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Summary of stakeholders' submissions on Sierra Leone*

Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

I. Background

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, taking into consideration the periodicity of the universal periodic review and the outcome of the previous review.¹ It is a summary of 12 stakeholders' submissions² for the universal periodic review, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints. A separate section is provided for the contribution by the national human rights institution that is accredited in full compliance with the Paris Principles.

II. Information provided by the national human rights institution accredited in full compliance with the Paris Principles

2. The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) acknowledged the steps taken by Sierra Leone to fulfil the three voluntary pledges that it made during the third cycle, namely, the abolition of the death penalty, the resumption of the constitutional review process and a review of the Sexual Offences Act of 2019.³

3. HRCSL remained concerned that Sierra Leone had not ratified some treaties and recommended ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.⁴

4. HRCSL noted that in 2021, Sierra Leone launched the National Reporting Mechanism to International Treaty Bodies. It recommended that Sierra Leone submit outstanding reports to treaty bodies in fulfilment of its international reporting obligations.⁵

5. While welcoming the progressive increase in government financial support to its operations, HRCSL highlighted that it continued to face challenges.⁶ HRCSL recommended fully complying with the Paris Principles and support the Commission with adequate logistics and financial resources to efficiently carry out its mandate.⁷

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



6. HRCSL expressed concern about the deaths of dozen of protesters, and six Police officers, during the protests that took place on 10 August 2022; the death of a person in Kailahun district as a result of political tensions during a Parliamentary bye-election, and the shooting to death of a gold miner by a security personnel in Tonkolili district.⁸
7. HRCSL observed that, despite Sierra Leone's efforts to improve detention conditions, overcrowding persisted in most correctional centres, and correctional centres posed significant health concerns for inmates because of their appalling conditions.⁹
8. HRCSL noted persistent challenges in the administration of justice, including delays and prolonged trials.¹⁰ It recommended that the Judiciary assign resident High Court judges to the remaining seven judicial districts to speed up trials and improve access to justice; and ensure that indictments are issued within the required timeframe to ensure expeditious trials.¹¹
9. HRCSL welcomed measures to combat trafficking in persons and child marriage.¹² It recommended devising a witness protection strategy to ensure that witnesses are brought when they are needed in order to expedite sexual gender-based cases;¹³ and develop a witness protection strategy for witnesses in cases of sexual gender-based violence.¹⁴
10. HRCSL recommended constructing shelters in the border regions to house victims of trafficking while they are being processed; recruit additional inspectors in the border regions to help combat human trafficking; and institute punitive measures for perpetrators of child labour, including parents.¹⁵
11. HRCSL welcomed policies and strategies to promote the right to health.¹⁶ However it noted persistent challenges regarding available human resources and medicines; poor water and sanitation facilities in some hospitals, inadequate and irregular supply of free health care, among others. It recommended increasing human resources for mobile clinics; expand the facility to other districts and regions; and ensure regular and adequate supply of free health care drugs and supplies.¹⁷
12. HRCSL commended Sierra Leone for implementing recommendations regarding the right to education. It was however concerned that in spite of the introduction of the Free Quality School Education seven years on, there was still inadequate supply of core text books in some schools across the country.¹⁸ It recommended ensuring the adequate supply of core text books and water, sanitation, and hygiene sector facilities to schools facing these challenges; and adapting the reconstruction of schools to the needs of persons with disabilities.¹⁹
13. In terms of human rights and climate change, HRCSL highlighted that despite the Disaster Risk Financing Strategy, challenges persisted. It recommended further involving women, children, persons with disabilities, minority groups and local communities in disaster risk management frameworks to ensure that they are inclusive, participatory and impactful.²⁰
14. Regarding business and human rights, HRCSL recommended that Sierra Leone consider setting up monitoring bodies to ensure that the provisions of the Mines and Minerals Development Act (2022) are fully implemented in favor of the host communities affected by the operations of mining companies.²¹
15. HRCSL was concerned that despite Sierra Leone's efforts, only one woman was elected to the 14 extra seats reserved for Paramount Chief Members of Parliament. It recommended allocating a quota of ministerial and deputy ministerial appointments for women with a view to increasing their participation in governance.²²
16. HRCSL recommended providing teaching and learning materials for the deaf to aid effective learning and ensure that no one is left behind in line with the main aim of the Radical Inclusion Policy.²³

