List of issues in relation to the initial report of Sierra Leone (CCPR/C/SLE/1)*

Constitutional and legal framework within which the Covenant is implemented (art. 2)

1. Please clarify the status of the Covenant within the domestic legal system. Please indicate when Parliament is planning to enact legislation specifically incorporating the Covenant into domestic law and provide information on measures taken to raise awareness about the Covenant and the Optional Protocol among public officials and State agents, in particular through human rights training of the judiciary and law enforcement officials. Please also indicate what procedures are in place for the implementation of the Committee’s Views under the Optional Protocol.

The Sierra Leone Constitution of 1991 is the supreme legal document. Basic human rights provisions are already enshrined in the Constitution. Section 15 of the Sierra Leone Constitution affirms the fundamental rights and freedoms as reflected in the ICCPR with no discrimination or distinction, based on race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed or sex but subject to the respect of the right and freedoms of others and for public interest. Article 15 of the Constitution: human rights protection is provided for regardless of sex.

2. Please indicate the measures taken to provide the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) with adequate financial and human resources for its effective functioning and to ensure that its decisions/recommendations are fully implemented by State authorities. What measures have been taken to strengthen the Ombudsman’s office, including by providing it with adequate human resources and extending its activities beyond radio discussions, and to raise awareness about its existence and mandate, especially in rural areas?

* Adopted by the Committee at its 108th session (8-26 July 2013).
The Office of the Ombudsman received some 1,031 complaints from institutions and members of the public from 2012 to date.

501 complaints in relation to illegal dismissal, unfair action were reported in 2011 of which 385 were investigated while 70 were referred to Parliament for harmonious resolution.

In 2012, the Ombudsman office received 386 complaints of which 142 were resolved while the remaining 244 were referred to Parliament. He also stated that for this year so far, the office has received 134 complaints with 70 already investigated.

Stating some of the achievements of the Office of the Ombudsman, Sseby said they had held several town-hall meetings with stakeholders in the regions on the need to be accountable, among others. The office, he said, investigates managerial injustices, abuse of power and injustice in the Judiciary for harmonious resolution.

He disclosed that they have opened regional offices in Kenema, Makeni and Bo and also provided complaint boxes in all the regions, cities and district headquarter towns and even in prisons where they also received complaints of injustice and delay to try cases of prisoners.

Insufficient budgetary allocation has meant that sub Offices only exist in Provincial headquarter towns and complaints boxes in District Headquarter towns could not be adequately manned. This is clearly an untenable situation for such an important Government Office that has scored some notable successes in resolving several thorny issues.

3. Please indicate whether any progress has been made with the law reform process, including the review of the human rights provisions of the Constitution, and provide information on the challenges encountered, as well as the measures taken to address them.

In early 2013, the Government of Sierra Leone indicated its intention to initiate a major review of the 1991 Constitution. This will be done through an appointed Constitutional Review Committee, comprised of 80 members representing political parties, independent bodies, CSOs, the judiciary and the legislature. The CRC composition and TOR are currently being finalized and the constitutional review process has been formally launched in July 2013.

The overall project objective is to ensure that the constitution is prepared in an inclusive participatory manner involving all sectors of the population and adopted by popular referendum. The members comprise of Political Parties, Civil Society Organizations, Youth Groups, Women’s Groups, the disabled, Non-Governmental Organizations, Governance Institutions and many more.

The process is led and owned by the Sierra Leoneans, as amply demonstrated in the composition of the Constitutional Review Committee that is spearheading the review process. President Koroma for is committed to an inclusive and transparent constitutional review process. The review presents a historic opportunity for strengthening Sierra Leone’s democratic institutions, anchoring the rule of law and human rights, leading to a modern and more inclusive system of governance, promoting equitable economic development and
social justice for all; those will in turn foster greater cohesion and unity among Sierra Leoneans. Funding for the review process has been secured through contributions from the Government of Sierra Leone, the European Union, the United Kingdom Department for International Development and the United Nations.

4. Please indicate whether the Sierra Leone Reparations Programme established in 2008 continues to provide reparations to war victims and, if not, clarify the main constraints and measures taken to overcome them.

