

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Programme for the August 2024 Presidency
of the United Nations Security Council



PARTNERSHIP, MULTILATERALISM AND REPRESENTATIVE
APPROACH TO SUSTAINED GLOBAL PEACE AND SECURITY



SIERRA LEONE
UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY COUNCIL
(2024 - 2025)



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Provisional Programme of Work of the UN Security Council

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29 JULY	30	31	1 AUG PR breakfast 10:30 AM Coordinators' meeting Consultations 11:30 AM Programme of work	2	3	4
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26	27 <i>OPCW report due</i>	28 Briefing (A.M.) Middle East Consultations (A.M.) Middle East (Syria) [pol/hum]	29 Adoption (A.M.) UNIFIL Consultations (A.M.) 1718 Committee <i>Migrant smuggling report due</i>	30 <i>Wrap-up session (P.M.)</i>	31 <i>UNIFIL mandate expires</i> <i>UNOCA mandate expires</i>	1 SEPT

Introduction to the Key Activities in the Provisional Programme of Work of the UN Security Council

In January 2024, Sierra Leone returned to the UNSC after 53 years since its previous and first tenure. Although frozen conflicts including the Middle East and the Question of Palestine remain on the Council's agenda, there have been marked global geopolitical shifts, from the end of colonialism, the end of the Cold War, the emergence of new global powers, and the rising influence of middle powers. This has led to the expressed view that the current geopolitical context is multipolar. Accordingly, the multilateral institutions and multilateralism must respond to contemporary global realities, be equitable, representative, and democratic.

In the 53 years, Sierra Leone has had a storied journey and experienced many challenges and transformations. In 2002, the decade long civil war was declared over, thus ushering a period of peacebuilding, peace consolidation and recovery. This was achieved in partnership with the international community led by the United Nations (UN). Today, Sierra Leone in many respects is seen as a model in nurturing the dividend of peace, and continually working to ensure peace and security, deepening democratic governance, and social cohesion. The concrete actions and policies development are aimed at addressing the root causes of conflict. This experience remains its most valuable asset within the work of the UNSC.

In addition to its priorities during its tenure as an elected member of the UNSC, in the August 2024 Presidency, Sierra Leone will particularly spotlight as signature events firstly, the imperative to address the structural imbalance in the composition

of the UNSC, through a focused discussion on its reform, examining the topics of equitable representation and rectifying the historical injustice being perpetuated against Africa. Africa, the largest regional group at the United Nations with 54 member States, and a continent of more than 1.8 billion people, is without a permanent seat in the Council, and grossly underrepresented in the non-permanent category with three seats, one seat alternated with Arab representation.

This first signature event on the reform of the UNSC will be held as a high-level debate of the UNSC to be presided over by **His Excellency, Brig. (Rtd.) Dr. Julius Maada Bio, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone** and Coordinator of the African Union Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government on the reform of the UN Security Council (C-10) on 12 August 2024. The Secretary-General of the United Nations and President of the General Assembly for the 78th session have been invited to brief the Council. They will be joined by a briefer from academia.

Member States and Interest Groups engaged in Intergovernmental Negotiations at the United Nations General Assembly on Security Council reform will participate in the debate. This includes C-10 Heads of State and Government or their representatives. The event presents a historical and unique opportunity for an unprecedented debate in the Council. It will also be an excellent build up to the Summit of the Future in September 2024, with input to the Summit's Pact for the Future containing the critical paragraph that Africa's case is special and therefore to be prioritized.

The **second signature event** will be an open debate of the UNSC to be held on 21 August 2024, and aimed at highlighting the importance of peacebuilding, the utility of prevention as part of the myriad of tools in maintaining international peace and security in the New Agenda of Peace, the UN Secretary-General's prevention strategy, using its lived experience to inform current debate on concrete measures to prevent conflict, and discussing the role of women as well. The meeting will be presided over by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone. It builds on a previous peacebuilding event held by Japan during its Presidency of the Council, and an excellent precursor to the Summit of the Future.

Part of the objective of the peacebuilding signature event is to spotlight Sierra Leone's peace journey and providing the opportunity for discussing aspects of the New Agenda for Peace, conflict prevention tools, the UN Secretary-General's prevention strategy and the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution. Sierra Leone is not only seen as a model of success in conflict resolution, peacebuilding and consolidation, but also a leader in implementing the New Agenda of Peace, particularly in reference to institution building and preventive actions. Sierra Leone's month-long Peace Exhibit at the Delegate's Entrance will provide a visual backdrop to this event.