III. Information provided by other stakeholders

A. Scope of international obligations²⁴ and cooperation with human rights mechanisms

17. JS5 noted that Sierra Leone had not ratified all main international human rights instruments and recommended ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.²⁵ JS7 and DSN recommended ratifying the Optional Protocol of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.²⁶

B. National human rights framework

1. Constitutional and legislative framework

18. JS5 welcomed the Customary Land Rights Act 2022 and the National Land Commission Act 2022. However, JS5 regretted delays in implementing these laws, and was concerned at inconsistencies with other legislation, including the Mines and Minerals Development Act 2022, which resulted in confusion and disparities in legal interpretation.²⁷

2. Institutional infrastructure and policy measures

19. JS4 and GFG recommended ensuring adequate support for the National Commission on Violence Against Women to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence.^{28,29}

20. JS4 and JS5 recommended increasing budget and resources for the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs to enable effective monitoring and capacity-building activities.³⁰

21. JS1 recommended strengthening police oversight and accountability by adequately resourcing the Independent Police Complaints Board, ensuring greater representation of women within the police including on night patrols, and integrating child-rights-based training on the specific needs and vulnerabilities of children in street situations into the Police Training Academy curriculum.³¹

C. Promotion and protection of human rights

1. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law

Equality and non-discrimination

22. According to JS4, despite Sierra Leone's efforts to promote equality before the law, there were still significant gaps when implementing this obligation.³² JS4 recommended taking efficient measures to guarantee equality before the law.³³ JS4 also recommended combating all forms of discrimination, on the basis of ethnicity, religion, and other factors, by promoting diversity and inclusion and providing support services for marginalized communities.³⁴

Right to life, liberty and security of person, and freedom from torture

23. JS2 and JS6 expressed concern at the report of the Special Investigation Commission, released in 2023, on the killing of six police officers and dozen protesters and bystanders during the August 2022 protests.³⁵ According to JS3, in August 2022 police officers used excessive force against young people, including students, protesting about the high cost of living.³⁶

24. JS3 and JS5 recommended that Sierra Leone publicly condemn at the highest levels all instances of the use of excessive and brutal force by security forces in response to protests, launch formal investigations into such instances, bring the perpetrators to justice and punish those found responsible with adequate sanctions.³⁷ JS5 also recommended enhancing Human Rights Training for Security Forces and Public Officials.³⁸

25. According to JS6, detention conditions remained poor, with detained individuals experiencing corporal punishment, overcrowding, unhygienic conditions, lack of adequate food, and lack of sufficient medical care.³⁹

26. JS6 regretted persistent violence against women in official custody. It recommended providing training to law enforcement officers about the rights of women in conflict with the law and gender-appropriate arrest and detention practices.⁴⁰ It recommended dedicating additional funding to bringing detention conditions into alignment with the Nelson Mandela Rules and the Bangkok Rules, prioritizing health and sanitation.⁴¹

Human rights and counter-terrorism

27. JS3 and JS5 were concerned by the adoption of the Counter Terrorism Act (2025), which provided a vague definition of terrorism and therefore it could be used to limit freedom of expression against journalists and human rights defenders.⁴²

28. Several stakeholders recommended that Sierra Leone review and amend the Public Order Act (1965), Counter Terrorism Act (2025) and Cyber Security and Crimes Act (2021), to bring them into line with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.⁴³

Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law

29. JS4 and JS6 highlighted challenges in the administration of justice, including insufficient legal aid and backlog in cases.⁴⁴ DSN noted that despite some progress, gaps persisted in courts, police, and administrative bodies, including in terms of infrastructure, information and access for persons with disabilities.⁴⁵

30. JS4 recommended strengthening access to justice, by expanding access to legal services, improving the efficiency of the justice system, and promoting alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. JS4 also recommended increasing access to legal aid services, particularly for vulnerable persons and groups, including those affected by conflict and displacement.⁴⁶ JS6 recommended expanding funding for public defenders and legal aid, and seeking technical support from the international community for implementation of the 2024 Justice Sector Reform Strategy.⁴⁷ DSN recommended developing and adopting justice-sector accessibility regulations to protect the rights of persons with disabilities.⁴⁸

31. JS6 noted that governance challenges persisted, including limited enforcement of accountability mechanisms, political interference, and continued reports of misuse of public funds.⁴⁹ JS4 further recommended effectively addressing corruption in the justice sector, by implementing anti-corruption measures, strengthening transparency and accountability, and providing training and support for judges and other justice sector workers.⁵⁰ JS6 recommended enhancing the institutional independence of the Anti-Corruption Commission.⁵¹

Fundamental freedoms and the right to participate in public and political life

32. Several stakeholders stated that during its third universal periodic review, Sierra Leone had accepted recommendations to respect freedom of expression. However, articles 14 and 17 of the 1965 Public Order Act and section 44 of the Cyber Security and Crime Act of 2021, had been allegedly used to suppress fundamental freedoms, and restrict civic space through the selective application of these laws against activists and human rights defenders.⁵²

33. According to JS2 and JS3, repressive laws were proliferating, with increased restrictions on freedoms of expression and association.⁵³ They regretted barriers to the formation of civil society organisations, and the climate of fear and retaliation. Activists, human rights defenders, journalists, and lawyers faced growing intimidation, arbitrary arrest, judicial harassment and reprisals for expressing dissenting views.⁵⁴ Moreover, land and environmental defenders and women's rights defenders were particularly at risk.⁵⁵ JS2 was particularly concerned at the criminalisation of agrobusiness opponents.⁵⁶

34. Several stakeholders recommended adopting the 2017 Human Rights Defenders Bill; put an end to arbitrary arrests and detentions of civil society activists, of human rights defenders and journalists;; conduct impartial, thorough and effective investigations into all

cases of attacks, harassment and intimidation against them and bring the perpetrators of such offences to justice.⁵⁷ JS7 recommended decriminalizing defamation, and implementing the Special Investigation Committee's recommendations related to the killings and abuses occurred in August 2022.⁵⁸

35. JS2 recommended creating, in law and in practice, a safe and enabling environment for civil society in accordance with the rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.⁵⁹

36. JS3 and JS5 recommended implementing legislative measures to enable access to information and establish mechanisms to facilitate public access, in line with international best practices; implementing recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association; amending the Public Order Act of 1965 in order to guarantee fully the right to freedom of peaceful assembly; and guarantying judicial review and effective remedy, including compensation, in cases of unlawful denial of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly by state authorities.⁶⁰

37. JS7 was concerned at the use of violence and intimidation against opposition candidates during elections.⁶¹ It recommended developing and implement a national prevention and response plan on political violence and harassment.⁶² JS7 and DSN recommended amending the Persons with Disability Act or electoral laws to guarantee reasonable accommodation for elections; and develop laws that ensure reserved seats or candidate quotas for persons with disabilities in Parliament, local councils and public office.⁶³

Prohibition of all forms of slavery, including trafficking in persons

38. JS1 welcomed the adoption of the Anti-Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Act (2022) and the Child Rights Act (2024).⁶⁴