Since its inception in 2009 the SLRP has registered and verified 32,148 civilian victims of war, of whom 13,283 were war widows, 8,677 child victims, 5,448 war-wounded, 3,602 victims of sexual violence and 1,138 victims of limb amputation.

Sierra Leone's National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) has begun the distribution of rehabilitation grants to 1,138 forced amputees and 162 of the country's most vulnerable, severely wounded conflict victims.

The purpose of the rehabilitation grants is to fill critical social protection gaps and enable the rehabilitation of 1,300 extremely vulnerable conflict victims. The beneficiaries will use the grants to find and ensure viable and sustainable livelihood solutions for themselves and their families.

The distribution of the funds, which will be gradual and spread over several months, was preceded by series of basic financial management and vocational workshops facilitated by NaCSA and delivered by professional training organizations across Sierra Leone.

The aim of the workshops was to sensitize and train the beneficiaries and their families on the most prudent, efficient and sustainable way to use their rehabilitation grants.

Most of the beneficiaries will use the money to start new or enhance their existing livelihood activities, including crafts, manufacturing, agriculture or services. Some of the beneficiaries will use the rehabilitation grants to support their own education and training, which will enable them to get better jobs in the future.

IOM supports NaCSA and the Sierra Leone Reparations Programme through provision of technical support, expert advice and programmatic and fiduciary oversight.

The current activities are supported by the Sierra Leone UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF), as part of the Social Protection, Child Protection, Gender Equality and Human Rights Cluster.

Non-discrimination, equality between men and women, and political participation (arts. 2, 3, 24, 25 and 26)

5. Please indicate whether the State party has undertaken any comprehensive review of its domestic legislation and Constitution with a view to identifying discriminatory legal provisions, including those discriminating against women, and to amend or repeal them; please indicate, in particular, the measures taken to repeal section 27 (4) (d) of the Constitution. Does the State party plan to adopt comprehensive legislation prohibiting discrimination and containing a comprehensive list of grounds for discrimination, including discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity? Are legislative amendments planned to de-criminalize sexual relations between consenting adults of the same sex?

These will be part of the constitutional review process.
6. Please indicate the measures taken to combat discrimination against women, including the steps taken to enhance the participation and representation of women in economic, political and public life, including in decision-making positions. Please report on measures taken to repeal discriminatory provisions against persons of non-"African Negro descent" and women in the acquisition and transmission of nationality, and ensure that foundlings are granted citizenship. Please also outline the measures taken to modify or eliminate harmful cultural practices and customs, eradicate patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes regarding the roles, responsibilities and identity of women and men in the family and society in general.

Several legal reforms have been made. On the 7th June 2007 the government of Sierra Leone passed into the Child Rights Act; on the 14th June 2007 Sierra Leone Parliament passed into law the three “Gender Justice Laws” namely the Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act, the Domestic Violence Act and the Devolution of Estates Act. Parliament also legislated the Chieflaincy Act of 2009 and the Sexual Offences Act on the 23rd August 2012. The government of Sierra Leone is pleased to report that these legal reforms have changed lives of women especially those in the rural areas. To ensure the full implementation of these laws, the government has developed the National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence; the National Referral Protocol on Gender-Based Violence which was signed Ministers of government including Health, Education, Local Government, Justice, Finance, NGO coordinating body, and my immediate predecessor. To ensure that these laws are widely popularized, my Ministry coordinated the development of simplified versions and implementation strategies.

Another landmark legislation which the government is focusing on is the Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Bill as soon as it goes through the crucible of Cabinet and onward tabling in Parliament for enactment.

It is expected that the recommendation to repeal section 27 (4) (d) and (e) will be seriously considered during the constitution review process. An eighty (80) Constitutional Review Committee has been appointed and the review process officially launched by the President and the Committee is expected to finish work in 2015.