Before the signature events, Sierra Leone also intends to convene a thematic briefing on "Women and Peace and Security (WPS): Gender-Responsive Approach to the United Nations Mission Transitions". This briefing is part of the implementation of the WPS commitments made by Sierra Leone during its tenure at the UNSC. The briefing seeks to increase awareness and

strengthen action by the Security Council in the context of accelerated drawdown trends amidst withdrawals of peacekeeping missions or operations.

During Sierra Leone's presidency of the UNSC, the international community will celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949. The significant milestone in the codification of the rules for the protection of civilians, armed forces, and others during armed conflict will be commemorated in Geneva at the request of Switzerland (an elected member of the Council). Sierra Leone has agreed to include the event on the programme of work of the Council during the August 2024 presidency.

It is noteworthy that Sierra Leone has prioritized accountability, premised on, inter alia, due compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law (IHL), as embodied by the Geneva Conventions. When IHL is respected, lives are saved, and the dignity of people upheld. Even wars have rules. In the current context of conflicts, for instance, in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan the need for IHL compliance has become even more prominent, and accountability imperative.

Following the Geneva Convention commemorative meeting, Sierra Leone intends to wrap-up its Presidency with a series of activities to celebrate the "Culture of Peace" exhibition. This peace expo will bring together core elements of the nexus between peace, security and development, as well as celebrating the unique characteristics of Sierra Leone.



Excerpt of His Excellency Brig. (Rtd.) Dr. Julius Maada Bio, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone Statement at the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly High Level Week General Debate

(NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 2023)



Mr. President of the General Assembly,

As Sierra Leone takes its non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council for the 2024-2025 term, we are deeply aware of our shared duty to uphold international peace and security. The profound nexus between peace, development and human rights will be the beacon guiding our priorities. We stand poised, resolute and committed to forging a world where these ideals are not mere aspirations but enduring realities for all. As Sierra Leone returns to the Security Council after a hiatus of 53 years, it does so with a profound awareness of its responsibility. We view with deep concern the rising tides of insecurity and the subtle erosion of democratic governance and ideals in the West African subregion and the Sahel. Beyond our previously mentioned priorities, the fortification of peace, the bolstering of democracy, and the unwavering

protection of human rights in the West African subregions and the Sahel are paramount on our agenda.

Our goal remains to thwart the seeds of conflict before they sprout, to ensure sustainable resources for African Union-led peace operations, and to silence the guns decisively and forever in Africa.

We seek not just the absence of conflict but the presence of enduring harmony and justice for all.

Mr. President,

Sierra Leone recognises the pressing issue of the Security Council's legitimacy, equitable representation, and transparency. In a world reshaped by geopolitical realities, true global peace and security hinge upon the reform and rejuvenation of the UN Security Council and the General Assembly.

Joined by fellow UN Member States, Sierra Leone committed at the 2005 World Summit to "support early reform of the Security Council — an essential element of our overall effort to reform the United Nations — to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent and thus to enhance further its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions".

While the discourse has seen forward movement, the historical injustices endured by the African Continent remain unresolved at the intergovernmental negotiations. Africa glaringly stands alone as the only region without permanent representation within the Security Council and is conspicuously underrepresented in its non-permanent category. The UN Security Council remains trapped in the era of 1945 when much of Africa was still in the regrettable grip of colonialism. We must not allow this colonial paradigm to persist three-quarters of a century later.

Africa's demand for two Permanent seats — complete with commensurate rights, including the veto if maintained — and five non-permanent seats are issues of equity, justice and our right to have an equal say in decision-making on issues that affect the African region.

The Reform of the United Nations Security Council in Focus

Excerpt of H.E. Brig. (Rtd.) Dr. Julius Maada Bio, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Coordinator of the African Union Committee of Ten Heads of States and Government on the Reform of the United Nations Security Council (C-10) Statement at the C-10 Summit in Oyala, Equatorial Guinea

(24 NOVEMBER 2023)

“

I am pleased to inform you that I have tasked my Mission in New York to use the Sierra Leone Presidency of the UN Security Council in August 2024 to hold a high-level event, one of our signature events, on the reform of the UN Security Council and the imperative to address the historical injustice done to Africa.

The event will offer an unparalleled opportunity for Africa to speak with one voice, calling for us to be treated as a special case and prioritised. Sierra Leone will be greatly honoured by your participation in this important signature event.



Excellencies,

The Co-Chairs of the 78th session of the IGN have proposed three elements to guide the IGN process. These include negotiations to reinforce and build convergences, structured dialogue on models of reform proposed by Member States and Groups, and Contributions for the Summit of the Future.

On the element of building convergences, our current mandate demands that we safeguard the integrity of the Common African Position. Africa's position, therefore, is unequivocal: we demand two seats in the Permanent Category of the UN Security Council and an additional two seats in the Non-Permanent Category, bringing the total of non-permanent seats to five. The African Union will choose the African Permanent Members.

