

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE  
OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Trial of Charles Taylor Set for June 4 Opening**

Following today's Pre-Trial conference in The Hague, opening arguments in the highly anticipated trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor are set to take place on June 4.

"Great efforts have been made to bring this case to trial since Mr Taylor was indicted in March 2003", said Stephen Rapp, Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

"His arrest and transfer last year were the result of three years of intense diplomacy by many in the sub-region and abroad. Up to now, attention has been on the process. On June 4, all eyes can focus on the trial itself".

"The very fact that this man is going on trial is a victory over impunity. Taylor's indictment, apprehension and arrest are a credit to the persistence of the world community, the governments of the region, and above all the courageous people of Sierra Leone."

"That Charles Taylor will now face justice is the very embodiment of the maxim that no one is above the law."

Taylor is charged with 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, including mass murder, mutilations, rape, sexual slavery and the use of child soldiers.

The Prosecution has indicated its intention to present up to 139 core witnesses. Of these, 62 will be predominantly "linkage" witnesses. Proving the connections between Taylor and the atrocities committed in Sierra Leone is a necessary part of the Prosecution's case. Witnesses to these connections will include persons with inside knowledge of Taylor's alleged activities.

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