

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has appointed the first Sierra Leonean to serve as acting prosecutor for the Special Court of Sierra Leone.



U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed Joseph Fitzgerald Kamara as acting prosecutor for the Special Court of Sierra Leone. Kamara is the first from Sierra Leone to serve in this capacity, pending the naming of a new prosecutor to replace Stephen Rapp. The Special Court was set up jointly by Sierra Leone and the U.N. in 2002 with a mandate to try those who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and national law committed in Sierra Leone during the country's war.

Kamara worked for eight years as prosecutor in Sierra Leone's office of the director of public prosecution and rose to the rank of senior state counsel. He joined the Special Court's office of the prosecutor in 2004 and was named deputy prosecutor in 2008. Earlier this year he was elected president of the Sierra Leone Bar Association.

Rapp, who became U.N. ambassador-at-large for war crimes, told the U.N. Security Council that the Special Court had been ground-breaking in several respects, including the first-ever convictions on the charge of sexual slavery, both as a war crime and crime against humanity, as well as convictions on the use of child soldiers.

The Special Court normally resides in Freetown, Sierra Leone, but is currently holding the Charles Taylor war crimes trial in The Hague.