On the Veto, Africa wants it to be abolished. If, however, Member States wish to retain the Veto, it must be extended to all new Permanent Members.

The Common African Position also reflects our best model to rectify the historical injustice done to Africa. In view of the directives requested by our Ambassadors in New York, we will have to consider whether we wish to provide views at this stage on the overall model for reforms and expressed views on positions of other Interest Groups and Member States.

Regarding the United Nations Summit of the Future in September 2024, allow me to first congratulate and commend Namibia and Zambia on their important co-facilitating roles in the Summit for the Future.

In relation to the IGN Co-Chairs' proposed input from the UN Security Council reform process, our aim should be to have an unequivocal message of addressing the non-representation of Africa in the Permanent Category and gross underrepresentation in the Non-Permanent Category of the UN Security Council.

In effect, we should make the clarion call for Africa to be treated as a priority and special case in the reform process. I trust you will share your views on this critical point during your interventions."

Concept Note for the United Nations Security Council High Level Debate

Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Addressing the Historical Injustice and Enhancing Africa's Effective Representation in the UN Security Council

(12 AUGUST 2024)

Introduction

- The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) current structure reflects the geopolitical realities of the immediate post-World War II era. Significant changes in the global landscape however have necessitated a review of the Council's composition to ensure its effectiveness and legitimacy in addressing contemporary global security challenges. This concept note proposes a debate within the UNSC specifically focused on enhancing Africa's representation, a longstanding concern with historical context.
- The UNSC as the primary body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security is mandated by the Charter of the United Nations (UN) to take decisions on matters of international peace and security binding on member States of the UN. It is in this regard that the UN Charter in article 24 (1) outlines the collective security scheme in which the members of the UN confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and this is to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations.
- Against this background it is important to note that the continent of Africa which represents 54 of the 193 members of the UN, accounts for 1.3 billion of the world's population, hosts the majority of peacekeeping operations and consistently provides four among the top ten troop contributing countries to UN peacekeeping operations, does not have a seat in the permanent category of the UNSC and is grossly underrepresented in the non-permanent category. This clearly goes against the article 2(1) UN Charter principle of the sovereign equality of all member States. This historical injustice done to the continent, therefore, must be reversed and Africa must be treated as a special case.

Impact of lack of representation on the maintenance of regional peace and security

- Though increasingly required to do more in response to these new and emerging threats and toward the enforcement of regional peace and security in the region, the absence of correlating powers and lack of representation on the body with the primary responsibility on matters of peace and security has hampered Africa's ability to effectively influence UNSC deliberations and to deliver on its' mandate of maintaining peace and security on the continent. This has largely made the notion concept of African solutions for African challenges, with African leadership mainly rhetorical. The effect is that decades after the end of colonization and the dismantling of apartheid, the fate of the continent continues to remain in the hands of other nations with asymmetrical decision-making powers, which often determine the direction of the affairs of the continent.
- The World Summit Outcome Document of 2005 adopted by UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution 60/1 (of 24th October 2005) reaffirmed member States' commitment "to early reform of the Security Council as an essential element of the overall effort to reform the United Nations in order to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent and enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions". On 15 September 2008, the UNGA adopted Decision 62/557 on the "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters", with calls to "commence intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform in informal plenary of the General Assembly during the sixty third session of the General Assembly, but not later than 28 February 2009, based on proposals by Member States, in good faith, with mutual respect and in an open, inclusive and transparent manner, on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council, seeking a solution that can garner the widest possible political acceptance by Member States".
- Since the 73rd session of the IGNC at the UNGA, member States, as reflected by the Co-Chairs, continue to "acknowledge the legitimate aspirations of African countries to play their rightful role on the global stage including through an increased presence in the Security Council as a priority". Additionally, it noted that the "reform of the Security Council should reflect the realities of the contemporary world, especially the increased representation of developing countries, small and medium sized states".

The Common African Position on UNSC Reform

- The core demands of the Common African Position (CAP) on UNSC reform are enunciated in the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration, and the continent views the CAP as the only viable option that reflects Africa's legitimate right and aspiration to rectify, inter alia, the historical injustice endured by the Continent. The CAP demands two permanent seats for Africa, with all the privileges and prerogatives of permanent membership including the right to veto if retained, and five non-permanent

seats the UNSC. Under the CAP, Africa reserves the right to select the candidates that would be considered for election by the UNGA. The CAP has gained much broad support from the member States participating in the IGN, and at the highest political level, including by present Permanent members.

