

Human Rights Defenders Network

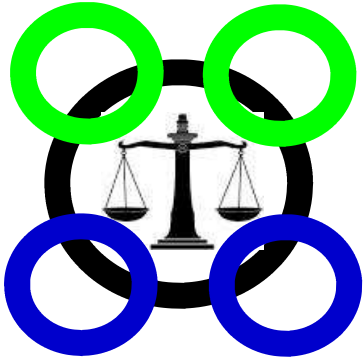
Sierra Leone (HRDN-SL)

145 Circular Road, Freetown,
Western Area, Sierra Leone

Email: info@hrdn-sl.org/Hrdefenderssl@gmail.com

Website: www.hrdn-sl.org

Tel: +232-78-213688/ +232-77-398893/ +232-76-680213



PRESS RELEASE

16th June 2016

CONCERN OVER PROLONG TRIAL OF A SENIOR STAFF OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF SIERRA LEONE

The Human Rights Defenders Network Sierra Leone (HRDN-SL) is a coalition of civil society organizations and individuals working in the field of human rights with specific focus on defending human rights defenders.

We recall the commitment made by the Sierra Leone government to promote and protect human rights by establishing the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone through the Human Rights Commission Act of 2004 including signing and ratification of the UN and AU Conventions/Treaties on human rights.

The Human Rights Defenders Network has been following the arrest and trial of a senior staff of the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRC-SL) Mr. Hassan Samba Yarjah, who was arrested during a protest by the main opposition Sierra Leone Peoples' Party (SLPP) in Kenema City on 27th April 2015 and later charged to court.

The Human Rights Defenders Network expresses grave concern on the prolonged trial of a staff of the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRC-SL).

MOTTO: "Defending the Defender"

The Network believes that the arrest, charge and prosecution of a senior staff of the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone is contrary to Section 5 of the Human Rights Commission Act of 2004 which states **“No action, suit or other legal proceeding shall lie against any person who is or was a member or employee of the Commission in respect of any decision taken or any act done or omitted to be done in good faith in the performance of any function under this Act”**.

In view of the above we call on government particularly the office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice as they prepare to respond to the UPR recommendations in Geneva to:

- Observe and adhere to the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone Act of 2004;
- Immediately acquit and discharge Mr. Hassan Samba Yarjah a Senior staff of the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRC-SL);

Signed by:



Executive Secretary

END

MOTTO: “Defending the Defender”