



Special Court for Sierra Leone Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

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Hon. Justice Benjamin Itoe Elected Presiding Judge of Trial Chamber I

Hon. Justice Benjamin Mutanga Itoe of Cameroon has been elected to a one-year term as Presiding Judge of Trial Chamber I. He succeeds Hon. Justice Bankole Thompson of Sierra Leone, who ends his term today, July 5.



Justice Itoe was called to the Bar on 25 July 1968.

After a career in the Bar, he was appointed Prosecutor General of the Bamenda Judicial Province in 1972, a post he held for nine years. During that time he was a Member of Cameroon's National Law Reform Commission. He participated in drafting the Cameroon Criminal Procedure Code which harmonised the country's Civil and Common Law Procedures. In 1982 he became Deputy Director of Control of Judicial Services of Cameroon in the Ministry of Justice.

From 1984, Hon. Justice Benjamin Itoe held a series of Ministerial posts in the Government of Cameroon, including Minister of Transport in 1984; Minister of Justice in 1985; and Minister of Tourism in 1989.

In 1998 he was appointed Judge of the Supreme Court.

He was conferred with the State Honour of Cameroonian Knight of the National Order of Valour in 1985, and Officer of the National Order of Valour in 1997.

Before his appointment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to serve as a Judge of the Special Court, Hon. Justice Itoe was Deputy Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Cameroon. At the same time, he served as the Chief Judge of the Administrative Bench of that Court.

Hon. Justice Itoe is serving for the second time as Presiding Judge of Trial Chamber I. He first served as Presiding Judge of this Chamber from May 2004 to May 2005. During that tenure of office, he presided over the opening of both the CDF and RUF trials, respectively, on 3 June and 5 July 2004.

#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.

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