Objectives of debate

The objectives of the debate include:

- To acknowledge and address the historical context of Africa's nonrepresentation in the permanent category and the gross underrepresentation in the UNSC. In this regard the discussions are intended to focus on equitable geographical representation and reversing the historical injustice done to Africa as pressing and key for restoring the Council's legitimacy, credibility, and effectiveness and for reigniting the Council's ability to deliver effectively on its mandate for preserving international peace and security.
- To bring attention to the CAP while mobilizing interest among member States to further consolidate convergences, outlining the path to treating Africa as a special case and priority in the reform process.
- To explore the potential impact of increased African representation on the effectiveness and legitimacy of the UNSC in addressing global security issues, particularly those concerning Africa.
- To identify potential challenges and propose solutions for navigating the UNSC reform process towards a more equitable outcome.
- To serve as a call to action to African nations and supporters of the CAP.

Guiding Questions

The questions to guide the high-level debate include:

- The current structure of the Security Council reflects the historical marginalization of Africa. How can this be rectified?
- The lack of permanent African representation undermines the legitimacy of the Security Council on issues concerning Africa. How can this be addressed?
- How has the historical injustices to Africa hindered the Continent's ability to contribute effectively on the global governance stage?

- What are the linkages between lack of representation in the Security Council and the ability of regional authorities to maintain regional peace and security?
- What are the immediate steps that can be taken by member States to provide support for the Common African Position? How can Africa be treated as a special case and priority in the reform process?

Format of Debate

- The format of the meeting will be a high-level debate with rule 37 participation by member States of the United Nations who are members of the African Union Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government on the reform of the UN Security Council, and one representative from each of the interest groups negotiating in the IGN and each of the regional groups.
- There will be three briefers including Secretary-General H.E. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations; H.E. Denis Francis, President of the General Assembly; and a briefier from academia.

Peacebuilding – the Importance of Prevention

Security Council High-Level Open Debate on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace: Addressing Global, Regional and National Aspects of Conflict Prevention



United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan meets with President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leone at the presidential lodge. 3 July 2006

Introduction

As there is a global uptick in violent conflict and regression in addressing threats to international peace and security, with conflict prevention severely limited, Sierra Leone, during its August 2024 Presidency of the United Nations Security Council will convene an open debate to reflect upon the United Nations Secretary-General's A New Agenda for Peace and how it can help to **engender mechanisms for conflict preventing, addressing threats to peace from the global, regional and national institutional perspectives.**

Context / Background

In July 2023, the United Nations Secretary-General's A New Agenda for Peace set out a vision to strengthen multilateral action for peace in a world in transition, a vision intended as an input to the Summit of the Future. A New Agenda for Peace considers the threats to peace and security in today's world and examines ways that Member States can move beyond the current logic of competition and find avenues for cooperation and collective action to pursue shared interests.

In A New Agenda for Peace, the Secretary-General underscores **conflict prevention** as a political priority while noting that prevention saves lives and safeguards development gains. Nonetheless, it does not receive the priority it deserves. The Secretary-General emphasizes that countries must move beyond words and **invest in prevention**, with effective prevention requiring comprehensive approaches, political will, effective partnerships, sustainable resources and national ownership. At the national level, A New Agenda for Peace urges that all States should agree to **recognize prevention and sustaining peace as universal goals**.

A New Agenda for Peace is a key opportunity to give new momentum to nationally led prevention strategies. These strategies are fertile ground to make progress on the UN prevention agenda:

- In the current divided geopolitical context, **nationally led prevention strategies benefit from strong support among Member States across these divides**. By focusing on being destigmatizing and sovereignty-supporting, such strategies assuage political concerns and open up the space for constructive discussions on prevention;
- **From a technical perspective, they are essential to reduce internal violence**: they recognize that there is no one-size-fits-all and that only national actors can strengthen their own social contract to prevent violence from erupting;
- Nationally led violence prevention strategies are not a new approach but **build on efforts that already take place in all countries**. Such a strategy strives to connect and strengthen rather than replace; and
- A New Agenda for Peace is a good opportunity to focus on nationally led prevention strategies because we believe the **UN is well-placed to help Member States to address the main challenges that hinder progress on such strategies**, namely national actors' lack of cognizance regarding the benefits of nationally led prevention strategies; the lack of technical expertise to navigate the complexity of setting up such a system; and the lack of funding to develop a strategy.

