

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	124
Land:	Sierra Leone
Kilde:	U.S. Department of State
Titel:	"International Religious Freedom Report 2006"
Udgivet:	14. september 2007
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	2. oktober 2007



Sierra Leone

International Religious Freedom Report 2007

Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

The Constitution provides for freedom of religion, and the Government generally respected this right in practice.

There was no change in the status of respect for religious freedom by the Government during the period covered by this report, and government policy continued to contribute to the generally free practice of religion.

There were no reports of societal abuses or discrimination based on religious belief or practice, and prominent societal leaders took positive steps to promote religious freedom.

The U.S. Government discusses religious freedom issues with the Government as part of its overall policy to promote human rights.

Section I. Religious Demography

The country has an area of 29,925 square miles and a population of approximately 5 million. The Inter-Religious Council (IRC) estimated that 60 percent of the population is Muslim, 20 to 30 percent Christian, and 5 to 10 percent indigenous and other religious beliefs. There are small numbers of Baha'is, Hindus, and Jews. There was no information concerning the number of atheists in the country.

Many citizens practiced a mixture of Islam and traditional indigenous religious beliefs or Christianity and traditional indigenous beliefs.

Historically, most Muslims have been concentrated in the northern areas of the country, and Christians have been located in the south; however, the 11-year civil war, which officially was declared over in 2002, resulted in movement by major segments of the population.

There are a number of foreign missionary groups operating in the country.

Section II. Status of Religious Freedom

Legal/Policy Framework

The Constitution provides for freedom of religion, and the Government generally respected this right in practice. The Government at all levels sought to protect this right in full and did not tolerate its abuse, either by governmental or private actors. There is no state religion.

Holy days celebrated as national holidays include the Islamic Eid al-Adha, the Birth of the Prophet Muhammad, Eid al-Fitr holidays, and the Christian Good Friday, Easter Monday, and Christmas holidays.

The Government has no requirements for recognizing, registering, or regulating religious groups.

The Government permits religious instruction in all schools. Students may choose whether to attend the religious knowledge classes offered by the school.

Restrictions on Religious Freedom

Government policy and practice contributed to the generally free practice of religion.

There were no reports of religious prisoners or detainees in the country.

Forced Religious Conversion

There were no reports of forced religious conversion, including of minor U.S. citizens who had been abducted or illegally removed from the United States, or of the refusal to allow such citizens to be returned to the United States.

Section III. Societal Abuses and Discrimination

There were no reports of societal abuses or discrimination based on religious belief or practice and prominent societal leaders took positive steps to promote religious freedom. The IRC, composed of Christian and Muslim leaders, played a vital role in civil society and actively participated in efforts to further the peace process in the country and the subregion. Christian and Muslim leaders worked together with the National Accountability Group and the Anti-Corruption Commission to address the problem of corruption in society. As in the previous reporting period, membership applications from Baha'i and Jewish representatives to the IRC were still pending, as the council did not decide what procedure it would use to register new members. The Jewish group's leader was reported to have died of natural causes in November 2006.

Unlike the previous reporting period, there were no known violations of religious freedom, discrimination based on religion, or violence against persons or property based on religion.

Section IV. U.S. Government Policy

The U.S. Government discusses religious freedom issues with the Government as part of its overall policy to promote human rights. The U.S. Embassy continued to maintain frequent contact with the IRC and its individual members.

Released on September 14, 2007

[International Religious Freedom Report Home Page](http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2007/90119.htm)