



HRCSL CHAIRPERSON DISCUSSES ‘SIERRA LEONE AT 60: ‘CHANGING THE NARRATIVE FOR THE AGED IN THE POST COVID -19 ERA’.

Freetown- 24th April, 2021

She discussed issues around the enjoyment of human rights by all noting that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) made it clear that ‘All human beings are born equal and no one should be discriminated against despite their colour, origin, religion, political affiliation and most especially age.

She informed all that a series of conferences have been held to discuss issues around the enjoyment of rights for older people since 1982. She cited the 1st and 2nd World Conferences on the Aged in 1982 and 2002, the 1991 UN Principles for Older Persons, the Africa Union Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing, the 2016 AU Protocol on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa and at the national level the National Ageing Policy 2018-2030.

She noted that all of the above focuses on rights of older persons and steps that government should take to ensure that older persons i.e. 60 years and above are provided with the enabling environment to live despite their ages and subsequently that older people’s rights are respected and protected. She noted that from the human rights perspective, age should not be a factor for discrimination.

She informed all that discussions on getting the National Ageing Policy to a bill is currently ongoing and will soon become law. She noted government’s support to fifty thousand extremely vulnerable aged through the provisions of quarterly stipend and also support to community farms in some piloted communities being part of the policy provisions for the aged.

Participants were further informed that human rights are enshrined in the law and protected by the state. Adding that the state has its human rights obligations of respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights and encourage all to have a copy of the national policy which will serve as an eye opener for older persons to claim their rights through the provisions in the law.

She concluded by saying "the enjoyment of human rights is our collective responsibility" and encouraged all to be part of the process.