

Special Court for Sierra Leone
The Office of the Prosecutor

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 16 December 2002

Special Court Prosecutor Completes Initial Visits to South and East

The Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, David M. Crane, has traveled to every district in the South and East regions to discuss the Court's work with local residents, civil society leaders, and students. Last week, he held community meetings in Moyamba, Bonthe, and Kenema.

Crane told a group of over two hundred residents in Moyamba, "The Special Court is for the entire country, so I need to hear from all of you. I work for no one other than you, the people of Sierra Leone." The Prosecutor is charged with the mandate of prosecuting those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed during the country's decade-long war.

Over two hundred local leaders crowded into the town council building in Kenema to offer suggestions and questions for the Prosecutor. One participant asked whether the Special Court only applied to crimes committed after 30 November 1996. Crane responded, "It is true that I can only indict people for crimes committed after the Abidjan Peace agreement of 1996, but I am investigating the entire war. In order to build the strongest case possible against those bearing the greatest responsibility, my investigations will cover the entire period of the conflict."

In Bonthe, Crane met with dozens of representatives from civil society groups that had gathered in the local court barri. During the discussion, the Prosecutor assured them that people on the islands would have sufficient access to investigators and the proceedings.

Over the past three months, Crane has held community meetings in nine of the country's twelve districts. The Special Court's Outreach Team has made over two dozen visits to the South and East. The meetings provide forums for interested individuals to raise questions, concerns, and suggestions on how the Special Court should undertake its work.

#END

INFORMATION FOR MEDIA - NOT FOR ADVERTISING

Produced by the
Press and Public Affairs Office
Special Court for Sierra Leone
Mobile: 232 76 655 237 Email: SCSL-pressoffice@un.org
Visit our website at www.sc-sl.org