



## Special Court for Sierra Leone Press and Public Affairs Office

### **PRESS RELEASE**

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 4 February 2008

#### **Prison Officers Recognised by Special Court**

Ten members of the Sierra Leone Prison Service were awarded certificates on Monday after completing training in Control and Restraint Techniques. The ten graduates were chosen from 55 Prison Officers seconded to the Special Court.



The four-month course was aimed at teaching Prison Officers how to use a minimum amount of force in dealing with uncooperative or violent detainees. Raymond Cardinal, the Special Court's Chief of Detention, noted that most times, the presence of a uniformed officer is sufficient to deal with most situations. At other times, he said, a Prison officer may be called upon to use "a minimal amount of force" to prevent injury to both the staff member and the detainee.

"The action is done in a professional manner using both verbal and physical contact," Mr. Cardinal said. "The force used is just enough to meet the threat and control the incident. At all times the use of minimum force must be justified and within the rules of detention and the rule of law."

Prison Officers demonstrate control technique on a Special Court staff member at Monday's graduation ceremony.

Special Court Registrar Herman von Hebel, who officiated at Monday's ceremony, noted that the skills learned in the training would increase the professionalism of Sierra Leone's national authorities when the graduates return to the Sierra Leone Prison Service.

"Part of the Special Court's legacy to Sierra Leone will be the strengthening of Sierra Leone's justice institutions," Mr. von Hebel said. "This Special Court training is a significant step in that process."

#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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Press and Public Affairs Office  
Special Court for Sierra Leone  
Mobile: 232 76 655732  
Email: [SCSL-pressoffice@un.org](mailto:SCSL-pressoffice@un.org)  
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