



# PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

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## PRESS RELEASE



### PARLIAMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION DISCUSSES EMERGING ISSUES

In a bid to strengthen human rights initiatives in Sierra Leone, the Human Rights Commission, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Human Rights Secretariat, engaged the Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Human Rights on Thursday, March 27, 2025. The event, which was held at The Hub Hotel, Wilberforce, Freetown focused on providing an overview of human rights mechanisms and discussing emerging human rights issues in the country.

In his welcome address, the Deputy Clerk of Parliament, Mr. Gilbert Bosco Nhabay, reaffirmed Parliament's commitment to supporting all its committees to function effectively. He highlighted that the Human Rights Committee in Parliament is constituted in accordance with the Standing Orders and the Constitution of Sierra Leone, underscoring its critical role in advancing human rights within the legislative framework.

Mr. Nhabay also outlined key progressive legislations enacted by Parliament to uphold human rights, emphasizing Sierra Leone's adherence to international human rights standards and best practices. He expressed gratitude to the Commonwealth Secretariat for its continuous support in strengthening the country's development.

Representing the Chairman of the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee, Hon. Paul Samba Conteh who is Deputy Chairman of the Committee commended the Commonwealth Secretariat for its support and assured a strong partnership between the Sierra Leone Parliament and human rights organizations globally.

The Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL), Mrs. Patricia Narsu Ndanema, acknowledged the Commonwealth Secretariat's contributions to the Commission's capacity-building efforts and other human rights-related initiatives. She emphasized the importance of collaboration between Parliament and the Commission in promoting and protecting human rights in the country.

Mrs. Ndanema further elaborated on the powers of the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee as enshrined in the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone and the crucial role of the Human Rights Commission in ensuring human rights are respected and upheld nationwide.

Delivering his remarks, Mr. Phumlani Dlamini, Adviser at the Human Rights Unit of the Commonwealth Secretariat, outlined Parliament's role in promoting human rights. He highlighted the Commonwealth's ongoing work in supporting human rights advocacy and strengthening access to justice in collaboration with various organizations.

Mr. Dlamini noted that the engagement aimed to facilitate information-sharing on human rights activities in Sierra Leone and explore pathways to further enhance human rights protections in the country.

During the discussions, Mr. Dlamini provided insights into the functioning of United Nations human rights mechanisms and member states' obligations. He also highlighted key emerging human rights issues in Sierra Leone, sparking critical discussions on the country's approach to addressing these challenges.

A presentation was delivered on the role of Parliament in human rights protection, including its cooperation with national human rights institutions. Key topics included the Belgrade Principles on collaboration between national human rights institutions and Parliament, as well as the Paris Principles, which outline the status and functioning of national human rights institutions.

The engagement concluded with discussions on enhancing the effectiveness of cooperation between the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee and the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone.

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