

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



Members of the Sierra Leone Market Women's Association said good-bye to the Special Court on Monday

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

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

**as at:**

Tuesday, 31 December 2013

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
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## UN News Centre

Tuesday, 31 December 2013

### **As tribunal closes, UN chief hails achievements in ensuring accountability in Sierra Leone**



31 December 2013 – Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has congratulated the staff of the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), which closes today, on their important achievements over the past 11 years in ensuring accountability for crimes committed during the country’s decade-long civil war.

The SCSL, an independent tribunal set up jointly by the Government of Sierra Leone and the UN, is mandated to try those who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law committed in the country since 1996.

Based in the capital city of Freetown, the Special Court carried out numerous trials since its establishment in 2002, including those of various leaders in the country as well as of former Liberian President Charles Taylor. The trials saw first-ever convictions for attacks against UN peacekeepers, forced marriage as a crime against humanity, and for the use of child soldiers.

“The United Nations is proud of its partnership with the Government of Sierra Leone in establishing the Special Court, which ensured accountability for the unspeakable crimes committed during Sierra Leone’s over a decade-long civil war, and thereby greatly contributed towards establishing peace and stability and in laying the ground for Sierra Leone’s long-term development,” said a statement issued by the spokesperson for the Secretary-General.

“Of the impressive legacy and the many lessons that the work of the Special Court leaves behind as we move forward in truly establishing an age of accountability, one lesson stands out above all: justice is an indispensable element for peace to be sustainable in post-conflict societies,” it added.

The SCSL will be succeeded on 1 January 2014 by the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone, which will deal with matters arising from the ongoing legal obligations of the tribunal which could include the review of applications by convicts for early release or the judicial review of their convictions. Judges may also be called on to preside over any contempt of court proceedings.

At a formal ceremony held in Freetown earlier this month, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and UN Legal Counsel Miguel de Serpa Soares hailed the closing of the SCSL as “a landmark, not only for the Special Court, but also for international criminal justice in general.”

He said that the Special Court’s legacy would benefit both national courts in the region and around the world in dealing with vital issues, and paid tribute to the witnesses who stepped forward and allowed the Court “to inscribe their experiences in the history of this country.”

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

United Nations

Tuesday, 31 December 2013

**Statement Attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on the Closing of the Special Court for Sierra Leone**

On the occasion of today's closing of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the Secretary-General wishes to congratulate the judges, principals and staff, both Sierra Leonean and international, on the important achievements that have been accomplished over course of the eleven years of its existence. The United Nations is proud of its partnership with the Government of Sierra Leone in establishing the Special Court, which ensured accountability for the unspeakable crimes committed during Sierra Leone's over a decade-long civil war, and thereby greatly contributed towards establishing peace and stability and in laying the ground for Sierra Leone's long-term development. On 1 January 2014, the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone will take over the residual tasks of the Special Court.

Of the impressive legacy and the many lessons that the work of the Special Court leaves behind as we move forward in truly establishing an age of accountability, one lesson stands out above all: justice is an indispensable element for peace to be sustainable in post-conflict societies. The Secretary-General's principled commitment to international criminal justice will remain steadfast and unwavering.

New York,  
31 December 2013

## United Nations Office of Legal Affairs

Undated

<http://legal.un.org/ola/lc-12-2013.aspx>

### Visit by the Legal Counsel to The Hague (Netherlands), Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), Arusha (Tanzania) and Freetown (Sierra Leone), 19 November to 4 December 2013

-SNIP-

#### Representation of the Secretary-General at the Closing ceremony of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and Swearing-in ceremony of the Judges of the Residual Special Court (Freetown, 29 November to 3 December 2013)

From Tanzania, the Legal Counsel proceeded across the continent to Freetown in Sierra Leone where he represented the Secretary-General at the [formal closing ceremony of the Special Court for Sierra Leone \(SCSL\)](#), which is in the process of closing down 12 years after the conclusion of the agreement establishing it.



On behalf of the Secretary-General, the Legal Counsel also witnessed [the swearing-in of the Judges](#) who are on the roster for the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone (RSCSL), the successor institution that will assume the residual functions and obligations of the SCSL.

[- Press release](#)

In the margins of the ceremony, the Legal Counsel met with the leadership and staff of the SCLS and future RSCSL, in particular the President and Judges, the Registrar and the chairman and members of the Management Committee who were also visiting Freetown on this occasion. In Freetown, the Legal Counsel was also received by the President of the Republic, H.E. Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, and held meetings with the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice of Sierra Leone, Mr. Franklin Bai Kargbo, and with the Chief Justice, Ms. Umu Tejan-Jalloh. He also met with the NGO community and with civil society representatives at two outreach events.

