

Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

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Hearings on the Prosecution Motion for Joinder

The Special Court for Sierra Leone will this week hear Prosecution applications to group nine accused into two joint trials under two indictments.

Under the Court's rules it can be requested, in what is legally referred to as a "joinder motion", that a group of individuals accused of the same crimes committed in the course of the same transaction be tried together.

A "joinder motion" is common practice in domestic legal systems around the world, and at other war crimes courts such as those for Rwanda, Yugoslavia and East Timor.

The Prosecutor is requesting that six indictees be grouped together in one trial for the crimes they allegedly committed while they were members of the RUF and AFRC.

The Prosecutor is also requesting the remaining three indictees currently in the custody of the Special Court be grouped together in another trial for the crimes they allegedly committed while they were members of the CDF.

Acting Principal Defender Sylvain Roy said that while individuals might be tried jointly, the determination of guilt or innocence and potential penalties will remain individually assessed.

"The defendants' lawyers will argue different positions in regards to the request to join the trials," Mr. Roy said.

The applications for joinder will begin in the Special Court's Trial Chamber tomorrow (Tuesday December 2) through to Friday December 5.

Decisions on the applications are expected to be issued next year.

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