



Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone
Public Information

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 6 April 2016

Statement by Registrar Binta Mansaray on the Death of Justice George Gelaga King



I am saddened to have to report the death of Hon. Justice George Gelaga King, who passed away yesterday in London after several months of illness.

Today the President of the Residual Special Court, Hon. Justice Philip Waki, conveyed on behalf of the Hon. Judges, the Oversight Committee, the principals and staff of the Court, our deepest sympathy to his family, his friends, and to the people of Sierra Leone.

“Justice King was among the first group of Judges to be appointed as a Judge of Appeal for the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and subsequently to the Roster of Judges of the Residual Special Court”, Justice Waki said. “In both appointments, he served with selfless dedication and exceptional distinction”.

Prosecutor Brenda J. Hollis said that Justice King's passing “is a loss to the Residual Special Court and to international criminal justice. We are deeply saddened by his death.”

Principal Defender Ibrahim Yillah noted that "Justice King was a strong advocate for the establishment of a Defence Office in 2003, the first of its kind at the time in any international tribunal. He will be sadly missed".

Justice King was elected by his colleagues three times as Presiding Judge of the Appeals Chamber, a post which conferred on him the Presidency of the Special Court.

Although Justice King shares credit for the Special Court's landmark jurisprudence upholding convictions for the use of child soldiers, for attacks on UN peacekeepers, and for forced marriage as a crime against humanity, we also remember him for his dedication to the Special Court as an institution. In October 2003 he turned the first shovelful of earth to break ground for the new courthouse, and in December 2013 he delivered the address at State House which closed the Court.

We have lost an irreplaceable friend and colleague. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

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