



THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF SIERRA LEONE

PRESS STATEMENT ON THE INCIDENT OF 26 NOVEMBER 2023

Freetown, Monday 27th November 2023

The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) is gravely concerned over the recent security breaches that occurred on Sunday 26th November 2023 in which some unknown persons attacked the following places; the military armoury at Wilberforce Barracks in Freetown, the military headquarters at Cockeril, some Police Stations and also the Freetown Male and Female Correctional Centers. Sadly, the breach at the Male Correctional Center accorded inmates an opportunity to flee their cells and jumped onto the streets of Freetown. Such ugly incidents hugely undermine the security of the state and the general enjoyment of human rights.

HRCSL therefore **STRONGLY CONDEMNS** the actions of all those who were involved in undermining the security of the state and by extension the enjoyment of human rights.

The Commission acknowledges the bravery and patriotism displayed by those compatriots in the security sector who resisted and thwarted the plans of enemies of the State. We **STRONGLY URGE** government to bring all perpetrators to book.

The Commission notes with delight the President's commitment to due process in the investigation and prosecution of perpetrators of yesterday's incident as expressed in his Presidential Address of 26th November 2023.

The Commission however reminds Government that the security and welfare of citizens is the responsibility of the State pursuant to Section 5 (2)(b) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, 1991 which stipulates that ***'the security, peace and welfare of the people of Sierra Leone shall be the primary purpose and responsibility of Government, and to this end it shall be the duty of the Armed Forces, the Police, Public Officers and all security agents to protect and safeguard the people of Sierra Leone'***

We therefore call on Government to take every step necessary and legal to protect innocent citizens and residents and to always take proactive steps aimed at averting such ugly incidents.

We also call on all citizens and residents to be law-abiding and cooperate with the Security Forces by rendering appropriate assistance to law enforcement agencies to restore calm and maintain law and order pursuant to Section 13(a) & (j) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991.

As a Commission, we express our deepest condolences to the families of all those patriotic security personnel who lost their lives during yesterday's unfortunate incident.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Patricia Narsu Ndanema', is written over a horizontal line.

Chairperson

Patricia Narsu Ndanema (Mrs.)

END