

Statement by the Attorney –General

Mr President, Distinguished Members of the Working Group, Sovereign States here represented, members of NHRI's and CSO's I wish you a very good afternoon and ask for your indulgence whilst I make this humble statement.

I must, on behalf of the Government and people of Sierra Leone, thank the Working Group of the Human Rights Council for the invitation to fulfil Agenda Item 6 of the Universal Periodic Review during this eighteenth session.

During the review of Sierra Leone in May of this year, 129 recommendations were put forward by states represented at the review. My delegation addressed 101 of those recommendations adequately and promised to submit the outstanding 28 to the stakeholders and the people of Sierra Leone for proper determination of the response. We welcomed the opportunity of being reviewed and most especially, appreciated all recommendations made by State parties.

On our return we presented our report to the President in Cabinet with recommendations for a nationwide consultation to do a presentation to the stakeholders and citizenry alike on the same. This was readily approved and scheduled; with technical assistance from UNIPSIL (which is the field office of the Human Rights Council) these consultations were conducted in August.

The consultations were planned and carried out by my office (Ministry of Justice) and the Human Rights Secretariat in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and they covered the major cities in Sierra Leone. The participants were drawn from a wide variety ranging from tribal heads, traders union, prison officers, police, army, general citizenry, CSO's and NGO. The consultations started in the east of Sierra Leone and culminated in the west.

The content of these consultations was a presentation of the report of the review and the recommendations addressed with reasons. The next step was explaining the outstanding recommendations reason for the consultation. At this point an interactive session follows with a view of clarifying any ambiguous points and prepping for the ultimate goal of the consultations. A group session was then commenced where the 28 recommendations were carefully discussed and a determination of the ultimate reaction sought. The object being that after touring the nation a ratio of all reaction to the recommendations will have been determined and the final decision reached.

This approach was very successful as the turn out in all the consultations was higher than anticipated and the feedback carefully tallied for the following outcome:

Recommendation

82.1

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation.

This recommendation is accepted with the clarification that Parliament must consider the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

82.2

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.

This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.3

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.4

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.5

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation.

82.6

Sierra Leone **accepts** this recommendation.

82.7

Sierra Leone rejects this recommendation.

82.8

Sierra Leone rejects this recommendation.

82.9

Sierra Leone rejects this recommendation.

82.10

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation.

82.11

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation.
This recommendation is accepted with a call for technical assistance in the implementation of the National Gender Plan and the National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), also, in formulating a strategy to combat violence against women.

82.12

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation.
This recommendation, like the former, is accepted with a call for technical assistance.

82.13

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation.
This recommendation, like the former, is accepted with a call for technical assistance.

82.14

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.15

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.16

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.17

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.18

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.19

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.20

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.21

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.22

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.23

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.24

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.25

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation in principle.
This recommendation is accepted subject to constitutional review.

82.26

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation.
It must be noted that there is an existing Board which could do with technical assistance and training in carrying out its mandate and informing the public.

82.27

Sierra Leone **accepts** the recommendation.

82.28

Sierra Leone accepts the recommendation.

However, since May a lot of work has been done in the area of Citizenship policies, treaty reporting, women, etc. The government has started the process of reporting on both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture and all Forms of Inhuman or Degrading Treatment final reports are scheduled to have been submitted by the 1st November 2011.

The first step of implementing the recommendations will be formulating and commissioning a National Human Rights Action Plan which will serve as a blueprint in ensuring the recommendations are addressed and the goal of protecting and promoting the human rights of all Sierra Leoneans is assured.

Mr President, all protocols observed, let me beg to end here and thank you all for listening.