



**Special Court for Sierra Leone**  
Outreach and Public Affairs Office

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Freetown, Sierra Leone, 30 January 2009**

### **Prosecution Witness Testimony Ends in the Trial of Charles Taylor**

The Prosecution today concluded witness testimony in the trial for former Liberian President Charles Taylor, on trial before the Special Court for Sierra Leone in The Hague. Taylor, the first African head of state to be tried by an international tribunal, faces an 11-count indictment for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Since the trial began in January 2008, Prosecutors have called 91 witnesses, including 52 crime base (victim) witnesses, 31 insider (linkage) witnesses, four expert witnesses and 4 witnesses of fact. Sixty-four of the witnesses testified in open session, and 23 testified in open session with protective measures. Four of the witnesses testified in closed session.

The Prosecution is now waiting for the Trial Chamber to take a number of important decisions on outstanding motions before it will be able to conclude its case. It is expected that will happen in the coming month.

Charles Taylor was indicted by the Special Court Prosecutor in March 2003. The indictment remained under seal until June 2003. Two months later, Taylor stepped down as President of Liberia and went into exile in Nigeria. On 29 March 2006 he was transferred to the jurisdiction of the Special Court.

Two of the four trials conducted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone are complete, including appeals. A judgment in the trial of three former leaders of the Revolutionary United Front is due shortly.

#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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