adjutant, his
11 clerk, but we called it adjutant in the guerrilla army.
12 The letter was passed to him and that was Jabba. He was
13 called adjutant Jabba. Jabba opened the letter and showed
14 it to Issa and Issa looked at the signature and said,
13:21:52 15 yes, that is Pa Sankoh's signature."

16 Did that occur?

17 A. I don't know the exact sequence for what happened, but I
18 doubt the sequence here because a Head of State handing you a
19 letter and you passing it to somebody else to open, I mean I
13:22:16 20 would not accept that before me. So I don't know the exact
21 sequence, but this doesn't appear to be the exact sequence for me
22 to give or any President to give a letter to Issa and he the big
23 man take it to give it to somebody else to open. Nonsense. I
24 don't know think this is the sequence. But a letter was given to
13:22:37 25 Issa and my own recollection is that Issa opened the letter, but
26 this would not be acceptable for me.

27 Q. "Q. And what happened after that?

28 A. Then Jabba read the letter. According to what he said,
29 because I did not read the letter, he said Pa Sankoh had

1 said Issa should now take control of the leadership and he
2 should take instructions, just as Mosquito used to do while
3 he was in jail - while he, Pa Sankoh, was in jail in
4 Nigeria, that Issa should now take control and instructions
13:23:11 5 from" - guess who - "Charles Taylor."
6 Did the letter say that?
7 A. The letter never said that. In fact, if that letter had
8 said that, the first thing Obasanjo and Konare would have done,
9 they would have never brought such nonsense, where Foday Sankoh
13:23:33 10 read a letter and say from now on take instructions from
11 Charles Taylor. In fact, knowing Obasanjo and Konare, they would
12 not have countenanced such nonsense. It can't be, no.
13 Q. Now remember, Mr Taylor, this is being said now in front of
14 those other two Presidents because they are present in the
13:23:56 15 waiting room, aren't they, at RIA?
16 A. It's done before all of us, yes.
17 Q. And it's being said that Issa Sesay, the leader of the RUF,
18 should take instructions from you, the same way that Mosquito
19 did. So help us, when that was said, what did Obasanjo and
13:24:16 20 Konare say?
21 A. This is another one of those concoctions. Don't let's
22 forget, let the Court be reminded, this letter is written by
23 Foday Sankoh in the presence of three Presidents. Tejani Kabbah,
24 Obasanjo and Alpha Konare are present when Foday Sankoh writes
13:24:42 25 this letter. You know who would have been the first to object
26 and you would have heard about it immediately? Even Tejan Kabbah
27 right there would have said you see what we are talking about, he
28 is saying that we should take - this is total nonsense. Kabbah
29 would have objected. Obasanjo would have never countenanced

1 such. Neither Konare.

2 This is not a letter sneaking in. This is a letter written
3 and given to two Heads of State, but written in the presence of
4 three Heads of State. And this boy would talk this thing here as
13:25:15 5 though there was such thing in that letter. Nobody would have
6 brought this letter. In fact, this letter would have been - I
7 mean Kabbah would have hit the roof. Obasanjo would have hit the
8 roof and Konare. There was no such thing in that letter. None
9 of such.

13:25:32 10 Q. "... that Issa should now take control and instructions
11 from Charles Taylor.

12 Q. Now, what happened after this?

13 A. After that, Obasanjo took a parcel and handed it over
14 to Issa.

13:25:46 15 Q. And what happened after Obasanjo handed this parcel to
16 Issa?

17 A. He bade farewell. He said goodbye and left the place,
18 he and Oumar Konare. They left and flew back to their
19 individual countries and Issa came to Monrovia city."

13:26:03 20 Tell me, did Obasanjo give a parcel to Issa?

21 A. Yes, he gave an envelope with money. It's money, which is
22 normal. Yes, he did give an envelope to the delegation at
23 Robertsville, but he didn't just leave immediately. This boy
24 doesn't know, because there was a press conference held. No
13:26:27 25 President would just continue like that and move. They held a
26 press conference and everything. That's why they didn't come all
27 the way to Monrovia. We did everything at the airport. After
28 the press conference, we sat down, had a couple of cold drinks,
29 Coca-Cola and stuff, before they departed.

1 MR GRIFFITHS: I recall your Honour reminding me that this
2 clock is slow. I don't know how much time we have left.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE: Are you moving on to a different topic?

4 MR GRIFFITHS: No, I'm on the same topic.

13:27:00 5 PRESIDING JUDGE: We have got about two minutes.

6 MR GRIFFITHS: Good. Then we continue:

7 Q. "Q. And what happened after Obasanjo handed this parcel to
8 Issa?

9 A. He bade farewell. He said goodbye and left the place.

13:27:15 10 He and Oumar Konare, they left and flew back to their
11 individual countries and Issa came to the Monrovia city.

12 Q. What happened after Issa came to Monrovia city?

13 A. When Issa came to Monrovia city, he passed the night
14 there and the following day came back to Sierra Leone.

13:27:33 15 Q. How did Issa travel from RIA to Monrovia city?

16 A. He used the same chopper to come to Weasua - sorry,
17 using the Weasua and they went to the guesthouse in Congo
18 Town and Benjamin Yeaten."

19 Did they travel by helicopter from RIA to Congo Town?

13:27:55 20 A. I don't know how they travelled. The chopper was there
21 because the chopper flew from Foya, instead of going to Monrovia
22 it came to RIA. So there is a probability that they could have
23 travelled by chopper to Monrovia because I never flew chopper, I
24 went with the convoy.

13:28:16 25 But now there is something I am not too sure about this.
26 Benjamin Yeaten, being on the chopper with Issa, I don't know,
27 because I'm at Robertsfield and I have to go back to Monrovia and
28 the head of the Secret Service normally would be in that convoy.
29 So I don't know the details, but it looks a little strange that

1 Benjamin - I think he missed this part. Benjamin would not have
2 - my convoy drove to Monrovia. The head of the Secret Service is
3 in the presidential convoy at all times, except he is out of the
4 country.

13:28:56 5 So this would be off, if Benjamin was on this chopper, and
6 I don't believe that part. But it's probable that they could
7 have flown back to Monrovia, I mean Issa and his delegation, by
8 using the chopper, since they did not have transportation at that
9 point. That sounds more likely than Benjamin being in the
13:29:15 10 chopper from Robertsfield to Monrovia.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE: Would that be a convenient place?

12 MR GRIFFITHS: As good as any.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE: We will adjourn for lunch and resume at
14 2.30.

13:29:30 15 [Lunch break taken at 1.30 p.m.]

16 [Upon resuming at 2.29 p.m.]

17 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, please continue, Mr Griffiths.

18 MR GRIFFITHS: Yes, may it please your Honours:

19 Q. Yes, Mr Taylor. I was giving you an opportunity just prior
14:29:35 20 to the break to comment on certain assertions made by a
21 Prosecution witness about you. We had reached the stage in that
22 individual's testimony where he spoke of travelling from RIA to
23 Monrovia city in a helicopter. Do you recall that?

24 A. Yes, I do.

14:30:00 25 Q. And the witness's testimony continues in this way:

26 "Q. Mr Witness, let's be clear on this. You have said he
27 used the same chopper to come - sorry, using the Weasua and
28 they went to the guesthouse in Congo Town and Benjamin
29 Yeaten. What did you mean 'and Benjamin Yeaten'?

1 A. It was he and Benjamin Yeaten who used the chopper from
2 RIA and they flew to - they flew and they used Benjamin's
3 vehicle and went to the guesthouse."

4 Now, are you able to say yes or no as to whether or not
14:30:46 5 they travelled by helicopter from RIA to Monrovia?

6 A. I really don't know.

7 Q. And can you assist as to whether or not Benjamin Yeaten
8 accompanied him?

9 A. I wouldn't - I wouldn't think so, no.

14:31:02 10 Q. Going back to the transcript:

11 "Q. Now you said that Issa passed the night in Monrovia
12 city and the next day he came back to Sierra Leone. How
13 did he travel from Monrovia back to Sierra Leone?

14 A. He travelled using the same Weasua helicopter and he
14:31:20 15 came to Foya. From Foya he drove to Sierra Leone."
16 For completeness, did he travel by Weasua helicopter to
17 Foya?

18 A. No.

19 Q. And then this:

14:31:40 20 "Q. Mr Witness, when Issa Sesay went back to Sierra Leone
21 from this trip did he take anything with him?

22 A. No, on that trip he did not take anything with him.

23 Q. What happened when Issa Sesay arrived back in
24 Sierra Leone?

14:32:01 25 A. When he came back to Sierra Leone, he convened a
26 meeting again in Lebanon, Koidu Town, and he took out this
27 letter and showed it to the people and the people were
28 happy about it because Issa had been appointed the new
29 leader and should carry on with the work Pa Sankoh was to

1 do.

2 Q. And did the letter explain what they meant to carry on
3 with the work Pa Sankoh was to do?

14:32:38

4 A. The letter only explained that Issa was to be the
5 interim chairman and at the same time he should take
6 instructions from Charles Taylor, just as before as
7 Mosquito had been doing and he should take care of the
8 revolution. He should not allow anybody to mislead him
9 into disarmament. That was what the letter read and the
10 people were happy about it."

14:32:59

11 Mr Taylor, did the letter contain those sentiments?

12 A. No, it did not.

13 Q. Mr Taylor, let's be clear now. According to this witness,
14 in the letter firstly Sankoh is saying business as usual; you now
15 take orders from Charles Taylor the way Mosquito did. Secondly,
16 don't allow anybody to mislead you into disarming. Now, that was
17 a letter read out in your presence, in Obasanjo's presence, in
18 Konare's presence. Did the letter contain any sentiments like
19 that, Mr Taylor?

14:33:22

20 A. It did not. In fact, it could not. Can you imagine
21 Foday Sankoh in jail, three Presidents before him, Kabbah,
22 Obasanjo and Konare, and Sankoh writes a letter to Issa Sesay
23 appointing him interim leader and telling him, "You now go and
24 take instructions from Charles Taylor."

14:33:45

25 But beyond that, the very reason why we want a leader in
26 the RUF to talk to is to be able to carry on disarmament. He
27 says in the letter do not what? "Do not let anybody mislead you
28 into disarmament." Now, what do you think those Presidents would
29 have said to Foday Sankoh right there? It doesn't make sense.

