Charles Taylor

Charles Taylor, born 28 January 1948, was President of Liberia from 2 August 1997 until his resignation on 11 August 2003, and a convicted warlord. His war crimes started after he escaped to Libya from a U.S. jail, where he was waiting to be extradited for embezzlement.

In Libya, he started the militia group National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) with which he overthrew the regime of Samuel Doe in 1989. The upheaval plunged the country into a 14-year bloody civil war. By the end, 200,000 were killed in the fighting and more than half of the population became refugees.

After a peace deal was made to end the civil war, Taylor was elected Liberia's president until he was forced out in 2003.

During his reign, Taylor fuelled the civil war raging in Sierra Leone. Witnesses said he sold guns to, and arranged attacks for, rebel groups in exchange for blood diamonds. However, Taylor wasn't just aiding a rebellion. He was also perpetuating horrific brutality. Over 50,000 were killed, and thousands more were mutilated in the more than a decade long civil war.

Taylor denied the accusations, but on April 26, 2012, he was found guilty of aiding and abetting a notoriously brutal rebel force who murdered, raped, forced sexual slavery, built a child army and mined diamonds to pay for guns.

In May 2012, Taylor was sentenced to 50 years in prison. Reading the sentencing statement, Presiding Judge Richard Lussick said: "The accused has been found responsible for aiding and abetting as well as planning some of the most heinous and brutal crimes in recorded human history."

Taylor is serving out his 50-year sentence in a prison in the United Kingdom.

Adapted from: https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/former-liberian-president-charles-taylor-found-guilty-of-war-crimes

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Taylor_(Liberian_politician)