



# Sierra Leone Association of Journalists

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **SLAJ Calls on Supreme Court to Reverse Order of Arrest**

The **Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ)** calls on the **Supreme Court (SC)** of the Judiciary of Sierra Leone to kindly rescind its recent warrant of arrest for lawyer **Augustine Sorie-Sengbe Marrah Esq.**

SLAJ is making this call because it is obvious that the lawyer was merely expressing his opinion to which he is entitled, no matter how obnoxious it may seem to the justices of the Supreme Court.

*"We are particularly concerned that the notice for the arrest of the lawyer came the very day H.E. President Julius Maada Bio officially assented his signature to the repeal of an infamous law that has stifled free speech and exchange of ideas in the country for decades. I believe the action of the SC is not only unprecedented but, with all due respect to the Judiciary of Sierra Leone, trivialises the remarkable importance of the symbolic signing at the Office of the President at State House,"* said the President of SLAJ, **Ahmed Sahid Nasralla**.

SLAJ is making this call on the grounds that every citizen has the right to an opinion on any issue, whether such opinion pleases the authorities or not.

And with the symbolic repeal of Part 5 of the Public Order Act 1965, this right is now guaranteed by law, and the Judiciary of all institutions bears the constitutional responsibility of protecting it. The Supreme Court should not put itself in a position where it is perceived to be violating one of the most fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

Meanwhile, SLAJ calls on democratic governance institutions to exercise their powers with due consideration of the rights and privileges of citizens.

Singed:

**Mohamed Asmieu Bah**  
National Secretary General

