

EMERGENCY EVACUATION AND CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR GHANA HIGH COMMISSION IN SIERRA LEONE

This is a contingency plan and procedure serving as a guide for Ghanaian nationals living in the Republic of Sierra Leone. These guidelines present four (4) Alert Levels to address contingencies of different nature and magnitude particularly, in the event of an outbreak of armed hostilities, political upheaval civil uprising and any crisis situation in Sierra Leone that may necessitate an emergency response from the Ghana High Commission, Freetown Sierra Leone.

2. Contact Information – Ghana High Commission:

Opening hours:	Mon – Fri 9.00-16.00
Mailing address:	10B Loop Road Wilberforce, Freetown
Visiting address:	10B Loop Road Wilberforce, Freetown
Tel:	+232-761-005-04
Emergency Contacts:	+232-720-105-22 (Consular)
	+232-765-338-87 (Assistant Consular)
	+232-745-798-96 (Head Of Chancery)
	+232-749-428-08 (Head of Mission)
Email:	freetown@mfa.gov.gh
Internet:	https://freetown.mfa.gov.gh/
Facebook	Ghana High Commission, Freetown-Sierra Leone

DISCLAIMER

Please note that this plan has not been prepared with any expected or present emergency situation in mind, but as part of the routine planning done by the Ghana High Commission.

NOTE: It is recommended that a copy of this plan is kept within easy access. Study the plan closely and share its recommendations with your family members.

3. REGISTRATION

As requested by Ghana regulations, all Ghanaian nationals staying or visiting Sierra Leone are advised to register at the High Commission to ensure easy access to them in the period of emergencies.

4. The Following Are General Guidelines:

- ❖ Crisis may erupt without warning at any time. In the event of crisis, remain calm but alert.
- ❖ Events during a crisis situation may evolve with the passage of time; as such one may not be able to predict all scenarios that may occur. Nonetheless, it is important to take preemptive measures including having knowledge of hotspots, know possible safe havens in your location identified by the Ghana Mission and always be ready with your individual emergency survival kits or grab bags.
- ❖ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Ghana, in collaboration with the Ghana High Commission in Sierra Leone are authorized to advise on the alert level as and when necessary.
- ❖ A major source of insecurity and conflict in Sierra Leone is political instability compounded by tribal incitement and hate speeches. Health emergencies are also a matter of concern.
- ❖ The Current political and security situation in the country is noted as volatile and tense fueling heightened insecurity. The High Commission has always set the Alert Level to “heightened alertness” or Level 1, reminding the Ghanaian community to remain attentive to current events in the country.
- ❖ It is important to know the Ghanaian Community and Association leaders/Coordinators in your province and city. Always stay in touch with the leaders to be in time with important information coming from the Mission.
- ❖ Refer further information to the High Commission website and Facebook page.
 - a. <http://freetown.mfa.gov.gh/>
 - b. Ghana High Commission, Freetown-Sierra Leone (Facebook Page)

5. Summary of Recommended Actions per Alert Level:

Below is a table which summarizes the various Alert Levels that would be declared by the High Commission upon instruction of the Government of Ghana. It also shows a summary of the recommended actions to be taken by the Ghanaian community corresponding to each Alert Level.