Women in Decision-Making

Our government continues to make a steady progress in the area of decision making positions for women in governance at all levels. I must confess that on the average government has not met the minimum 30% representation at all levels but we are happy to report that progress is made in that direction. At the Local Council level, in 2004 we had 10.9% for females, 2008 we recorded 18.9% females and in 2012 we recorded 19.1% females. In fact the Makeni City Council, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are females whilst the council has 8 female councillors and 8 male councilors. We have however witnessed stagnation in the numbers of female Parliamentarians and female Cabinet Ministers and their deputies. Let me also inform the Committee that His Excellency the President has made several appointments of women in key governance positions. I usually refer to them as the ‘Generals Club’ established by President Koroma. They include but not limited to the Commissioner General of National Revenue Authority, Administrator and Registrar General, Director General of the Sierra Leone Roads Authority, Solicitor General, Auditor General, Chief Justice, Brigadier General, Chairperson for Environmental Protection Agency, Head of Electoral Commission and several more as chairpersons of various parastatals. At the sub-regional level, Sierra Leone Government nominated the first ever female Deputy Secretary General of the Mano River Union and advocated for the
11. Please report on measures taken to address impunity, to prevent and combat all forms of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, rape and other forms of sexual violence. Please specify whether spousal rape is explicitly defined as a crime under the Criminal Code. Please also provide information on: (a) the number of complaints received; (b) investigations carried out; (c) the types of penalties imposed; (d) remedies provided to victims; and (e) the number of safe shelters and any other resources and services in place to assist victims of domestic violence.

- The Ministry in collaboration with the National Committee on Gender-Based Violence (NaC-GBV) in 2008 developed the Strategic Roll-Out Plan for the implementation of the three ‘Gender Justice Laws’ namely the Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act 2009; Devolution of Estates Act 2007; and the Domestic Violence Act 2007. The strategic roll-out plan looked at three main sections: enforcement; public education; and monitoring and data collection.

- In 2012, the government of Sierra Leone passed into a robust legislation on Sexual Offences. This legislation is regarded as one of the toughest laws around the world in addressing sexual violence related cases and it is in line with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820 and optional protocols to child prostitution, CEDAW among others. Following the passage of the Sexual Offences Act, 2012 which came into force on the 1st day of November, 2012, the Family Support Unit (F.S.U) of the Sierra Leone Police has investigated about 6,805 matters nationwide from January-September, 2013. Out of this number, 1,040 were charged to the Magistrate Court for Preliminary Investigations and 363 were committed to the High Court for trial.

- In the same 2012 two related documents developed by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs namely the National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence and the National Referral Protocol on Gender-Based Violence. The Referral Protocol on GBV has been rolled out in Kambia, Bonthe, Kenema, Bo and Freetown, as a result the collaboration and coordination of the different service providers has strongly increased (at least in Kambia and Bonthe). The Ministry is collaborating with IRC and UNICEF to roll-out the protocol all over the country.

- To address the menace of sexual gender-based violence, the Judiciary introduced the Saturday courts especially for SGBV matters which is yielding dividend.

11. Please respond to reports that large numbers of children are victims of sexual violence or abuse and indicate the measures taken to combat this phenomenon. Please provide information on: (a) the number of such cases recorded; (b) investigations carried out; (c) sanctions imposed; (d) remedies provided to victims.

The Sexual Offences Act of 2012 created a more robust legal framework to prosecute various forms of SGBV and the National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence was launched in the same year alongside the National Referral Protocol on Gender-Based Violence.

Right to life and prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (arts. 6, 7, 19 and 21)

12. In light of the de facto moratorium on executions that has been in place since 2008 and the State party’s commitment to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the
death penalty, please indicate the steps that are being taken to abolish the death penalty both in law and in practice.

In addition to refusing to carry out capital punishment sentences, on April 27, 2011, the 50th anniversary of Sierra Leonean independence, President Koroma pardoned 96 prisoners, five of whom were on death row.

More recently, in December 2012, 14 death row prisoners received either a presidential pardon or had their terms commuted to life imprisonment, leaving only one known prisoner awaiting execution in Sierra Leone.

In the years following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls for abolition of the death penalty in 2004 after the Sierra Leone's decade-long civil war, Sierra Leonean government officials like President Koroma and Foreign Minister Manura Kamara have made strong statements about international trends toward abolition due to “a culture of rights” taking hold, and that “the abolition of the death penalty is desired by every civilized nation.”

