

Special Court for Sierra Leone  
Press and Public Affairs Office

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Judge Itoe takes over as Presiding Judge of Trial Chamber**

Judge Benjamin Mutanga Itoe is now the Presiding Judge of the Trial Chamber following his election on Tuesday, the 1st of June, 2004. He assumed these functions the next day, Wednesday, the 2nd of June, and presided over the trial session that commenced on Thursday, the 3rd of June, 2004.

Judge Itoe succeeds Judge Bankole Thompson who remains as a Judge of the Trial Chamber.

Under the Special Court's Rules of Procedure and Evidence, the Presiding Judge of the Trial Chamber is elected for a renewable term of one year.

Benjamin Itoe was sworn in as one of the three Trial judges of the Special Court for Sierra Leone on December 2, 2002.

Born on the 23rd of September, 1942, in Bombe Kumba, in the Republic of Cameroon, he was Deputy Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Cameroon, and President of the Administrative Bench of that Court before being appointed by the Secretary General of the UN as a Judge of the Trial Chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Judge Itoe's legal career spans more than three decades. He has served in numerous high offices in Cameroon including Minister of Justice and Keeper of Seals. In 1996 he participated in drafting the Constitution of Cameroon and the Criminal Procedure Code which harmonises the Common and Civil Law procedures that are applicable in a bicultural Anglo-Franco Cameroon.

Judge Itoe studied at the University of Lagos, in Nigeria where he obtained a Bachelor of Laws Degree with honours in 1967. He went on to study at the Nigeria Law School in Lagos, passing the Bar examination in 1968. He was called to The Bar on the 25th of July, 1968.

Judge Itoe has travelled extensively and has participated and at times presided over some international Committees and Conferences of some international organisations.

Judge Itoe speaks English and French and some rudimentary Spanish.

He is married to Mrs Itoe Mispa Fule and a father of six children.

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