14:34:14

1 It did not happen that way. And it was not in the letter. Those
2 Presidents who have never left that place with a letter that is
3 instructing Sesay not to disarm. How does it make sense?

14:34:58 4 There's no sense to this. No, no. The two issues of you listen
5 to Charles Taylor and don't disarm, I mean, the meeting would
6 never have probably ended or you would have never had a letter
7 appointing anybody to anything, no.

8 Q. Now, just to complete this scenario, help me. Did Issa
9 Sesay come back to Liberia in the year 2000?

14:35:32 10 A. I want to believe so. I would have to reflect on that.
11 I'm sure - I'm sure Issa came back. This is August. I'm sure
12 Issa probably came back to - if things were slowing down I would
13 have sent for him to come back and explained why things are
14 slowing down, but I want to believe he did, yes.

14:36:00 15 Q. Now help us, Mr Taylor --

16 PRESIDING JUDGE: Again, Mr Griffiths, are you saying,
17 Mr Taylor, you don't know? Is that a guess or what are you
18 saying?

19 THE WITNESS: Well, I'm not - no, I'm not saying that I
14:36:17 20 don't know. I think a clearer statement would be I cannot
21 recollect. But the point I'm trying to make is that the coming
22 to Liberia would depend on whatever crisis we have over there and
23 what we want to accomplish at a particular time. And we are in a
24 very crucial time. I can't recall directly what reason he would
14:36:40 25 have come, but I can almost say with 100 per cent certainty that
26 he came back to Liberia.

27 MR GRIFFITHS:

28 Q. Now, during the course of these three meetings in May, July
29 and August, Mr Taylor, how did you find Issa Sesay as an

1 individual with whom you were dealing?

2 A. Well, I tell you quite frankly, I - and this opinion was
3 formed by me and by Obasanjo of which I'm sure he will speak for
4 himself and Konare. We found Issa to be extremely reasonable in
14:37:41 5 doing what was required under Lome. We found him enthusiastic
6 about it. Issa was very, very understanding and agreeable. He
7 in fact was liked by all of us. In fact, subsequent to those
8 discussions I was aware that Obasanjo called him directly over
9 across in Sierra Leone. Konare did. In fact, from what even I
14:38:06 10 got to know from Kabbah, in fact Kabbah formed a very strong link
11 with Issa that he could talk to him at all times.

12 So for me, and this is also the conclusion of my
13 colleagues, at least the two of them that I spoke to, we found
14 him to be a very reasonable fellow and, quite frankly, if Issa
14:38:31 15 had not taken over the leadership of the RUF - the interim
16 leadership at that time, quite frankly I do not think that peace
17 would have come and the disarmament would have continued.

18 I really think that some credit is due him for really being
19 reasonable and getting on with the process of Lome. I think Lome
14:38:49 20 was stuck and he helped to unstick it when he became interim
21 leader. And I'm being very, very, very earnest about that and my
22 colleagues formed that same opinion too.

23 Q. And you say President Kabbah used to telephone him?

24 A. Oh, yes. Kabbah was in - from what Kabbah himself told me,
14:39:12 25 Kabbah was in regular contact with Issa Sesay. I mean direct
26 contact, yes.

27 Q. And this was following his appointment in August as the
28 interim leader?

29 A. That is correct. That is correct.

1 MR GRIFFITHS: Can I pause at this moment to deal with a
2 couple of things. Firstly some spellings. Francois Mitterrand,
3 F-R-A-N-C-O-I-S M-I-T-T-E-R-R-A-N-D, a former President of
4 France. Also Valery Giscard d'Estaing, V-A-L-E-R-Y G-I-S-C-A-R-D
14:39:52 5 D'E-S-T-A-I-N-G. That's the first matter.

6 There's another housekeeping matter which hopefully I can
7 deal with at this stage. It has been spotted by those
8 responsible for these matters in our team that one of the
9 documents in week 33 filings is incomplete. There's some annexes
14:40:28 10 to be added. And this is week 33, tab 110, which is in binder 3.
11 So it's the next binder that these appendices need to be added to
12 behind the document in that. So it's week 33, tab 110,
13 attachments to document DCT-62.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE: That's the document ministry of lands,
14:41:13 15 mines and energy. Thank you to for that, Mr Griffiths. We've
16 added those annexures to the document.

17 MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful for that. We will come to
18 those in due course:

19 Q. But, Mr Taylor, we've gone into August in order to complete
14:42:11 20 the story regarding Issa Sesay and his appointment to - as
21 interim leader. But can we now take up the chronology of events
22 back in July. Now, in July of 2000, Mr Taylor, did you receive a
23 delegation from the United States of America?

24 A. Yes, I did receive one.

14:42:35 25 Q. Who was it headed by?

26 A. It was headed by the Under-Secretary of State of the
27 United States, Thomas Pickering.

28 Q. Thomas Pickering?

29 A. That is correct.

1 Q. And what was the purpose of that delegation coming to
2 Liberia?

3 A. They came to discuss so many bilateral and - issues and
4 issues of interest to both countries. It also centred around the
14:43:11 5 whole Sierra Leonean story and certain steps that the
6 United States were contemplating if they felt that they had not
7 gotten sufficient move on the Sierra Leonean situation.

8 Q. Certain steps such as?

9 A. They were contemplating sanctions on their side against
14:43:37 10 Liberia.

11 Q. Now, in preparation for the arrival of that delegation,
12 Mr Taylor, did you cause any document to be prepared?

13 A. Yes. The National Security Council prepared a talking
14 document for me dealing with the issues that we should raise that
14:44:06 15 ranged from our steps in Sierra Leone to some new cooperation.

16 We were trying to push the United States to come on board with
17 the whole aspect of trying to look at the security at the
18 Liberia-Sierra Leonean border and a proposal to them of what it
19 would take for such a programme to be put into place. So these
14:44:33 20 briefing notes are normally prepared for such serious meetings.

21 Q. Can I invite your attention, please, behind divider 63 in
22 folder number 2 of 4 for week 33, please. What is that document
23 we see there, Mr Taylor?

24 A. Yes. These are the briefing notes prepared by my National
14:45:22 25 Security Council for the arrival of Under-Secretary of State
26 Pickering in dealing with the security matters that we were to
27 discuss.

28 Q. Who receives these notes, Mr Taylor?

29 A. Oh, they are provided to me.

1 Q. And we see that it's headed "Briefing Notes for the
2 Security Discussions Between a US delegation led by
3 Under-Secretary of State Pickering and Liberian Delegation headed
4 by His Excellency Dankpannah Dr Charles Ghankay Taylor, President
14:46:08 5 of Liberia". It's dated July 17, 2000, yes?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. So this is about a week before that second visit by Issa
8 Sesay to Monrovia?

9 A. That is correct.

14:46:22 10 Q. And we see that the first item on the list is dissident
11 attacks on Liberia?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Now, that is - is that because on 8 July, so about nine
14 days previous, there had been this attack in Lofa County?

14:46:43 15 A. Yes. That's the third attack, yes.

16 Q. And point number 1 - bullet point number 1 under that
17 heading we see is "repelling of attackers from Guinea". Bullet
18 point number 2 is "revival of Mano River Union cooperation,
19 including the formation of Union Security Committee and its
14:47:09 20 technical committees to monitor the borders between member
21 states". Is that right, Mr Taylor?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And so these are topics that you were to discuss with the
24 US delegation. Is that right?

14:47:25 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. Bullet point number 3, going back to the document:

27 "Restructuring of armed and security forces to ensure the
28 able defence of republic from external aggression, ongoing slowly
29 and painfully without outside help thus far."

1 Pause there. Now, we're talking about to the year to 2000,
2 Mr Taylor. So you've been in government now for three years. Is
3 that right?

4 A. That's correct.

14:48:00 5 Q. Has the Liberian army been restructured by this stage?

6 A. No. No.

7 Q. And where we see there "to ensure the able defence of
8 republic", were you in a position to provide or guarantee the
9 defence of Liberia in July 2000?

14:48:26 10 A. No. We didn't have a structured army. We didn't have
11 arms. No.

12 Q. Bullet point number 4:

13 "Notwithstanding indications from the United States and
14 members of the international community that the destruction of
14:48:47 15 the war-time arms of Liberia's rebel factions would be rewarded
16 with assistance to develop and improve the nation's military
17 capacity, up to now the United States remains one of the
18 staunchest opponents of the lifting of the arms embargo on
19 Liberia."

14:49:08 20 Pause there. Is that true?

21 A. Yes, it is. It is true. When the resolution appeared -
22 the first resolution appeared before the Security Council, as
23 recommended by ECOWAS - there was a second in the making - the
24 United States and Britain objected. We are now trying to get the
14:49:31 25 Americans to even come back and train our armed forces as they
26 had done historically, and this is - these are the security
27 issues that are going to be discussed.

28 Let me just note here that even though these are briefing
29 notes for me, what happens before these principal meetings, these

1 issues are sent before the meeting so the other side is not
2 caught unawares. They are aware of the issues that are going to
3 be discussed. So even though these are my briefing notes - but
4 the points are relayed in advance of the meeting to the other
14:50:18 5 side. So Pickering knows what he is going to be talking about.

6 Q. And then we see bullet point number 5:

7 "The Taylor administration is at a loss to understanding
8 the non-supportive attitude of our friends in Washington. Also
9 invited is an explanation for the glaring absence of American
14:50:40 10 diplomatic pressure to put a halt to Liberian dissident
11 activities in Guinea on an unarmed neighbour and a historic
12 American friend."

13 Over the page, please, the Sierra Leonean, topic number 2.
14 Bullet point number 1:

14:51:08 15 "Ending the war in Sierra Leone was supposed to be one of
16 three issue areas preconditioned by the United States government
17 for the resumption of its historic relationship of cooperation
18 with Liberia. The other was the destruction of the residual
19 civil war arms of the defunct rebel factions and cooperation and
14:51:30 20 exoneration in the United Nations fact-finding on September
21 18-19, 1998 incident involving the Liberia government and the
22 Roosevelt Johnson group."

23 Can I pause. Now, when this says "one of three issue areas
24 pre-conditioned by the United States government", what does that
14:52:01 25 mean, first of all, Mr Taylor?

26 A. It means that the United States government had made it very
27 clear - crystal clear to the Government of Liberia that there
28 were three principal areas of concern that would contribute
29 significantly - if brought under control that would contribute

1 significantly to cooperation between the two governments.

