



**Special Court for Sierra Leone**  
Outreach and Public Affairs Office

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Freetown, Sierra Leone, 4 May 2009**

### **Justice Shireen Avis Fisher Sworn in As Appeals Judge**

Justice Shireen Avis Fisher, an experienced international judge and legal scholar, was sworn in today as Appeals Judge for the Special Court for Sierra Leone.



*Justice Shireen Fisher subscribes to the Judicial Oath during Monday's ceremony in Freetown.*

Justice Fisher, from the United States, was appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

She succeeds Justice A. Raja N. Fernando of Sri Lanka, who passed away last November.

Immediately prior to her appointment to the Special Court Justice Fisher served, from 2005 to 2008, as an International Judge of the War Crimes Chamber, Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The cases adjudicated by Justice Fisher at the Bosnia War Crimes Chamber included convictions for

sexual slavery and other crimes against humanity, war crimes, and notably, the first convictions for the commission of genocide at Srebrenica. She also developed the court rules for victim and witness protections in the courtroom. She currently serves as a Commissioner on the Kosovo Independent Judicial and Prosecutorial Commission.

Since 1986 she has also served as a Judge of General Jurisdiction Trial Courts (criminal, civil and family courts) in the U.S. state of Vermont, currently with Active-Retired Status. Justice Fisher began her legal career as a Public Defender in Vermont, with a particular focus on juvenile justice cases.

She was called to the Bar in 1976.

Justice Fisher received her *Juris Doctor* from the Columbus School of Law, Catholic University of America, in 1976 and an LLM in International Human Rights Law from University College London in 2001. She anticipates receiving her Ph.D in International Law from University College London in 2009.

She has written and lectured extensively on international law.

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