Alert Level	Description	Indicators	What to do
1	Heightened insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are continuous provocations such as attacks on security agencies and state institutions as well as government officials, attacks on tribal groups and political opponents, rampant hate speeches and incitements, mass protest, civilian road blocks. • This is the default alert level in Sierra Leone because of the country's recent history of civil war, general insecurity compounded by political protest etc., threat is present but danger is not always imminent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain calm but be vigilant of the developments in your location. • Avoid hotspots and violent prone areas. • Stock up on basic needs (Emergency supplies, water, food, fuel, prepaid electricity, etc.) • Prepare a grab bag. • Keep a reasonable amount of Money on yourself. • Exercise caution and monitor announcements from the High Commission and the Sierra Leone Government.
2	Restricted Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy Military and Police Operational Support Division, (OSD) across principal streets in the country. • Other Diplomatic and International Organizations based in Freetown are issuing advisories and warnings restricting travel to certain locations. • The Office of National Security (ONS) and other security agencies are frequently issuing advisories on civilian safety procedures and protocols. • There may be more military encounters in isolated places most likely along the Eastern axis of the National Capital. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize movement and avoid going to places of potential conflict. • Follow the instructions of the police or civil defense force in your area. • Prepare for possible evacuation to safe havens identified by the High Commission in your locality. • Get ready with the Survival Kit (Grab Bag). Contact the Ghanaian Community/Union Leader. Go to the safe havens if directed by the High Commission and community leaders.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military topples the government 	
3	Voluntary Repatriation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are more military and militant encounters in places along the Freetown to Waterloo route. • Rampant attacks by the youth on state authorities. Recorded cases of attacks on civilians particularly of foreigners across the country especially in Makeni, Magburaka, Kono, Kambia, Bo and Kenema. • Alarming rate of military patrols in the cities. • Involvement of militant and vigilante groups to enforce order. • The Sierra Leone Government has issued evacuation instructions for Conflict Zones and Militarized Zones. • There is heavier Military deployment across the country. • Military take over. • Other Diplomatic Missions and International Organizations based in Freetown have issued advisories and warnings to discourage travel to Sierra Leone. 	<p>The High Commission declares Alert Level No. 3 and advises Ghanaians to leave Sierra Leone voluntarily.</p> <p>Ghanaians who have the means and valid travel documents (passport) may leave Sierra Leone on their own.</p> <p>The Ghana Government will decide at the proper time whether to bear the cost of plane or ship ticket for those Ghanaians without the means.</p> <p>Ghanaians should take with them their individual Survival Kits (Grab Bags).</p>
4	Mandatory Evacuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger scale military conflict is imminent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon declaration by the Ghanaian Government of mandatory evacuation, Ghanaians in and around • Kenema,

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other Diplomatic Missions are preparing their nationals for mass evacuation out of Sierra Leone • A critical determinant in the order of mandatory evacuation is Sierra Leone's declaration of a national emergency. • Civilian factories are expected to halt operations. • When full blown conflict erupts. • State Security loses control. • Closure of Airspace. • Mass exodus of political leaders and government officials outside of Sierra Leone. 	<p>Bo, Kono should move southwards towards the designated exit points, particularly the border with Liberia. Sulima, Pujehun District is identified as a Safe haven.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ghanaians in the North and North West (Makeni, Kambia, Kabala, Magburaka) may exit through the borders with Guinea Conakry. • Ghanaians in the Freetown may safe crossover to Lungi and try and make it to the Freetown International Airport. • The Residence of the Consular Officer at 24 Spur Road, the Residence of the High Commissioner, Behind Presidential Lodge and the Chancery at 10B Wilberforce/Spur Loop are noted as safe havens depending on the prevailing circumstance. • Ghanaians should take with them <input type="checkbox"/> their individual Survival Kits.
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5. *Survival Kit (Emergency Grab Bag)*

A Grab Bag is a portable kit containing items for survival within 72-hours following the declaration of alert level four or a national emergency. It is meant for a short period survival rather than long-term survival.

Any foreign national resident in another country must keep a grab bag. This kit should be checked every 6 months taking into consideration the freshness and effectiveness of the items inside.

a. When, how to, and who should prepare an emergency grab bag?

- i) Before a/an other disaster strikes
- ii) It should be an easy-to-carry bag.
- iii) Preferably, each member of the family should have his/her own kit.
- iv) Children should be taught to prepare their own kits and trained how to act when disaster strikes.

b. What should be placed inside the emergency grab bag?

TYPE	ITEM LIST
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 One (1) Litre bottle water • 5 500gm bottle water • Water purification supplies (If available)
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-perishable • Protein/granola bars, dried fruit, crackers, Cereals, easy-to-open canned goods, Gari, Plantain Chips, Groundnuts, Sugar, Powdered milk, Shito etc. • In case of hypoglycemia, canned juice or hard sweet candies Should be sufficient for 3 days for the family • Disposable plates and utensils
Emergency Tools/Gear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ID card for family members with special concerns. • Indicate information and special circumstances of the person (if any). • Maps for evacuation sites and routes • Whistle (preferably with compass) • Flashlight (Self-powered/solar is preferred. If none, include extra batteries.) • Multi-purpose knife • Matches or lighter and candles (Warning: Do not use matches or candles until you are certain there are no gas leaks.) • AM/FM radio transistor (self-powered/solar. If none, include extra batteries.) • Glow sticks • Plastic sheeting or garbage bag • Blankets • Ropes (avoid nylon) • Sleeping bag • Life Jacket
Personal Effect And Hygiene Kit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra clothing Undergarments • Antibacterial soap • Toothbrushes and toothpaste • Hand towels Comb/hair brush • Hand sanitizer or alcohol • Sanitary napkin
Important Documents And Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be inside a plastic envelope or the like • Money in the form of cash and loose change • Prepaid cards • Passport • Legal documents (Birth Certificates, marriage contract, insurance certificates, land titles, etc.) • Important information (Security insurance number, tax identification number, driver's license, passport number, bank account details, insurance policy, etc.) • Other documents as may be deemed important (academic credentials,

