

Special Court for Sierra Leone
The Office of the Prosecutor

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 7 March 2003

Statement on International Women's Day

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The Prosecutor Special Court for Sierra Leone

Today we join millions of people around the world in celebrating International Women's Day. Women are the foundation on which the well-being of their communities, families and nations rests, and yet women are increasingly being targeted in conflict situations.

During the past decade, the people of Sierra Leone suffered in unspeakable ways; women bore a significant brunt of the conflict. They were raped, sexually enslaved, mutilated, as well as forcibly impregnated and sterilized. Yet, many have endured and survived the brutality. Today, we should recognize the contributions of those who work tirelessly in Sierra Leone to advance the goals of gender equality and justice.

However, much work remains to be done. The Special Court is committed to helping build a just and sustainable peace through the promotion of respect for the dignity and human rights of all Sierra Leoneans. My team of investigators is continuing to collect evidence on those "bearing the greatest responsibility" for the atrocities during the war. Gender crimes are woven into the fabric of the conflict and thus, from the start, they were included in the prosecutorial strategy. These crimes are being actively and thoroughly investigated and our indictments will include them as core charges.

Together with our international and Sierra Leonean colleagues, we will send a message to the world that impunity for gender crimes will not stand.

#END

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