2 Q. "The Taylor government, on the Clinton administration
3 suspicion and pressures, became constructively engaged not only
4 in successfully working to secure the early 1999 ceasefire
14:52:50 5 between the Revolutionary United Front and the Kabbah government,
6 but also dramatically undertook the historic sub-regional air
7 shuttles that eventuated in clearing the unresolved issues of a
8 disagreement at the Lome peace talks and the signing of the peace
9 agreement between the parties in July 1999."

14:53:20 10 Bullet point 3:

11 "In the recent crisis of hostage-taking by the RUF, it was
12 the Taylor government that rose to the historic challenge of
13 mediation and hostage release on behalf of ECOWAS. Although
14 promises of support were made at the outset, this feat of
14:53:43 15 securing the 500 United Nations peacekeepers was eventually
16 accomplished with little more than an American expression of
17 commendation to the Liberia government. What little logistical
18 support that was received to encourage the tremendous financial
19 and moral sacrifice of Liberia came from other friends, mainly
14:54:05 20 Libya. Liberia has also been positively responsive to the
21 special plea of India for the recovery of its contingent of the
22 peacekeeping forces trapped behind RUF lines. This effort too
23 has involved added strains on the meagre resources of the
24 Liberian government."

14:54:34 25 Now, Mr Taylor, when we see there the reference to
26 "regional air shuttles", is that the shuttle diplomacy you
27 referred to earlier in your testimony?

28 A. That is correct, yes.

29 Q. Let us go over the page, please:

1 "Notwithstanding these constructive actions of the Taylor
2 government, the United States has been among the collaborating
3 governments which have posed a direct threat to the security of
4 Liberia by arming and deploying along our borders a
14:55:17 5 non-restructured Sierra Leone Army, the Kamajors or Civil Defence
6 Forces, and a so-called Special Forces of Liberia dissidents in
7 Sierra Leone. More than this, the United States is helping to
8 discredit the present Taylor-led government by unproved
9 accusations of diamond smuggling and gun-running. Recent reports
14:55:46 10 have, however, revealed that there exists an international
11 conspiracy to manufacture evidence to prove Liberia's involvement
12 in diamond smuggling by its British accusers. Also directly
13 threatening the durability of the peace efforts of the Liberian
14 government and our national security is American insistence on
14:56:12 15 Foday Sankoh's trial for war crimes, which will most probably
16 catapult the hand-won Lome Peace Agreement of 1999 and return the
17 RUF and the Sierra Leone government to the battlefield across our
18 borders."

19 Now, can I pause for a moment, Mr Taylor, and seek a little
14:56:37 20 clarification here. Now, these are briefing notes. But when it
21 comes to the actual meeting, do you read out these notes
22 verbatim, or what?

23 A. No, no, no, no, no. You do not read them out. In fact,
24 these are briefing notes. You know what areas you want to talk
14:57:01 25 about, but there's no reading off verbatim, no.

26 Q. I ask for this reason, Mr Taylor: Did you, when you met
27 with Under-Secretary Pickering, make the kind of blunt statements
28 about US involvement which we see set out in that bullet point?

29 A. Oh, trust me, I surely did. Looking - he looking across

1 the table from me, oh, yes, I did. Yes, I did.

2 Q. So you accuse the United States of collaborating with the
3 people you set out there on the borders with Liberia. You accuse
4 them of that directly?

14:57:52 5 A. Oh, yes. In fact, we had done so officially and we had
6 presented evidence and the United States government had made it
7 very clear to us what I've said before to this Court. Their
8 statement was, "Look, we are training in Guinea. We have United
9 States marines training in Guinea. We are training Guinean
14:58:15 10 regulars. We do not know who they are. If they cross the border
11 into Liberia to fight we don't know. All we know, we are
12 training Guinean regulars."

13 We told them, "But they are the ones coming over" and they
14 said, "Well, that's not our business." So they had not denied
14:58:31 15 that they were involved in training across the border and these
16 were the very LURD people that were being trained. But they did
17 say that they were not supporting LURD, but that they were
18 training Guinean regulars in Nzerekore which is just, Nzerekore
19 is about five miles from the Liberia border. The United States
14:58:50 20 marines were there training. And so we had confronted them in a
21 diplomatic note. This was official. This was just a re-echoing
22 of the sentiments of the Liberian government, yes.

23 Q. Next bullet point:

24 "Threatening as these are to the continued welfare of the
14:59:09 25 Liberian state and its freely elected government, the Taylor
26 administration welcomes a justification for the foregoing policy
27 orientations of our American friends and how contributory they
28 are to the enhancement of our friendly relations."

29 Now, Mr Taylor, when you said these blunt acquisitions to

1 the Under-Secretary Pickering, did he deny them?

2 A. Yes, he did. Pickering said that he could speak on behalf
3 of his government that they were not involved in arming the
4 rebels, he made that they clear, and that they had a military
14:59:57 5 assistance agreement programme with Guinea that involved training
6 and some funding for the Guinean armed forces and this is what
7 they were undertaking. These were his words. He did deny that
8 they were directly involved, but did accept that there were
9 marines over there training regulars and that he could not
15:00:19 10 account for where they went after training.

11 Q. Now, when you made the point about an international
12 conspiracy to manufacture evidence to prove Liberia's involvement
13 in diamond smuggling, did Under-Secretary Pickering suggest to
14 you that he had any evidence to support that suggestion?

15:00:43 15 A. None. All Pickering said is exactly what had been said all
16 along, that there are reports. He said, "Mr President, there are
17 reports that Liberia is involved in arms smuggling, gun-running
18 and diamond smuggling. We find these reports very serious. We
19 take them very seriously and if this is going on we want the
15:01:06 20 government to stop."

21 And I asked him more than once, "Mr Secretary, do you have
22 anything physical? Anything physical?" He said, "No, these are
23 reports that are circulating. We've read about them but we have
24 no physical evidence that I can give you, Mr President, but these
15:01:25 25 reports are pretty strong and we would ask you to pay very strict
26 attention because relationship with the United States depends on
27 the cessation of this problem in Sierra Leone. There will not be
28 any fruitful relationship with the United States government until
29 this matter is resolved and these issues that surround Liberia

1 are cleared up." I must admit he made that very clear. But he
2 did not in that meeting, neither then nor in documents that he
3 released after he left Liberia - never gave any evidence in that
4 meeting then or after, no.

15:02:10 5 Q. The next heading in that document is "Other related
6 subjects":

7 "Discussions for resumed security cooperation may be
8 centred around the following:

9 1. Communication equipment. The financing or supply of
15:02:27 10 equipment for long and short-range communication as well as radio
11 handset for the defence as well as monitoring of Liberia's
12 frontiers and strategic points.

13 2. Vehicles. The financing or supply of vehicles to
14 facilitate mobility for the military and paramilitary.

15:02:51 15 3. Uniforms. The financing or supply of uniforms and
16 related items for the various uniformed military and paramilitary
17 forces.

18 4. Housing. The financing of building renovations and
19 expansions at the existing barracks and installations of the
15:03:12 20 Liberian security forces.

21 5. Training assistance. The provision of trainers and
22 training equipment and other logistics for the Liberian security
23 forces.

24 6. Restructuring. The provision of technical assistance
15:03:27 25 for the rationalisation and streamlining of the various
26 categories of security forces for efficient and satisfactory
27 performance."

28 Now, Mr Taylor, did any such assistance materialise?

29 A. No, but I must admit there was the appearance that we were

1 getting somewhere. We conveyed to the secretary that we felt
2 that regardless of how - and Americans love frankness and we were
3 all trained there. They know they like it, so we do it too. We
4 love frankness, so we were frank. So it was not personal. We
15:04:14 5 were talking about what was very serious items. We looked them
6 in the faces and they looked at us and we told them frankly, and
7 they told us frankly.

8 But beyond that, there were some efforts that were being
9 considered where we said, "Well, look, one way you can help is
15:04:32 10 come back, train our armed forces." We were looking at the
11 possibility and it had not materialised - we were looking at the
12 possibility of a funded programme where they would take a small
13 twin-engine fixed-wing aircraft with certain surveillance cameras
14 they had told us could be mounted on those aircrafts and they
15:05:07 15 would fly along the border and they would be able to pick up any
16 serious movements and with communication that would help. That
17 was under consideration. They appeared to be amenable to this
18 kind of thing to help.

19 I raised this matter because I do not want it to appear
15:05:27 20 that we were so much at loggerheads that we were almost fighting
21 in the room. No, we all went to school in American, we're
22 trained. You talk, you be very frank. We were frank without
23 having to - there were no insults across the room, no. But it
24 never materialised. Up until I left office it had not
15:05:54 25 materialised.

26 But the whole issue of restructuring and training of the
27 army was even further up on the agenda. We had done the
28 proposal. They had asked for a proposal for the restructuring of
29 the armed forces. We had a national committee set up. We had

1 done the study and the proposals and they were already prepared
2 but, in short, we did not get it going.

3 Q. Mr Taylor, how long did this Pickering-led delegation come
4 to Liberia for?

15:06:26 5 A. They were in Liberia for a few days. I think a couple.
6 Not more than a few.

7 Q. And upon their departure, did Mr Pickering make a
8 statement?

9 A. Yes, yes. He did a statement, yes, and then subsequently
15:06:44 10 wrote a letter. But he did a departing statement.

11 MR GRIFFITHS: Now before we come to look at that statement
12 can I ask, please, that those briefing notes for the security
13 discussion between a US delegation led by Under-Secretary of
14 State Pickering and the Liberian delegation dated 17 July 2000 be
15:07:05 15 marked for identification MFI-151.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document will be marked for
17 identification MFI-151.

18 MR GRIFFITHS:

19 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, let's have a look behind divider 66,
15:07:32 20 please. Is that the statement of which you spoke?

21 A. This is it, yes.

22 Q. As we see, it's entitled "Departure Statement", yes?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. "I would like to express my appreciation to President
15:08:03 25 Taylor for receiving me during this very brief but important
26 visit to Liberia. We were able to have a direct and clear
27 discussion on Sierra Leone and ways in which Liberia can play a
28 helpful and positive role in the future.