	vaccination records, medical records etc.)
Special Needs (Of Elderly, Children, Infant Or Sick Member Of The Family)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency medication • Prescription medication • Children’s food • Glucose
First Aid Kit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Adhesive strips (Pk50) • 1 Hypo-Allergenic medical tape 1.25cmx9.1m • 1 Conforming Bandage 5cm • 1 Triangular Bandage 110cmx110cm • 1 Wound Dressing No. 15 • 1 Mentholated Alcohol • 2 Swabs Antiseptic • 1 Tweezers metal 8cm • 1 disposable scissors • 1 Set of safety pins- assorted (pk12) • 1 resealable plastic bag- 100x180mm • 1 resealable plastic bag- 150x230mm • 1 First Aid Quick Reference Guide • Pain Relievers and Analgesics • Antihistamine

7. Operationalization: Alert Level 3 – Voluntary Repatriation

In the event of conflict, which is assumed to be political unrest or conventional warfare, skirmishes will be concentrated in the strongholds of the two major political parties and their corresponding tribal groupings. At this point, the prevailing circumstances will not yet necessitate mandatory evacuation of every Ghanaian resident throughout Sierra Leone at the outset, but would entail voluntary repatriation of non-essential Ghanaians (Children, Vulnerable persons, etc) and those with the means, who feel that their safety and security are at risk.

➤ *Phase I: Declaration of Alert Level 3 by the Ghana High Commission*

The Ghana High Commission would declare Alert Level 3 when the security situation so warrants and urge Ghanaians in affected areas to consider voluntary repatriation.

- Information Dissemination:

The information for voluntary repatriation will be disseminated to the affected Ghanaians primarily through the following Email and text messages to the Whatsapp of the Ghanaian Community/Union leaders.

- a. <http://freetown.mfa.gov.gh/>
- b. Ghana High Commission, Freetown-Sierra Leone (Facebook Page)

Ghanaians are also advised to communicate with your Community/Union Leaders for important advisories and information.

- Refer to the table below to know who your Area Coordinator is:

City/Province/Association	Leaders/Coordinators	Mobile Phone No.
<i>NORTHERN PROVINCE</i>		
• Makeni Ghana Community	<i>Mr. Augustine Anea Mr. Addai</i>	+232 76 469 639 +232 88 110 257
• Magburaka Ghana Community	<i>Mr. Augustine Anea Mr. Christian</i>	+232 76 469 639 +232 27 508 253
• Kabala Ghana Community	<i>Nana Kwabena Mr. Owusu Ansah Mr. Baafi</i>	+232 79 684 000 +232 31 112 336 +232 99 701 985
<i>EASTERN PROVINCE</i>		
• Kono Ghana Community	<i>Mr. Ernest Asiedu Rev. Sister Rita Kissiwaa Pastor Egyam</i>	+232 76 706 489 +232 79 892 671 +232 76 706 489
<i>SOUTHERN PROVINCE</i>		
• Bo Ghana Community	<i>Mr. Kofi Nyarko</i>	+232 79 0447 17
• Kenema Ghana Community	<i>Mr. Richard Lamptey Mr. Ebow Davis Mr. Maxwell Ayim</i>	+232 76 6435 89 +232 995 276 57 +232 765 550 66
• Sulima Ghana Community	<i>Mr. Anthony Baiden Mr. Kow Baiden</i>	+232 32747744 +232 99004039
<i>WESTERN PROVINCE(URBAN)/FREETOWN</i>		
• Ghana Professionals in Sierra Leone (GHAPSIL)	<i>Mr. Selassi Amah D'Almeida Mr. Abu-Bukari Kwesi Issah Mr. Charles Dwomoh</i>	+232 76 199 317 +232 763 41092/ +232 30284888 +232 882 913 27/ +232 301 963 874

