



**SIERRA LEONE**  
**23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the UPR**

**SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE**

11 November 2015

Madam Vice-President,

Sierra Leone welcomes the delegation of Sao Tome and Principe and thanks them for the presentation of their second cycle national report.

My delegation commends the Government of Sao Tome and Principe for the progress achieved since their last review cycle four years ago, which we believe demonstrates their continued commitment to upholding human rights standards nationally.

We note, with particular interest the recent ratification of the CRPD in 2014, the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (2012 – 2016) and the justice sector reforms which commenced this year.

Sierra Leone notes that the Child Rights Committee has ceased to operate since 2012, and urges Sao Tome and Principe to reinstate it and grant it the necessary resources to continue its work.

Sierra Leone offers the following recommendations:

1. Ratify six of the core international human rights instruments, including, CAT, ICCPED, ICRMW and the ICESCR.
2. Accelerate efforts to establish an independent national human rights institution which is in conformity with the Paris Principles.
3. Submit its long overdue reports to the relevant treaty bodies.
4. Develop a comprehensive strategy and national plan of action for the implementation of the CRC.
5. Comprehensively address harmful cultural practices, and increase the age of marriage to 18, in conformity with the provisions of the CRC.

It is praiseworthy that various strategies are being undertaken by the government to promote food security, including the recent investments into modernising its production infrastructure, as well as establishing a 30% quota for the participation of women in Parliament.

However, my delegation would encourage Sao Tome and Principe to ensure free birth registration and facilitate the issuance of birth certificates.

Given its geographical location, my delegation believes that fostering regional partnerships would be vital to assisting the country in developing sustainable strategies to mitigate and adapt to the adverse impact of climate change.

Finally, while it is understandable that there may have been certain technical constraints, the availability of the national report in all the official UN languages would have better enabled delegations to fully consider all the developments outlined in their national report.

Sierra Leone wishes Sao Tome and Principe every success in completing this review cycle.

Thank you, Madam Vice-President.