

SIERRA LEONE

Date of admission to UN: 27 September 1961.

TREATIES AND REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES

Land and People: Sierra Leone has not submitted a core document for use by the treaty bodies.

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Acceded: 23 August 1996.

Sierra Leone's initial report is due 30 June 1998.

Civil and Political Rights

Acceded: 23 August 1996.

Sierra Leone's initial report was due 22 November 1997.

Optional Protocol: Acceded: 23 August 1996.

Racial Discrimination

Signed: 17 November 1996; ratified: 2 August 1967.

Sierra Leone's fourth through 14th periodic reports have not been submitted (1976–1996); the 14th periodic report was due 4 January 1996.

Discrimination against Women

Signed: 21 September 1988; ratified: 11 November 1988.

Sierra Leone's initial report was due 11 December 1989; the second periodic report was due 11 December 1993.

Torture

Signed: 18 March 1985.

Rights of the Child

Signed: 13 February 1990; ratified: 18 June 1990.

Sierra Leone's initial report (CRC/C/3/Add.43) has been submitted and is pending for consideration at the Committee's January 1998 session; the second periodic report was due 1 September 1997.

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Since 1996, Sierra Leone has been considered by the Commission on Human Rights under the 1503 confidential procedure. At the 1997 session, the Commission decided to continue consideration under 1503 at the 1998 session.

THEMATIC REPORTS

Mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights

Arbitrary detention, Working Group on: (E/CN.4/1997/4, para. 17)

The report notes that an urgent appeal was sent to the government involving four persons. Details of the case or cases were not provided.

Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary execution, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1997/60/Add.1, paras. 433–434)

The Special Rapporteur referred to information that had been received which indicated that, despite the return to civilian rule and cease fire agreement, civilians continue to be victims of human rights violations and abuses, including violations of the right to life. These are allegedly committed by both government soldiers and rebel forces. At the time the report was written no response had been received from the government to cases sent in October 1995.

Mercenaries, Special Rapporteur on the use of: (E/CN.4/1997/24, para. 15)

The report reproduces a reply from the British government about the corporation, Executive Outcomes (EO), and its activities in Sierra Leone. The response states that EO and its affiliates were contracted to work in various resource and mining areas and had approximately 150 employees in Sierra Leone. The reply also indicated that there was no evidence that they were engaged in activities to terrorize the civilian population. It stated that the government of Sierra Leone had contracted EO to provide their army with assistance and training, and noted that details of the contract were a matter between the government of Sierra Leone and EO.

Mechanisms and Reports of the Sub-Commission

States of emergency, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/19/Add.1, Annex)

The report notes that a state of emergency was declared in Sierra Leone 30 April 1992 and a curfew imposed. The report comments that, as a result of internal armed conflict, the situation has not yet returned to normal and a curfew was introduced in the capital 25 May 1997.

Traditional practices affecting the health of women and children, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/10, paras. 12, 129)

The report notes that, according to a newspaper report, more than 1,000 four- and five-year-old girls of the Bundo sect in Sierra Leone had been held captive for over a month because their parents had not paid the mutilation fee of \$3 to the members of the sect who had circumcised the children. Those holding the girls stated that they would not be returned to their parents until the fee was paid. The Special Rapporteur reports that thousands of women of the Bundo sect had demonstrated to express their anger at a statement made on the radio against excision and the problems resulting from it. Reference is also made to the fact that the highest court in Sierra Leone has adopted a position in favour of female genital mutilation.

Other Reports

Migrant workers and their families, Report of the S-G to the CHR: (E/CN.4/1997/65, para. 4)

The report of the Secretary-General notes that Sierra Leone has acceded to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

SECURITY COUNCIL

The reports of the Secretary-General (S/1997/80, 26 January 1997; S/1997/811; 21 October 1997; S/1997/958, 5 December 1997) refer to political developments since the signing of the Peace Agreement between the government and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) at Abidjan, 30 November 1996. Commentary is provided on a number of issues, *inter alia*: measures to be taken to encourage the consolidation of a fair and representative political process; the reconstitution of the National Elections Commission; the necessity to ensure respect for human rights; the promotion of a professional code of ethics and eradication of all forms of nepotism and corruption; the need to strengthen