As a reward for these strong statements in favor of banning capital punishment and demonstration of his commitment to preventing future executions, Hands Off Cain, an internationally renowned anti-death penalty organization, celebrated President Koroma as “Abolitionist of the Year” in 2012.

As just the third African leader to win this award, many people both in Sierra Leone and around the world were confident that the death penalty would soon be legally abolished.

13. Please provide information on the measures taken to investigate, to bring to justice those responsible and to provide adequate remedies, including compensation, to victims or their relatives for: (a) the alleged arbitrary deprivation of life and serious injuries during the violent demonstrations in Bumbuna, Tonkolili District and Koidu City, Kono District, when police officers reportedly made use of tear gas and fired live ammunition at protesters; (b) the alleged arbitrary killings of motorcycle riders by police officers in the Western Area, allegedly without any genuine cause; (c) the alleged arbitrary deprivation of life and serious injuries during the clash between the All People’s Congress (APC) and Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP) supporters in September 2010, when police used tear gas and live ammunition to disperse the crowd; (d) the assault of four journalists in September 2011 by plain-clothes members of the Presidential Guard, when one of them was beaten unconscious. Please elaborate on whether human rights law norms, including the principles on the use of force and firearms, are a standard component of curricula for law enforcement officials.

These cases are still being investigated.

14. Please report on measures taken to combat ritual murder and impunity for such acts, including on measures to address obstacles to effective investigation and prosecution of perpetrators.

Cases are few and perpetrators of ritual murder are punished in line with other acts of murder.

15. Please elaborate on the measures taken to address the high under-five and maternal mortality rates and the results achieved. Please also provide information on the status of the draft law legalizing abortion under certain conditions.

The last Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP II) “Agenda for Change” (2008-2012) placed significant weight on reproductive health, particularly on maternal health in the
country's development agenda and gave priority to the reduction of maternal and child mortality. On 27th April 2010, the Government launched the Free Health Care (FHC) that enabled pregnant women, lactating mothers and children under-five to access free-of-charge medical care and services. This initiative addressed all dimensions related to reproductive health from quality service delivery to ensuring access and utilization through demand generation. Data on the FHC show that it has succeeded in increasing the number of under-five outpatient consultation by 250% compared to the period before the launch of the policy. Between April 2010 and March 2011, there were two million new under-five consultations, over 39,000 more women delivered babies at health facilities, 12,000 maternal complications were managed at health facilities leading to a decline in associated fatality cases by 60%. Admissions at the main maternity hospital in the country increased from 800 to 12,000 between April 2010 and April 2012. An increase of over 60% attendance at hospital and peripheral health units has been recorded for pregnant women, lactating mothers and under-five children.

16. Please indicate the steps taken to define and criminalize the offence of torture in accordance with international standards. Please elaborate on concrete measures taken, and procedures and institutions established, to prevent torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and ensure that such allegations, including from the civil war period, are effectively investigated, prosecuted and victims have access to effective legal recourse and to adequate remedies. Please indicate whether the Independent Police Complaints Board has been established and provide information on its independence, composition and mandate. If applicable, please provide statistical data on the number of complaints of torture and ill-treatment received and investigations and prosecutions initiated.

The general provision is the guarantee of section 20 in the Constitution. However, this guarantee is ensured by several rules, policies and ordinances.

In the training of law enforcement personnel within the Police Force they have a Police Training School-Recruit Manual1 which ensures education on the prohibition of torture with the following: "A suspect should not be given any inhuman or degrading treatment, nor be subjected to torture or cruel treatment". CDHID. This Training Recruit Manual is undergoing further revision with the support of UN bodies in Sierra Leone so as to ensure that the right Human Rights standards are embedded in it.

The military law enforcement personnel are guided by International Humanitarian Law rules especially the Four Geneva Conventions and the Two Additional Protocol. Section 68 of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone (Amendment) Act No.13 of 2000 says: "Any person subject to military law under this Ordinance who is guilty of disgraceful conduct of a cruel, indecent or unnatural kind shall...be liable for conviction for a term not exceeding two years".

Professionals who are likely to be involved in the interrogation, custody or treatment of any individual/s subjected to any form of arrest, detention or imprisonment are bound by oath to adhere to what is humane and ensconcing their professionalism with integrity. The medical personnel are so guided at the end of training to swear to such an oath and this applies also to the legal practitioners.

