
Code of Ethics for Interpreters and Translators Employed by the Special Court for Sierra Leone

Adopted on 25 May 2004

PREAMBLE

The Registrar of the Special Court for Sierra Leone,

Considering Rule 76 of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which requires interpreters and translators, before performing any duties, to solemnly declare to do so faithfully, independently, impartially and with full respect for the duty of confidentiality,

Considering that being subject to a Code of Ethics is an integral attribute of being an interpreter and translator employed in a judicial environment,

Considering that it is necessary for interpreters and translators employed by the Special Court to be aware of their duties and responsibilities,

Hereby issues this Code of Ethics for Interpreters and Translators Employed by the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Article 1 - Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Ethics, the following terms shall mean:

Code of Ethics	The Code of Ethics for Interpreters and Translators Employed by the Special Court for Sierra Leone;
Court Management Section	The Court Management Section of the Registry of the Special Court;
Interpreters	Persons employed by the Special Court under a fixed-term contract, a short-term contract or a Special Services Agreement, who interpret in the proceedings of the Special Court and/or who interpret in support of the activities of the Special Court;
Rules of Procedure and Evidence	The Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Special Court;
Special Court	The Special Court for Sierra Leone established by the Agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone on the Establishment of a Special Court for Sierra Leone, signed in Freetown on 16 January 2002;
Staff Rules and Regulations	The Staff Rules and Regulations of the Special Court; and
Translators	Persons employed by the Special Court under a fixed-term contract, a short-term contract or a Special Services Agreement,

who translate in writing the documents referred to the Court Management Section or other documents intended for use by the Special Court.

Article 2 - Application

(A) This Code of Ethics shall be applied in conjunction with the relevant provisions of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence and the Staff Rules and Regulations.

(B) Interpreters and translators who breach this Code of Ethics may be subject to contempt proceedings in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and Evidence, and/or disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the Staff Rules and Regulations.

Article 3 - Competence

(A) Interpreters and translators shall possess a sound knowledge of the languages from and into which they interpret or translate.

(B) Interpreters and translators shall not accept assignments that they are not technically and/or linguistically competent to perform.

Article 4 - Integrity

(A) Interpreters and translators shall perform their duties with integrity, in a courteous, polite and dignified manner.

(B) Interpreters shall at all times maintain a professional attitude in dealings with Judges, court officers, counsel for the Prosecution and the Defence, suspects, accused, witnesses and other persons inside the courtroom.

Article 5 - Independence and Impartiality

(A) Interpreters and translators shall not allow any personal or other interests to interfere with the performance of their duties.

(B) Interpreters and translators shall not, in the performance of their duties, solicit or accept any gratuities or other consideration, benefit or advantage of any kind.

(C) Interpreters and translators shall disclose to their supervisor any conflict of interest or appearance of such conflict that may arise during the performance of their duties, including but not limited to circumstances referred to in paragraphs (A) and (B) above.

Article 6 - Confidentiality

(A) Interpreters and translators shall exercise their utmost discretion in all matters relating to their functions and shall not communicate at any time to the media or to any institution, person, governmental or non-governmental organization or other authority external to the Special Court any

information that has not been made public and which has become known to them in the course of their duties.

(B) Interpreters and translators shall not communicate any information that has been entrusted to them in confidence, that has become known to them by reason of their functions, or that they otherwise know to be confidential to any person within the Special Court other than those persons who need to have such information for the performance of their duties or with the authorization of their supervisor.

(C) Translated documents remain the property of the Special Court at all times and shall not be shown or released by interpreters or translators to third persons without the express permission of their supervisor or by order of a Judge or Chamber.

(D) Interpreters and translators shall not discuss the facts of any case pending before the Special Court, except as regards matters of a professional nature within the Court Management Section.

(E) Interpreters and translators shall not derive any personal profit or advantage from any confidential information that they may have acquired during the performance of their duties.

(F) The provisions of paragraphs (A) to (E) above shall continue to apply to interpreters and translators after the expiration or termination of their employment with the Special Court.

Article 7 - Accuracy

(A) Interpreters and translators shall convey with the greatest fidelity and accuracy, and with complete neutrality, the wording used by the persons they interpret or translate.

(B) Interpreters and translators shall convey the entire message, including vulgar or derogatory remarks, insults, mistakes, untruths and any non-verbal clues, such as the tone of voice and emotions of the speaker, which may facilitate the understanding of their listeners or readers.

(C) Interpreters and translators shall not embellish, omit or edit any material in their assignments.

(D) Interpreters and translators shall request repetition, rephrasing or explanation if any material to be interpreted or translated is unclear.

(E) Interpreters and translators shall promptly acknowledge and rectify any mistakes in their interpretation or translation.

(F) Interpreters and translators shall inform their listeners or readers promptly in the event that an external element, including technical hindrances such as poor sound quality and illegible photocopies, interferes with the accuracy or completeness of their interpretation or translation.

Article 8 - Entry into Force

This Code of Ethics shall enter into force on 25 May 2004.

Robin Vincent
Registrar
25 May 2004