



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN INFORMATION KEY DOCUMENTS

# SIERRA LEONE

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14 JANUARY 2010

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## Preface

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- i This Country of Origin Information Key Documents (COI Key Documents) on *Sierra Leone* has been produced by COI Service, UK Border Agency (UKBA), for use by officials involved in the asylum/human rights determination process. It provides general background information about the issues most commonly raised in asylum/human rights claims made in the United Kingdom. The COI Key Documents includes information available up to 1 December 2009. It was issued on 14 January 2010.
- ii The COI Key Documents is an indexed list of key reports, papers and articles produced by a wide range of recognised external information sources. It does not contain any UKBA opinion or policy.
- iii For UK Border Agency users, the COI Key Documents provides direct electronic access to each source referred to in the document, via a link on the source numbers in the index and list of sources. For the benefit of external users, the relevant web link has also been included, together with the date that the link was accessed.
- iv As noted above, the documents identified concentrate mainly on human rights issues. By way of introduction, brief background information on *[country]* is also provided. Please note, this background material is not intended to provide a summary of the material contained in the documents listed.
- v This COI Key Documents and the documents listed are publicly disclosable.
- vi Any comments regarding this COI Key Documents or suggestions for additional source material are very welcome and should be submitted to COI Service as below.

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## INDEPENDENT ADVISORY GROUP ON COUNTRY INFORMATION

- vii The Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Chief Inspector of the UK Border Agency to make recommendations to him about the content of the UKBA's country of origin information material. The IAGCI welcomes feedback on UKBA's COI Reports, COI Key Documents and other country of origin information material. Information about the IAGCI's work can be found on the Chief Inspector's website at <http://www.ociukba.homeoffice.gov.uk>
- viii In the course of its work, the IAGCI reviews the content of selected UKBA COI documents and makes recommendations specific to those documents and of

a more general nature. A list of the COI Reports and other documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI or the Advisory Panel on Country Information (the independent organisation which monitored UKBA's COI material from September 2003 to October 2008) is available at <http://www.ociukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

- ix Please note: it is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any UKBA material or procedures. Some of the material examined by the Group relates to countries designated or proposed for designation to the Non-Suspensive Appeals (NSA) list. In such cases, the Group's work should not be taken to imply any endorsement of the decision or proposal to designate a particular country for NSA, nor of the NSA process itself.

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## **Background information on Sierra Leone**

**Full Country Name:** Republic of Sierra Leone. (US State Department Background Note on Sierra Leone – April 2009 version) [2c]

**Area:** Total area 71,740 sq. km. [2c]

**Population:** 6.2m (UN estimate 2008). (UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Country Profile on Sierra Leone – last reviewed 25 February 2009) [4]

**Capital City:** Freetown. [2c]

**People:** Temne 30%, Mende 30%, Krio 1%, 15 other ethnic groups and a small Lebanese community. [2c]

**Languages:** English, Krio, Temne, Mende, and 15 other indigenous languages. [2c]

**Religions:** (estimate) Muslim 60%, Christian 30%, animist 10%. [2c]

**Major Political Parties:** Sierra Leone's People's Party (SLPP), All People's Congress (APC), and People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC). [2c]

**Government:** Republic with a democratically elected president and unicameral parliament. [2c]

(The US State Dept Background Note on Sierra Leone – April 2009 version). [2c]

**Head of State:** President Ernest Bai Koroma. [4]

**Currency:** Leone (L). 1 Leone = 100 cents. [4]

**Membership of International Groupings/Organisations:** United Nations, African Union, Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), Commonwealth, Economic Community of West African states (ECOWAS), African Development Bank (AFDB), Mano River Union. [4]

(The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Country Profile on Sierra Leone – last reviewed 25 February 2009). [4]

## GEOGRAPHY

The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Country Profile on Sierra Leone (last reviewed 25 February 2009) stated that:

