

**Mr. President, Excellencies,**

**On behalf of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, I thank you for this opportunity to address you on the achievements of the Special Court and the upcoming completion of our mandate. We are especially privileged to be speaking during the presidency of Guatemala, a nation which shares with us a commitment to fighting impunity and striving for gender justice.**

**We are also very pleased to address you on the 12th Anniversary of Resolution 1325. The Special Court is a living example of the progress of your resolution. For the first time in the history of international tribunals, all four principals – the President, the Prosecutor, the Registrar, and the Principal Defender are all women. We owe a special thanks to UN Women, Women’s Initiative for Gender Justice, and UNDP, first because of their tireless efforts in advancing the goals of Resolution 1325, and on a more personal level, we thank them for financing our journey here without which we could not appear today before you.**

**Mr. President, Excellencies,**

**The Special Court for Sierra Leone will soon complete its final case, and deliver the final judgment in appellate proceedings in the case of Mr. Charles Taylor, former President of Liberia. That final judgment**

**will determine Mr. Taylor's guilt or innocence. The Court will then transition to residual status and close its doors. It will be the first international criminal tribunal to do so.**

**I could tell you that the Special Court has delivered on its mandate. I could tell you that it has contributed to ending impunity. I could tell you that it has brought justice to the people of Sierra Leone.**

**I could tell you that, but I think it more important that you hear that from the people of Sierra Leone and Liberia themselves.**

**At the end of May 2012, with funding from the European Union, an independent nationwide survey in Sierra Leone and Liberia was conducted. It was designed to measure the impact and legacy of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.**

**79.16 %, almost 80% of the people surveyed, believe that the Special Court has accomplished its mandate.**

**The Report rightly attributes these results "to the vision established during the early stages of the Court of it being an institution embedded in and responsive to the expectations and needs of the people of Sierra Leone and Liberia." For this, credit and thanks are owed to the Registrar, Ms. Binta Mansaray whose vision it was to take the Court to the people, and who designed an outreach program that was both geographically and demographically inclusive and participatory.**

**When questioned on what that mandate entailed, the people surveyed expressed their understanding that it was to prosecute those with the greatest responsibility for the war, from all factions without regard for the side on which they fought or the power of the position which they held. For this, credit and thanks are owed to the Prosecutor, Ms. Brenda Hollis, and her predecessors.**

**But the people surveyed also indicated that they believed the mandate was to bring justice and the Rule of Law to their war torn part of the world. It cannot be forgotten that faith in the outcome of these cases depends on faith in the process: that it is fair, that the Accused's rights are respected and that they are represented zealously. For this, credit and thanks are owed to the Principal Defender, Ms. Claire Carlton-Hanciles, and the dedicated defense teams she oversees.**

**Most heartening and humbling, however is that the survey found that 91% of people in Sierra Leone and 78% of people in Liberia believe that the Special Court has contributed to bringing peace in their countries. The Court that the United Nations established and has supported for the past ten years has been judged by 91% of the people surveyed to have contributed to bringing peace to Sierra Leone. For this, credit and thanks are owed to you.**

**The Special Court's successes are truly your successes. Celebrating the success of the Special Court is celebrating your steadfast commitment to the work of the Court. On behalf of the Special Court, then, your four Principals would like to thank the Council, Member**

**States of the United Nations and the international community as a whole for their enduring support and assistance over the last decade. We congratulate you for your vision as well as your dedication, and we encourage you to recognize the immensity of our joint achievement.**

**Because of your vision --The Special Court for Sierra Leone is the first of its kind. It is the first partnership between national authorities and the United Nations to create a credible system of post-conflict justice that meets international standards. It is the first hybrid tribunal created to assist a State that desired post-conflict justice but did not have sufficient capacity to ensure it. It is the first UN sponsored tribunal to carry out its work in the territory where serious violations of international humanitarian law were committed and thereby ensuring that the survivors of conflict are participants in justice, not merely bystanders to it.**

