



UPR 24, Jan 27, 2016
Recommendations by Canada for the Republic of Sierra Leone's UPR

Recommendations

Canada recommends that Sierra Leone:

1. Combat impunity by ensuring prompt, thorough and transparent investigations of all violations against human rights defenders, and prosecute perpetrators.
2. Decriminalize same-sex conduct between consenting adults and pass legislation to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.
3. End the practice of prohibiting pregnant girls in Sierra Leone from attending schools and taking exams, in accordance with Article 2 and 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
4. Take steps to fully and effectively implement the 2013 Freedom of Information Act, including by repealing criminal libel laws and the 1965 Public Order Act.
5. Amend the Sierra Leone Citizenship Act so that women can transfer their nationality to their children and non-national spouses on an equal basis with men, and include a provision in the new Constitution which grants equal nationality rights to men and women.

Observations

Canada commends Sierra Leone for its sponsorship of Human Rights Council Resolution 27/31 on the protection of civil society space. We encourage Sierra Leone to take necessary steps to ensure that all individuals enjoy the constitutionally protected rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and that all human rights defenders in Sierra Leone, including women, can operate free from hindrance and insecurity.

Canada acknowledges steps taken by Sierra Leone to implement the "Let Girls be Girls, Not Mothers" national strategy for the reduction of teenage pregnancy. However, we are concerned that school girls are forced to take pregnancy tests and are kept out of school if found pregnant. We stress the importance of protecting girls' right to education and privacy rights.