



Special Court for Sierra Leone
Outreach and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 4 May 2009

Trial Chamber Dismisses Motion for Judgment of Acquittal, Orders Taylor Defence to Open on June 29

The Judges of Trial Chamber II in The Hague have dismissed in its entirety a Motion for Judgment of Acquittal brought Under Rule 98 by Defence counsel on behalf of former Liberian President Charles Taylor. This means that Mr. Taylor has a case to answer on all 11 counts of the indictment.

The Trial Chamber ruled that the Prosecution had presented sufficient evidence on all counts which, if believed, would be capable of supporting a conviction. The Chamber made its finding based on the joint criminal enterprise mode of liability, and ruled that it need not examine other modes of liability, that is, aiding and abetting, planning, instigating, ordering, and superior responsibility.

“The Trial Chamber agrees with the Prosecution that it is not necessary for the purposes of Rule 98 to evaluate the sufficiency of the evidence in relation to each mode of liability and that it is sufficient if there is evidence capable supporting a conviction on the basis of one of those modes,” Justice Richard Lussick said in reading out the Chamber’s decision. “In relation to the alleged participation of the accused, the Trial Chamber finds that there is evidence that the accused participated in the joint criminal enterprise.”

Justice Lussick emphasized that the standard for determining sufficiency of evidence under Rule 98 “is not evidence on which a Trial Chamber should convict, but evidence on which it could convict.”

The Chamber ordered that the Taylor Defence open their case on 29 June 2009. A Pre-Defence Conference will take place on 8 June 2009.

Mr. Taylor is expected to take the stand in his own defence. Under the Special Court’s Rules, he will be the first witness to testify in the Defence case.

#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.

INFORMATION FOR MEDIA - NOT FOR ADVERTISING

Produced by the
Outreach and Public Affairs Office
Special Court for Sierra Leone
Mobile: 232 76 655732
Email: SCSL-pressoffice@un.org
Visit our website at www.sc-sl.org