



THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF SIERRA LEONE

HRCSL Commemorates International Human Rights Day

The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone on 10th December 2025 held an engagement at the Sierra Leone National Museum to commemorate International Human Rights Day. The event was organised under the local theme, “Remembering the Horrors of the Civil War, Seeking Reparations for War Victims, and Committing to ‘Never Again’.”



The commemoration was supported by World Vision International through the National AIDS Secretariat and brought together survivors of the civil war, government representatives, and human rights advocates.

Commissioner Hassan Samba Yarjah moderated the engagement, emphasising the need to uphold justice and human dignity.

“Every Sierra Leonean deserves justice, safety, and the ability to thrive,” he said.



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War survivor Abass Sesay shared his personal account of the conflict, recalling that he was only three years old when his right arm was amputated.

“My father and grandmother were killed, and my mother still battles Bipolar Disorder and PTSD—scars that never stop aching,” he said.

Sesay added that many victims continue to face significant obstacles, including lack of access to education, unemployment due to disability, untreated medical conditions, and social exclusion.



“Those who suffered great atrocities must not be forgotten,” he said, urging authorities to fully implement the TRC recommendations and prioritize mental health support for survivors and their families.

HRCSL Chairperson Patricia Narsu Ndanema highlighted this year’s global theme, “Human Rights, Our Everyday Essentials,” which underscores the right to food, water, health, security, shelter, and freedom from violence and discrimination.



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Reflecting on the civil war, she noted that thousands of Sierra Leoneans were denied these rights.



Quoting from the TRC Report, she said: “The central cause of the war was endemic greed, corruption, and nepotism that deprived the nation of its dignity and reduced most people to a state of poverty.”

She reaffirmed the Commission’s call for sustained national commitment to fully implement reparations.

Deputy Commissioner of NaCSA, Dr. Susan Robert, outlined the agency’s work in supporting war widows, amputees, war-wounded survivors, and child victims under the reparations programme.

Delivering the keynote address, the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Alpha Sesay, reflected on the devastation of the 11-year conflict, describing it as “a chapter of our history we must never sanitise.”

He said the pathway to justice for war victims requires “a two-pronged approach: robust accountability and comprehensive reparations.”

Sesay further expressed government’s commitment to strengthening democratic institutions, reinforcing judicial independence, confronting



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corruption, protecting freedom of expression, and supporting the work of the HRC SL.



The event ended with the signing of a national “Never Again” commitment, symbolizing a unified pledge by government institutions, survivors, and partners to prevent future conflict and uphold human rights across Sierra Leone.

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