



Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 22 February 2007

Special Court Indictee Sam Hinga Norman Dies in Dakar

It is with deep regret that the Special Court for Sierra Leone announces the death of former Sierra Leone Internal Affairs Minister Sam Hinga Norman, who was on trial before the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Mr. Norman died today at a military hospital in Dakar, Senegal.

Mr. Norman and another Special Court detainee were taken to Dakar on 17 January for medical procedures which were considered routine, but which were unavailable in Sierra Leone. Those procedures were performed on Thursday, 8 February, without complication.

At 10:55 this morning Mr. Norman collapsed and, despite attempts to revive him, was pronounced dead at about 11:15.

Initial indications are that Mr. Norman suffered heart failure during post-operative care. Registrar Lovemore Munlo, SC has ordered an independent investigation by international medical experts to determine the exact cause of death.

Mr. Munlo informed family members early this afternoon and expressed his deep personal regret at their loss.

Mr. Norman had been charged with 8 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity stemming from acts allegedly carried out by the Civil Defence Forces militia he headed during Sierra Leone's decade-long civil conflict. He had maintained his innocence throughout the trial, which began in June 2004.

A verdict in the case is pending before the Trial Chamber.

#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.

INFORMATION FOR MEDIA - NOT FOR ADVERTISING

Produced by the
Press and Public Affairs Office
Special Court for Sierra Leone
Mobile: 232 76 655 237
Email: SCSL-pressoffice@un.org