

Special Court for Sierra Leone
The Office of the Prosecutor

PRESS RELEASE

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Special Court Prosecutor Addresses Seminar Participants; Encourages Perpetrators to Talk to the TRC

The Prosecutor for the Special Court for Sierra Leone David M. Crane addressed members of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) today at a week-long seminar organized by the U.S. Defence Institute of International Legal Studies (DIILS). The audience included over forty members of the RSLAF, as well as civilian leadership from the Ministry of Defence. The Prosecutor stated that his investigations would focus only on "those bearing the greatest responsibility" for violations of international humanitarian law - not the rank and file of the military.

"While I believe that accountability is the cornerstone to democracy and a sustainable peace, the mandate given to me by the international community asks me to only prosecute those who bear the greatest responsibility," said Crane. "I do encourage citizens to talk to Truth and Reconciliation Commission, whether they be victims or perpetrators."

The Prosecutor also told participants that "national, regional, and international" investigations are ongoing. "I want our work to be absolutely thorough. These cases are rather complex and I've instructed my staff to follow the evidence wherever it leads," said Crane. He indicated that investigations will likely continue into the summer (rainy season).

The week-long DIILS seminar focuses on "The Legal Aspect of the Military in the 21st Century Society." Participants are engaged in discussions on issues such as the rule of law, military organization, and human rights.

Crane returned recently from a one-week trip to London and Washington, D.C. He is scheduled to make the third in a series of diplomatic missions later this month, where he will make initial visits to Germany, Norway, and Denmark to brief senior government officials and human rights leaders on the establishment of the Court. Trips are also planned for April.

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