39. The European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ) expressed concern that despite adopted legislation prohibiting child trafficking for labor in Sierra Leone, this practice persisted. It noted that child trafficking in the country was exacerbated by the cultural practice known as *menpikin*.⁶⁵ ECLJ recommended that Sierra Leone combat child trafficking and *menpikin*, by conducting awareness raising campaigns aimed at educating the population on the dangers and risks of sending their children away.⁶⁶

40. ECLJ also recommended that Sierra Leone enforce the legislation protecting children and disseminate information on the Anti-Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Act 2022 and the Child Rights Act 2024.⁶⁷

Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work

41. JS3 noted that, while workers had the right to join independent trade unions, as enshrined in relevant legislation, labour laws did not protect unions from employer discrimination or interference. JS3 expressed concern that some unions such as Sierra Leone Teachers' Union had been suspended and membership removed from the Labour Congress.⁶⁸

Right to social security

42. JS4 highlighted that, while Sierra Leone had implemented a range of social protection programmes, significant gaps remained in the realization of economic, social, and cultural rights.⁶⁹ JS7 recommended increasing public spending on social security to at least 3–5% of GDP, to align with international benchmarks.⁷⁰

43. DSN noted that major shortfalls remained with low coverage of disability-sensitive social protection needs. It recommended that Sierra Leone operationalize the Disability Development Fund; develop a social protection implementation plan for disability inclusion; increase budget for persons with disabilities within the national social protection budget; integrate disability markers into social protection registries; and develop and invest in sustainable livelihood pathways that link persons with disabilities to agriculture, cooperative loans, and vocational schemes.⁷¹

Right to an adequate standard of living

44. JS4 noted that Sierra Leone had made progress in addressing standards of living in the country. However, despite its efforts, significant challenges remained and many persons and communities continued to lack access to basic services.⁷²

45. JS7 was concerned at the lack of a comprehensive legal framework on housing rights and that over 56% of the population lived below the national poverty line, with poverty being particularly acute in rural areas among women, persons with disabilities, and youth.⁷³ JS7 recommended strengthening implementation of the National Social Protection Policy with clear budget lines; increasing investment in rural infrastructure adopting legislation on the right to water and sanitation in line with SDG 6 and human rights standards.⁷⁴

46. JS4 recommended that Sierra Leone ensure universal access to clean water, sanitation, electricity, and healthcare, particularly in rural and marginalized communities; strengthen and expand social protection programmes to cover vulnerable groups, including children, persons with disabilities, older persons, and conflict-affected populations; provide increased support to small-holder farmers, including access to credit, training, modern inputs, and markets.⁷⁵

47. JS4 also recommended that Sierra Leone promote climate-resilient agricultural practices to enhance food security and mitigate climate risks; improve rural infrastructure, including feeder roads, storage facilities, and market access for farmers; and develop and implement community-based programmes for conflict resolution, reconciliation, and sustainable livelihood generation in affected regions.⁷⁶

Right to health

48. JS7 was concerned that health insurance coverage remained extremely limited below 1%. Rural populations, persons with disabilities, and the poorest households faced severe access barriers due to inadequate infrastructure, long distances to facilities, and limited transport. It recommended allocating enough funds to improve the health care infrastructure and ensuring health care equity for poor households.⁷⁷

49. JS4 commended Sierra Leone for some health care progress including the Free Health Care Programme for mothers and children, and national responses to HIV and AIDS. However, it expressed concerns at the persistence of maternal mortality. JS4 also regretted the fact that health centers were critically under-resourced and about critical doctor shortages, especially in the rural areas.⁷⁸

50. JS4 recommended that Sierra Leone increase the national health budget to meet the Abuja Declaration target of at least 15% of total public expenditure, prioritizing rural infrastructure, maternal care services, and the availability of essential drugs. JS4 also recommended recruiting and retaining qualified health professionals, by improving conditions of service, raising salaries, and decentralizing deployment to remote area. In addition, JS4 recommended that Sierra Leone ensure that health facilities, particularly those providing maternal and child health services, operate with qualified personnel and functional equipment; and organize capacity-building programmes for traditional birth attendants.⁷⁹

