PRESS RELEASE
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Justice Lussick Elected Presiding Judge of Trial Chamber II

Justice Richard Lussick of Samoa has been elected Presiding Judge of Trial Chamber II. He succeeds Justice Teresa Doherty, who ended her one-year term as Presiding Judge on 17 January.

Pursuant to Rule 27 of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence, the Presiding Judge of each Trial Chamber shall be elected for a renewable term of one year. However, it has been the general practice of both Trial Chambers to rotate the position of the Presiding Judge at the end of each one-year term.

Justice Richard Lussick was called to the bar in 1973. He worked as a barrister in private practice in Australia from 1973-1986. From 1986-1987 he served as Parliamentary Counsel in the Office of the Attorney-General in Samoa. He became a Judge in 1987 and has held a wide variety of positions within the Samoan judiciary, including Acting Chief Justice, Judge of the Court of Appeal, Acting President of the Land & Titles Court, Supreme Court Judge, Chairman of the Public Service Appeals Board, District Court Judge, and Coroner. From 1995-2000 he served as Chief Justice of the Republic of Kiribati. He is a past Vice President of the Commonwealth Magistrates and Judges Association.

Trial Chamber II, consisting of Justice Lussick, Justice Doherty and Justice Julia Sebutinde, is hearing evidence in the trial of the three AFRC accused (Brima, Kamara and Kanu). That trial started on 7 March 2005. The Prosecution concluded its case on 21 November 2005.

Justice Lussick was appointed to the Special Court by the Government of Sierra Leone.

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. To date, the Prosecutor has indicted eleven persons on various charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. Nine indictees are currently in the custody of the Court.