**And it is successful.**

**And that success is not only an accomplishment for the present, but importantly for the future as well because it is a proven model for positive complementarity. As the Special Court's success proves, complementarity is a reality, not simply an aspiration. My colleagues and I, the four Principals of the Court, are visible evidence of that reality - we are two Sierra Leoneans, and two internationals, united in our commitment to post-conflict justice.**

**What is special about the Special Court is the synergy of local commitment, knowledge and talent with international financial and human resources. Complimentarity works.**

**Mr. President, Excellencies,**

**The Special Court's example should dispel doubts that positive complementarity can succeed in difficult environments. It must be remembered that this Court came about because the government of Sierra Leone had the courage and innovation to request a partnership with the international community at a time when the situation in Sierra Leone continued to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region. The conflict had destroyed national legal and judicial institutions, and Sierra Leone did not have the human and financial resources to alone realize its desire for justice.**

**Confronted with challenges, the Special Court innovated.**

**Faced with isolated communities, a multiplicity of languages, and limited communications infrastructure, the Special Court's Outreach program innovated. Under the leadership of Registrar Mansaray, a Sierra Leonean who knows her country and its people, it literally took the court to the people. Traveling over roads that were no more than trails, outreach workers crisscrossed the country again and again with**

**the latest video summaries of the actual trials, in mobile units consisting of video players and a generator they carried with them.**

**When from the first, the unique concerns and experiences of women and girl survivors of the war were recognized, as were the personal and cultural barriers to participation in the justice process, the Court innovated. Gender sensitive approaches to witness support and Outreach were developed in partnership with local women's organizations and resources. Accommodations were made by judges in the courtroom to encourage women's voices to be heard. Those voices have been reflected in the jurisprudence of the Court which was the first to recognize forced marriage as a crime against humanity and sexual violence as a form of terrorism.**

**Other jurisprudential firsts have been truly remarkable. The Special Court was the first to develop jurisprudence on the recruitment and use of child soldiers, jurisprudence that has been used and acknowledged by the ICC in their first trial judgment in the Case of *Lubanga*. The Special Court was the first to rule on the effect of national amnesties in international law, on the issues of immunity involving sitting heads of State, and a matter close to the hearts of those in this Chamber --- the crime of attacks on peace keepers.**

**On front after front, the Special Court has developed not only jurisprudence, but also tools, practices and programs addressing the specific needs of a post-conflict society.**

**The Special Court stands ready to share the knowledge and expertise it has gained, and we invite Member States to draw on the Special Court's work and utilize the Special Court's programs as part of their own national strategies.**

**Mr. President, Excellencies,**

**We must keep in mind how fragile our accomplishment will be if we fail to keep faith with the people in the region who put their trust in you and in us. Our responsibility to these people will not cease. It must be taken up and advanced by the Residual Special Court of Sierra Leone.**

**Residual responsibilities are not an afterthought or burden.**

**Ensuring the protection of witnesses who appeared before the Special Court encourages more to come forward and to be witnesses in other courts involved in fighting impunity; failing to ensure their protection will guarantee the opposite result. Preserving the archives ensures that the work of the Special Court remains an accessible unequivocal record of the war; failing to preserve it invites revisionist history and denial of the suffering endured by Sierra Leone's people. Supervising**

**the enforcement of sentences ensures that the Special Court continues to lead by example in protecting the human rights and dignity of all people as demanded by the rule of law; failure to provide that oversight erodes our reputation as a just institution and undermines the moral authority of all our work.**

**The Residual Special Court will face particular challenges in obtaining voluntary contributions to fund its operations. The support of the Security Council will be essential to ensure that it can carry out its important responsibilities.**

**Mr. President, Excellencies**

**On behalf of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, we once again extend our sincere thanks to the Security Council, Member States of the United Nations and the international community as a whole for their enduring support and assistance. And congratulate them on this accomplishment.**