Federal Office of Justice

2 million frozen in Taylor case

FOJ delegates execution of legal assistance application
to Office of the Attorney General of Switzerland

Press Release, FOJ, 23.07.2003

Bern, 23.7.2003. Around 2 million Swiss francs has been frozen in accounts held by two persons associated with the Liberian president Charles Taylor. No accounts held directly by President Taylor have been found, however. The Federal Office of Justice (FOJ) has delegated enactment of the legal assistance application from the Special Court for Sierra Leone to the Office of the Attorney General of Switzerland.

In June, the FOJ instructed various banks in Geneva and Zurich to take the precautionary step of blocking any accounts held by persons cited in the application for legal assistance. The banks concerned reported that assets totalling around 2 million francs had been frozen.

After the formal initial examination of the legal assistance application, the FOJ delegated its enactment to the Office of the Attorney General of Switzerland. The Special Court requested that assets held in Switzerland by Charles Taylor and persons connected with him be frozen and the relevant bank records be obtained. The application for legal assistance also extends to relatives of Taylor, members of his regime and various businesspeople and companies. The Special Court for Sierra Leone accuses Taylor of being one of the main individuals responsible for crimes against humanity and war crimes committed during the civil war.

Contact / questions
Federal Office of Justice, T +41 31 322 77 88, Contact

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