“Sierra Leone is situated on the west coast of Africa and shares borders with Guinea and Liberia. Its 400 km coastline overlooks the North Atlantic Ocean. The country can broadly be divided into three areas: mangrove swamps and beaches along the coast; a belt of low-lying wooded land in the immediate interior; and a mountain plateau rising to 2,000 metres further inland. The climate is tropical, with a hot, humid, rainy season from May to December and a winter dry season from December to April.” [4]

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## RECENT HISTORY

The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office February 2009 Country Profile on Sierra Leone stated that:

“Sierra Leone was founded by returned slaves from Britain and North America in 1787. The colony of Sierra Leone (roughly the current day Western Province around Freetown) was administered by the British. In 1896 the hinterland came under British control as a protectorate. Following the Second World War, the indigenous populations of the protectorate gained greater political voice, culminating in the election of Dr (later Sir) Milton Margai of the SLPP (Sierra Leone’s People’s Party) as Chief Minister in 1953 and later Prime Minister in 1958. He led the country to full independence on April 27<sup>th</sup> 1961.

“The SLPP ruled until 1967 when the electoral victory of the opposition APC (All People’s Congress) was cut short by the country’s first military coup. But the military eventually handed [power] over to the APC and its leader Siaka Stevens in 1968. He turned the country into a one-party estate in 1978. He finally retired in 1985, handing over [power] to his deputy, General Momoh. Under popular pressure, one party rule was ended in 1991, and a new constitution providing for a return to multi-party politics was approved in August of that year. Elections were scheduled for 1992. But, by this stage, Sierra Leone’s institutions had collapsed, mismanagement and corruption had ruined the economy and rising youth unemployment was a serious problem.” [4]

The US State Dept Background Note on Sierra Leone, published in August 2009, stated that:

“Under Momoh, APC rule was increasingly marked by abuses of power. Earlier in 1991, in March, a small band of men who called themselves the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) under the leadership of a former-corporal, Foday Sankjoh, began to attack villages in eastern Sierra Leone on the Liberian border. Fighting continued in the ensuing months, with the RUF gaining control of the diamond mines in the Kono district and pushing the Sierra Leone army back towards Freetown. On April 29, 1992, a group of young military officers, led by Capt. Valentine Strasser, launched a military coup, which sent Momoh into exile in Guinea and established the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) as the ruling authority in Sierra Leone.” [2c]

The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (February 2009 version) Country Profile on Sierra Leone stated that:

“Strasser was deposed in January 1996 by his fellow junta leaders. His replacement, Major Maada Bio, under international pressure, agreed to organise elections in February 1996. The RUF refused to take part and continued the conflict. The elections were won by Tejah Kabbah and the SLPP. The new government signed a peace agreement with the RUF in Abidjan [in] 1996 but it failed to stop the rebellion. Kabbah’s government was subsequently overthrown in a further coup in 1997 and took refuge in neighbouring Guinea. The military junta, headed by Major Johnny Paul Koroma, invited the RUF to join [in] government. But the Junta was complicit in looting and violence, often in association with the RUF, and was unable to consolidate its position. It was eventually overthrown and the Kabbah government was re-instated in 1998 with the help of troops from ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African states).” [4]

“The destructive force of the rebellion reached Freetown for the first time when the RUF, combined with renegade elements of the army, invaded the capital in January 1999, committing appalling acts of violence against the civilian population in the process. They were repulsed by the Nigerian troops of ECOMOG (Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group), but at great human cost. A second peace agreement, the Lomé Accord of 1999, to be supervised by a UN peacekeeping force (UNAMSIL), brought the RUF officially into government. But this collapsed in 2000 when the RUF attacked UN peacekeepers upcountry and threatened to invade Freetown again. Some UN peacekeepers were killed and others detained by the rebels. Security was restored with the intervention of British troops in May 2000 and RUF ministers, including its leader Foday Sankoh, were arrested. The signing of the Abuja peace agreement in November 2000, together with the deployment of UNAMSIL across the country, allowed the gradual restoration of government authority throughout the territory. The war was officially declared over in February 2002.” [4]

