

Ten Years On: Sierra Leone's Post-Conflict Transition

Tuesday, 11 December 2012

London House, Goodenough College

Mecklenburgh Square, Bloomsbury

London WC1N 2AB

Sponsored by the LSE Department of International Relations

Sierra Leone's civil conflict caused 70,000 casualties and left 2.6 million people displaced. The war was known for widespread atrocities, including forced recruitment of child soldiers, rape and sexual slavery, and amputations of limbs. Ten years since the end of its eleven-year civil war, Sierra Leone is again in the international news. The recent sentencing of Charles Taylor in The Hague marks the first international trial of an African Head of State. Meanwhile, within Sierra Leone, democratic elections on November 17, 2012 mark a critical evaluation point for the country's transition to peace.

This symposium takes stock of Sierra Leone's post-conflict transition. Termed by William Schabas as a successful example of the "two-track" approach to transitional justice, Sierra Leone has been a site of multiple international and domestic mechanisms of transitional justice. The Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and ongoing community reconciliation processes have all sought to address the legacies of violence and put the country on a more secure footing. The symposium invites scholars, in the context of recent elections, to examine the impact of transitional justice in Sierra Leone. Do transitional justice approaches present short-term solutions or do they work towards long-term peace, stability, and development? Do transitional justice mechanisms address the visible legacies of conflict (victims, justice for atrocities, and in this case, child soldiers), or conflict's long-term drivers (economic, social and political)? To what extent have transitional justice approaches complemented each other, as some have claimed, or are they in tension? Ten years on, to what extent has transitional justice been transformative within Sierra Leone?

10.00 – 10.45 Registration and coffee

10.45 – 11.00 Welcome and introduction

11.00 – 12.30 Keynote speech by the Prosecutor of the SCSL, Brenda J. Hollis

12.30 – 13.15 Buffet lunch

13.15 – 14.30 Panel 1

Joe A.D. Alie (History, Fourah Bay College, Freetown)

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Peacebuilding in Sierra Leone

Phil Clark (Politics & International Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies, London)

The Obsolescence of International Law? Comparative Perspectives on International Criminal Justice from the African Great Lakes

Rebekka Friedman (International Relations, London School of Economics)

Restorative Justice: Promises and Limitations

Chris Mahony (New Zealand Centre for Human Rights Law, Policy and Practice, University of Auckland)

The Special Court for Sierra Leone: Political Justice?

14.30 – 15.45 Panel 2

Viviane Dittrich (International Relations, London School of Economics)
Towards Completion and Beyond: Legacies of the Special Court for Sierra Leone

Lansana Gberie (Security Council Report, New York)
The Trial of the CDF: A Perverse Legacy of the Special Court for Sierra Leone

Kieran Mitton (International Relations, King's College, London)
Integration or Infiltration? Ex-combatants and Politics in post-conflict Sierra Leone

Chandra Sriram (Law, School of Oriental and African Studies, London)
Victims and Ex-combatants in Sierra Leone

15.45 – 16.15 Coffee

16.15 – 17.45 Roundtable

Tim Allen (International Development, London School of Economics)

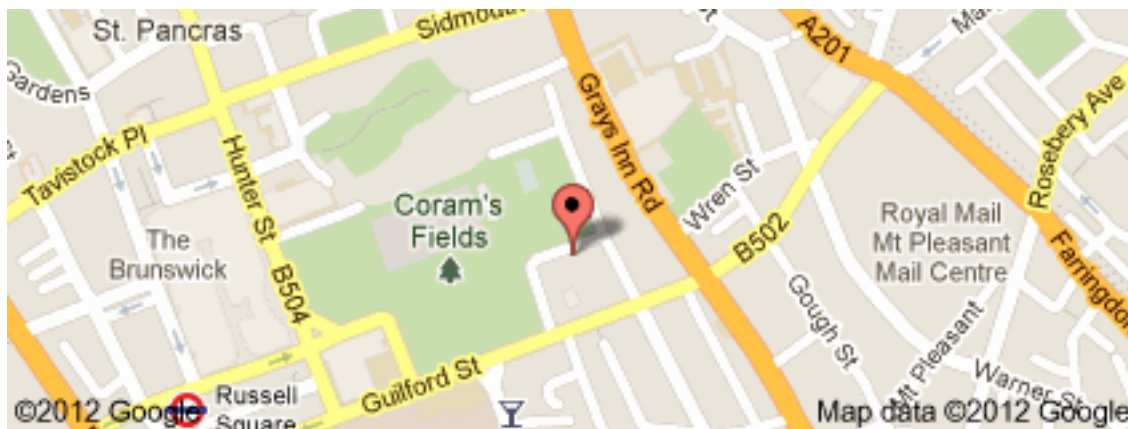
David Harris (Politics and International Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies, London)

Saleem Vahidy (Witness Protection, Special Court for Sierra Leone)

Nathalie Wlodarczyk (Exclusive Analysis, London)

17.45 – 18.45 Reception

Conference Venue: London House, Goodenough College



Conference Organisers: Kirsten Ainley (LSE); Rebekka Friedman (LSE); Chris Mahony (University of Auckland)

*** To register for the conference, please send an email, indicating your full name and affiliation, as soon as possible to: r.c.friedman@lse.ac.uk ***