Right to education

51. DSN acknowledged that Sierra Leone had developed a policy framework, notably the 2023 Basic and Senior Secondary Education Act, which made basic education free and compulsory.⁸⁰

52. According to JS4, while Sierra Leone had made progress in expanding access to education and increasing enrolment rates since its third universal periodic review, challenges persisted including teacher shortages, inadequate teaching training, low teacher salaries, insufficient funding, infrastructure gaps, and ongoing reform efforts remained to be addressed.⁸¹

53. JS4 recommended that Sierra Leone increase investment in education; enhance rural school infrastructure for accessibility; expand and standardize school feeding coverage in remote areas; and improve teacher training and retention. JS4 also recommended addressing

gender inequality in education, promoting community engagement in education; providing conditional support for vulnerable children to remain in school; and addressing dropout causes through community programmes.⁸²

54. JS7 recommended increasing budget allocation to at least 20% of total public expenditure and 6% of GDP in line with the Incheon Declaration; improving teacher recruitment, training, and deployment, especially to underserved districts; and allocating sufficient funds to implement the National Comprehensive School Safety Policy.⁸³

Development, the environment, and business and human rights

55. JS5 was concerned at challenges in the management of natural resources in Sierra Leone such as opaque corporate structures and inadequate disclosure of beneficial ownership. According to JS5, it was difficult to access information about the ultimate owners, and in some cases, they were international companies registered outside the country. JS5 regretted the lack of transparency which obstructed access to justice for communities and ability to hold owners to account when environmental damage, land disputes or human rights abuses occurred.⁸⁴

56. JS5 recommended that Sierra Leone undertake a comprehensive review of all legislation governing land, minerals and other natural resources to ensure policy coherence, address gaps and harmonize laws that contradicted each other. It further recommended actively seeking input from local communities, landowners, and civil society organisations in this review. Furthermore, JS5 recommended that Sierra Leone review the Mines and Minerals Act (2022) and the Mines and Mineral Development and Management Corporation Act (2023) to ensure compliance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and other international human rights standards. Moreover, JS5 recommended creating a publicly accessible online beneficial ownership registry for all private companies operating in Sierra Leone, including beneficial ownership and mining/agro-concession licenses; hold private companies accountable to ensure that consultations with communities concerned is conducted prior to any sale or lease of land; and ensure transparency and accountability in the management of Sierra Leone's mineral wealth.⁸⁵

2. Rights of specific persons or groups

Women

57. GS4 and GFG expressed concern that despite legislative reforms, gender-based violence remained widespread in Sierra Leone. They regretted that survivors of domestic violence encountered structural and financial barriers to justice, including medical fees required to pursue cases; limited access to police services, and pressure to accept out-of-court settlements, all of which contributed to impunity. They noted that investigations and prosecutions were often weak, with local authorities sometimes obstructing justice. JS4 also regretted the limited access to support services; and deep-seated cultural and social norms.⁸⁶

58. JS4 recommended that Sierra Leone ensure the effective implementation of the Sexual Offences Act (2018) and strengthen the legal framework to address sexual and gender-based violence, including by holding perpetrators accountable; increase access to support services for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, including medical and psychological care, legal assistance, and shelter; promote gender equality and challenge harmful cultural norms that perpetuate sexual and gender-based violence, by engaging with communities to promote positive social change and transform harmful attitudes and behaviours. JS4 and GFG also recommended that Sierra Leone engage with communities in developing sustainable solutions to sexual and gender-based violence, by collaborating with local organizations and community leaders to design culturally appropriate and effective interventions; increase funding and resources for programmes addressing sexual and gender-based violence; strengthen data collection and monitoring systems to track and respond to sexual and gender-based violence, by establishing a robust reporting mechanism and using data to inform policy and programme development.⁸⁷