Development-focused Conflict Prevention

In Africa, to take one regional example, countries have put in place frameworks and strategies that place the prevention of conflict on an elevated strategic level. Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2030 and its

Master Roadmap, a flagship initiative under the African Union's Agenda 2063, prioritizes prevention to ensure a peaceful and secure Africa. However, with conflict and violent extremism on the rise in the continent, it may be valuable to interrogate the question of prevention from a different angle: development-focused conflict prevention. **In this model, the proximate cause of conflict lies in a lack of inclusive and sustainable development.**

Among the various triggers of conflict, **unemployment, underemployment and other decent work deficits** have emerged as critical triggers for conflict, particularly violent extremism. A 2023 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report featuring interviews of thousands of former members of violent extremist groups found that approximately 25 per cent of voluntary recruits identified "employment opportunities" as their primary motive for joining. Many voluntary recruits worked in the informal sector, where they earned significantly less and were largely engaged in vulnerable employment. This context has been greatly exploited, for example, by extremist groups such as Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram in Africa, which have frequently and increasingly focused their recruitment efforts on areas with higher rates of poverty, unemployment and underemployment.

Improved short- and medium-term development planning is the key to preventing conflict. In this connection, development is not felt by the average citizen through data or economic statistics, but rather **at the human level through efficient governmental provision of basic services** that touch people's lives. Service delivery includes, among others, the provision of safe and sufficient housing; access to nutrition, clean water and sanitation; health care; and education – simple needs that are universal and embedded throughout the Sustainable Development Goals. Yet, every day, hundreds of millions go without having those basic needs met. While service delivery is not the only determinant of State legitimacy, it is the primary way by which citizens directly encounter the State, thus shaping their overall perception of it. In regions and States where governments grapple with a myriad of challenges, including resource and capacity constraints, rapidly rising urbanization, corruption and, in some instances, protracted conflict, **exclusion from service delivery has been shown to have a clear link to conflict as a driver, trigger or fertile ground for instability.**

In addition, the rule of law is essential for peacebuilding, with significant economic, social and political impacts. It encompasses more than just justice mechanisms and institutions; it is a fundamental public good expected from a well governed state. Unfortunately, there is a notable deterioration in the rule of law globally, with decreasing equality before the law, declining judicial impartiality, and reduced access to justice, enforcement and fairness in judicial proceedings.

While rule of law deficits is a global challenge, they are particularly acute in conflict-affected countries, where governmental incapacity and societal disintegration have profound effects. Conflicts often lead to severe shortages of judicial staff, financial resources, essential equipment and court infrastructure, exacerbated by the loss of critical legal documents. Weak rule of law and limited access to justice contribute to various forms of inequality, exclusion, and marginalization, reinforcing existing disparities and creating grievances along social lines. These deficits have been particularly devastating, hindering economic opportunities, worsening structural inequality, eroding social cohesion, undermining political stability, fueling conflict, and providing opportunities for harmful non-state actors, particularly extremist groups, to fill the void.

Objective

The open debate will seek to discuss and share best practices and concrete successful examples of conflict prevention through institutional intervention on the basis of national ownership, the efficient and effective provision of public services, within the global, regional and national lens. The open debate will additionally address the sustenance of peace and stability through inclusivity.

Best practices should be considered by Member States in the context of the Pact for the Future, which is being negotiated ahead of the Summit of the Future. The Pact for the Future should embrace the Secretary-General's call for countries to develop national prevention strategies. To help strengthen prevention efforts where they are the most needed—at country level—and improve UN support, the Pact can also help set the groundwork for providing greater clarity on how to design and implement effective national and regional prevention strategies.

Guiding questions

- What steps have national governments taken to promote good governance and the rule of law through the strengthening of institutions, promoting accountability, and fostering political inclusivity?
- How can national governments strengthen social cohesion through building trust, improving social services, increase economic development, reducing poverty, creating job opportunities, promoting sustainable development and empowering women and youth?
- What steps have national governments, regional organizations and the United Nations taken, and can take, to enhance security sector reform through professionalizing security forces, implementing Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programmes, and promoting community policing?
- What actions can national governments take to enhance conflict preventive mechanisms, including effective and nationally-owned early warning and response systems through monitoring potential conflicts, developing rapid response capabilities, and engaging local communities in conflict prevention efforts?
- How can international and regional cooperation be enhanced through promoting regional integration and engaging in peacekeeping and mediation efforts? How have national governments been involved in these processes?

Briefers / Format

The open debate will be chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

The following speakers shall brief the Security Council:

- Ms. Elizabeth Mary Spehar, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support
- H.E. Amb. Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, African Union Commission
- Ms. Hawa Samai, Executive Secretary, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion, Sierra Leone
- Civil society briefer



H.E. Dr. Fatima Maada Bio, First Lady of the Republic of Sierra Leone, introduces a draft resolution on a World Day for the Prevention of and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Violence (18 November) during the General Assembly meeting on Sexual exploitation and abuse: implementing a zero-tolerance policy. The resolution was adopted.

