



NO PEACE WITHOUT JUSTICE

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PRESS RELEASE

SEMINAR ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT IN SIERRA LEONE ON 11-15 DECEMBER 2006

Freetown, 8 December 2006

No Peace Without Justice (NPWJ), in partnership with the Government of Sierra Leone, the Sierra Leonean NGO “Manifesto 99” and the Commonwealth Secretariat, and with the support of the European Union, the Open Society Institute and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, are hosting a seminar on the Implementation of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in Sierra Leone at the Miatta Conference Centre, Freetown (Sierra Leone), on 11-15 December 2006.

The Seminar is organised as part of an international campaign to promote the drafting and adoption of national legislation implementing international criminal justice obligations and cooperation with the International Criminal Court (ICC). The objective of this seminar is to devise substantive proposals and guidelines to promote the drafting and adoption of national legislation implementing the Rome Statute of the ICC, including incorporation of crimes under international law and cooperation with the ICC in Sierra Leone. The Seminar will allow stakeholders to identify and facilitate the production of basic outlines for fulfilling State obligations and principles enshrined in the Rome Statute. Participants will include representatives of the Government, Parliament, legal practitioners, civil society and other opinion leaders.

Speaking from the capital Freetown, Alison Smith, NPWJ's Legal Counsel and Coordinator of the International Criminal Justice Program, said today: “Sierra Leone knows better than most countries that there must be accountability for the wrongs of the past for the restoration of dignity to victims, for sustainable peace and to create the necessary conditions for a fully-fledged democracy governed by the Rule of Law. In fact, Sierra Leone has been at the forefront of supporting international criminal justice and accountability efforts, both in Sierra Leone and internationally. They have taken a strong leadership role at the Assembly of States Parties of the International Criminal Court from the very beginning, particularly on the need for international justice institutions to engage local populations in their work. So it is only fitting that attention is now turning to national implementation of the international obligations in the Rome Statute for the ICC. What is striking here is the involvement of society at large in dialogue about how Sierra Leone should develop legislation that is fundamental for both national and international justice and accountability. We are very much looking forward to the conclusions and recommendations that will come from this Seminar and hope that Sierra Leone will continue to lead the way in the region and elsewhere on international criminal justice through enacting implementing legislation as soon as possible.”

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No Peace Without Justice (NPWJ) is an international non-profit organisation, working for the protection and promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.