



## Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law-Sierra Leone (CARL-SL)

....fostering human rights through accountability

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### **Press Statement:**

### **CARL-SL Responds to Parliament's Stance on FGM in the Child Rights Act, 2025**

July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Freetown, Sierra Leone

The Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law, Sierra Leone (CARL-SL) expresses profound concern regarding the recent press statement issued by Parliament on July 7, 2025, concerning the Child Rights Act, 2025 and its implications for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

The statement suggests that, the Act does not criminalize FGM or prescribe fines for those involved in the practice on girls under the age of eighteen. This is deeply troubling, given the harmful and long-lasting effects of FGM on girls and women. CARL-SL believes that, any law or policy should prioritize the protection of children's rights and well-being.

### **Call to Action**

We encourage Parliament and the President to:

- Reconsider the implications of the Child Rights Act, 2025 on FGM and ensure that it aligns with international and regional human rights standards.
- Engage in a consultative process with civil society organizations, including those working on children's rights and gender issues, to strengthen the Act's provisions on FGM.
- Prioritize the safety and well-being of girls and women in Sierra Leone, by taking concrete steps to prevent FGM.
- President Julius Maada Bio not to sign this law, and return it to parliament for a provision to be added, in criminalizing child FGM.

CARL-SL remains committed to promoting accountability and the rule of law in Sierra Leone. We will continue to monitor the implementation of the Child Rights Act, 2025 and advocate for the protection of women and girls.

For further clarification, please feel free to contact Ms. Mary-Magdalene Kelfalla, Advocacy Officer, CARL-SL on: +232 34-656751 or email: [mabri2829@gmail.com](mailto:mabri2829@gmail.com)

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