WESTERN PROVINCE (RURAL)		
• Obimanso Association	<i>Mr. Yawson Mr. Martin Manu Mr. Raman</i>	+232 334 978 66 +232 300 884 01 +232 762 453 35
• Funkia Association	<i>Nana Mensah (Speaks Krio and English only)</i>	+232 800 830861
• Waterloo Association	<i>Mr. Afotey Mr. Alex Amoah Pastor Bright</i>	+232 767 426 89 +232 758 577 29 +232 888 413 97
• Ghana Family Association	<i>Mrs. Lydia Mr. Richard Mr. Danquah</i>	+232 992 010 34 +232 808 838 93 +232 777 254 64

8. Movement From Conflict Areas To Safe Havens:

At the outbreak of widespread conflict in the major hotspots in the provincial and national capitals, Ghanaian nationals in affected areas will be urged to immediately move towards the identifiable safe zones to be determined as the situation unfolds. As conflict for this particular Alert Level is expected to be concentrated along the provinces of the strongholds of the respective political parties, it is presumed that public transportation toward Freetown and those heading to the border with Guinea Conakry in the North and Northwest, as well as Liberia in the South and Southeast maybe a challenge, as the country is limited by commercial transport/bus operators.

Note: During conflict, some roads may be restricted, so you should be prepared to walk, cycle or find alternate means of transportation, including buses that may be provided by aid and humanitarian agencies. The High Commission may not be able to provide transportation during Voluntary Repatriation.

Also note that, at the level of Alert Level 3 (Voluntary Repatriation) transportation especially of international travels may not have been disrupted. Airspace may still be opened for commercial flights. At this point, mass movement is expected and there may be a bit of chaos at the various sea crossing operators (Sea Coach, Sea Bird, the Ferry terminal etc) terminals.

Note: during Voluntary repatriation Ghanaians may not need to seek shelter elsewhere than their homes unless the situation so demands and upon the High Commission's instructions. Ghanaians are encouraged to remain calm.

9. Phase II: Voluntary Repatriation

For Alert Level 3, the Ghanaian travelers are personally responsible for booking and make payment of the ticket themselves but inform the High Commission, either directly or through your respective leaders, that you are leaving Sierra Leone voluntarily.

➤ *Registering with the Ghana High Commission (for Repatriation)*

If you would want help to be voluntarily repatriated back to Ghana, you may go to the High Commission to seek assistance in booking of flights and/or issuance of Travel Documents.

- Procedure:

Upon arrival at the Embassy, you will be met by one of the High Commission's consular assistants. Those in need of medical attention will be referred to a pre-identified medical facility.

- ✓ You will be asked to fill up the Embassy's registration form.
- ✓ Upon completion, assigned personnel will record data in the Consular registration system.
- ✓ If you do not have a valid Ghanaian passport, consular assistant would process the issuance of an Emergency Travel Certificate (TC). The validation of the TC is 30 days.
- ✓ If it is necessary to temporarily relocate you, the Chancery may accommodate you at the Chancery pending your repatriation back to Ghana. At this time, you are expected to use the supplies inside your Grab Bag.

10. Alert Level 4 – Mandatory Evacuation

❖ Scenario 1: Conventional Warfare

In the event of a full-scale conventional war, the **mandatory evacuation** of all Ghanaians in Sierra Leone would be undertaken.

The information for mandatory evacuation will be made known to you through available means of communication and through your Ghana community/Union leaders. However, if access to communication and mass media proves difficult, you should be alert and mindful of your surroundings, as well as listen to your local governments for further instructions.

In the event that Ghanaians in the whole of Sierra Leone need to be evacuated, the High Commission would activate the following General Concept of Evacuation:

➤ *Phase I: The Ghana High Commission Declares Alert Level 4 For Mandatory Evacuation*

The High Commission and the Government of Ghana through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and RI base on their assessment of the security situation, and upon the declaration of a national emergency by the Sierra Leonean Government, would declare the immediate mandatory evacuation of all Ghanaians in the country.

