

Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

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First Suspect Detained

Augustine Gbao appeared today before the Special Court in a Sierra Leone district courthouse in Bonthe. He is the first person to be detained by the international criminal court as a suspect. Seven other men were indicted earlier in the month, five of whom have so far been arrested.

Gbao's detention came at the request of the Prosecutor David M. Crane. The Prosecutor has thirty days to either lodge an indictment or request that the suspect be held for a further thirty days. If the suspect is not indicted after the ninetieth day of detention, he or she must be released, according to Court rules.

In the public hearing, the Judge, Benjamin M. Itoe of Cameroon, explained Gbao's rights to him.

Public hearings were also held during the day for four of the indictees. Their cases were adjourned to a date to be fixed by the Registrar. The fifth indictee, Chief Samuel Hinga Norman, has had closed hearings at an undisclosed location.

#END

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