“In May 2002 President Kabbah was re-elected to a five-year term along with the SLPP, which also won a landslide victory. The RUF political wing, the RUFPP, failed to win a single seat in parliament. The elections were marked by irregularities and allegations of fraud, but not to a degree to significantly affect the outcome.” [4]

“...in the summer of 2002, Sierra Leone’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) began operations. The Lomé Accord had called for the establishment of a TRC to provide a forum for both victims and perpetrators of human rights violations during the conflict to tell their stories and to facilitate genuine reconciliation. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its Final Report to the government in October 2004. In June 2005, the Government of Sierra Leone issued a White Paper on the Commission’s final report which accepted some but not all of the Commission’s recommendations.” [4]

“The Special Court was established by an agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone pursuant to Security Council resolution 1315 (2000) of 14 August 2000. The Court’s mandate is to try those who ‘...bear the greatest responsibility for the commission of crimes against humanity, war crimes and serious violations of international humanitarian law, as well as crimes under relevant Sierra Leonean law within the territory of Sierra Leone since November 30, 1996.’ ” [4]

Presidential and parliamentary elections were held in August 2007. More than 500 candidates vied with each other for over 100 parliamentary seats and seven presidential candidates vied with each other to replace Ahmad Kabbah as President. Election observers stated that the elections were free, fair and credible. (BBC News Online “Sierra Leone elections ‘free and fair’ ”, 13 August 2007) [6e]. In the parliamentary elections, opposition politicians took overall control. In the presidential election, Ernest Koroma, of the opposition All People’s Congress Party, won 44 per cent of the votes cast and Solomon Berewa won 38 per cent of the votes cast. The percentage of votes won by Koroma were insufficient for him to win the election outright because a candidate must win at least 55 per cent of the votes cast. As a result, a second round of the presidential election was organised. (allafrica.com news report “Opposition Wins Parliamentary Elections”, 24 August 2007) [24]. The second round of the presidential election was held on 8 September 2007. Koroma won this election by winning 54.6 per cent of the votes cast, while his rival, Solomon Berewa won 45.4 per cent of the votes cast. (Reuters news report “Koroma wins Sierra Leone presidential poll – official”, 17 September 2007) [23].

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## RECENT EVENTS AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The US State Department Report on Human Rights Practices, 25 February 2009, recorded that “In the run-up to the July [2008] local elections, police clashed with demonstrators protesting allegations that SLPP supporters had defaced the president's portrait”. The same report stated that “Domestic and international observers characterized the July 5 local elections as generally free and fair, although there were irregularities that did not affect the final outcome.” [2a]

The UN Security Council Second Report of the Secretary General on the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone, dated 22 May 2009, recorded that in early March 2009 “in the run-up to a local council by-election in Pujehon District there were violent altercations between the SLPP (Sierra Leone People's Party) and APC (the All People's Congress) sympathizers, resulting in serious injuries and a subsequent postponement of the election. The by-election was held on 28 March. However earlier incidents of political violence had an adverse effect on the turnout of potential voters and compelled some villagers to cross the border into Liberia for safety.”

The same UN Security Council report continued:

“On 13 March, there was a clash between APC and SLPP supporters in Freetown. Stones and petrol bombs were utilized. The SLPP office and the Freetown City Council building were damaged as a result of these actions. A number of vehicles in the premises of SLPP were burned...On 16 March...the SLPP headquarters in Freetown was attacked by riotous crowds. The building was ransacked and badly damaged and a number of SLPP supporters injured. There were allegations that some women were raped and sexually assaulted in the course of the attack. There were also indications that some ex-combatants currently in the service of the law enforcement entities of the State were present during the attack on the SLPP offices. The police appeared overwhelmed and ill-equipped to deal effectively with those incidents.” [33]

The UN News Service, in an article of 9 June 2009, ‘UN envoy praises political leadership in Sierra Leone’, stated that “Sierra Leone's political leadership deserves praise for signing an agreement that brought to an end the ‘spiral of violence’ in the West African nation...The governing APC and the opposition SLPP signed that agreement on 2 April [2009], ending violence between the two parties that erupted in early March.” [35]