29 The situation in Sierra Leone is a cause for deep concern

1 in the region and the international community. The destruction
2 and atrocities there have touched the entire world. There must
3 be an end to the destruction and atrocities and genuine support
4 for a durable peace with justice in Sierra Leone. The UN has
15:08:47 5 spoken clearly about ending the illegal diamond and arms trade.
6 Liberia and the United States are legally bound to observe and
7 enforce the United Nations Security Council resolution 1306,
8 which provides for such steps.

9 Liberia thus has a large role to play in this effort and we
15:09:15 10 recognise President Taylor's work on the release of the UN
11 hostages two weeks ago. To date Liberia's role unfortunately has
12 been largely negative. There are strong indications that the
13 Government of Liberia is the primary patron and benefactor to the
14 RUF. This is not good for Liberia, not good for the region, and
15:09:43 15 not good for the world."

16 Now, the strong indications, Mr Taylor, were they provided
17 to you?

18 A. No. That's it. That's the statement, "strong indication".
19 That's it. If he had, he would have said it here, "We have
15:10:01 20 provided President Taylor with proof that he should stop this."
21 No, this is it.

22 Q. Strong indications?

23 A. That's all. Strong indications. We've seen reports.
24 That's it.

15:10:16 25 Q. "To date Liberia's role unfortunately has been largely
26 negative." What had you done, Mr Taylor, since Lome in 1999,
27 July, which was negative?

28 A. I really don't know. Nothing had I done. Nothing. But
29 the rumour mills were in progress and that's all. Reports. We

1 hear. We think. That's it.

2 Q. Let's widen the net a little bit. What had you done since
3 you became President of Liberia which was negative?

4 A. Nothing to my connection. Nothing. Nothing.

15:11:05 5 Q. "I have called in the strongest terms for President Taylor
6 to reverse this situation. He has shown that he has influence
7 with the RUF."

8 Now, Mr Taylor, did you solely and individually have
9 influence over the RUF?

15:11:24 10 A. No. No, I do not - we disagreed. He did mention the word
11 "influence" in our meeting. "Mr President, we believe" - I kept
12 telling them, "No, I am doing this with the full backing of
13 ECOWAS and everybody. It is not because of my personal
14 influence, it's because of the role that I'm playing." He did
15:11:48 15 raise this word "influence" before.

16 Q. "I have called in the strongest terms for President Taylor
17 to reverse this situation. He has shown that he has influence
18 with the RUF. He must now show that he will use that influence
19 to bring about an immediate return to the peace process. If
15:12:08 20 President Taylor is not willing to play this positive role in
21 word and deed, we regret that there will be very negative
22 consequences for our bilateral relationship, and, I believe, for
23 Liberia's relations with the entire international community. He
24 should act, and act now."

15:12:30 25 Negative consequences like what, Mr Taylor.

26 A. Well, I'm in jail, am I not? This is a part of it.
27 Negative consequences. Aid will cut off. EU did not help.
28 Bretton Woods institutions, they just decided to drown Liberia
29 and they did. That's the negative consequences.

1 Q. "Finally, I wish to assure the Liberian people that we are
2 concerned for their welfare and the United States continues to
3 value highly our relationship with them and their country."

4 MR GRIFFITHS: Could I ask, please, Mr President, for that
15:13:18 5 document to be marked for identification MFI-152, please.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-152.

7 MR GRIFFITHS:

8 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, you mentioned thereafter Under-Secretary
9 Pickering wrote you a letter. Is that right?

10 A. Yes. This was just the official statement, but he wrote me
11 a letter as he was going out.

12 Q. Look behind divider 71, please. Is that the letter he
13 wrote?

14 A. Yes, this is the letter that the secretary wrote on his way
15:14:05 15 out, yes.

16 Q. We see it's headed "Embassy of the United States of
17 America", 9 August 2000:

18 "Dear Mr President, I am writing to thank you most
19 sincerely for the opportunity you gave me on my visit to Liberia
15:14:36 20 on July 17 to make an extensive presentation of the United
21 States' views on the current situation in the region with
22 particular reference to Sierra Leone. I also want to thank you
23 for the time you took to explain in such a degree of detail your
24 own views about the situation in the region."

15:14:57 25 Now, pausing there, Mr Taylor, those views about the
26 situation in the region, did there come a time when you set those
27 views down in writing?

28 A. Yes, eventually I published a white paper on it.

29 Q. You published a white paper on it?

1 A. That is correct.

2 Q. Just pause for a moment and look behind divider 67. Is
3 that the white paper?

4 A. Yes, this is it.

15:15:30 5 Q. Right. Let's go back behind divider 71, please:

6 "In light of the long history of close and extensive
7 relations between the United States and Liberia, I want to
8 reaffirm to you the strong preference of my country to approach
9 relations with your country in a spirit of cooperation wherever

15:15:55 10 possible. I also want to say that we stand ready to cooperate
11 and reciprocate any efforts that you may make on your part to
12 make a sincere contribution to that effort in the light of our
13 bilateral relations. Needless to say, I do not need to repeat
14 for you, because you clearly understand, the United States

15:16:18 15 remains deeply and sincerely concerned by the information I
16 relayed to you about our conclusions concerning the activities of
17 Liberia and its senior officials respecting the RUF, diamond
18 trading and arms trafficking.

19 You made a number of suggestions which we will study
15:16:41 20 carefully in order to deal with this issue. I also have had the
21 opportunity for extensive conversations with President Kabbah,
22 President Conte and President Konare about the situation.

23 I want to emphasise to you as well that the United States
24 seeks an immediate peaceful and fully responsive diplomatic
15:17:10 25 solution to the crisis in the region and in Sierra Leone. In
26 that regard, the return of the RUF to positions occupied on 7
27 July 1999, coupled with their immediate and rapid implementation
28 of the full programme of disarmament, demobilisation and
29 rehabilitation under the provision of the Lome agreement, is an

1 objective which I believe we all can support to meet our overall
2 objective of returning Sierra Leone to the full control of its
3 freely elected government. In that regard, a ceasefire designed
4 to facilitate such cooperation is something the United States is
15:17:54 5 prepared to consider and in that context to support.

6 You made a strong point to me of the need for a peaceful
7 solution and I repeated to you we agreed. Now is the time for
8 all of us to make all sincere efforts to achieve that goal as
9 rapidly as possible.

15:18:15 10 Finally, I was concerned to learn that the Government of
11 Liberia was proposing to expel the defence attache. That was
12 completely contrary to your interest in closer and more extensive
13 relations and a better understanding of the situation in Liberia.
14 I was pleased to learn subsequently that your government has
15:18:38 15 withdrawn that proposal. The decision is in keeping with your
16 expressions to me of how you wish to see Liberian-American
17 relations develop and our efforts to deal more cooperatively with
18 the very difficult problem I set out for you."

19 Pause. Had you been contemplating expelling the defence
15:19:08 20 attache?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Why?

23 A. You know, sometimes these big countries think that because
24 you are small they can do whatever they want to do, even when you
15:19:16 25 warn them not to. This defence attache knew, in every country,
26 there are areas of the country that are closed off to the public
27 for the national security of the state. We had warned him about
28 certain security facilities in the country that was closed to the
29 public and he kept insisting on visiting those areas and we told

1 him, in all countries, there are these, and if he ever went back
2 there and tried to violate our regulation that he would be
3 expelled. We got a response back from the embassy promising that
4 that would not happen again and we withdrew our threat.

15:19:50 5 Q. What facilities was he wanting to look at, Mr Taylor?

6 A. Well, we had the ATU facilities near the Executive Mansion
7 that he wanted to - he insisted on visiting the building, house
8 and them. That's not his business. We would not do that in
9 America. So we told him that, "Look, this is outside of your
10 diplomatic watchamacallit, and if you insist, we'll throw you out
11 of here." So they recognised that they were doing something
12 wrong, promised that they would not do it, and we withdrew the
13 threat.

14 Q. Returning to the document:

15:20:35 15 "In the meantime, we will continue to watch carefully
16 developments in the area and make our decisions on the basis of
17 the facts as they become clear to us. In that regard, the United
18 States considers the situation to be, as I have explained to you,
19 a serious one in which we are clearly expecting Liberian full
15:20:55 20 cooperation along the lines I set out to you and most especially
21 with regard to your participation in the illegal diamond and arms
22 trade. This will clearly determine the course of our bilateral
23 relationship as I noted.

24 Again, let me express my pleasure at meeting you. My
15:21:20 25 thanks for the kindness with which you welcomed us and the time
26 which you and your colleagues gave to hearing us out and
27 considering thoroughly the presentation which we made. We look
28 forward to positive action in this regard in the nearest future."

29 So that was the letter he wrote to you, Mr Taylor. Did

1 your government respond?

2 A. Yes, my foreign minister responded on behalf of the
3 government.

4 MR GRIFFITHS: Before I move on, can we mark that letter
15:22:01 5 from the Under-Secretary of State Pickering, dated 9 August 2000,
6 MFI-153, please.

7 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, marked MFI-153.

8 MR GRIFFITHS:

9 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, what do we see behind divider 73?

15:22:27 10 A. This is the response to his letter by my minister of
11 foreign affairs.

12 Q. Now, why did the response come from the ministry of foreign
13 affairs?

14 A. That is protocol. The under-secretary wrote me, but I
15:22:42 15 write to his President, so his response cannot come from me; it
16 will come from his colleague at our foreign ministry. That's
17 protocol.

18 Q. Now, we see that the letter bears the crest of the Republic
19 of Liberia, ministry of foreign affairs, and it's dated 17 August
15:23:09 20 2000, and it reads as follows:

21 "Dear Mr Under-Secretary, President Taylor would have me
22 express his sincere thanks and appreciation for your letter of 9
23 August 2000 and for the frank and candid views expressed therein.

24 As we conveyed to you, our interest in the pursuit of peace
15:23:38 25 in Sierra Leone is strategically linked to our legitimate
26 national security concerns and our desire for sub-regional peace
27 and stability.

28 The integrity of our territory is repeatedly violated by
29 attacks launched from the area of the Guinea-Sierra Leone

1 borders. Indeed, the third and most recent attack emanating from
2 Guinea is still ongoing."

3 Pause there. That third attack, Mr Taylor, is the attack
4 which began on 8 July. Is that right?

15:24:13 5 A. That is correct.

