



Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

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Special Court Registrar Welcomes United Nations Security Council Resolution

The Registrar of the Special Court, Mr Lovemore Munlo SC, has welcomed today's Chapter 7 Security Council Resolution, which clears the way for the trial of Charles Taylor to be held in The Hague.

"Resolution 1688 provides the legal basis for the Government of the Netherlands to conclude a Headquarters Agreement with the Special Court for Sierra Leone," Mr Munlo said. "This was a necessary step before the Special Court could make a determination on whether Charles Taylor should be tried in The Hague".

The Security Council Resolution calls the presence of Mr Taylor in the subregion "an impediment to stability and a threat to the peace", and asks the Secretary-General "as a matter of priority" to assist in making the legal and practical arrangements for the transfer of Mr Taylor to the Netherlands, and for the provision of all necessary facilities for the conduct of his trial.

The Security Council also calls on the Dutch government to facilitate the trial by allowing, among other things, the transport to and the detention of Mr Taylor in the Netherlands, and enabling the appearance of witnesses, experts and other persons required by the Court under the same conditions as are provided for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

Mr Munlo emphasised that although the trial will take place in a courtroom of the International Criminal Court (ICC), it will be conducted in accordance with the Statue and Rules of the Court by Judges of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. "The Resolution stresses that the Special Court will retain exclusive jurisdiction over Mr Taylor during his presence in the Netherlands," Mr Munlo said.

The headquarters of the Special Court will remain in Freetown, where three other trials are already underway. Two of these trials have already entered the Defence phase, while the Prosecution is expected to conclude its case in the third trial later this year.

#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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