Afrol News in an article of 8 April 2009, ‘S/Leone rebels sentenced’, reported that:

“The Sierra Leone's war crimes tribunal has sentenced three top leaders of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) to jail terms between 25 and 52 years today for overseeing atrocities during the country's 1991 to 2002 civil war. Issa Hassan Sesay...Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao...were found guilty of various war crimes and crimes against humanity for their role in the West African country's brutal civil war...According to a summary of the judgment in February, the three men were part of a so-called joint criminal enterprise aimed at gaining political power and control over the territory of Sierra Leone and in particular the diamond mining areas. During the trial the prosecution also argued that the RUF needed the blood diamonds to fund their war against the government.” [36a]

In an Afrol News article of 4 May 2009, ‘Taylor's acquittal plea thrown out’, it was stated that:

“The Special Tribunal for Sierra Leone judges have today rejected an application for acquittal by former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, ordering the trial to resume on 29 June. Mr Taylor...has been ordered to resume his defense on war crimes charges that include murder, rape and other violence in the neighbouring Sierra Leone, during the reign of terror that gripped the country from 1991 to 2002...Amongst evidence gathered against Mr Taylor, are allegations that he supported and armed rebels in Sierra Leone, who amongst others, recruited child soldiers to carry out the atrocities.” [36b]

A Voice of America News article of 26 October 2009, ‘Sierra Leone War Crimes Tribunal Makes Final Ruling’, noted that:

“The Special Court for Sierra Leone, established to try rebel leaders for atrocities committed during the country’s brutal civil war, handed down its last judgment Monday. A decade has passed since Sierra Leone put an end to its brutal civil war and embarked on the long road to reconciliation and justice. As part of the process Sierra Leone’s Special Court upheld the convictions of three rebel leaders accused of war crimes. The appeal ruling is the court’s final word on atrocities committed during 11 years of civil war.” [40]

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## BASIC ECONOMIC FACTS

**GDP:** (2008 estimate) US\$1.44 billion. [2c]

**GDP growth rate:** (2008 estimate) 5.8%. [2c]

**Average annual inflation rate:** (2008 estimate) 15.8% [2c]

**Industries:** diamonds, bauxite, and rutile mining, forestry, fishing, beverages, cigarettes, flour, cement and other construction goods, plastics, tourism. [2c]

**Major trading partners:** Belgium, Germany, U.K., the Netherlands, India, and U.S.. [2c]

(The US State Dept Background Note on Sierra Leone - August 2009 version) [2c]

The US State Dept Background Note on Sierra Leone, published in August 2009, states that:

“Rich in minerals, Sierra Leone has relied on the mining sector in general and diamonds in particular, for its economic base. In the 1970s and early 1980s, [the] economic growth rate slowed because of a decline in the mining sector and increasing corruption among government officials. By the 1990s economic activity was declining and economic infrastructure had become seriously degraded. Over the next decade much of Sierra Leone’s formal economy was destroyed in the country’s civil war. Since the cessation of hostilities in January 2002, massive infusions of outside assistance have helped Sierra Leone begin to recover. Full recovery to pre-war economic levels will require hundreds of millions of additional dollars and many more years of serious effort by the Government of Sierra Leone and donor governments.” [2c]

## HUMAN RIGHTS

### OVERVIEW

The USSD 2008 Country Report on Human Rights Practices, published 26 February 2009, stated that:

“The government generally respected the human rights of its citizens. However, there were serious problems in a number of areas, including: security force abuse and use of excessive force with detainees, including juveniles; police theft and extortion; harsh conditions in prisons and jails; official impunity; arbitrary arrest and detention; prolonged detention, excessive bail, and insufficient legal representation; restrictions on freedom of speech and press; forcible dispersion of demonstrators; harassment of opposition party supporters by ruling party members; widespread official corruption; societal discrimination and violence against women; female genital mutilation (FGM); child abuse; trafficking in persons, including children; and child labor.” [2a]

