



Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone  
Office of the Prosecutor

## **OTP PRESS RELEASE**

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### **RSCSL Prosecutor Investigates Witness Tampering Allegations**

The Residual Special Court Prosecutor is investigating allegations in Liberia and Sierra Leone of unlawful contacts with witnesses who testified before the Special Court for Sierra Leone, including offering bribes to witnesses to recant their previous testimony.

"The safety and security of our witnesses is of the utmost importance, and any interference with witnesses of the Court, and any actions to interfere with the Court's administration of justice, will be fully investigated and appropriate action taken," said RSCSL Prosecutor James Johnson. "Interference with witnesses is a threat to the administration of justice and my office will pursue any unlawful interference with witnesses, as mandated by the RSCSL Statute and the Rules of Procedure and Evidence."

The Office of the Prosecutor has a duty under Articles 1 and 14 of the RSCSL Statute to investigate all allegations of contempt, and to pursue charges when warranted. Rule 77 sets out those offences that interfere with the administration of justice, which would be charged as Contempt of Court.

Persons convicted of interfering with witnesses could face a prison sentence of up to seven years, a fine, or both. Previously, nine persons were convicted by the Special Court of interference with the administration of justice, and were given various punishments, including sentences of up to two years for offering bribes to witnesses, or otherwise attempting to induce witnesses to recant their testimony after the trials had been completed.

#END

The Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone is responsible for the ongoing legal obligations of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which concluded its mandate in December 2013. These include supervision of prison sentences, witness protection and support, maintenance and preservation of the archives, and assistance to national prosecution authorities.

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