Prison Officers have benefitted from a lot of training on the Standard Minimum Treatment required for prisoners. A recent report released - Behind the Walls: An Inventory and

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1 Paragraph 5, page 6, Revised in August 2003.
Assessment of Prisons in Sierra Leone has brought out the fact that there has been some education on the prohibition of torture and other cruel and inhumane or degrading treatment. This report assessed how the legal framework conforms to international standards and reported how solitary confinement is sometimes translated into inhuman treatment as the infrastructure of many prison facilities across the country does not allow section 35 of the Prison Rules to be in harmony with Rule 32 of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (UN SMR) which forbids punishment of a prisoner in a dark cell. The infrastructure has rendered this provision powerless as lack of electricity (even in proper cells) translates solitary confinement into confinement in a dark cell as cells used are often in darkness. The infrastructure also belies the provision in section 53 of the Prison Rules that prohibit discrimination especially with regards to the exercise prisoners in solitary confinement should get which is contrary to Rule 21 of the UN SMR.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) recommended that corporal punishment be abolished as even though section 73 of the Prison Rules and section 57 of the Prison Ordinance allow for corporal punishment it is by its very nature cruel and inhuman treatment. The Constitution in section 20 (2) actually sanctions this but it is in contravention of the international standards especially rule 31 of the UN SMR. What must be the fundamental principle is article 10 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which asks that all persons deprived of their liberty be afforded humane treatment preserving their respect and inherent dignity at all times.

Section 45 of the Prison Ordinance mandates labour for prisoners without any mention of remuneration of any kind. The effect of this that prisoners are subjected to labour in government offices and private residences without any compensation which makes this labour of an affirmative nature contrary to Rule 71 and 76 of the UN SMR. The Sierra Leone Correctional Service Bill which has been prepared and is awaiting enactment in Parliament however abolishes sentencing with hard labour.

17. Please indicate whether any steps are being taken to enact legislation explicitly prohibiting the practice of female genital mutilation/circumcision (FGM/C), to prosecute and punish offenders and to raise awareness among the population about the harmful effects.

The ban on the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) for girls below 18 years old was included in the Agenda for Prosperity and that Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) were signed at local level in this regard; it however calls the GoSL to organize the national dialogue building on these progress to frankly discuss further steps

18. Please outline the measures taken to ensure that the law explicitly prohibits corporal punishment in all settings, including the home.

Child Rights Act of 2007 prohibits corporal punishment for children

**Elimination of slavery and servitude (art. 8)**

19. Please provide information on the measures taken to combat trafficking in women, men and children for purposes of sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude, inter alia the steps taken to identify and investigate such cases, prosecute and sanction perpetrators and ensure victims’ access to effective remedies, including compensation and

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1 It states that every sentence of imprisonment whether the sentence was one of imprisonment within hard labour or simple imprisonment, passed upon any criminal prisoner, shall work as directed by the officer in charge.
rehabilitation, and provide relevant statistics. Please also elaborate on any counter-
trafficking measures, including training programmes for authorities implementing the
measures against trafficking, and awareness-raising programmes.

Sierra Leone passed the Anti-Human Trafficking Act in 2005. A Unit has been set up
within the Office for National Security to coordinate the monitoring of human trafficking.
There are Anti-Trafficking Units comprising police and immigration officers at border
points.

Refugees and asylum seekers (art. 13)

20. Please provide information on the progress made in revising the Refugees Protection
   Act 2007 with a view to ensuring unhindered access to, and transparency of, the refugee
   status determination procedure.

   The Refugee Protection Act was enacted in 2007. The Secretariat is at MFAID and is now
   fully operational. There is a multi-sectoral Appeals Committee, chaired by a judge.

Right to liberty and security of person, treatment of persons deprived
of their liberty, fair trial and independence of the judiciary (arts. 7, 9,
10, 14, 15 and 24)

21. Please indicate the measures taken to prevent and address cases of arbitrary
   deprivation of liberty, to ensure that such cases are duly recorded and that effective
   remedies, including adequate compensation, are available in practice to victims.

