



Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 9 October 2007

Former CDF Militia Leaders Sentenced by Special Court

Two former leaders of Sierra Leone's Civil Defence Forces (CDF) militia have received prison sentences following their convictions in August for war crimes committed during the country's decade-long civil conflict.

Justice Itoe said that while both Prosecution and Defence had recommended single, "global" sentences, the Court had decided to hand down separate sentences on each count for which the two accused had been found guilty.

Moinina Fofana, who was convicted on 4 counts of the 8-count indictment, received sentences of 6 years for Count 2 (murder), 6 years for Count 4 (cruel treatment), 3 years for Count 5 (pillage), and 4 years for Count 7 (collective punishments).

Allieu Kondewa, who was convicted on 5 counts, received sentences of 8 years for Count 2 (murder), 8 years for Count 4 (cruel treatment), 5 years for Count 5 (pillage), 6 years for Count 7 (collective punishments), and 7 years for Count 8 (conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities).

Prosecutors had asked for longer terms of imprisonment, but Presiding Judge Justice Benjamin Itoe, in reading out today's sentencing judgment, pointed to a number of mitigating factors which the Court held justified shorter sentences. These included the CDF's efforts to restore Sierra Leone's democratically-elected government which, the Trial Chamber noted, "contributed immensely to re-establishing the rule of law in this Country where criminality, anarchy and lawlessness...had become the order of the day".

The Court ordered that the sentences be served concurrently, meaning that Fofana will serve a total of 6 years and Kondewa will serve an 8 year sentence. The sentences will run from 29 May 2003, the date the two were taken into custody by the Special Court.

#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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Produced by the
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