



Report prepared and submitted by the Youth Partnership for Peace and Development

# UN Security Council Resolution

## 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security



### Report of National Launch in Sierra Leone

**BUILDING PEACEFUL, INCLUSIVE AND RESILIENT SOCIETIES WHILE TAKING YOUTH ALONG**



CIVIL SOCIETY PLATFORM FOR PEACEBUILDING AND STATEBUILDING

Cordaid



Search for Common Ground



United Network of Young

Peacebuilders



Youth Partnership for Peace and Development

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## Background

In December 2015, the importance of engaging young women and men in shaping lasting peace was recognized by the Security Council in a ground breaking resolution on Youth, Peace and Security. Resolution 2250 urges Member States to increase inclusive representation of young people in institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict and for countering violent extremism and calls for an increase in political, financial, technical and logistical support the participation of youth in peace efforts and to take account of their needs. This Resolution marks an historical achievement for the first time in its history the Security Council has recognized that young people play an important and positive role in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.

This is the first resolution that deals specifically with the role of young people in issues of peace and security. The resolution is an important landmark for the recognition of the positive role young people can play in conflict and post-conflict setting. But what exactly does this resolution say? Why does a Security Council resolution on Youth, Peace and Security matter? How can young people use this resolution to build more peaceful and safe societies? These are the questions we will address in the official launch of UNSC resolution 2250 in Sierra Leone. The UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (UNSCR2250) was passed after more than 10,000 young people called for it in the *Amman Youth Declaration*, adopted during the Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security in August 2015. The Resolution marks the birth of a Youth, Peace and Security agenda and was very much inspired by the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

The adoption of the UNSCR2250 marks the culmination of years of advocacy by civil society for the recognition by the Security Council that young men and young women have a critical and positive role to play for building sustainable peace. Its passage would not have been achieved without the leadership of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, who sponsored the resolution, hosted the Global Forum in Amman and led an Open Debate in the Security Council in April 2015.

The Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS) has also been part of this advocacy journey. CSPPS is a South-North non-governmental coalition of peacebuilding organizations that coordinates and supports civil society participation in the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS). CSPPS mission is to strengthen the voice and capacity of society to effectively engage in, and influence, peacebuilding and statebuilding as a critical contribution to crisis prevention and sustainable peace and development for all.

The Platform advocated for recognition and consideration of Youth Peace and Security in the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and

Statebuilding (IDPS) Stockholm Declaration Addressing Fragility and Building Peace in a Changing World. Subsequently, CSPPS provided recommendations towards operationalizing commitments made on Youth Peace and Security into IDPS work plan and action. In Sierra Leone, the CSPPS has a local representation through the New Deal / CSPPS Country Team consisting mainly of national CS/NG institutions<sup>1</sup>.

It is in this context that we are proposing a National Launch event of the UNSCR2250 in Sierra Leone as means to create the required awareness and also deliberate on possible entry points for joint implementation among all stakeholders. The “New Deal”, proposes key peacebuilding and statebuilding goals (PSGs) as an important foundation for accelerated national development, with a focus on engendering new ways of engaging, while identifying commitments to building mutual trust achieving better results which in fact forms the strategic fit for the launch of UNSCR2250 in Sierra Leone. With support from the ND Country Team, this event will be led by the Youth Partnership for Peace and Development.

## RATIONAL FOR RESOLUTION 2250 NATIONAL LAUNCH IN SIERRA LEONE



*“Youth played a cardinal but critical role in the decade-long Sierra Leonean civil war; a successful transition between conflict and peace is often dependent on the establishment of increased human security and the creation of a climate of confidence, which paves the way for a range of peacebuilding and recovery interventions that takes into account the inclusion of young people as a socially viable category when harnessed well.”*

Being on the crossroads since the country's civil war, Sierra Leone has had several processes unfolding as part of repositioning her place on the global and governance stages. While most of these processes are looked at as key opportunities for holistic growth and engagement, a lot seems disconnected as to answering questions like how central young people are in seeking joint and collective solutions to dealing with major drivers of conflicts, violence and fragility in general. Sierra Leone, like any conflict, security and violence-affected contexts, young people are commonly perceived as either perpetrators or victims of violence with young men usually assumed to be the primary perpetrators and young women the primary victims, especially of sexual and gender-based violence. Yet the live realities of young people in these contexts are much more complex than these stereotypes suggest. Some young people may be both direct victims and perpetrators of violence; others may be neither, but instead have to use their skills and resources to survive and support themselves and their families. As signatory to the New Deal and one of the countries that piloted the New Deal implementation tools and guidance conducted an inclusive country-led and owned Fragility Assessment in 2012.

