



FIAT JUSTITIA

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## PRESS STATEMENT

### UNLAWFUL DEMONSTRATION AND ALLEDGED ATTEMPT AT AN UNCONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE OF THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

The Sierra Leone Bar Association (**hereinafter known as "the SLBA"**) is gravely concerned about the violent and unlawful demonstration that took place on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 2022 in the East of Freetown and parts of the Northern province of Sierra Leone, specifically Makeni city and Lungi, preceded by inciteful rhetoric by some unpatriotic Sierra Leoneans both home and abroad.

The SLBA is seised of publicly circulated video recordings of the violent and unlawful demonstration with images of brutal killings of security personnel and loss of civilian lives, hate speech and ethnic bigotry and malicious destruction of properties. The SLBA extends its heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families of our lost compatriots and commiserates with those who have suffered total loss of property.

While the SLBA recognizes the rights of citizens to engage in peaceful protest under the Constitution of Sierra Leone (Act No. 6 of 199), the same **MUST** be done within the applicable limitations, strictly complying with the Laws of Sierra Leone, including as provided for in section 17(1) and (2) of the Public Order Act, No.46 of 1965.

**The SLBA condemns this unfortunate incidence in the strongest of terms and entreats citizens to be law abiding and to pursue legitimate means in expressing concerns and dissatisfaction.**

The SLBA takes note of the Press Statement from the Hon. Vice President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Dr. Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh aired on the public broadcaster, the SLBC TV, on Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> August 2022, wherein the Vice President aforesaid informed citizens that "some self-serving Sierra Leoneans over the past weeks have intensified the call for violence and the forceful overthrow of the legitimate government of President Julius Maada Bio". The SLBA further strongly condemns any attempt at an unconstitutional change of the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone. A change of government can only be done by a Constitutional means; any other means not in compliance with our laws would be palpably illegal and criminal.

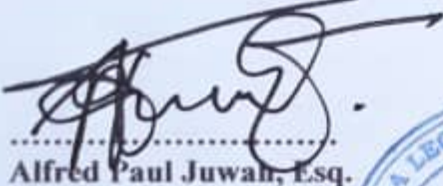
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The SLBA further takes note of the measures, including the curfew, imposed by the Government of Sierra Leone, and urge for appropriate legal steps to be taken to address the seeming threats to public safety and order.

In view of the above, the SLBA hereby calls for the following:

1. The commencement of a full investigation into the incidents leading to the violent and unlawful demonstration, and the perpetrators of the violent and unlawful demonstration including those that incited the incident to be held accountable within the ambit of the law.
2. All citizens be law abiding and exercise calm.
3. Security personnel to be professional while carrying out their duties in the difficult circumstances.

The SLBA will remain seised of the matter.



Alfred Paul Juwan, Esq.  
General Secretary – SLBA

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