**Ref: Protecting Human Rights and After the COVID-19, Joint Questionnaire by Special Procedure Mandate Holders**

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the enjoyment of the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the individual; something every person in Sierra Leone was, prior to the pandemic, entitled to irrespective of his race, tribe, and place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed, sex or sexual orientation. Without derogating from the generality of the impact, and notwithstanding the provisions in the Constitution of Sierra Leone, 1991 (Act No.6 of 1991) (hereinafter The Constitution), there is now restrictions on the movement of persons within defined localities in the country.
2. Following the pandemic, a proclamation was made by the President pursuant subsection (1) of section 29 of The Constitution declaring that a State of Public Emergency exists in the whole of the Republic of Sierra Leone for a year. This declaration has had a limiting effect on human rights as during this period, the President is vested with the powers to make regulations and take such measures as appear to him to be necessary or expedient for the purpose of maintaining and securing peace, order and good government in Sierra Leone or any part thereof.
3. As noted supra, the measures taken by the President in declaring that a State of Public Emergency exists in the whole of the Republic of Sierra Leone is provided for by the principal law in our jurisdiction - The Constitution.
4. The measures, including the restrictions on the movement of persons within defined localities in the country, among others, are necessary to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic because of the public danger which clearly constitutes a threat to the existence of the State of Sierra Leone.
5. The measures are proportional in view of the expected results to counter the pandemic. Most people are being allowed to go about their daily chores, barring the inter-district lockdown, and keep to health guidelines from health care professionals, including social distancing, wearing of face masks in public places and washing hands regularly.
6. The measures have no discriminatory effect and apply to all without regard to race, tribe, and place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed, sex, sexual orientation or social status.
7. The responses to the COVID-19 pandemic may have generally had some effect on promoting and protecting human rights but have not rolled back considerably the gains made in the enjoyment of the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the individual. It is worthy to note that the fundamental principles of the State, *inter alia*, is to ensure the security, peace and welfare of the people of Sierra Leone; thus the extraordinary measures taken during the pandemic is in fulfilment of the primary purpose and responsibility of Government.
8. The earlier this pandemic is dealt with, the better for the protection and promotion of human rights. Restricting the movement of people, whether at inter-district or international level, and lockdowns including the imposition of night to dawn nationwide curfew all risk undermining the enjoyment of human rights.