With the overall results showing that Sierra Leone is still at the transition stage/ crossroads” tells that much remains to further climb by improving on the respective PSGs and dimensions. The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States is a framework for engaging in situations affected by conflict and fragility. Recognizing and supporting youth in fostering peace and security remains awaited area of development in Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone is one of the founding members of the g7+ and a signatory to the New Deal. Agreed upon in November 2011 by the g7+ and international partners, the New Deal proposes five peacebuilding and statebuilding goals (PSGs) for conflict-affected countries. It also focuses on new ways of engaging with donors, and identifies joint commitments for better results. As a New Deal Pilot Country, Sierra Leone was one of the first countries to start New Deal implementation, and chose to begin with an inclusive country-led fragility assessment. Rather than just being wishful thinking, this resolution is an important step towards tackling the challenges of modern-day conflicts where at least 600 million young people live in fragile and conflict-affected zones.

This is significant because, as the resolution states, “today’s generation of youth is the largest the world has ever known [...] often form[ing] the majority of the population of countries affected by armed conflict”. Socially isolated, disillusioned youth turn to violence and extremism in their search for identity, acceptance, and purpose with the unwanted consequence of perpetuating cycles of conflict. The resolution has particular resonance for the Africa region where youth comprise a greater population of the total population.

This historical resolution is the first of its kind to recognize the positive role young people play in building sustainable peace and to lay out the need for governments and other stakeholders to support young people in this role. It represents a landmark for the participation of young people involved in transforming conflict, peacebuilding and countering violence. The next step is to ensure that this resolution becomes a reality.

Resolution 2250 therefore, represents a formal declaration recognizing youth as partners in building a safer world and as key actors both in peacekeeping and peacebuilding sustainability and statebuilding efforts. The main purpose of the resolution is to raise awareness of the contributions youth make in the areas of prevention, resolution of conflicts, and building a sustainable peace at national and global levels. Launching the resolution in Sierra Leone further represents a significant roadmap towards holding government accountable in implementing major related frameworks that seeks to enhance peacebuilding and statebuilding while taking youth on board as critical players for a peaceful Sierra Leone.

Following the holding of elections in May of 2002, Sierra Leone has since embarked on a process of peacebuilding. While facing multiple challenges, the country’s youthful population is one that certainly deserves greater attention as identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Youth comprises well over 50% of Sierra Leone’s population and in the face of scarce opportunities for empowerment and inclusion in a country devastated by multiple shocks; they are a segment of the population that must be incorporated into the post-conflict reconstruction processes which is now badly needed for a wholesome, peaceful and inclusive society.

As a matter of fact, Sierra Leone does not have a tradition where youth participate in the national and district development planning process. Even where the Government has established district youth development councils and chiefdom youth committees, the majority of youth are not aware of their roles within these mechanisms and the processes involved in participating and influencing their outcomes.

*Launching the UNSCR 2250 therefore was a significant bold step in not only raising the profile of youth in peace and security, but further generated wider policy and stakeholder interests while building on commitments to solidify structures for holistic engagement with young people across the board.*

*There launch further served as a significant step in agreeing on the setting up an Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Youth Peace and Security in Sierra Leone and by extension, the very great beginning to cushioning rising election tensions that may emanate in the lead up to the 2018 national polls. The wider New Deal Country team in Sierra Leone saw this as a golden opportunity in supporting its work in not only the PSGs, but also as part of the overall national effort in placing youth at the center of peacebuilding and statebuilding.*



## The Goal

The goal was to officially launch the resolution at the national level, agreeing on a National Action Plan and ensure concrete follow-up actions while using the opportunity of raising awareness and mobilize relevant stakeholders for actions that will sustainably contribute to building a more peaceful, wholesome and inclusive Sierra Leonean society.