The Human Rights Watch (HRW) World Report 2009 on Sierra Leone, published in January 2009, stated that:

“The government of President Ernest Bai Koroma, elected in 2007, made concerted efforts to address the issues which gave rise to the brutal 11-year armed conflict that ended in 2002 – rampant corruption, gross public financial mismanagement, inadequate distribution of the country’s natural resources, and weak rule of law. However, resistance to the reform agenda from some influential members of government threatened these efforts. Meanwhile, serious deficiencies in the police and judiciary continue to undermine fundamental human rights.” [5]

### CORRUPTION

The USSD report noted that “corruption in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches was widespread. Official corruption was exacerbated by low salaries and a lack of accountability.” [2a]

The Amnesty International Report 2009, published 28 May 2009, noted that “the Anti-Corruption Act 2000 was replaced by the Anti-Corruption Act 2008. In February [2008] a new national anti-corruption strategy was adopted by the government. As part of this strategy, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) established a department of investigation, intelligence, and prosecution.” [8a]

The Human Rights Watch (HRW) World Report 2009, published 14 January 2009, noted that the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) was given expanded powers:

“...granting it [the ACC] independent powers to investigate and prosecute matters on its own, rather than through the president-appointed attorney general. During the year [2008] President Koroma warned government officials to desist from corrupt practices, ordered a temporary ban on logging and exploitation of timber, took steps to address the lack of competitive bidding for contracts, and in September became the first Sierra Leonean head of state to declare his assets to the ACC. During 2008 the ACC indicted a former ombudsman and several low- and mid-level officials from ministries and parastatals. Several other investigations, including those involving a serving minister and two magistrates, were ongoing.” [5a]

## POLICE

The Amnesty International Report 2009, published 28 May 2009, recorded that “police brutality, excessive use of force and reported cases of sexual violence by police continued.” [8a]

The Human Rights Watch World Report 2009, published 14 January 2009, stated:

“On several occasions police were accused of using excessive force against the media and alleged criminals, or while executing a court order. There were also persistent reports of bribe-taking, extortion at checkpoints, and requiring victims of crimes to pay the police to file reports or conduct investigations. However, the police were notably professional and non-partisan during episodes of ethnic and politically-motivated violence and in their response to serious crimes...Police leadership is also increasingly more willing to investigate, discipline and dismiss officers engaging in unprofessional or corrupt practices. In June [2008], 94 police officers were fired after having been found guilty of professional misconduct.” [5a]

The US State Department Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008, published 25 February 2009, stated:

“There were fewer cases of police brutality during the year [2008], but police corruption was a serious problem, in part exacerbated by low salaries. There were continued reports that police officers took bribes at checkpoints, falsely charged motorists with violations, and impounded vehicles to extort money. Police also accepted bribes from criminal suspects in exchange for dropping charges or having their rivals arrested and charged with crimes. Police were frequently not present or chose not to intervene when crowds beat alleged thieves. There were numerous instances in which police refused to make arrests when warranted, or arrested persons without charge for civil causes, such as alleged breach of contract or failure to satisfy debt, in exchange for kickbacks.”

The same USSD report continued:

“According to the Justice Sector Development Program, impunity was less of a problem than in the past, and there were several mechanisms available to investigate police abuses. The Police Complaints Commission and the Complaints, Discipline and Internal Investigations Department (CDIID) heard complaints against police officers...The CDIID facilitated all hearings and trials related to police officer complaints. An appeals process was available...[In the first half of 2008] CDIID received 1,273 complaints countrywide, resulting in at least 176 officers being either dismissed, demoted, suspended, or officially warned...The most common complaints lodged against police were corruption, unfair treatment, lack of professionalism, and assault.” [2a]

## FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

The US State Department Report on Human Rights Practices 2008, published 25 February 2009, stated:

