

Special Court for Sierra Leone
The Office of the Prosecutor

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 10 December 2002

TRC Chairman and Special Court Prosecutor Join Hands to Fight Impunity

Freetown - This afternoon, the Chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone appeared in public together for the first time to support each others' efforts to fight impunity and promote human rights in the country.

The event took place in Victoria Park at an International Human Rights Day celebration organized by the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone. This is the first time a truth commission and an international war crimes tribunal have commenced work simultaneously in a country.

Chairman Bishop Humper told the crowd of civil society leaders and human rights activists, "The TRC and the Special Court are important institutions to deal with accountability, justice and reconciliation in Sierra Leone. To that extent, they both deserve the support of all Sierra Leoneans." The Commission began taking official statements last week.

The Prosecutor of the Special Court, David M. Crane, echoed the Chairman's remarks. "In the decade ahead, the world will look to Sierra Leone with admiration for its courageous, creative and comprehensive approach to human rights accountability," he said.

Mr. Crane also used the opportunity to state publicly that his office would not demand any information from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. "Victims, perpetrators, and witnesses who testify before the TRC should do so without fear of having their statements subpoenaed by my office."

Highlighting the role these two institutions in stabilizing the peace, Bishop Humper noted, "In Sierra Leone, darkness came upon us in 1991. Thankfully, the first rays of dawn are now upon us. It is not yet daylight, but the sun shall surely come out."

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