6 Q. We're now on 17 August. Was it still going on?

7 A. Yes, it was.

8 Q. "Given our long and traditional relationship with the
9 United States, it continues to be the expectation of the
10 government and people of Liberia that these attacks, which to
11 date have not been condemned, would receive the condemnation of
12 the United States. Notwithstanding, the government and people of
13 Liberia expect and hope that the United States will use its good
14 offices and other forms of influence to ensure the sanctity of
15:24:57 15 our borders and the maintenance of peace, security and stability
16 within the framework of the Mano River Union.

17 We are pleased to note that the United States seeks an
18 immediate, peaceful and fully responsive diplomatic solution to
19 the crisis in the region and in Sierra Leone and the need to make
15:25:21 20 all sincere efforts to achieve that goal as rapidly as possible.
21 In this regard, the full implementation of a ceasefire, including
22 the return of all belligerent parties to positions occupied on 7
23 July 1999, coupled with the immediate and rapid implementation of
24 the full programme of disarmament, demobilisation and
15:25:46 25 rehabilitation of the RUF, remain a shared objective to which we
26 are fully committed. We will give practical and public
27 expressions to these common endeavours.

28 To date, I am pleased to inform you that in keeping with
29 the decisions taken by the authority of the Heads of State and

1 government of ECOWAS in Abuja in May 2000, and in keeping with
2 consultations held among the chairman of ECOWAS, the chairman of
3 the OAU, the Presidents of Liberia, Nigeria and the Gambia, in
4 Monrovia on 26 July 2000, a new interlocutor and leader of the
15:26:32 5 RUF has been proposed by the RUF command through a letter to the
6 chairman of ECOWAS."

7 Pause there. Now, that's the appointment of Issa Sesay,
8 isn't it, Mr Taylor.

9 A. That is it.

15:26:50 10 Q. And, as we see, your foreign minister is here making clear
11 for public consumption how that appointment came about?

12 A. Yes, yes.

13 Q. So it wasn't just a private little affair conducted by you?

14 A. No.

15:27:07 15 Q. This was a very public event, wasn't it?

16 A. It was.

17 Q. And the circumstances surrounding Sesay's appointment were
18 public knowledge, were they not?

19 A. Very public.

15:27:22 20 Q. "To date the RUF in its letter to the ECOWAS chairman also
21 expressed its willingness to a ceasefire, a returning to their
22 positions at the signing of the Lome agreement on 7 July 1999,
23 and the deployment of an ECOWAS contingent of UNAMSIL into the
24 RUF positions. It is important to note that the deployment of
15:27:56 25 ECOWAS forces is expected to take place simultaneously with the
26 withdrawal of the RUF to their previous positions. Already there
27 has been a lull in the fighting, a somewhat unofficial ceasefire.
28 We must, therefore, encourage this situation into a full and
29 satisfactory ceasefire agreement.

1 May I hasten to urge the United States government to
2 urgently support the logistical needs of ECOWAS forces already
3 serving in UNAMSIL in order to facilitate their early deployment,
4 as we cannot afford any delay while we have the commitment of the
15:28:42 5 RUF in hand.

6 On the issue of alleged diamond trading and arms
7 trafficking, as additional confirmation of our support of and
8 compliance with United Nations resolution 1306 and a clear
9 demonstration of our desire and intent to cooperate with the
15:29:02 10 United States and the international community, the following
11 actions have been or are being taken by the government:

12 1. The government is enacting a Statute making it a
13 criminal offence for anyone in Liberia to trade in or export
14 undocumented or uncertificated diamonds from Sierra Leone."

15:29:29 15 Did you do that?

16 A. Yes, we proposed the legislation and it passed, yes.

17 Q. Was the legislation actually passed, Mr Taylor?

18 A. Yes, the legislation was passed and that was a first.

19 Q. "Secondly, the government, through the ministry of lands,
15:29:49 20 mines and energy, and the Central Bank of Liberia, has already
21 promulgated regulations requiring all diamonds exported from
22 Liberia to have a certificate of origin and other export
23 documentation. IMF and World Bank experts already assigned at
24 the Central Bank of Liberia will also assist in the development
15:30:16 25 of a transparent process. The government will ensure that the
26 regulations are enforced."

27 Pause there. Had there been such regulations in force,
28 Mr Taylor?

29 A. What do you mean, had there been before my time or --

1 Q. No, no, no. Had they been promulgated, these regulations?

2 A. No, they are not completed up until the time I left. This
3 is a more cumbersome process. This is the Kimberly process that
4 we talked about. I left that in operation as I left office.

15:30:53 5 It's a longer process.

6 Q. "Thirdly, we will contract with a highly reputable firm
7 based in Antwerp, Belgium, to provide their expertise to
8 government in implementing these measures."

9 Pause. Was that done?

15:31:10 10 A. That was also put into place, yes.

11 Q. "We feel compelled to again draw your attention to the
12 highly porous nature of our borders and hereby formally solicit
13 the good offices of the United States to facilitate: (a)
14 international monitors to be stationed at our borders; and (b)
15 provide technical assistance to improve monitoring capacity at
16 all ports of entry. These could go a long way towards addressing
17 the concerns of the United States and the international community
18 about alleged illicit diamond trading and arms trafficking."

15:31:39 19 Pause again, Mr Taylor. This letter is dated 17 August
15:32:06 20 2000. Help us, for how long had you been campaigning for
21 monitors to be placed on the border between Sierra Leone and
22 Liberia?

23 A. Close to three years. Close to three years.

24 Q. "We would be grateful for any additional advice or
15:32:28 25 assistance which could be provided by the United States and the
26 international community to further strengthen these measures
27 which should be effective in restoring peace and stability to
28 Sierra Leone and the entire sub-region.

29 We assure you of our sincere desire and willingness to

1 cooperate to have these accomplished."

2 We see it's signed by your foreign minister, Monie Captan.
3 Now, Mr Taylor, apart from that letter written by your foreign
4 secretary, was there any further communications on this issue
15:33:11 5 with the United States?

6 A. Yes, I then - because he was conveying the sentiments of
7 his President, I then wrote to President Clinton following his
8 return to the United States.

9 MR GRIFFITHS: Before we come to look at that letter, can I
15:33:34 10 ask, please, that this letter from the Liberian foreign minister
11 to Under-Secretary Thomas P Pickering dated 17 August 2000 be
12 marked for identification MFI-154, please.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE: That document is marked MFI-154.

14 MR GRIFFITHS:

15:34:16 15 Q. Yes. Now, you say that you wrote to President Clinton. Is
16 that right?

17 A. That is correct.

18 Q. Have a look behind divider 75, please. Is this the letter,
19 Mr Taylor?

15:34:39 20 A. This is the letter.

21 Q. We see the letter is dated 23 August 2000:

22 "Dear President Clinton, I am pleased to extend compliments
23 on behalf of the people of Liberia and in my own name to Your
24 Excellency and to acquaint you with the current status of
15:34:59 25 Liberia's engagement in the Sierra Leonean peace process.

26 By letter dated 9 August 2000, Under-Secretary Pickering
27 detailed the concerns of the United States government about the
28 need to have an immediate, peaceful and diplomatic solution to
29 the crisis in the sub-region, with particular emphasis on

1 Sierra Leone. He stressed the need for us to make sincere
2 efforts to achieve this goal as expeditiously as possible and
3 that the United States was also prepared to cooperate with and
4 reciprocate any efforts the Liberian government would make
15:35:46 5 towards this endeavour.

6 In our reply to Under-Secretary Pickering of 17 August
7 2000, we concurred with the sentiments expressed and specifically
8 committed ourselves to these shared objectives. We also agreed
9 to give practical and public expressions to these hopefully
15:36:05 10 mutual endeavours.

11 We also informed Mr Pickering about the repeated violations
12 of our territorial integrity by armed insurgents from the area of
13 the Guinea-Sierra Leone borders. Though generally unacknowledged
14 and uncondemned, a third and most recent attack emanating from
15:36:28 15 the Republic of Guinea is ongoing, resulting into unnecessary
16 loss of lives, property and the displacement of a large number of
17 our people. In light of ongoing Liberian efforts, we had
18 expected that the United States government would use its good
19 offices and other forms of influence to ensure the sanctity of
15:36:55 20 our borders and the maintenance of West African peace, security
21 and stability, especially within the framework of the Mano River
22 Union.

23 As the inviolability of the borders between Liberia, Guinea
24 and Sierra Leone remains a crucial issue, I recommend the
15:37:19 25 following and request the support of the United States in
26 ensuring its speedy implementation:

27 We again call for a monitoring presence of the United
28 Nations at these borders to monitor all crossing points capable
29 of vehicular traffic. We recognise the enormous cost of policing

1 the entire length of the borders and suggest the utilisation of
2 an airborne multi-spectral service in detection of any unusual
3 movements of any type along the entire border. Intelligence
4 gathered therefrom could prove useful to the three countries and
15:38:05 5 the international community at large. The cost, which is
6 relatively minor, could be borne by the international community."

7 Pause there. Mr Taylor, the technology you were referring
8 to there, was it available to the United States of America?

9 A. They told us that it was available, yes. They told us
15:38:29 10 about it.

11 Q. When did they tell you about it?

12 A. In these meetings with Pickering they told us that such a
13 system existed and this is something that they would be able to
14 look into. So we knew what we were talking about.

15:38:43 15 Q. Now, did they ever provide such assistance?

16 A. No. No.

17 Q. Now of course, had it been provided as requested, we could
18 have some hard evidence like photographs and the like, couldn't
19 we, Mr Taylor?

15:39:06 20 A. That's correct. Intercepts too. It would be able to
21 intercept and photographs all, yes.

22 Q. "2. On the status of the Revolutionary United Front, as
23 has been previously done, the Liberian government has again
24 called for the immediate disarmament and simultaneous deployment
15:39:28 25 of ECOWAS troops under UNAMSIL in areas recently considered as
26 RUF-dominated. Along these lines, the RUF has announced a new
27 leadership acceptable to ECOWAS and has informed ECOWAS through
28 its chairman that it welcomes our call for disarmament and
29 demobilisation and that it has begun the process leading to its

1 transformations to a political entity and subsequent
2 reintegration into society.