“No law specifically prohibits FGM, and it was practiced widely and supported by politicians and community members...Although police occasionally detained practitioners on accusations of forced mutilation or manslaughter, human rights workers reported that police remained hesitant to interfere in cultural practices...In

2007 the parliament passed the Child Rights Act, which makes it illegal to subject anybody under the age of 18 to harmful treatment, including any cultural practice which dehumanizes or is injurious to the physical and mental welfare of the child; however, the act does not explicitly address FGM.” [2a]

The Amnesty International Report 2009, published 28 May 2009, recorded that “there was little progress in reducing the incidence of female genital mutilation.” [8a]

An IRIN report of 16 April 2009, ‘Sierra Leone: Chiefs ban genital cutting for girls under 18’, stated:

“In Sierra Leone village chiefs, community members and women who perform female genital cutting have signed an agreement stating that girls in northern Kambia district will not undergo genital mutilation – or ‘cutting’ – before age 18...Most Sierra Leonean girls – the World Health Organization estimates 94 percent – are initiated at puberty into ‘Bondo’, also known as the Sande Secret Society. As part of the rite, a woman known as a ‘sowei’ in the Mende language cuts the clitoris and prepares the girl for adulthood through singing, dancing and teaching domestic skills. For the initiation girls spend up to three months in the bush...Given how deeply embedded genital cutting is in Sierra Leonean culture, many activists say banning the rite would not be feasible in the country. But they say raising the age of cutting and giving girls a choice could reduce the numbers...Putting off the initiation ritual could also reduce early marriage and pregnancy...Once initiated, girls are considered grown women, so they often fall pregnant or marry and inevitably drop out of school.” [25c]

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## Index to key source documents

<p><b>KEY FACTS AND GEOGRAPHY</b></p>	<p>[1] Europa World Online – Sierra Leone section <a href="http://www.europaworld.com/pub/">http://www.europaworld.com/pub/</a></p> <p>[2a] United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a></p> <p>[2c] United States Department of State Background Note on Sierra Leone (June 2009 version) <a href="http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5475.htm">http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5475.htm</a></p> <p>[4] Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK) Sierra Leone Country Profile (25 February 2009 version) <a href="http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/sierra-leone">http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/sierra-leone</a></p> <p>[6a] BBC Sierra Leone Country Profile, 8 September 2009 <a href="http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1061561.stm">http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1061561.stm</a></p> <p>[7] Central Intelligence Agency (United States), The World Factbook – Sierra Leone section (5 May 2009 version) <a href="https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/SL.html">https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/SL.html</a></p> <p>[31] Every Culture - Countries and their Cultures – Sierra Leone <a href="http://www.everyculture.com/Sa-Th/Sierra-Leone.html">http://www.everyculture.com/Sa-Th/Sierra-Leone.html</a></p>
<p><b>MAP</b></p>	<p>[25] Infoplease.com Map of Sierra Leone <a href="http://www.infoplease.com/atlas/country/sierraleone.html">http://www.infoplease.com/atlas/country/sierraleone.html</a></p>
<p><b>HISTORY</b></p>	<p>[1] Europa World Online – Sierra Leone section <a href="http://www.europaworld.com/pub/">http://www.europaworld.com/pub/</a></p> <p>[4] Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK) Sierra Leone Country Profile (25 February 2009 version) <a href="http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/sierra-leone">http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/sierra-leone</a></p> <p>[6b] BBC News Online: Sierra Leone Timeline, 7 August 2009 <a href="http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1065898.stm">http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1065898.stm</a></p> <p>[25] United Nations IRIN Sierra Leone Humanitarian Country Profile (February 2007 version) <a href="http://irinnews.org/country.aspx?CountryCode=SL&amp;RegionCode=WA">http://irinnews.org/country.aspx?CountryCode=SL&amp;RegionCode=WA</a></p>

