



Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 27 October 2006

Defence Testimony Ends in AFRC Accused Trial

The final Defence witness testified Thursday in the trial of three alleged former leaders of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). Following procedural matters on Friday, the Defence case has come to an end.

Tamba Brima, Brima Bazzy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kanu each face a 14-count indictment alleging war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. All of the accused have pleaded not guilty to the charges.

The AFRC-Accused trial began in March 2005. The Prosecution rested its case in November 2005.

Since the opening of the Defence case in June 2006, Judges of Trial Chamber II have heard testimony from 87 witnesses. This included evidence from First Accused Tamba Brima, who testified in his own defence.

The Trial Chamber has scheduled closing arguments for 7 December.

This is the second Defence case to close in trials at the Special Court. Last month, the Defence rested in the case of The Prosecutor vs. Sam Hinga Norman, Moinina Fofana and Allieu Kondewa (the CDF-Accused).

Meanwhile, in the case of The Prosecutor vs. Issa Hassan Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao (the RUF-Accused), Trial Chamber I handed down its oral decision Wednesday on Defence Motions for Judgment of Acquittal. The Trial Chamber ordered the Accused to defend on all 18 counts in the indictment. It ruled, however, that the Defence would not need to present a case regarding a number of towns and villages listed in the particulars where, in the Court's view, the Prosecution had not led evidence capable of sustaining a conviction.

The case of The Prosecutor vs. Charles Ghankay Taylor, which is being conducted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone at The Hague, is still in the pre-trial phase and is tentatively scheduled to begin on 2 April 2007.

#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. To date, the Prosecutor has indicted eleven persons on various charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. Ten indictees are currently in the custody of the Court.

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Produced by the
Press and Public Affairs Office
Special Court for Sierra Leone
Mobile: 232 76 655 237
Email: SCSL-pressoffice@un.org
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