➤ *Phase II: Move Immediately Towards Exit Points*

For Ghanaians who did not avail of Voluntary Repatriation during Alert Level 3, and when a full evacuation has been ordered, you will be instructed to move from where you are to the identified exit points.

The principal exit points are:

1. Sea Transport Terminals in Freetown (Sea Coach, Sea Bird, Government Ferry)
2. Lungi (Freetown International Airport)
3. Gbalamayu Border, Kambia District (Border with Guinea-Conakry in the Northwest).
4. Bo-Waterside Border, Southern province (Border with Liberia).
5. Kabala - Gberia Fotombu Border (Krobola Border), Falaba District (Border with Guinea-Conakry in the North).
6. Sulima Fishing Dockyard (Dominated by Ghanaian fisherman).
7. Kailahun (Dambara) crossing, Eastern (Border with Guinea in the East).

Note: In the event of a full-scale war, the Sierra Leonean Government may declare a state of emergency. Civilian movement, including access to and use of roads and communication, may be restricted and vehicles may be seized by the various actors in the war.

- With no efficient public transportation system (trains, buses and taxis) you would have to use private vehicles to move towards the designated exit points.
- It is also assumed that the Freetown International Airport at Lungi, the only international airport in Sierra Leone may be rendered unusable if military operations were to take place near the airport or in the event of an airspace closure.
- You will be advised to move southwards or Northwest, towards pre-identified exit points, away from conflict areas, with the view of entering Liberia and Guinea-Conakry, respectively.

Note: During a conflict should the main highway particularly in Freetown be unavailable for use, bearing in mind that there is **only one highway out of the city by road** (Waterloo axis, a major hotspot), it may not be possible to drive a private vehicle; you should be prepared to walk, cycle

or find alternate means of transportation, including buses provided by aid and humanitarian agencies or the High Commission.

Note also the possibility of the High Commission's inability to provide transportation for you.

The maps below will show the main cities and districts, closest exit points and the approximate distance from the cities and districts to these points:



- i. Freetown - Gbalamayu Border
 - Distance: 173 km (3-hour Drive) (21hrs Walk)
- ii. Freetown – Lungi (Freetown International Airport) by Sea.
 - Distance: 32 km (45mins)
- iii. Freetown – Lungi (Freetown International Airport) by Road.
 - Distance: 183 km (3-hour Drive) (26hr Walk)
- iv. Freetown – B0-Waterside Border
 - Distance: 389 km (6hr Drive) (74hr Walk)
- v. BO - Bo-Waterside Border
 - 151 km (2hr 30min Drive) (18hrs Walk)
- vi. Kenema – BO-Waterside Border
 - Distance: 186 km (2hr 45min Drive) (12hrs Walk)
- vii. Kenema – Kailahun Border Crossing
 - Distance: 117 km (1hr 50min Drive) (21hr Walk)
- viii. Kabala - Gberia Fotombu Border (Krobola Border)
 - Distance: 53 km (1hr 30min Drive) (11hr Walk)
- ix. Kono – Kailahun (Dambara) crossing
 - Distance: 137 km (4hr 30min Drive) (21hr Walk)

➤ **Seeking Shelter:**

- ❖ In case of aerial bombardment and artillery fire, both friendly and hostile, you should first seek a safe place as protection. Recognized Hotels may be an ideal place for seeking shelter.
- ❖ Major hospitals like may also be considered especially when the security situation has deteriorated into Alert Level 4.
- ❖ Educational institutions especially the main tertiary institutions may also be a good place for shelter. One can also seek shelters largely in tunnels, and basements of buildings, if such is identified. However, these may not be present in Sierra Leone.

Be mindful that these aforementioned institutions may restrict movement into their facilities. Ghanaians are encouraged to remain calm.

If you seek refuge in shelters one must wait until it is safe to move.

➤ **Phase III: Evacuation**

The Ghana High Commission would arrange for your necessary transport to the Ghana, or to a designated third destination prior to evacuation to the Ghana.

At each designated Exit Point, a team of High Commission officials may be stationed to attend to your needs, including, but not limited to the following:

- ✓ Provide you with temporary shelter pending your evacuation.
- ✓ Issue your travel documents or processing of the extension of your validity of your passport, if necessary.
- ✓ Refer you to available medical facilities, if your medical condition warrants it.
- ✓ Provide you important information such as security situation in the region.

**GHANA HIGH COMMISSION
FREETOWN**