



Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

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Special Court President Addresses the Security Council

The President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Justice Emmanuel Olayinka Ayoola, today briefed the Security Council on the progress of the Court, issues that will impact on its completion, and the immediate need to transfer former Liberian President Charles Taylor.

Justice Ayoola described the challenges the Court faces in funding beyond December 2005. He also stressed the need for the United Nations to continue to provide security at the Special Court complex after the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) completes its withdrawal at the end of this year.

Justice Ayoola predicted that, based on the current timetable, all trials should end by early to mid-2007. While the Registry is working to shorten the time frame, he said, there were a number of factors which could draw the process out.

The President explained to the Security Council that a delay in the transfer and trial of indictees who remain at large, including Charles Taylor “will have a negative impact in terms of completion strategy, funding and security requirements.”

“Also, the importance of trying Taylor and Johnny Paul Koroma cannot be over-emphasised because of the strong impact that this would have on the perception that the people of Sierra Leone and of Africa have of the Special Court and of similar institutions, and on the Court’s contribution to combating the culture of impunity,” Justice Ayoola said.

Justice Ayoola emphasised that the international community could not afford to let the Special Court fail, because such a failure would send a message to those struggling to combat a culture of impunity, and would undermine respect for human rights and international law.

Justice Ayoola finished his briefing to the Security Council by urging it to give its wholehearted and effective support to the Special Court, particularly in the areas of funding, the transfer of indictees, and the maintenance of the necessary security to enable the Court to complete its operations safely.

For a complete copy of Justice Ayoola’s address, please see the website at www.sc-sl.org

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The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone. It is mandated to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996. To date, the Prosecutor has indicted eleven persons on various charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. Nine indictees are currently in the custody of the Court.

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