59. Several stakeholders expressed deep concern that female genital mutilation continued at alarmingly high rates, rooted in cultural traditions and reinforced by powerful secret

societies. Those stakeholders highlighted that Sierra Leone had one of the highest rates of female genital mutilation in the world. According to a national survey, 83% of women had undergone female genital mutilation, with 71% of them subjected to the practice before the age of 15. They further indicated that although Sierra Leone had made policy commitments under international frameworks, female genital mutilation was not explicitly prohibited in law; and the absence of comprehensive legislation perpetuated the practice.⁸⁸

60. JS5 noted that in the third universal periodic review of Sierra Leone, Member States made dozens of recommendations to Sierra Leone to ‘prohibit’, ‘eliminate’ and ‘criminalise’ female genital mutilation. Sierra Leone, however, noted those recommendations.⁸⁹

61. JS5 and JS7 recommended that Sierra Leone comply with the ruling of July 2025 on female genital mutilation, of the Economic Community of Western Africa States (ECOWAS) Court, and comply with its judgment, criminalising all forms of female genital mutilation.⁹⁰ GFG recommended that Sierra Leone establish monitoring mechanisms, mandatory reporting, and a public registry of cases of female genital mutilation; enforce the ban on initiation ceremonies, with penalties for organizers/financiers; and carry out multilingual awareness campaigns and partnerships with chiefs and Bondo leaders to end cutting and adopt alternative rites.⁹¹

62. While welcoming the 2023 Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Act, JS4 and JS5 expressed concern at the persistence of gender inequality, with women facing barriers to education, healthcare, economic opportunities and protection from gender-based violence due to patriarchal norms and weak enforcement of the new laws especially in rural areas. They regretted that women’s representation in leadership roles, particularly at local levels, remained limited, and they were excluded from decision-making around the allocation, transfer or inheritance of family or community land.⁹²

63. JS4 and JS5 recommended that Sierra Leone strengthen implementation of the Customary Land Rights Act (2022); promote community-level dialogues with traditional leaders; integrate gender-sensitive land rights education; launch nationwide related awareness campaigns; engage traditional and religious leaders; and set up Sexual Offence Model Courts in all districts to ensure speedy trials and easy access to justice.⁹³

64. JS4 and JS5 recommended that Sierra Leone ensure that national and local authorities comply with the latest legislation to ensure women’s access to land and invest in initiatives that empower women; carry out related awareness raising campaigns on the negative effects of patriarchal norms, involving all actors including religious and traditional leaders, and ensure the data used to inform government policy is gender-disaggregated; and improve access to financial literacy and services for women in the informal sector.⁹⁴

Children

65. JS1 highlighted progress made by Sierra Leone in promoting the rights of children such as the Child Rights Act 2024; the National Policy on Diversion and Alternatives to Detention for Children in Conflict with the Law, adopted in 2025; and the National Strategy for Addressing Issues of Children in Street Situations 2021-23.^{95,96}

66. ECLJ and JS1 welcomed the law on the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act of 2024.⁹⁷ GFG was concerned that child marriage persisted despite legal reforms raising the age of marriage; due, among other factors, to poverty, limited educational opportunities for girls, weak enforcement of laws, and inadequate birth registration.⁹⁸

67. JS1 expressed concern that children in street situations across Sierra Leone continued to face systemic discrimination, and exclusion from essential services such as healthcare, education, and justice. In a landmark decision in November 2024, the ECOWAS Court ruled that Sierra Leone’s loitering laws discriminated against marginalised groups, including children in street situations, and called for their immediate repeal. JS1 added that children in street situations were also overlooked and invisible due to persistent data gaps, while stigma and harmful portrayals in media and political discourse entrenched their exclusion and denied them access to justice and rights.⁹⁹

