



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

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PRESS RELEASE

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**The Permanent Mission of Sierra Leone to the United Nations holds Talks with
Concerned Sierra Leoneans in North America Inc,**

Five representatives of coalition groups, led by Concerned Sierra Leoneans in North America Inc, who were planning to hold a rally on Independence Day in order to express their concerns regarding the allegations of sexual assault against women in Freetown in the course of last month's politically motivated riot, held a consultative meeting with the Permanent Mission of Sierra Leone to the United Nations on Tuesday 14th April 2009 at the mission's headquarters on 49th East Street in New York.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the negative impact of the intended rally on the on-going Peace Building initiatives, and the democratic process as a whole. After an hour and half of fruitful exchanges, the civil society actors were prevailed upon to drop any idea of holding a rally at this point in time in order to ensure that the on-going measures undertaken by the government on the one hand have been fully implemented. Furthermore, the need to intensify party dialogue to address the challenges in strengthening the democratic process and the promotion of rule of law as the country consolidates the peace was underscored.

The Permanent Mission agreed to bring to the attention of the government of Sierra Leone the outcome of the meeting with the group with a view to ensuring a speedy implementation as well as address the burning issue of the allegation of sexual assault, which, hopefully, will be fully investigated without delay.

The Permanent Mission will continue to collaborate with the Concerned Sierra Leoneans in North America and all Diaspora-based groups to further the development aspirations of the Government and to promote investment opportunities that will help in creating wealth and employment for the country's predominantly youthful population.

To this end, the Mission expressed its sincere appreciations to Concerned Sierra Leoneans in North America, Inc. and other stakeholders for their forthrightness and magnanimity in participating in the process that led to the well-reasoned conclusion that emerged from this consultation.

New York

14th April 2009