



Special Court for Sierra Leone
Outreach and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

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Prince Taylor Appeal Denied for Late Filing; Judges Rule Appeal Not Properly Before the Chamber

A three-member panel of the Appeals Chamber today dismissed an appeal by convicted former Special Court defence investigator Prince Taylor against his contempt conviction and 2-1/2 year prison sentence due to late filing of the appeal submissions by his counsel.

The panel, consisting of Justice Emmanuel Ayoola (presiding), Justice Renate Winter and Justice Jon Kamanda, noted that the Defence had filed its Notice of Appeal on 22 February 2013 unaccompanied by the appeal submissions, which is contrary to the procedure set out in the Practice Direction. The submissions were only filed with the Court three weeks later.

Justice Winter, who read out the judgement summary, said that even then, had the Defence submissions been accompanied by a late filing form setting out the reasons for the delay, the Chamber could have exercised its discretion whether or not to hear the appeal. Since the Defence had not taken advantage of this remedy, she said, the appeal was not properly before the Court.

The Judges consequently dismissed the appeal in its entirety.

The Appeal Judgement was delivered in The Hague and streamed to Freetown by video link. Prince Taylor and his lawyer participated in the proceedings from the Special Court's Courtroom No. 1.

Prince Taylor, a former Special Court Defence investigator, was found guilty on 25 January 2013 on five counts of interfering with Special Court witnesses. Four of the counts alleged that he had "otherwise interfered" with Prosecution witnesses who had testified against former Liberian President Charles Taylor. The Court found that Prince Taylor, through former RUF member Eric Koi Senessie, attempted to induce the four witnesses to recant their testimony. The fifth count alleged that Prince Taylor had interfered with Eric Koi Senessie at a time when he was a potential witness in contempt proceedings before the Chamber.

On 8 February 2013, Prince Taylor was sentenced to a 2-1/2 years prison sentence.

The Defence had appealed on four grounds against the judgement, and on two grounds against the sentence.

#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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