



Special Court for Sierra Leone
Outreach and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

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Defence Rests Their Case in the Taylor Trial

Counsel for Charles Taylor formally concluded their case today, after calling twenty-one witnesses in defence of the former Liberian president, including Mr. Taylor himself.

The Defence opened their case on 13 July 2009, and Mr. Taylor took the stand on the following day. He concluded his testimony on 18 February 2010. The last witness, a Liberian commander of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), ended his testimony on 9 November 2010.

Between January 2008 and January 2009, 91 Prosecution witnesses took the stand in The Hague. Prosecutors also entered into evidence the written testimony of three additional witnesses under Rule 92*bis*. The Prosecution, with the consent of the Trial Chamber, re-opened their case in August 2010 to hear testimony from three additional witnesses.

The Special Court Registrar, Binta Mansaray, said the end of the Defence case “is not only a major milestone in the Charles Taylor trial, but in the work of the court as a whole”.

The Trial Chamber has scheduled closing oral arguments for 8, 9 and 11 February 2011, after which the Judges will retire to deliberate. Mr. Taylor faces an 11-count indictment for war crimes and crimes against humanity. A trial judgment is expected mid next year.

#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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