



Pre-UPR consultative meeting on Sierra Leone

VENUE: TBC

DATE: TBC

CONCEPT NOTE

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) was created through the UN General Assembly on 15 March 2006 by resolution 60/251, which also established the Human Rights Council. The UPR is a State-driven process which reviews the human rights records of the UN Member States once every four years, providing an opportunity for States to demonstrate what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situation in their countries. This is carried out as a mechanism to monitor states respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and aims at improving the human rights situation in all countries, identifying human rights violations wherever they occur, and supporting States to rectify them.

Sierra Leone was first reviewed on 5 May 2011 and following the review, accepted 126 recommendations including commitments to uphold the right to freedom of expression and assembly and to improve human rights. Sierra Leone is due for its next review in January 2016 and submissions from civil society on the state of human rights between 2011 and 2015 are due to be submitted to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on or before 23 June 2015. Sierra Leone has faced enormous political and socio-economic challenges over the last decade recovering from a brutal civil war and since 2014 combating the deadly ebola virus. These need to be taken into account in assessing the state of human rights for the period under review. Unfortunately, the state has been complicit in certain instances in restricting freedom of expression and has on occasion targeted civil society activists.

The Campaign for Good Governance, an organisation whose objective is to increase citizen participation in governance through advocacy, capacity building and civic education in order to build a more informed civil populace and democratic state and CIVICUS, the global alliance for citizen participation plan to organise a pre UPR consultation in Freetown on The consultation will bring together representatives of civil society organisations from the different regions in Sierra Leone.

The objective of the meeting is to:

1. Discuss challenges to human rights and freedoms of expression, association and assembly in Sierra Leone between 2011 and now.



2. Identify key examples and cases which show restrictions on media freedoms, human rights activists and civil society organisations imposed by the government.
3. Develop follow-up recommendations to the government of Sierra Leone which will be included in the UPR submission which is due by 23 June.
4. Use feedback from the consultations to develop the UPR submission on Sierra Leone.