

Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

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International Judges Arrive in Sierra Leone for Swearing-in

The first of the international judges of the Special Court for Sierra Leone are to arrive today in the country's capital Freetown. They will be sworn-in during a ceremony on Monday.

"This is a significant step in establishing the Court," said the Court's Registrar, Robin Vincent, whose job is to support all branches of the international criminal body and who will swear the judges in. "Since we arrived at the end of July we have mostly supported the Prosecutor and his team as they began to investigate and prepare their cases. Now we must focus on providing the judges as well as the defense with their needs in order to make this Court fair and impartial," he said.

Monday's ceremony, in which the judges make a solemn declaration to the Court, will be witnessed by Behrooz Sadry, Acting Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General and Eke Holloway, Sierra Leone's Attorney General. The Court was created through an agreement between the government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations to try those "bearing the greatest responsibility" for atrocities committed during Sierra Leone's recent violent conflict.

The Court will have a total of eight judges: Three Trial judges, two of whom were appointed by the UN; one by the Government of Sierra Leone. The five other judges are Appeals judges, three appointed by the UN; two by the Government of Sierra Leone.

Those judges arriving today are Judge Renate Winter from Austria, Judge Geoffrey Robertson from England, Judge Pierre Boutet from Canada and Judge Rosolu John Bankole Thompson, a Sierra Leonean arriving from the United States. The others, who will arrive before Monday, are Judge Benjamin M. Iteo from Cameroon, Judge Hassan B. Jallow of The Gambia and Judge Emmanuel O. Ayoola of Nigeria. Judge George Gelaga King, a Sierra Leonean, is already in the country.

After they have made their solemn declaration, the judges are expected to elect a President of the Court.

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