



Ministry of Health and Mercy Ships Extend Stay of Hospital Ship in Sierra Leone to Provide Life-Changing Surgeries and Education

The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the renowned international charity Mercy Ships, proudly announces the extension of the *Global Mercy's* stay in Sierra Leone. This affirms the commitment to addressing the surgical needs of the Sierra Leonean people and advancing healthcare education in the region.

Since its arrival in Freetown in August 2023, the *Global Mercy™* – Mercy Ships' largest and newest hospital ship – has been delivering essential surgical services in alignment with Sierra Leone's strategic healthcare plan. Responding to President Julius Maada Bio's invitation, the ship's presence underscores a dedication to enhancing healthcare infrastructure and accessibility in the nation.

Scheduled for a short annual maintenance stint in Tenerife this June, the *Global Mercy* will resume its operations in Sierra Leone in August. The continuation of its mission will offer free surgeries across various specialties, including maxillofacial, general, pediatrics, orthopedic, reconstructive plastic, and ophthalmic procedures.

Patient registration, facilitated by Mercy Ships in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, will be conducted on designated dates and locations, to be announced in June. Registration remains free of charge, ensuring equitable access to surgical care for all.

Over the years, Mercy Ships has performed over 10,200 surgical procedures during its field services in Sierra Leone since 1992, underscoring its enduring commitment to the nation's healthcare needs.

The news has been celebrated by the government and the people of Sierra Leone. In a country where there are only 25 surgeons for a population of 8 million people, there is a need to prioritize health issues.

For more information and updates on Mercy Ships' programs in Sierra Leone, visit www.mercyships.ca

ABOUT MERCY SHIPS:

Mercy Ships operates hospital ships that deliver free surgeries and other healthcare services to those with little access to safe medical care. An international faith-based organization, Mercy Ships has focused entirely on partnering with African nations for the past three decades. Working with in-country partners, Mercy Ships also provides training to local healthcare professionals and supports the construction of in-country medical infrastructure to leave a lasting impact.

Each year, more than 3,000 volunteer professionals from over 60 countries serve on board the world's two largest non-governmental hospital ships, the *Africa Mercy*® and the *Global Mercy*™. Professionals such as surgeons, dentists, nurses, health trainers, cooks, and engineers dedicate their time and skills to accelerate access to safe surgical, obstetric and anesthetic care. Mercy Ships was founded in 1978 and has offices in 16 countries as well as an Africa Service Center in Dakar, Senegal. For more information, visit mercyships.ca and follow us on social media.

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