68. JS1 recommended that Sierra Leone review and update the National Strategy for Addressing Issues of Children in Street Situations in line with General Comment No. 21 of

the Committee on the Rights of the Child, ensuring participation of children and partnership with civil society; and repeal all vagrancy and loitering laws in compliance with the ECOWAS Court of Justice judgment and African Court Advisory Opinion.¹⁰⁰ JS1 also recommended that Sierra Leone provide rights-based training for professionals such as police, teachers, and social workers.¹⁰¹

69. JS1 further recommended that Sierra Leone ensure that children in street situations are involved in planning, policy-making, and reporting through long-term, accessible, and child-friendly platforms where they can express their experiences, needs and find solutions in the topics that affect them.¹⁰²

70. In addition, JS1 recommended that Sierra Leone implement the recommendations of the 2025 report of the Special Rapporteur on the Sale, Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children's, on children in street situations, including ensuring access to basic services, safe reporting of abuse, and child-rights-based police training.¹⁰³

71. JS1 recommended that Sierra Leone ensure access for children in street situations to education, healthcare, housing, food, shelter, and psychosocial support without hidden costs.¹⁰⁴ JS1 also recommended that Sierra Leone expand access to child-friendly information on rights and establish safe, confidential, and accessible mechanisms for reporting police abuse.¹⁰⁵

Persons with disabilities

72. DSN stated that Sierra Leone had made some progress in advancing the rights of persons with disabilities through the enactment of the Persons with Disability Act 2011 and the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.¹⁰⁶

73. DSN noted that polling stations were not accessible by persons with disabilities in 2023 general elections, and that low awareness/use of tactile ballot guides had been observed.¹⁰⁷

74. DSN and SLUDI regretted the weak enforcement of the Persons with Disability Act and limited access to redress for victims of violence or discrimination.¹⁰⁸ DSN recommended that Sierra Leone invest in training the police, Family Support Units, and judiciary on disability-sensitive case management.¹⁰⁹

75. SLUDI was concerned at challenges for persons with disabilities to secure adequate and structured housing with adequate accessibility, and to equally access to health services. SLUDI recommended that Sierra Leone ensure a disability approach in its housing policy and in the provision of health services.¹¹⁰

76. DSN recommended that Sierra Leone develop and adopt a national policy for disability sports.¹¹¹

77. DSN also recommended that Sierra Leone develop guidelines to ensure school infrastructures are disability-friendly and accessible by persons with disabilities; operationalize the National Disability Development Fund Act; and develop a comprehensive national disability strategy and support coordination among institutions.¹¹²

78. DSN further recommended that Sierra Leone allocate enough funding to scale teacher capacity building in disability learning pedagogy; develop a national guideline on accessibility compliance for all public and private institutions; strengthen health workforce capacity on disability services and develop policy to support disability-friendly finance and businesses.¹¹³

Internally displaced persons

79. JS4 recommended that Sierra Leone ensure that displaced and vulnerable populations are fully included in national development planning, social protection programmes, and legal protection schemes.¹¹⁴

Stateless persons

80. Highlighting gaps on birth registration system, JS1 recommended that Sierra Leone guarantee free birth registration.¹¹⁵ DSN recommended that Sierra Leone ensure that the National Civil Registration Authority implement a disability-friendly approach to legal national identity rights.¹¹⁶

Notes

¹ A/HRC/48/17, A/HRC/48/17/Add.1, and A/HRC/48/2.

² The stakeholders listed below have contributed information for this summary; the full texts of all original submissions are available at: www.ohchr.org (one asterisk denotes a national human rights institution with A status).

*Civil society**Individual submissions:*

DSN	Disabilities Sports Network Sierra Leone - Flying Stars Amputee, Freetown (Sierra Leone);
ECLJ	European Centre for Law and Justice, The, Strasbourg (France);
GFG	Global Freedom Group, Honolulu (United States of America);
SLUDI	Sierra Leone Union on Disability Issues, Freetown (Sierra Leone).