22. Please indicate the measures taken to address lengthy pretrial detention and to
   ensure segregation of pretrial detainees from convicted detainees. Is there any legal
   framework protecting those held in pretrial detention? Please comment on reports of
   excessive use of pretrial detention for petty offences as well as on reports that courts have
   discretionary power over the granting of bail, individuals often being asked to pay bribes at
   police stations or court before bail can be granted. Please provide information on non-
custodial alternative measures to pretrial detention and their application.

23. Please report on the measures taken to address the harsh conditions of detention,
   including overcrowding, in prisons, jails and police holding cells, inadequate food, water
   and sanitation facilities, and medical care, as well as lack of adequate recreational and
   educational facilities. Please respond to allegations that harsh disciplinary measures are
   employed against prisoners. To what extent is the State party using alternative sanctions to
   detention in an effort to reduce prison population? Has a system been established for
   regular and independent monitoring of places of detention? What practical steps have been
   taken to guarantee the right of inmates to submit complaints and to ensure that
   complainants are not subject to reprisals? Does the State party plan to review its prison
   rules and ordinance of 1960 and 1961?

We are in the process of transforming the Sierra Leone Prisons Department into an
institution that meets minimum international standards. We are also on the verge of
enacting a revised Criminal Procedure Act which, among other things, will introduce
alternative sentencing. We have also given high priority to efforts aimed at reducing the
backlog of cases in our Courts, and overcrowding in our prisons.

24. Please provide information on the implementation in practice of the Justice Sector
Reform Strategy 2008-2010 and the results achieved. With reference to the information provided in the State party’s report (CCPR/C/SLE/1, para. 83), please clarify the instances when the burden of proof is shifted from the prosecution to the accused and indicate how this is compliant with the presumption of innocence principle.

25. Please provide information on measures taken to strengthen the capacity of the judicial system, combat corruption within the judiciary, ensure access to justice for all and address the lengthy delays in the administration of justice, the lack of resources, insufficient personnel and poor staff training, as well as the increasing backlog of cases. Please provide statistics on the number of judges, magistrates, prosecuting attorneys and lawyers (including State counsels) and the number of cases pending examination in courts of different levels. Please also report on measures taken to ensure access to the formal justice system in rural areas and to ensure that local courts abide by the principles of independence and impartiality and observe due process guarantees.

This realization of this Local Courts Act brings the Local Councils under the direct purview of the Chief Justice, with the aim of removing political influence from the Courts. Act brings the Local Councils under the direct purview of the Chief Justice, with the aim of removing political influence from the Courts.

26. Please explain how domestic courts interpret the definition of fair hearing “within a reasonable time” and the compatibility of such interpretation with the Covenant. Please also indicate whether adequate remedies are provided in practice for delays in proceedings. Please report on concrete measures taken to ensure fair trial guarantees to all, including providing a right to appeal, access to interpreters and legal representation. Please provide information on the implementation in practice of the Legal Aid Act 2012 and the availability of legal services to vulnerable and disadvantaged persons, especially those living in the provinces and rural areas.

27. Please report on measures taken to improve the situation of juvenile offenders and to ensure that (a) only persons who are 18 years or above are treated, for the purposes of criminal law, as adults; (b) juvenile offenders are segregated from adult offenders; (c) detention is used as a last resort and only for as short a time as possible. Please elaborate on any available alternative sanctions to imprisonment of juvenile offenders and their application in practice, and also indicate whether the State party envisages prohibiting the imposition of life imprisonment on juveniles.

28. Please report on measures taken to ensure the reintegration of child soldiers into society.

**Freedom of expression (art. 19)**

29. Please indicate whether the State party intends to repeal the seditious libel provisions contained in the 1965 Public Order Act which limit the full enjoyment of the rights of freedom of expression and information and which are widely used to intimidate journalists and human rights defenders. Please also indicate whether the Freedom of Information Act has been adopted.
Dissemination of information relating to the Covenant (art. 2)

30. Please provide information on the steps taken to disseminate information on the Covenant and its First Optional Protocol, the submission of the first periodic report of the State party, and its forthcoming examination by the Committee. Please also provide more information on the involvement of civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone in the preparatory process of the report.