<p><b>POLITICS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS</b></p>	<p>[1] Europa World Online – Sierra Leone section <a href="http://www.europaworld.com/pub/">http://www.europaworld.com/pub/</a></p> <p>[2a] United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a></p> <p>[2c] United States Department of State Background Note on Sierra Leone (August 2009 version) <a href="http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5475.htm">http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5475.htm</a></p> <p>[4] Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK) Sierra Leone Country Profile (25 February 2009 version) <a href="http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/sierra-leone">http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/sierra-leone</a></p> <p>[5a] Sierra Leone section of the Human Rights Watch World Report 2008 <a href="http://hrw.org/englishwr2k8/docs/2008/01/31/sierra17935.htm">http://hrw.org/englishwr2k8/docs/2008/01/31/sierra17935.htm</a></p> <p>[25] IRIN – Sierra Leone: War-wounded get micro-grants, 12 November 2009 <a href="http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=87007">http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=87007</a></p> <p>[33] UN Security Council - Second Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone, 22 May 2009 <a href="http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N09/340/34/PDF/N0934034.pdf?OpenElement">http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N09/340/34/PDF/N0934034.pdf?OpenElement</a></p> <p>[34] International Crisis Group 'Sierra Leone: A New Era of Reform?', 31 July 2008 <a href="http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/africa/west_africa/143_sierra_leone_a_new_era_of_reform.pdf">http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/africa/west_africa/143_sierra_leone_a_new_era_of_reform.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>HUMAN RIGHTS – GENERAL:</b></p>	<p>[2a] United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a></p> <p>[8a] Amnesty International Sierra Leone section of the Annual Human Rights Report 2007 <a href="http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/africa/west-africa/sierra-leone">http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/africa/west-africa/sierra-leone</a></p> <p>[4] Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK) Sierra Leone Country Profile (25 February 2009 version) <a href="http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/sierra-leone">http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/sierra-leone</a></p> <p>[5a] Human Rights Watch (HRW) Sierra Leone section of the World Report 2008 <a href="http://hrw.org/englishwr2k8/docs/2008/01/31/sierra17935.htm">http://hrw.org/englishwr2k8/docs/2008/01/31/sierra17935.htm</a></p> <p>[16] Sierra Leone section of the Freedom in the World 2009, 16 July 2009 <a href="http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&amp;year=2009&amp;country=7699">http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&amp;year=2009&amp;country=7699</a></p>

<b>HUMAN RIGHTS – SPECIFIC ISSUES:</b>		
<b>(IN ADDITION TO GENERAL REPORTS ABOVE, INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING ISSUES IS PROVIDED IN THE DOCUMENTS LISTED BELOW)</b>		
<b>ABUSES BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ARMED FORCES</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
<b>ARREST AND DETENTION – LEGAL RIGHTS</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
<b>CHILDREN</b>	<b>[1]</b>	Europa World Online – Sierra Leone section <a href="http://www.europaworld.com/pub/">http://www.europaworld.com/pub/</a>
	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
	<b>[2d]</b>	United States Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report, 16 June 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2009/123139.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2009/123139.htm</a>
	<b>[10]</b>	The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), Sierra Leone section <a href="http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/sierraleone.html">http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/sierraleone.html</a>
	<b>[25c]</b>	IRIN “Sierra Leone: Chiefs ban genital cutting for girls under 18”, 16 April 2009 <a href="http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=83947">http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=83947</a>
	<b>[25i]</b>	IRIN “Sierra Leone: Children dying but hope persists”, 15 January 2009 <a href="http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=82400">http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=82400</a>
	<b>[25j]</b>	United Nations IRIN Sierra Leone Humanitarian Country Profile (February 2007 version) <a href="http://irinnews.org/country.aspx?CountryCode=SL&amp;RegionCode=WA">http://irinnews.org/country.aspx?CountryCode=SL&amp;RegionCode=WA</a>
	<b>[38]</b>	United States Department of Labor 2008 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor, 10 September 2009 <a href="http://www.dol.gov/ilab/programs/ocft/PDF/2008OCFTreport.pdf">http://www.dol.gov/ilab/programs/ocft/PDF/2008OCFTreport.pdf</a>
<b>CITIZENSHIP AND NATIONALITY</b>	<b>[26]</b>	Sierra Leone Citizenship Act 1973 <a href="http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?page=search&amp;docid=3ae6b50610&amp;skip=&amp;query=Sierra%20Leone%20Citizenship%20Act%201973">http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?page=search&amp;docid=3ae6b50610&amp;skip=&amp;query=Sierra%20Leone%20Citizenship%20Act%201973</a>
<b>CORRUPTION</b>	<b>[12]</b>	Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2009, released 17 November 2009 <a href="http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2009/cpi_2009_table">http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2009/cpi_2009_table</a>



