



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ....



**L.A.W.Y.E.R.S**  
**LEGAL ACCESS THROUGH WOMEN YEARNING**  
**FOR EQUALITY RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**

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**CONCERNS ABOUT TREATMENT OF WOMEN FOLLOWING THE INCIDENTS ON MONDAY APRIL 12<sup>th</sup> AND TUESDAY APRIL 13<sup>th</sup> 2021**

We, are deeply concerned with the video recording making media rounds depicting the incident at the IPAM Campus on Monday April 12<sup>th</sup> 2021. We are alarmed at the conduct of the Sierra Leone Police "force for good" in their treatment of the students particularly the female Student whose human right and dignity was violated.

We are equally alarmed by the assault on the young female Medical Practitioner by certain Government Officials within the precincts of the Connaught Hospital (a public space) for lawfully using her cell phone to capture distressful situation within the Hospital precincts; a matter of National interest.

As a Nation, we continue to struggle with the state of violence against women which continues to be one of the most pervasive manifestations of discrimination.

Violence against women and girls is a global phenomenon and its national levels remain unacceptably high. The current spate of violence against women dents Government's professed commitment to promote & respect the rule of law, protects its citizens and undermines the fight for gender equality. It is our considered opinion that the conduct of the Sierra Leone Police/Persons in Authority is in contravention of Government's Constitutional obligation to recognise, maintain and enhance the sanctity of the human person and human dignity; noting that the Social Order of the State is founded on the ideals of Freedom, Equality and Justice.

The conduct of the Police/Persons in Authority is deemed to be in reckless disregard of citizen's human rights with no desire to minimize injury. It is clear there is no strategy on how the Police/Persons in Authority should treat women who are striving to exercise their constitutional right, or allegedly fell foul of the law or simply got caught up in an unfortunate incident.

We want to be clear: the burden of de-escalation does not fall on private citizens — it falls on Police Officers/Persons in Authority.

As can be gleaned from media footage, these women were subjected to excessive force. With the IPAM Student for instance, there was no need to strip her of her garments, nor the need to cause her such grievous bodily harm, nor defile her body.

We, therefore call for an urgent and diligent investigation into the incidents aforementioned and demand accountability for the transgressions on these women.

We empathize with the women who have been subjected to inhumane treatment and renew our commitment to continue to serve as partners in development with the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone. We implore all institutions and authorities to continue to strengthen existing policies for the protection of human rights in Sierra Leone and the implementation of comprehensive and sustainable internal and public programs to guide their operations.

As a Nation, we cannot be seen to engage in fruitless endeavours in our stride to protect, promote and preserve the rights of our women. Impunity must not prevail and there must be accountability. Let sanity prevail today, tomorrow and the next as we shall not relent in our fight for the promotion and preservation of the rights of women and girls.

**We demand justice for the victims3**

DATED THE 12<sup>th</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 2021

L.A.W.Y.E.R.S.  
11 PERCIVAL STREET  
FREETOWN.  
SIGN *[Signature]*  
DATE

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DATE  
Vice President

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