3 The United States government is fully aware of our support
4 for United Nations resolution 1306 calling for an end to the
15:40:11 5 smuggling of diamonds from Sierra Leone. As evidence of this we
6 shall be undertaking several initiatives, including the enactment
7 of a Statute criminalising the export of undocumented or
8 uncertificated diamonds, the enforcement of legislation requiring
9 the Central Bank of Liberia to issue certificates of origin, in
15:40:34 10 line with existing laws, and our request to the IMF and the World
11 Bank to assign experts to assist in the development of a
12 transparent process. These initiatives should gain much needed
13 resources for reconstruction and development, so stridently
14 denied our people by insensitive donors."

15:41:04 15 Can we pause for a minute, Mr Taylor. Mr Pickering, had
16 made it quite plain, and indeed it had been made plain from much
17 earlier in a letter from General Yerks, that the quid pro quo for
18 financial assistance to Liberia was peace in Sierra Leone. Is
19 that right?

15:41:25 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. So help me, Mr Taylor. What was your motivation, as
22 suggested, for allegedly continuing the war in Sierra Leone, in
23 supporting it? How could it help you?

24 A. In no way. It was just going to sink us deeper and deeper
15:41:50 25 and deeper.

26 Q. "These initiatives should gain much needed resources for
27 reconstruction and development so stridently denied our people by
28 insensitive donors. In furtherance, the government calls for
29 assistance from the international community to convene a meeting

1 of international experts to focus on the diamond trade within the
2 Mano River Union countries and its certification process. The
3 Liberian government would be most grateful if the venue of such
4 conference would be Washington, DC. The Government of Liberia
15:42:31 5 remains committed to the pursuit of peace and stability both at
6 home and in the sub-region and wishes to further commit ourselves
7 to the pursuit of the process of mutual cooperation, a function
8 of our traditional relationship."

9 Mr Taylor, did you receive a response from President
15:42:52 10 Clinton?

11 A. We got a letter back from the national security adviser, at
12 that time was, I think, Sandy Berger, that did write us a letter.

13 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, in the remarks made by Under-Secretary
14 Pickering in his departing statement -

15:43:32 15 MR GRIFFITHS: And before I forget, I'm helpfully reminded,
16 could I ask that that letter from President Taylor to President
17 Clinton, dated 23 August 2000, be marked for identification
18 MFI-155.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is now marked MFI-155.

15:43:57 20 MR GRIFFITHS:

21 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, as I was saying, in that document we looked
22 at, MFI-152, the departure statement by Under-Secretary
23 Pickering, a threat was expressed of negative consequences if
24 certain things weren't done. Is that right?

15:44:26 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. And how did you take that? What specifically did you think
27 might occur as a consequence of that?

28 A. We were expecting, really, additional sanctions. We were
29 expecting sanctions. We were looking at travel bans, because

1 this has been hinted. In these discussions, you almost know -
2 they come up with, "Look, there are so many options open to us.
3 We hate to do these, but there could be a travel ban on Liberians
4 travelling to the United States and probably sanctions against
15:45:17 5 Liberia, bilateral sanctions." These were very clear. This is
6 what we were expecting from the United States.

7 Q. Now, as a consequence of that fear, Mr Taylor, did you do
8 anything?

9 A. There was nothing left to do. There was nothing left to
15:45:40 10 do. We had - I mean, you try to do something new when you know
11 you're doing something wrong. What else did we have to do?
12 There was nothing else to do. We were supporting the peace
13 process 100 per cent. We were exhausting our little meagre
14 resources to ensure - I mean, we knew - for me, in our government
15:46:04 15 - for my government, it was like an investment. We hardly had
16 any money. We were not even paying our people's salaries. Here
17 we are out there trying to charter aircrafts to move people up
18 and down. People - these delegations come, you have to feed
19 them. They are in hotels, you have to pay the hotels bills for
15:46:22 20 them. There is a lot - but we considered it an investment. We
21 had done everything.

22 We were working closely with ECOWAS. We were working
23 closely with the OAU. We were working closely with the United
24 Nations and its representatives in Liberia. There was nothing
15:46:35 25 else we could do. Nothing. I mean, we were just stuck. Stuck.
26 Nothing.

27 Q. Now, speaking of the United Nations representative in
28 Liberia, now, we remind ourselves that the Pickering delegation
29 met with you on 17 July. After that meeting, Mr Taylor, did you

1 make any public statement about your meeting with Mr Pickering?

2 A. Yes, I held a press conference at the Executive Mansion to
3 tell the nation - because by this time everybody was waiting to
4 see, oh, what's the outcome of this meeting? Because the word
15:47:24 5 had come out that Thomas Pickering was coming to Liberia with a
6 bundle of proof that will finally come out and the world will get
7 to know and have the facts about what Liberia was doing in
8 Sierra Leone. So there was this anticipation out there. So we
9 all waited.

15:47:43 10 He came. There was no bundle of proof. He kept talking
11 about their information. So after that, we had a press
12 conference and we told the Liberian people, which was my duty,
13 that I had met Pickering. We had still not obtained any proof.
14 But there were these threats hanging over us, so they should
15:48:02 15 prepare for the worst. That's what we told them.

16 Q. And this press conference, was it attended by the United
17 Nations special representative?

18 A. Oh, yes. Yes. Yes.

19 Q. And to your knowledge, did he report that press conference
15:48:16 20 to UN headquarters?

21 A. Yes, he did. He did. He reported it.

22 Q. How do you know?

23 A. Because he supplied us a copy of the report that he sent
24 back. He did.

15:48:29 25 Q. Did you retain such a copy in your archives, Mr Taylor?

26 A. Yes, I kept a copy, yes.

27 Q. Have a look behind divider 65, please. Mr Taylor, is that
28 the document?

29 A. Yes.

1 Q. We see it's an outgoing code cable from Downes-Thomas to
2 Prendergast at the United Nations, New York. It is dated 19 July
3 2000. The subject matter is "President Taylor's Press
4 Conference". So 19 July, that's two days after you met with
15:49:18 5 Pickering?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. "President Taylor today addressed a press conference at the
8 Executive Mansion on the recent attack in Lofa County; the
9 situation in Sierra Leone; and the Government of Liberia's
10 response to the recent US threat to impose sanctions against
11 Liberia for its alleged complicity with the RUF rebels."

12 Now, pausing there. Had Mr Pickering or, indeed, the
13 United States government said openly that they were considering
14 sanctions, Mr Taylor, as opposed to the word used by
15:50:07 15 Mr Pickering, "negative consequences"?

16 A. Pickering, in that meeting, the word "sanctions" came out,
17 but he was being very diplomatic. That's another word for - the
18 nearest thing is negative consequences. I don't think he wanted
19 to alarm the Liberian people by saying outright sanctions, but
15:50:36 20 sanctions did come out, that these were things that they were
21 considering in the meeting, yes.

22 Q. "Speaking on the current situation in Lofa County, the
23 President said fighting was still going on in Voinjama between
24 government forces and dissidents, whom the government alleges are
15:50:56 25 operating from Guinea. He said there were 'constant supplies
26 coming out of Guinea' and that the situation was serious. In
27 this connection, the President disclosed that he has consulted
28 with the national legislature with a view to declaring a
29 'limited' state of emergency in the conflict areas, including

1 Voinjama. Vowing to use every means within his power to fight
2 the dissidents, President Taylor called on 'all able-bodied men
3 and women' to report to their county bases for assignments. The
4 President said his government's mission was to contain the attack
15:51:45 5 and then mount an offensive before putting 'a mechanism in place
6 to destroy their capacity'. He urged Guinea to act urgently to
7 stop its territory from being used by dissidents to attack
8 Liberia. The President stated that he was taken aback by the
9 United States' position on Liberia and the fact that the United
15:52:10 10 States had yet to condemn the attack by dissidents on Liberia.
11 He, however, expressed the hope that the United States's failure
12 could have been perhaps an oversight on its part.

13 On the situation in Sierra Leone, the President said that
14 the perception that Liberia was involved in diamond smuggling and
15:52:38 15 gun-running in Sierra Leone was 'sheer nonsense'. He called on
16 people making these allegations to come forward with the evidence
17 so that he could have his day in court."

18 You've certainly got that now, Mr Taylor?

19 A. Yes. More than I bargained for, yes.

15:53:01 20 Q. "He explain that the issue of Sierra Leone was of vital
21 interest to Liberia and as such 'does not involve either carrots
22 or sticks' because, as he put it, without peace in Sierra Leone,
23 there won't be peace in Liberia. He maintained the restoration
24 of peace in Sierra Leone was Liberia's moral duty. President
15:53:27 25 Taylor said that Liberia was in full agreement with ECOWAS's
26 position and would not therefore act unilaterally on Sierra
27 Leonean matters. He explained that his government supported the
28 Lome Peace Accord, the resumption of disarmament, and
29 demobilisation of all parties, and that his government also

1 facilitated the release of United Nations hostages. He also
2 commended the United Nations for rescuing the more than 200
3 United Nations peacekeepers whose freedom of movement had been
4 restricted by the RUF.

15:54:14 5 President Taylor expressed his support for President
6 Kabbah's government, adding that there was no question regarding
7 the legitimacy of the Sierra Leonean government. He disclosed
8 that he had had a telephone conversation this morning with
9 President Kabbah regarding reports that Liberian troops had
10 fought with the Kamajors on the two countries' common border. In
11 this connection he stressed that he had informed President Kabbah
12 of the falsity of the reports and he (President Kabbah) had
13 concurred. The President urged his Sierra Leonean counterpart to
14 open lines of communication with the RUF because 'Liberia does
15:55:08 15 not speak for nor represent the RUF'. In this regard, he
16 revealed that President Kabbah had spoken with Sam Bockarie on
17 the phone."

18 Mr Taylor, do you recall that yesterday we discussed the
19 telephone call between President Kabbah and Sam Bockarie?

15:55:28 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Is this the same telephone call?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. "He told the press conference that President Kabbah had
24 agreed with him and promised to pursue that line. President
15:55:51 25 Taylor emphasised the need for contact between the Government of
26 Sierra Leone and the RUF and that Liberia would support any move
27 that would bring peace in that country.

28 On the recent threat of sanctions by the United States
29 Under-Secretary of State for political affairs, Thomas Pickering,

1 President Taylor said Liberia would not respond to threats and
2 would not accept any attempts to muffle or arms twist his
3 government without facts. He said Liberia would continue to play
4 a positive role within the region in line with ECOWAS's position
15:56:38 5 and was also open to bilateral discussions. He expressed the
6 hope that the United States would understand where his government
7 was coming from and that Liberia would keep the door open as long
8 as peace efforts in Sierra Leone were in line with that of
9 ECOWAS. He reiterated his government's readiness to send
15:57:03 10 peacekeepers to Sierra Leone if that would contribute to bringing
11 peace to that country."