Prioritizing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

In the two years preceding its election as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Sierra Leone led in the adoption of two significant resolutions at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), urging for global solidarity on access to justice and remedies for survivors of sexual violence, and the dignity of child; and on the recognition of the “World Day for the Prevention of, and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Violence”, to increase awareness of child sexual abuse, to promote greater understanding of the impact of childhood sexual abuse on victims, their families, communities, and the world at large.

Accordingly, Sierra Leone understands the merit of the global call for full and equal ownership, meaningful participation and representation of women at all levels in governance, peace processes and security engagements. Sierra Leone has a rich and successful experience complementing the UNSC’s mandate in conflict prevention and peacebuilding through active advocacy for the increased role of women in this field.

During its first six (6) months on the UNSC, Sierra Leone has focused attention on critical development relating to the WPS agenda. As Co-Chair of the Informal Expert Group on Women Peace and Security (IEG), efforts have centered on guaranteeing and increasing women’s contributions and participation at all levels

of decision-making. Established in 2016, the IEG is the only UNSC forum where the situation of women and girls is exclusively examined. It serves to improve information flow and gender analysis to Council members, and to enable greater oversight on how the WPS agenda is being implemented.

The Co-Chairs invite senior UN leadership in the field, to brief the IEG on the latest developments on WPS, and such briefings have been done on Iraq, Sudan and Yemen. Sierra Leone has also signed the Shared Commitments on WPS and have participated in five press stakeouts since January 2024. In addition to negotiating Council products, Sierra Leone has advocated and urged for the inclusion of WPS language in Council products.

United Nations Security Council Briefing

CONCEPT NOTE

Women and Peace and Security: “Sustaining WPS Commitments in the context of accelerated drawdown of peace operations”

(7TH AUGUST 2024 | UNSC CHAMBER, UNHQ)

I. Background

Peacekeeping is one of the most effective tools available to the United Nations in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security and plays a crucial role in creating conditions for stability and lasting peace. UN peacekeeping has been found to play a positive role on advancing gender equality while research shows that the presence of UN peacekeeping structures can contribute to avoiding renewed

militarization in post-conflict societies and to improving gender equality over a period of 5 to 10 years.

United Nations mission transitions have emerged as a central focus of attention with several drawdowns, reconfigurations, and accelerated closures of United Nations peacekeeping operations and Special Political Missions (SPMs) during recent years.

¹ These include the closure of United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) and United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) in 2014, United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire (UNOCI) and United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in 2017, United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in 2018, the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) in 2019, United Nations - African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in 2020, United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) in 2020, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) in 2023 and the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission (UNITAMS) in 2024.

² Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security include 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019), 2493 (2019).

Since 2014, the United Nations system has managed ten transitions¹ in eight country settings. United Nations peacekeeping operations and SPMs are mandated by the Security Council to implement the Security Council resolutions on women, peace, and security.² UN operations are instrumental in facilitating women's leadership and agency including participation in peace negotiations, mechanisms for the implementation of peace agreements, national dialogues, and elections. They support human rights monitoring, with a special focus on violations of women's rights and responding to attacks on women's rights defenders.

Women participate in activities led by UN missions across all areas of mandate delivery, such as security sector reform, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, or community violence reduction, and benefit from quick impact projects, from building centers for women's organizations to furnishing girls' schools. Accelerated drawdowns, reconfiguration and exit of United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions, may pose increased risks for women and girls. Situations where the United Nations missions are closed without planned transition have a potential to both jeopardize hard-won peace gains and important contributions to gender equality and women, peace and security (WPS) agenda, and can leave women and girls in potential danger from the lack of protection from sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) and attacks on women human rights defenders and peacebuilders. When the resources allocated to running these missions are not transferred to the UN Country Team or national actors, interventions targeting women and girls and the institutional knowledge of the situation of women and girls in these contexts may also experience a sharp decline. The Security Council has invited more than three hundred women from civil society to brief the Security

Council since 2004, and more than 90 percent of them since 2017. A number of the women briefers have spoken about the risks associated with accelerated drawdowns.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015) and 2594 (2021) highlight the need for comprehensive gender analysis and technical gender expertise throughout the transition process, and call on ensuring women's full, equal, and meaningful participation in all sequenced stages of the mission. Resolution 2594 (2021) further places particular emphasis on the importance of ensuring that gains made on gender equality and WPS are highlighted and sustained throughout transition planning efforts and requests the Secretary-General to ensure that women's needs are fully integrated in all stages of a mission's mandate and transition.

The briefing will therefore focus on the impact that the drawdowns, reconfigurations and accelerated withdrawals of the United Nations missions have on women, peace and security (WPS). The meeting is an opportunity for all Member States to share specific insights and examples on:

- i. how they are supporting women's leadership and agency through their full, equal and meaningful participation in political, peacebuilding and other processes in a transition process and beyond;
- ii. measures taken to support protection from sexual and gender-based violence; and
- iii. measures for consideration by the Security Council and the international community that will ensure that the gains made on gender equality are not reversed after the departure of UN operations.