<b>DEATH PENALTY</b>	<b>[8b]</b>	Amnesty International - Death Sentences and Executions in 2008, 24 March 2009 <a href="http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ACT50/003/2009/en/0b789cb1-baa8-4c1b-bc35-58b606309836/act500032009en.pdf">http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ACT50/003/2009/en/0b789cb1-baa8-4c1b-bc35-58b606309836/act500032009en.pdf</a>
<b>DISABILITY</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
<b>EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
<b>ETHNIC GROUPS</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
<b>FOREIGN REFUGEES</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
	<b>[3]</b>	The US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) – World Refugee Survey 2008, 19 June 2008 <a href="http://www.refugees.org/countryreports.aspx?id=2169">http://www.refugees.org/countryreports.aspx?id=2169</a>
<b>FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
<b>FREEDOM OF RELIGION</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
	<b>[2b]</b>	United States Department of State, 2009 International Religious Freedom Report on Sierra Leone, 26 October 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2009/127254.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2009/127254.htm</a>
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<b>FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND MEDIA</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
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	[16]	Sierra Leone section of the Freedom in the World 2009 Report, 16 July 2009 <a href="http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&amp;year=2009&amp;country=7699">http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&amp;year=2009&amp;country=7699</a>
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<b>INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs)</b>	[2a]	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
<b>JUDICIARY</b>	[1]	Europa World Online – Sierra Leone section <a href="http://www.europaworld.com/pub/">http://www.europaworld.com/pub/</a>
	[2a]	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
	[2c]	United States Department of State Background Note on Sierra Leone (June 2009 version) <a href="http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5475.htm">http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5475.htm</a>
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	[18a]	Canada Immigration and Refugee Board – Response to Information Request – Sierra Leone: Treatment of homosexuals by society and government authorities; legal recourse and protection available to homosexuals who have been subjected to ill-treatment (2005-2006), 22 February 2007 <a href="http://www2.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/research/rir/index_e.htm?action=record.view_rec&amp;gotorec=450954">http://www2.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/research/rir/index_e.htm?action=record.view_rec&amp;gotorec=450954</a>
	[30]	Behind the Mask – Sierra Leone page <a href="http://www.mask.org.za/index.php?page=sierraleone">http://www.mask.org.za/index.php?page=sierraleone</a>
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	[20a]	Médecins sans Frontières 2007 International Activity Report - Sierra Leone section <a href="http://www.msf.org/msfinternational/invoke.cfm?objectId=C95BEED9-15C5-F00A-25CB1CF2E91032D4&amp;component=toolkit.article&amp;method=full_html">http://www.msf.org/msfinternational/invoke.cfm?objectId=C95BEED9-15C5-F00A-25CB1CF2E91032D4&amp;component=toolkit.article&amp;method=full_html</a>
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<b>MILITARY SERVICE</b>	[15]	War Resisters’ International : Refusing to Bear Arms, August 1998 – Sierra Leone section <a href="http://www.wri-irg.org/co/rtba/sierraleone.htm">http://www.wri-irg.org/co/rtba/sierraleone.htm</a>

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<b>PRISON CONDITIONS</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
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<b>SECURITY FORCES</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
<b>SECURITY SITUATION</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
<b>TRAFFICKING</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
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<b>WOMEN</b>	<b>[2a]</b>	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices 2008: Sierra Leone, 25 February 2009 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119023.htm</a>
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