12 Now, Mr Taylor, when you say there that Liberia would not
13 respond to threats and would not accept any attempt to muffle or
14 arm twist its government, didn't you think that was a rather
15:57:30 15 foolhardy thing to do in relation to the United States?

16 A. No, I wouldn't think so. It's not foolhardy. I think
17 truth has its own values. We all have our own moral values. All
18 I cared about was truth. I told - I have been telling the truth
19 for almost ten years now, but what had to happen to me just had
15:57:56 20 to happen. It was not foolhardy. I told him. It was the fact.
21 It is factual today just as it was many years ago.

22 And so there was no - nothing about being foolhardy about
23 this. I think Pickering understood this. And you have to give
24 it to the Americans too, they like frank discussions so there was
15:58:14 25 nothing foolhardy about it. I think earnesty for me was where I
26 drew the line. Once we were earnest and sincere about what we
27 were doing and saying, that was what was important to me. All of
28 us have our dignity to protect. I was President of a country.
29 It was a very small country, but I took my job very seriously and

1 when I spoke I did not speak for me; I spoke for the 4 million
2 plus people of my little country and I did it with dignity and
3 honour.

15:58:50 4 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, that was 19 July. Amongst the various
5 matters you raised there was the question of peace in the Mano
6 River Union?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Now, you mentioned earlier that you had set these ideas
9 down on paper?

15:59:03 10 A. That is correct.

11 Q. Can we now have a look at that document behind divider 67.
12 But before I move on, that code cable from Felix Downes-Thomas to
13 Undersecretary-General Prendergast dated 19 July 2000 on the
14 topic of President Taylor's press conference, can I ask that that
15:59:32 15 be marked for identification MFI-156, please.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-156.

17 MR GRIFFITHS:

18 Q. Now, what's the status of this document, Mr Taylor?

19 A. When you say the status?

15:59:57 20 Q. What is it? Why was it written?

21 A. Oh, this - sometimes you talk, talk and talk and maybe no
22 one is listening. But for scholars in West Africa and I'm
23 looking at maybe all the non-governmental organisations, I
24 thought to publish - to do this white paper, that people will
16:00:21 25 begin to know and read and see some of the things that I was
26 thinking about in trying to deal with the Mano River Union, its
27 problems and how I saw the way forward. So I did this document
28 for wide publication that people could read and see if they would
29 understand and agree with some of the things that I was talking

1 about.

2 Q. Okay. Now, we see that it's headed "President Taylor's
3 formula for peace in the Mano River Union." So can I ask this
4 question right at the outset: The ideas contained in this

16:01:00 5 document, are they yours or are you merely putting your name to a
6 document prepared by others?

7 A. No, no, no. These are my ideas.

8 Q. And we see that the subheading is "A response to the
9 concerns of the international community."

16:01:19 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. What concerns are they, Mr Taylor?

12 A. Instability in the - amongst - between and amongst the Mano
13 River Union countries, the crises in Sierra Leone, now the crisis
14 in Liberia, the possible crisis between Liberia and Guinea.

16:01:38 15 These are the principal concerns of the international community.
16 The issue of refugees, all of this stuff. Internally displaced,
17 non-state actors. There are quite a few subject matters on the
18 table at this time.

19 Q. We see that it also bears the source of its origin at the
16:02:10 20 Executive Mansion, Monrovia, Liberia, and it's dated 22 July
21 2000, yes?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Now, help me with this, please, Mr Taylor: We know the
24 Pickering visit is on the 17th and you give the press conference
16:02:29 25 on the 19th, yes?

26 A. Uh-huh.

27 Q. Had this document been in preparation prior to the
28 Pickering visit?

29 A. Yes. Yes, the ideas were being put together prior to -

1 this was not because of Pickering but prior to that, yes.

2 Q. So prior to Pickering coming you had decided to set your
3 ideas down on paper?

4 A. That is correct.

16:02:53 5 Q. Now, when we go over the page we see a map of Africa with
6 the Mano River region highlighted. Is that correct?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Over the page there's a picture of yourself. Is that
9 right?

16:03:11 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Then we have the contents page and we see that first of all
12 there's an introduction, then an overview, then you deal with the
13 Liberian-Guinean border issue, yes?

14 A. Yes.

16:03:31 15 Q. You then deal with the Sierra Leonean conflict, yes?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And then you deal with the issue of diamonds before the
18 conclusion, "Liberia's position for a final resolution", yes?

19 A. Yes.

16:03:47 20 Q. Now, the introduction over the page, do you have it?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. "The Mano River Union currently teeters on the brink of
23 disintegration in spite of the best efforts of member states and
24 the ECOWAS authority to foster peace and maintain stability. The
16:04:13 25 Sierra Leonean conflict poses the greatest challenge to the Mano
26 River Union leadership as peace becomes increasingly elusive.

27 The high profile intervention of the United Nations so far
28 is producing very slow and uncertain results. Western countries'
29 proposal for peace enforcement through a military build-up is not

1 going down too well with the ECOWAS leadership who desire to
2 maintain a more confident peace building role in the resolution
3 of the conflict, as they did in Liberia and Guinea-Bissau.

4 While the stubborn conflict in Sierra Leone poses a threat
16:04:56 5 to the security of other Mano River Union states, Liberia and
6 Guinea, the scenario is further complicated by allegations
7 against the Government of Liberia of diamond dealing and direct
8 support to the Revolutionary United Front on the one hand, and
9 the incursion of Guinean based Liberian dissidents into Liberian
16:05:19 10 territory (for the third time in less than one year).

11 In recent times the spotlight of the international
12 community has descended unfairly on the Liberian government to do
13 more to end the conflict in Sierra Leone. That Liberia has
14 played a major role in salvaging the Lome accord through the
16:05:41 15 Monrovia reconciliatory talks of October 1999 and the more recent
16 release of more than 500 UN hostages has hardly won any laurels
17 for President Charles Ghankay Taylor outside the ECOWAS region.

18 At the same time, no one appears to be concerned enough to
19 condemn the regular incursion into Liberia's sovereign territory
16:06:06 20 or censure the Guinean authorities for this blatant breach of
21 international law and convention against Liberia.

22 More than that, no one appears to be listening to the
23 legitimate concerns of the Liberian government about the large
24 groups of Liberian combatants in Sierra Leone, some identified to
16:06:32 25 be training with the unstructured Sierra Leonean army, who
26 pose, as well, a direct threat to Liberia's national security.

27 However, in response to the high anxieties aroused among
28 the Liberian populace on account of the latest, 8 July, incursion
29 into Lofa County and the ultimatum and threats issued to the

1 Liberian government by US Under-Secretary of State Thomas
2 Pickering, the President of Liberia has formulated a blueprint
3 for peace in the Mano River Union with the following objectives:

4 To seek cooperation from the Guinean government in
16:07:17 5 expelling the insurgents from that country and to discourage any
6 further insurgency into Liberian territory; to remain
7 constructively engaged for a final solution of Sierra Leonean
8 conflict under the ECOWAS framework of the Lome accord; and to
9 finally put to rest the unsubstantiated allegations against
16:07:41 10 Liberia for involvement in the Sierra Leonean conflict.

11 This document is therefore intended to respond in timely
12 fashion to the wishes of the international community and at the
13 same time portray the goodwill of the Liberian government in its
14 earnest efforts to contribute to a conflict-free Mano River
16:07:59 15 Union."

16 Let's go over the page, please. Now, we see here this page
17 is headed "President Taylor's formula for peace in the Mano River
18 union":

19 "Efforts by the Liberian government to foster and maintain
16:08:27 20 peace and harmony with its immediate neighbours through the Mano
21 River Union mechanism predate the current conflict situation by
22 more than two decades when the Mano River Union was established,
23 linking Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone in a union to encourage
24 free trade, unrestricted movement of people, economic
16:08:55 25 integration, and good neighbourliness.

26 Over the past 20 years, however, political and social
27 changes in the Mano River Union nations, culminating in seven
28 years of civil war in Liberia, nine years of civil war in
29 Sierra Leone, and deep suspicions on the part of the Guinean

1 government about impending dangers to its own stability, have
2 contributed to the weakening of the union.

3 Since the return of peace and democratic governance more
4 than three years ago, the Taylor administration, adopting
16:09:43 5 Liberia's traditional leadership role in regional organisational
6 matters, has taken the mantle to revive the Mano River Union
7 following three visits to Conakry to confer with President
8 Lansana Conte and a half dozen meetings with Sierra Leonean
9 President Dr Ahmad Tejan Kabbah in Abuja, Lome and Monrovia.

16:10:09 10 Accordingly, the Mano River Union has begun to focus on the
11 critical issue of stability with the formation of the union
12 security committee and its technical committees to monitor the
13 borders between member states and to meet periodically to compare
14 notes and create confidence.

16:10:32 15 To further allay fears in the sub-region and to foster acts
16 of good neighbourliness, the Liberian government made a critical
17 decision last July, 1999, to destroy huge quantities of residual
18 arms and ammunition from its civil war period.

19 Although the Liberian government realised that the
16:10:55 20 destruction of those arms put the security of the nation in a
21 questionable state, the gesture was made in the hope that it
22 would contribute to making the Mano River Union an arms-free zone
23 of cooperation and development.

24 In spite of these efforts and the objective realities,
16:11:23 25 Liberia's strategic interests have not been served. Liberian
26 dissidents abound in Sierra Leone as active members of the
27 various warring factions, while Guinean-based Liberian dissidents
28 have attacked Liberian territory for the third time within the
29 year.

1 Notwithstanding indications from the United States and
2 members of the international community that the destruction of
3 the wartime arms of Liberia's rebel factions would be rewarded
4 with assistance to develop, train and improve the nation's
16:12:10 5 military capacity, up to now, no such assistance has been
6 forthcoming and the arms embargo on Liberia has yet to be lifted.

7 The Taylor administration is at a loss to understand the
8 non-supportive attitude of 'our friends' in Washington DC and
9 elsewhere. Also invited is an explanation for the glaring
16:12:39 10 absence of diplomatic pressures to put a halt to Liberian
11 dissident activities in Sierra Leone as well as dissident
12 aggression out of Guinea.

