



## PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

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### PRESS RELEASE



### PARLIAMENT JOINS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF SIERRA LEONE TO DISCUSS A DRAFT BILL

The Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Human Rights in collaboration with the Legislative Committee in the Parliament of Sierra Leone on Saturday 06/07/2024 joined the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone to conduct a pre-legislative engagement on a draft Bill entitled: "Human Rights Commission Act 2024", in Port Loko District, NDMA Hall, Falaba Road in Port Loko City.

The consultative project is supported by both United Nations Development Programme and Irish Aid.

In his submission to the draft pre-legislative engagement, the Chairman of the Legislative Committee, Hon. Abdul Sulaiman Marray-Conteh recalled that 20 years ago the Commission was established by an Act of Parliament, and noted that there is a need for a review with an indepth examination to meet changes relating to human rights issues around the country. "Human rights are rights belonging to everyone", he concluded.

Hon. Abdul Karim Kamara, the Opposition Whip in Parliament who also doubles as the Parliamentary Chairperson on Human Rights said the work of the Committee is huge and

appreciated the work of HRCSL for doing a marvellous job. He went on to call on colleague MPs to continue to be onboard, and heaped praises on them for their support in the promotion of Human Rights. The youthful MP also acknowledged other Leaders of Parliament for their immense contributions toward human rights issues in the country. "Let us bring the Commission to the door step of our people", he appealed.

Speaking on behalf of the Leadership of Parliament, Hon. Daniel Brima Koroma, Deputy Leader of the Opposition commended the Leadership of Parliament for just enacting into law The Criminal Procedures Act of 2024. He said no one would talk about human rights without referencing the just enacted Bill into law by the Parliament of Sierra Leone. He also applauded the Chairman of the Human Rights Committee in Parliament, Hon. AKK for showing magnanimity in the work of Human Rights in Sierra Leone.

The Leader also assured participants that when the Bill is in front of Parliament they would do the needful before passage into law. "The power to review, repeal and replace a law is in the right place", he categorically stated.

The Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone, Mrs. Patricia Narsu Ndanema said she is happy to see MPs in attendance of the programme and said this has demonstrated that MPs have interests in the work of the Commission. She also acknowledged the work of HRCSL and that of Parliament is cordial. The Chairperson highlighted the history of the Commission since its inception and went on to explain the needs for the review of the Commission's Act. The Chairperson explained the processes and procedures that have so far been taken by the Commission in order to see Act being reviewed.

Presenting the draft bill through a PowerPoint presentation, Commissioner Simitie Lavalley Esq. briefed MPs on the background information on the Bill entitled: "The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone Act 2024" including the review process, sections to be amended, repealed and replaced for purposes of enhancing human rights in the Republic of Sierra Leone in light of meeting international benchmarks and standards.

MPs in their various contributions to the draft Bill appreciated the Commission and lauded the consultative endeavors in light of the timeliness of the draft Bill.

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