II. Guiding questions

The following questions will guide the debate and we encourage Member States to address them in their statements:

1. How can the Security Council best support sustainable UN mission transitions that include sufficient time to transfer tasks to the government, United Nations Country Team and civil society organizations, and ensure that the transitions are guided by gender-responsive conflict analysis and take into account the needs of women and girls?
2. How can women's leadership and agency and the civic space for women remain secured in advancement of their full, equal and meaningful participation in politics, peacebuilding and other processes as a priority during and after the transition process?
3. How can the Security Council and the international community ensure women's protection from sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), including conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), during the transition processes and in the new post-transition contexts, as well as ensure sufficient resources and capacity for women's protection?
4. How can the United Nations and the international community best support women civil society representative's participation in the transition processes?
5. How can the Security Council and other mechanisms still monitor the situation of women and girls in these contexts?
6. What can the international community do to prevent a sharp drop in funding and interventions on gender equality and WPS after the departure of a UN mission?
7. How does your country specifically plan to support WPS after the withdrawal of UN missions?

III. Format, briefers, participation:

The Security Council will be briefed by:

- The Executive Director of UN Women, Ms. Sima Bahous;
- ASG for Africa, UN DPPA – DPO, Ms. Martha Pobee;
- Civil society briefer

Priorities of Sierra Leone at the United Nations Security Council

Excerpt of the Statement of Mr. Timothy Musa Kabba, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation at a Press Stakeout at the United Nations in April 2024



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Sierra Leone therefore started our second inning at the Security Council with a unique experience. The past months have been quite unprecedented, frenetic, complex, but worthwhile. Under the leadership of H.E. President Julius Maada Bio Sierra Leone has underscored the importance of partnership, representation, and effective multilateralism. Therefore, adding our perspective on the myriad of global security challenges remains a worthwhile endeavour.

We came into the Security Council prioritizing conflict prevention, peace-making and peacekeeping; women, peace, and security, youth, peace, and security; countering terrorism; climate security; accountability; small arms control; and Security Council reform.

Additionally, our President, His Excellency Julius Maada Bio in the last UNGA high-level week announced that Sierra Leone will also prioritize the West African and Sahel region and address food insecurity.

Despite the challenging global situation, Sierra Leone has endeavoured to be a voice of reason, with balance and objectivity; a small State that seeks to promote the respect for and adherence to international law, the UN Charter and dialogue for the peaceful settlement of disputes. This has been reflected in our statements on issues such as the conflicts in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, and others.

8 PRIORITIES



Partnership and Representation to Maintain Peace and Security

Sierra Leone emphasizes the importance of partnership to maintain international peace and security. The intervention of Security Council in conflict prevention and in conflict situations should be decisive and timely.

Peacekeeper, Peacebuilding and Prevention

Sierra Leone seeks to achieve the goal of sustaining global peace and security through effective commitments and experience sharing on peacemaking, peace keeping, peacebuilding and conflict prevention.



Maintaining Peace, Human Rights and Accountability

Pursuing human rights and accountability, ensuring that the UN is effectively able to maintain peace, and advocating for a culture of accountability is a major policy engagement of Sierra Leone in the Security Council.

Women and Youth in Global Peace and Security

The meaningful participation and representation of women and youth at all levels in peace processes and security engagements will continue to underpin Sierra Leone's engagement in the Council.



Terrorism and New Threats to Peace (Climate Change and Combating Terrorism)

Sierra Leone firmly believes that there is strong nexus between climate change and peace and security, and the need for the Council to adopt the multidimensional approach to tackle global climate security risks. Tackling terrorism is another major priority given the spate of terrorism in the Sahel and West Africa.

Spotlighting Small Arms Control

Sierra Leone will spotlight and continue to build support for the work to eradicate small arms which fuel armed conflicts and crime.



Reforming the Security Council

As Coordinator of the AU C-10 on the reform of the UN Security Council, Sierra Leone will continue to pursue Africa's vision of a reformed Security Council that is inclusive, geographically balanced, and transparent.

Food Security

Sierra Leone is committed to addressing conflict-induced food insecurity in situations of armed conflict much like the national drive to enhance food self-sufficiency, build food system resilience, boost inclusive economic growth, and protect forest ecosystems from agricultural encroachment.



