# First Lady of Sierra Leone faces scrutiny over London council flat amid social housing crisis



Fatima Jabbe-Bio, the First Lady of Sierra Leone, has recently come under scrutiny for allegedly retaining a council flat in South London that she has reportedly occupied sporadically since 2018. According to local council records, the property in Southwark has had a stable tenant since 2007, and Ms Jabbe-Bio has been registered to vote at this address multiple times since 2009. The average rent for a two-bedroom flat in this area is around £560, a figure that, amid the social housing crisis affecting over 336,000 households in London, raises questions about her eligibility to maintain such a tenancy given her elevated status in Sierra Leone.

Ms Jabbe-Bio, who transitioned from a career in modelling and acting to the role of First Lady after her husband, Julius Maada Bio, assumed the presidency in 2018, has a documented history that includes a blend of cultural and charitable engagements. Born in Sierra Leone, she has been a prominent figure in the entertainment sector, utilising her platform to promote Sierra Leonean cinema internationally, as noted in reports highlighting her marriage to Maada Bio in London in 2013. This union has positioned her as a key public figure, yet it also brings to light the complexities surrounding her living arrangements and their implications.

Neighbours of the Southwark flat have noted her infrequent visits, suggesting she returned as late as autumn last year, accompanied by vehicles typical of diplomatic circles. Some residents identified her daughter, Tigda Soley, as occasionally using the flat, prompting speculation about the family's link to the residence, particularly in light of her registration to vote there in 2023.

The situation is further complicated by ongoing allegations regarding financial misconduct connected to the First Lady's initiatives. Reports indicate that she may have harnessed her husband's political influence to garner funds for various campaigns, including the "Hands Off Our Girls" initiative aimed at combating violence against women and children in Sierra Leone. This aligns with broader allegations of corruption involving the Bio administration, casting a shadow over her philanthropic efforts and suggesting a potential violation of anti-corruption laws.

Moreover, Ms Jabbe-Bio has consistently engaged in international diplomacy, exemplified by her attendance at significant events, such as Queen Elizabeth II’s funeral in 2022. This appearance highlighted her role as a cultural ambassador for Sierra Leone, yet it also underscores the duality of her public persona: a figure striving for national upliftment while facing scrutiny over personal and political conduct.

The continuing discussions about her residency and the broader implications of her actions resonate in a context where social housing is at the forefront of public concern in the UK. As debate around eligibility and resource allocation intensifies, the First Lady's situation epitomises the challenges faced by those navigating the intersection of public service, community needs, and personal privilege.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4
2. Paragraph 2
3. Paragraph 5
4. Paragraph 6

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

* <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2053398/sierra-leones-first-lady-rents-london-flat> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.thesierraleonetelegraph.com/sierra-leones-presidential-hopeful-maada-bio-weds-in-london/> - This article discusses the marriage of Julius Maada Bio, a presidential hopeful in Sierra Leone, to Fatima Jabbe in London on October 25, 2013. It highlights Fatima's background as an actress and her contributions to the Sierra Leonean film industry, including her role in promoting the industry internationally. The piece also touches upon her charity work, noting her patronage of organizations like the John Utaka Foundation, which supports African children and young people facing health challenges. The article emphasizes Fatima's influence and recognition in both the entertainment and charitable sectors.
* <https://www.thesierraleonetelegraph.com/more-allegations-of-corruption-involving-bio-government-of-sierra-leone/> - This article reports on allegations of corruption involving Sierra Leone's President Julius Maada Bio and his wife, Fatima Bio. It details claims that the First Lady used her husband's influence to solicit funds from private organizations and businesses between 2018 and 2020. The piece references documents from the Africanist Press, which suggest that Fatima Bio raised significant amounts of money for the Hands Off Our Girls campaign, potentially violating anti-corruption laws. The article provides insights into the financial operations of the Office of the First Lady and the broader political implications.
* <https://www.thecalabashnewspaper.com/sierra-leones-first-lady-attends-queen-elizabeths-funeral-in-london/> - This article covers the attendance of Sierra Leone's First Lady, Dr. Fatima Maada Bio, at the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II in London on September 19, 2022. It describes her participation in the funeral at Westminster Abbey and her visit to Lancaster House to sign the Royal Book of Condolence on behalf of Sierra Leone. The piece highlights Fatima Bio's respect and condolences for the late Queen, noting her attire and the solemnity of the occasion. It underscores the diplomatic and cultural significance of her presence at the event.
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