



# Sierra Leone Association of Journalists

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## PRESS RELEASE

### **SLAJ Calls for Responsible Use of Social Media**

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The **Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ)** is concerned about the proliferation of videos, audios, and voice notes with incendiary messages on social media which have the potential to divide us as a nation and cause unrest in the country.

While SLAJ will at all times stand to defend the fundamental human right of all citizens to free speech as an essential element of our democracy, “citizen journalists”, political enthusiasts and members of the public who have been abusing social media should know that this right is not absolute.

“Freedom of speech is like a kitchen knife. When you take it out of the kitchen for other purposes like stabbing, then it becomes harmful to the victim and to yourself,” said President of SLAJ, **Ahmed Sahid Nasralla**.

SLAJ calls on all media houses not to allow their platforms to be used as conduits for the dissemination of incendiary messages, fake news and disinformation. We also call on all journalists and other citizens not to share any such messages, if they receive them.

SLAJ also appeals to the leaderships of all political parties, political activists and citizens in general to condemn and desist from making and spreading expressions in every shape or form that promote hate and division among Sierra Leoneans.

“It’s not just the responsibility of the Government of Sierra Leone to maintain and promote law and order, and peace and stability in the country. It’s equally the responsibility of all political parties, democratic institutions and citizens,” added Nasralla. “The Government must work with the leaderships of all political parties and other stakeholders to look at the root causes of this dangerous trend and make genuine and honest efforts to address them collectively.”

**Long Live SLAJ. Long Live Sierra Leone.**

**#HateSpeechNotInOurName**

**Mohamed Asmieu Bah**  
NATIONAL SECRETARY GENERAL



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