

[Sierra Leone: Briefing paper on the situation of human rights defenders](#)

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(Geneva) – Sierra Leone should commence a consultative process for the development of a human rights defender protection law in line with its statement at the 28th session of the UN Human Rights Council in March 2015 said ISHR in a [briefing paper](#) published today.

The Republic of Sierra Leone is scheduled to be reviewed at the 56th session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights from 21 April - 7 May 2015.

The Republic of Sierra Leone presented its first country report to the African Commission covering the period 1983-2013 on 27 June 2013.

In 2009, the African Commission's Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information reminded the Government of Sierra Leone of its obligation to ensure laws relating to the media are in accord with the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa, as well as international standards regarding freedom of expression.

The Special Rapporteur also urged the Government of Sierra Leone to prosecute reported cases of harassment and intimidation against journalists.

Especially vulnerable are human rights defenders working on issues related to corporate accountability, women human rights defenders and journalists.

Key recommendations that should be made to Sierra Leone during its review include that the Government ensure violations against human rights defenders are investigated and refrain from criminalising the legitimate activities of human rights defenders.

ISHR's [briefing paper on the situation of human rights defenders in Sierra Leone](#) is intended to highlight the situation for human rights defenders in Sierra Leone since its last review by the African Commission; the steps taken by the Sierra Leone to implement the African Commission's past recommendations; and key recommendations for the African Commission to consider making to Sierra Leone during its current review.

For further information about the briefing paper or for any assistance or advice in the formulation of recommendations, please contact ISHR's Clement Voulé, on c.voule@ishr.ch.

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