Looking Ahead: Youth, Peace and Security



Lead Youth Peace and Security Expert, Mr Isaac Sheku Bayoh and Co-Lead Youth Peace and Security Expert, Ms. Agnes Bio

As we look ahead post the August 2024 Presidency of the UN Security Council, and towards the November 2025 Presidency, the Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) agenda remains a paramount priority, addressing the underrepresentation of youth in peace and reconciliation processes. This focus is essential for fostering sustainable peace and security globally, as young people bring unique perspectives and innovative solutions to conflict resolution.

The YPS team has been engaged in a number of initiatives such as the international steering group for the global five-year strategic action plan on youth-inclusive peace processes, capacity-building programs in conflict mapping and analysis, and advocating for youth-led initiatives in the UN Security Council. Furthermore, the YPS agenda is playing a pivotal role in addressing the pressing issue of migration. By partnering with entities like the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) via the support of UN Youth Office, the YPS team is promoting youth-led initiatives that tackle the root causes of migration and support the integration and empowerment of migrant youth.

By promoting educational empowerment, intercultural dialogue, and ensuring the protection of young peacebuilders, the YPS agenda aims to empower youth and foster their meaningful participation in peacebuilding efforts. Additionally, the YPS framework can be instrumental in advocating for the reformation of the UN Security Council. Emphasizing the inclusion of youth voices in decision-making processes ensures that the Security Council reflects the diverse and dynamic perspectives necessary for addressing contemporary global challenges.

To further this progress, the Permanent Mission of Sierra Leone intends to host an Arria-Formula meeting focused on reinforcing the implementation of the YPS agenda. This meeting aims to bring together Member States, regional organizations, and youth representatives to discuss actionable steps to strengthen YPS implementation, including utilizing the UN Peacebuilding Architecture Review and engaging the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission more effectively. Strengthening the institutional framework to support youth participation, as demonstrated by Sierra Leone's commitment, will be crucial to translating these strategic actions into concrete, impactful outcomes for a peaceful and stable future.



H.E. President Brig. Rtd. Dr. Julius Maada Bio and Cabinet Members of the Republic of Sierra Leone (2024)



UN Security Council Flag Installation Ceremony



Chief Minister Dr. David Sengh gives Sierra Leone Statement at the UN Security Council on the Situation in Middle East, Including Palestinian Question



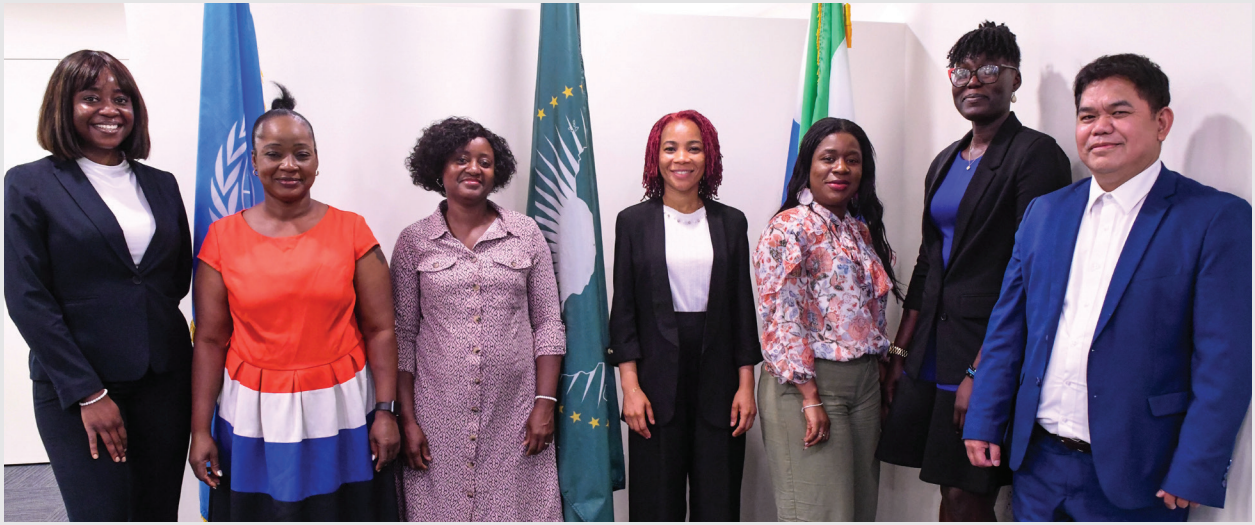
Foreign Minister Musa Timothy Kabba gives Sierra Leone Statement at the UN Security Council on the The situation in Middle East, Including Palestinian Question



Deputy Foreign Minister Mrs. Francess Piagie Alghali gives Sierra Leone Statement at the UN Security Council on Promoting Conflict Prevention – Empowering All Actors Including Women And Youth



Arria Formula Meeting on: Combating the Rise of Terrorism and Violent Extremism in West Africa and the Sahel



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— (2024 - 2025) —