Joint submissions:

JS1	Joint submission 1 submitted by: Consortium for Street Children, London (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland); Consortium for Street Children (please note this version is identical to previous submission on 17 Sept but includes a minor typo on a provision of legislation);
JS2	Joint submission 2 submitted by: International Service for Human Rights, Geneva (Switzerland); Human Rights Defenders Network Sierra Leone;
JS3	Joint submission 3 submitted by: CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, Johannesburg (South Africa); Campaign for Good Governance, Mother Earth for Climate Justice and the Network Movement for Justice and Development (with no ECOSOC Status);
JS4	Joint submission 4 submitted by: Edmund Rice International, Geneva (Switzerland); Edmund Rice International Vivat International Christian Brothers Development Office Sierra Leone;
JS5	Joint submission 5 submitted by: Christian Aid, London (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland); a) 50/50 Group fiftyfiftySierraleone.org/b) Budget Advocacy Network (BAN) www.ban-sl.org c) Christian Aid www.christianaid.org.uk/d) Green Scenery https://greenscenery.org/ e) Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone (IRCSL) f) Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD), www.nmjdsl.org/ and g) Women's Network for Environmental Sustainability (WoNES) www.wones.org/ ;
JS6	Joint submission 6 submitted by: Advocates for Human Rights, Minneapolis (United States of America); The Society for Human Rights and Development Organisation (SHRDO) The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty;
JS7	Joint submission 7 submitted by: Lutheran World Federation, 1211 Geneva 2 (Switzerland); Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sierra Leone.

National human rights institution:

HRCSL	Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone, Freetown (Sierra Leone).
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³ HRCSL, para.7.

⁴ HRCSL, para.9.

⁵ HRCSL, para. 11.

⁶ HRCSL, para.11.

⁷ HRCSL, para.15.

⁸ HRCSL, para.10.

⁹ HRCSL, paras. 12–14.

- 10 HRCSL, para.11.
 11 HRCSL, para. 11.
 12 HRCSL, para.14.
 13 HRCSL, para.15.
 14 HRCSL, para.15.
 15 HRCSL, para.17.
 16 HRCSL, para.29.
 17 HRCSL, para. 34.
 18 HRCSL, para.35.
 19 HRCSL, para.41.
 20 HRCSL, paras. 25–28.
 21 HRCSL, para.24.
 22 HRCSL; para.16.
 23 HRCSL, paras. 15–16.

24 The following abbreviations are used in UPR documents:

ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
OP-ICESCR	Optional Protocol to ICESCR
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICCPR-OP 1	Optional Protocol to ICCPR
ICCPR-OP 2	Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
OP-CEDAW	Optional Protocol to CEDAW
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
OP-CAT	Optional Protocol to CAT
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
OP-CRC-AC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict
OP-CRC-SC	Optional Protocol to CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
OP-CRC-IC	Optional Protocol to CRC on a communications procedure
ICRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
OP-CRPD	Optional Protocol to CRPD
ICPPED	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

- 25 JS5, para.83.
 26 JS7, page 4 and DSN, p.2.
 27 JS5, para.5.
 28 JS4, para.49.
 29 GFG, p.10.
 30 JS4, para.39 and JS5, paras.84 and 85.
 31 JS1, page 2.
 32 JS4, para.52.
 33 JS4, para.53.
 34 JS4, para.53.
 35 JS2, para.14. See also JS6, para.13.
 36 JS3, paras.5.9 and 5.11.
 37 JS3, paras.6.6, 6.7 and 74–76.
 38 JS5, paras.74–76, and 78.
 39 JS6, para.2 and 19.
 40 JS6, para.2, 19 and 35.
 41 JS6, para.35.
 42 JS3, paras. 1.5 and 2.1, JS5, para.42.
 43 JS2, p.5, JS3, para. 6.5, and JS5, paras.74–76.
 44 JS4, para.53, JS6, para.8.

- 45 DSN, p.4.
- 46 JS4, para.53.
- 47 JS6, para.35.
- 48 DSN, p.4.
- 49 JS6, para.15.
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