## Objectives

- To advance the understanding of donors, policymakers and the larger non-state actors community of complex and often interconnected policy and program considerations for more holistic support to youth peacebuilding interventions in the context of Sierra Leone;
- To agree on the need for developing a national action plan that will serve as roadmap for implementation resolution at the national level.
- To share informed knowledge of how the principles of the UNSCR2250 can support the implementation of the SDGs, the New Deal for engagement in fragile states and general peacebuilding.
- To demonstrate how to engage the resilience inherent in the youth population for sustainable peace; an avenue for tapping into the demographic dividend
- To discuss and foster partnership to further this Youth, Peace and Security agenda in context of Sierra Leone through the establishment of a National Youth Action Group on Youth Peace and Security at the respective district levels.

## Major Event Outcomes

- Preparation and delivery of a comprehensive and compelling youth statement Sierra Leone with Government and respective partners making commitments to ensuring that they will adequately continue to include youth in development activities/programs and ensure their full participation. And also to implement the provisions of the Resolution was a major commitment made.
- The preparation of key recommendations to governments aimed at attaining the fullest implementation of the UN Resolution 2250 and the SDG 16 from a Sierra Leonean youth perspective
- Well-informed and capacitated participants enthused to take major learning outcomes forward through their various institutions to engage on the key agreed areas of intervention.
- Agreed on the establishment of a credible and representative platform (an Inter-Agency Coordination) for youth engagement for the implementation of the UNSCR 2250 in Sierra Leone.
- Built consensus on need for the design of a National Action Plan that will serve as road map for the implementation of the Resolution in line with relevant frameworks like the SDGs and the World program of Action for Youth and areas for mainstreaming youth across a broad spectrum of policy.
- Established a Committee within the Country Team to follow up on implementation of the National Action Plan and provide the necessary advice as necessary.
- Participants were able to discuss key ways forward for post launch activities.

## Speakers



**Chairperson:**  
**Dr. Memunatu Pratt**  
 Lecturer and Head of Department  
 Peace and Conflict Studies at Fourah Bay College,  
 University of Sierra Leone.

**Keynote Speaker:**

Mr. Anthony A. Koroma  
 Commissioner  
 National Youth Commission



**Speaker:**  
 Jimmy Joseph Sankaituah  
 Country Director  
 Search for Common  
 Ground in Sierra Leone



**Speaker:**  
 Dr. Samuel Doe  
 Country Director  
 UNDP in Sierra Leone

**Speaker:**  
 Coordinator  
 Civil Society Platform on  
 Peacebuilding and  
 Statebuilding Secretariat  
 The Netherlands



**Speaker:**  
 Shellac Davies  
 New Deal CSO Focal  
 Point and SLANGO  
 National Coordinator



**Speaker:**  
 Sharron Kelliher  
 Country Director  
 Cordaid Sierra Leone



**Speaker:**  
 Mohamed B. Koroma  
 Coordinator  
 National Youth Council

**Facilitator and Event Convener:**

Musa Ansumana Soko  
 Executive Coordinator  
 Youth Partnership for Peace and Development/  
 Chairman, WASH-Net Sierra Leone



## Attendees and Stakeholders

The event brought together well over one hundred and twenty participants as stakeholders in the youth as well as peacebuilding sectors including senior government officials, INGOs and LNGOs, the United Nations, youth serving as well as youth-led organizations, academic institutions, the judiciary, Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces, the Police, representatives of political parties and host of others

## Next Steps and Recommendations

- Formation of an Inter-agency Platform for coordinating the activities of the post launch.
- Developing an action plan for the implementation of the national action on the implementation of the provisions of the Resolution.
- Continuous engagement of state and non-state actors to mainstream youth into their planning and programs
- Engaging young people to take the lead in preventing conflict and promoting peace in their communities.
- Constant media engagement to raise awareness about the resolution at the national and district levels
- Development of a national program of action that will serve as road map for the implementation of the resolution at the national level.

## Organization and Collaboration

The event will be organized by the Youth Partnership for Peace and Development in collaboration with the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS) and the Sierra Leone CSO Country Team on the New Deal.

The event provided the opportunity to collaboratively work with and invite UN agencies such as UNFPA, UNDP, UNWomen, FAO and other Civil Society/Non-Governmental organizations such as Search for Common Ground, United Network of Young Peacebuilders. Speakers will be further drawn from youth representatives, government, civil society and the donor community that are actively engaged in issues of youth development, security, and peace.

The government of Sierra Leone will be partnered with as part of the launch next steps through the Office of the Office of National Security, Ministry of Youth Affairs, National Youth Commission, Youth Councils, and Presidential Youth Aide and respective Ministries, Departments and Agencies at the decentralized level.





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