



Special Court for Sierra Leone
Outreach and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 26 April 2012

Charles Taylor Convicted on all 11 Counts; Sentencing Scheduled for 30 May

Charles Ghankay Taylor, the former President of Liberia, was convicted today on all counts of an 11-count indictment which alleged that he was responsible for crimes committed by rebel forces during Sierra Leone's decade-long civil war. The Special Court's Trial Chamber II found unanimously that Mr. Taylor aided and abetted RUF and AFRC rebels in the commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Sierra Leone.

Mr. Taylor was convicted on Count 1 for acts of terrorism (a war crime), on Count 2 for murder (a crime against humanity), on Count 3 for murder (a war crime), on Count 4 for rape (a crime against humanity), on Count 5 for sexual slavery (a crime against humanity), on Count 6 for outrages upon personal dignity (a war crime), on Count 7 for cruel treatment (a war crime), on Count 8 for inhumane acts, including mutilations and amputations, (a crime against humanity), on Count 9 for the recruitment, enlistment and use of child soldiers, on Count 10 for enslavement (a crime against humanity), and on Count 11 for pillage (a war crime).

The Prosecution had not alleged that Mr. Taylor had committed these crimes in person, but that he participated from Liberia in the commission of crimes by AFRC and RUF rebels and, under Articles 6.1 and 6.3 of the Special Court Statute, was individually responsible for them. The Chamber found that he had aided and abetted the rebels by providing them with arms and ammunition, military personnel, operational support and moral support, making him individually responsible for their crimes.

Charles Taylor is the first head of state to be indicted, tried and convicted by an international tribunal.

The Chamber has scheduled a sentencing hearing for Wednesday, 16 May 2012, and the sentencing judgement will be delivered on Wednesday, 30 May 2012. Under the Special Court Rules, sentences must be given in a specified term of years. The Special Court may not impose a life sentence or the death penalty.

Mr. Taylor was ordered remanded in custody until the 16 May hearing.

At the Special Court, both Prosecution and Defence may appeal. A notice of appeal must be filed within 14 days of the full judgement and sentence.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone is the first "hybrid" tribunal, created by an agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone, and is the first modern court to have its seat in the country where the crimes took place. It is the first court to convict former rebel and militia leaders for the use of child soldiers, for forced marriage as a crime against humanity, and for attacks directed at United Nations peacekeepers.

With today's judgement, the Special Court has reached a major milestone, and is on course towards being the first modern international criminal tribunal to complete its mandate.

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