



Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

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Special Court President Requests Charles Taylor be Tried in The Hague

The President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Justice A. Raja N. Fernando, yesterday made a request to the Government of The Netherlands and the President of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to facilitate the conduct of the trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor by the Special Court in The Hague.

Under Rule 4 of the Special Court's Rules of Procedure and Evidence, the President of the Special Court is empowered to authorise a Trial Chamber to exercise its functions away from the seat of the Court in Freetown.

The trial would thus be held by a Trial Chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, sitting in the Hague.

Justice Fernando's letter referred to concerns about the stability in the region should Taylor be tried in Freetown.

A Headquarters Agreement would need to be secured to allow a chamber of the Special Court to sit outside of Freetown. A United Nations Security Council Resolution would also be required by the Government of the Netherlands to provide the legal basis for the Court to sit within its national jurisdiction.

#END

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. Ten indictees are currently in the custody of the Court.

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