

**HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
24TH SESSION OF THE UPR WORKING GROUP**

**Statement by
Miss Cherryl Gordon, Minister/Deputy Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Jamaica
to the
Universal Periodic Review of
SIERRA LEONE**

Geneva, 27th January 2016

Jamaica welcomes the Delegation of Sierra Leone, and thanks them for the update on the situation of human rights in that country.

Being fully cognisant of the impact of the Ebola crisis on the structural integrity of the nation, we commend Sierra Leone for its courageous commitment to human rights, in the midst of grappling with the Disease; including reforming and promulgating legislation and working with the OHCHR to ensure that Ebola interventions respected human rights.

While understanding the enormous re-building task ahead, we recommend the following measures, with appropriate support from civil society, regional partners, and the international community:

- 1) Prioritise the setting-up of the Independent Police Complaint Board, building on best practices of the Complaints, Discipline and Internal Investigations Department (CDIID);
- 2) Incorporate lessons learned from the Ebola crisis in future policies and actions for human rights promotion and protection, including in the Constitutional Review Process;
- 3) Strive for a careful balance between measures taken against harmful traditional practices and respect for traditional cultural and spiritual beliefs; and
- 4) Permit teen-aged mothers to return to formal education and to sit exams after giving birth, including through gradual approaches, such as separate classes or sittings; aimed at breaking cycles of poverty, teen-age pregnancy and domestic abuse.

Jamaica wishes Sierra Leone all the best in this current review.

"Walk Good" [For Interpreters: this is a Jamaican expression that approximates: "Go Well", "Fare Well" or "Go with God".]