

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

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Freetown, Sierra Leone, 21 July 2003**

### **On World Day for International Justice, Special Court Requests Assistance in Arresting Indictes**

The President of the Special Court Justice Geoffrey Robertson asked for assistance from the international community on Thursday in securing the cooperation of governments in bringing indicted war criminals to justice. In June the Special Court had unsealed a seventeen-count indictment against the president of Liberia, Charles Taylor.

Speaking in Rome's Capital Hill at the fifth anniversary of the Rome conference at which 120 countries agreed to create a permanent criminal court for serious crimes under international law, Justice Robertson called the ICC the Special Court's 'big brother'. "At a time when we are having difficulties arresting indictees and transferring prisoners, I hope we can work together to secure the cooperation of states."

Justice Robertson hailed the decision five years ago to create the ICC and noted the legacy of the Nuremberg trials following the Second World War. He hoped that the ICC would use its powers to hold trials in areas ravaged by war. "It is often important that judges sit where the crimes took place."

Sierra Leone's Ambassador to the UN, Allieu I. Kanu, also spoke at the anniversary event in his capacity as the Vice-President of the Assembly of States Parties of the ICC. In referring to the Special Court for Sierra Leone, he said: "Accounting for our past and attributing individual criminal liability to those who bear the greatest responsibility for the atrocities is the one sure way the international community and the Government of Sierra Leone have devised for the attainment of peace and stability in our country."

#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.