13 True to earlier apprehensions on the part of the Liberian
14 government, the large cache of arms brought into the sub-region
16:13:01 15 by the British military in support of the Sierra Leonean
16 government forces, have evidentially found their way into the
17 hands of the insurgents, thereby escalating the threat to the
18 security and stability of not only Liberian government but all
19 governments in the sub-region."

16:13:36 20 Over the page. And we come to the Liberia-Guinean border
21 issue:

22 "In spite of the unprovoked aggression carried out against
23 the peaceful people of Liberia, with the three incursions by
24 dissident forces out of the Republic of Guinea, the Liberian
16:13:53 25 government continues to exercise a great deal of patience and
26 restraint in its response to the attacks.

27 In the three years of the Taylor administration, not a
28 single instance of aggression has been carried out against any
29 Mano River Union state from Liberian soil and it is the policy of

1 this administration to maintain that good neighbourly stance.

2 Therefore, in an attempt to safeguard the territorial
3 integrity of Liberia and minimise conflict between Liberia and
4 Guinea, the government of the Republic of Liberia has instituted
16:14:37 5 the following measures to deal with the Lofa insurgency:

6 A. Declare a state of emergency in the areas of Lofa
7 County occupied by the insurgents until they are flushed out;

8 B. Institute a strategy of containment to prevent the
9 fighting from spreading;

16:15:02 10 C. Flush out the dissidents and destroy their capacity to
11 launch another attack;

12 D. Invite the Guinean authorities under the Mano River
13 Union security mechanism to jointly monitor the border against
14 any further insurgency;

16:15:21 15 E. Urge the Guinean government to discourage further use
16 of their territory for dissident rebel activities against
17 Liberia;

18 F. Invite Guinean President Lansana Conte to Liberia for a
19 reciprocal visit for the purpose of confidence building and a
16:15:43 20 strengthening of fraternal relations;

21 G. Invite the United Nations, OAU, ECOWAS and the
22 international community to exert pressure on the Guinean
23 authorities to work harder to prevent dissidents using Guinean
24 territory to launch attacks against Liberia.

16:16:07 25 It is the conviction of the Liberian government that
26 through these measures, good relations among Mano River Union
27 states will flourish, while peace and stability will prevail in
28 both Guinea and Liberia. "

29 We then come, do we not, Mr Taylor, to the Sierra Leonean

1 conflict?

2 A. Uh-huh.

3 Q. "Ending the war in Sierra Leone was supposed to be one of
4 the three issue areas pre-conditioned by the United States
16:16:42 5 government for the resumption of its historic relationship of
6 cooperation with Liberia. The other issues were the destruction
7 of the residual civil war arms of the defunct rebel factions and
8 the cooperation of government in the United Nations fact-finding
9 exercise regarding the September 18-19, 1998 incident involving
16:17:09 10 the Liberian government and the Lawless Roosevelt Johnson faction
11 in Monrovia, which resulted in the shoot-out at the US embassy.
12 After one year of cooperation with United Nations investigation
13 of the September 18 Johnson incidents, Liberia was exonerated."

14 Pause there. Is that true, Mr Taylor?

16:17:37 15 A. That is true.

16 Q. Is there a report to that effect?

17 A. There was a report. I don't know why it's not among my
18 paper, but there was a report.

19 Q. "Moreover, the Taylor government, under international
16:17:57 20 suspicion and pressures, became constructively engaged not only
21 in successfully working to secure the early 1999 ceasefire
22 between the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the Kabbah
23 government, but also dramatically undertook the historic
24 sub-regional air shuttles that eventuated in clearing the
16:18:24 25 unresolved issues of disagreement at the Lome peace talks and the
26 signing of the peace agreement between the parties in July 1999.

27 In the recent crisis of hostage-taking by the RUF, it was
28 the Taylor government that rose to the historic challenge of
29 mediation and hostage-release on behalf of ECOWAS. Although

1 promises of support were made at the outset, this feat of
2 securing more than 500 UN peacekeepers was eventually
3 accomplished with little more than a grudging expression of
4 commendation to the Liberian government by a handful of
16:19:09 5 governments outside of the ECOWAS region. What little logistical
6 support that was received to buttress the tremendous financial
7 and moral sacrifices of Liberia came from our friends, mainly
8 Libya.

9 Notwithstanding these constructive actions of the Taylor
16:19:31 10 government, the British government has been among the
11 collaborating governments which have posed a direct threat to the
12 security of Liberia by re-arming a non-restructured Sierra Leone
13 Army, the Kamajors or Civil Defence Forces, which include Special
14 Forces of Liberian dissidents in Sierra Leone.

16:19:57 15 More than this, there appears to be an international
16 conspiracy to discredit the Taylor-led government by unproved
17 accusations of diamond smuggling and gun-running to the RUF.

18 Further, it seems absolutely important that the United
19 Nations not get involved in a war in Sierra Leone, given the
16:20:19 20 negative experience it has encountered in Somalia, Rwanda,
21 Angola, and the Congo. The United Nations has to live up to its
22 reputation as a neutral and friendly force. The conflict will
23 not and cannot be resolved through the deployment of a massive
24 military force, apparently un-impartial."

16:20:54 25 Pause there, Mr Taylor. When you say "apparently
26 un-impartial", what are you suggesting?

27 A. Well, the mandate that has been given to UNAMSIL is what?
28 It's peace enforcement. That's not being - I mean, you are
29 really looking at a situation. But we were looking at an

1 impartial force that would serve the interests of all sides, but
2 this force now has a mandate and it's not impartial. They have a
3 direct mandate to enforce peace.

4 Q. "Also directly threatening the durability of the peace
16:21:45 5 efforts of the Liberian government and our national security is
6 the insistence on Foday Sankoh's trial for war crimes, which will
7 most probably jettison the hard-won Lome Peace Agreement of 1999
8 and return the RUF and the Sierra Leone government to the
9 battlefield, with a possible spillover across the Liberian
16:22:10 10 border."

11 Why did you think, Mr Taylor, that the insistence on Foday
12 Sankoh's trial for war crimes would be a danger to peace in the
13 sub-region?

14 A. But I also talk about the spillover. Look, I was the -
16:22:36 15 probably - I was the loudmouth, I guess, that jumped out talking
16 about it. This whole matter, the arrest of Sankoh and this
17 impending trial in Sierra Leone, was something that most of the
18 leaders in ECOWAS didn't see it as being properly timed, but I,
19 Mr Big Mouth, jumped out and talked about it. Maybe that's my
16:23:04 20 problem, but it was of concern. The timing. Not the action.
21 The timing was always a concern. The timing.

22 Here we are, we just got out of hostage crisis. This man
23 is arrested. We don't have the guns yet from the people. The
24 people are armed and fighting. We are trying to ask them to come
16:23:26 25 back to what? Pre-July 7 lines to get the process going, because
26 following the agreement, the fighting - they had captured more
27 territory, so we wanted them to come back. All of this is going
28 on. In the middle of it all, court. So, I mean, I - maybe I
29 just should have kept my mouth shut.

1 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, what exactly was the charge
2 against Foday Sankoh at this stage?

3 MR GRIFFITHS: Well, let me ask the witness:

16:24:11

4 Q. Mr Taylor, at this stage, what was the allegation being
5 made against Foday Sankoh?

6 A. All we heard was that he was going to be charged with war
7 crimes. At this time of this document, that's all that -
8 Foday Sankoh was going to be put on trial for the atrocities that
9 had been committed in Sierra Leone throughout the war.

16:24:29

10 Q. Now, as far as you're aware, by this time, which is July
11 2000, had any request been made for the setting up of a war
12 crimes Tribunal in Sierra Leone?

16:24:58

13 A. Oh, yes. To the best of my knowledge, the Sierra Leonean
14 government was, I think, putting together legislation, and I
15 think they were trying to obtain the acquiescence of the United
16 Nations in granting assistance for that purpose.

17 Q. And who had set that process in motion?

16:25:19

18 A. I don't know the details, but the government, I'm sure,
19 through the President, government of the Sierra Leone, from what
20 was being said at that time. And Tejan Kabbah was President.

21 Q. But do you know what charges Foday Sankoh was facing while
22 in custody at this time?

16:25:55

23 A. I don't know the direct details, but I'm sure it was - all
24 we heard on the reports that reached us was that he was being put
25 on trial for crimes that were committed during the crisis - the
26 war in Sierra Leone, and these were war crimes that involved
27 murder, rape - all of the - all of the activities that are so
28 terrible that happened in Sierra Leone, he was being charged with
29 those.

1 Q. That was the information you had?

2 A. That's the information that I had. Remember, this is the
3 second arrest of Foday Sankoh, not the first. I'm talking about
4 the May arrest of Foday Sankoh.

16:26:33 5 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Perhaps ancillary to that question, you
6 speak of the insistence on Foday Sankoh's trial. Who was
7 insisting?

8 THE WITNESS: President Kabbah. President Kabbah was
9 insisting that he be put on trial.

16:26:52 10 MR GRIFFITHS:

11 Q. Now by this stage, July, Mr Taylor, had President Kabbah
12 taken any steps to bring this about?

13 A. Well, I was not following the day-to-day situation over
14 there. But we had reports that the Government of Sierra Leone
16:27:12 15 was trying to put together legislation that will govern such a
16 trial and that President Kabbah was pushing for a court that
17 would try Foday Sankoh. From what we thought, it was not a trial
18 that would have been done by the Sierra Leonean government
19 itself, but by an international court supported by the United
16:27:34 20 Nations and that he was seeking assistance because --

21 Q. Seeking assistance from whom?

22 A. From the United Nations to help with the court.

23 Q. "Threatening as these are to the continued welfare of the
24 Liberian state and its freely elected government, the Taylor
16:27:57 25 administration welcomes a justification for the foregoing policy
26 orientations of our American and British friends and how
27 contributory they are to the enhancement of our friendly
28 relations on the one hand and the fostering of peace and
29 stability among Mano River states."

1 I note the time, Mr President.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, this is probably a good place to
3 finish for today. Mr Taylor, I'll remind you that you are not to
4 speak of your evidence to any other person. We will adjourn
5 until 9.30 tomorrow morning.

16:28:33

6 [Whereupon the hearing adjourned at 4.29 p.m.
7 to be reconvened on Thursday, 20 August 2009 at
8 9.30 a.m.]

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