



**NEW ALBUM FROM SIERRA LEONE'S REFUGEE ALL STARS, *RISE & SHINE*, TO BE RELEASED MARCH 23, 2010 BY CUMBANCHA**

*Album Recorded in New Orleans, Louisiana and Freetown, Sierra Leone Builds Upon the Band's Remarkable Rise*

**US/Canada Release Date:** March 23, 2010

**Europe and ROW Release Date:** April 26, 2010

**For more information, review copies, song lyrics & descriptions, interviews, photographs, tour dates and other support materials, etc. please contact:**

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**December 23, 2009 - Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars** started playing music together in West African refugee camps while their homeland was being racked by years of bloody warfare. Since then, audiences around the world have embraced the band and their utterly extraordinary story. On their forthcoming album, *Rise & Shine*, the All Stars' sound, as well as their biography, evolves further; the music finds them "establishing an identity based as much on skill, imagination and charisma as on their undeniably touching story" (*The Los Angeles Times*). **Cumbancha** will release the album on **March 23, 2010**.

For the follow up to their acclaimed debut, *Living Like a Refugee*, the band began recording in their hometown of Freetown, Sierra Leone then traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana to work with the highly accomplished producer **Steve Berlin (Los Lobos, Angélique Kidjo, Rickie Lee Jones, Michelle Shocked, Alec Ounsworth, Jackie Greene)** at Piety Street Recording. The All Stars immediately felt at home in New Orleans, not only because the hot climate and spicy food reminded them of Africa, but also because the residents of the Crescent City have firsthand experience with the bitterness of exile and the redemptive power of music. The local musicians who contributed to the record—including favorites **Troy "Trombone Shorty" Andrews, Bonerama** and **Washboard Chaz**—lend it an infectious spirit of celebration and optimism in the face of struggle.

*Rise & Shine* reflects how far the band has come in the past few years, after multiple international tours and recording experience with the likes of **Aerosmith** and **Mavis Staples**. With an expert producer at the helm, Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars have realized a unique and seamlessly coherent sound: a fusion of traditional West African music and roots reggae, inflected with New Orleans styles. The album's 13 tracks embrace the wide array of musical influences the All Stars have encountered on their rise to international fame.

The band members are broadly diverse in age and character, although they possess a strong bond forged through common experiences and values: They all know war and have struggled to survive in one of the world's poorest countries, and they share an unwavering belief in the transformative power of music. The current lineup of the band was cemented when **Reuben M. Koroma**, the sage songwriter and guiding light of the group, returned home from the refugee camps, joined by **Black Nature**, an orphaned teenaged rapper; **Mohammed Bangura**, who suffered amputation at the hands of rebels; and **Francis John Langba**. Back in Sierra Leone, they reunited with family, friends and former band mates **Ashade Pearce, Jah Son Bull** and **Makengo Kamara**—many of whom they believed not to have survived the violence.

The band's journey—which culminated in the All Stars' first recording in a studio—was documented in the multi-award winning documentary *Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars*, by **Zach Niles** and **Banker White**. The resulting album, *Living Like A Refugee*, garnered the band international acclaim and high profile fans such as **Keith Richards, Sir Paul McCartney, Aerosmith, Angelina Jolie** and **Ice Cube**.

Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars deliver electrifying and uplifting live performances and will tour the U.S. in Spring 2010. They have already appeared at some of the most prestigious music festivals worldwide including Bonnaroo, Montreal Jazz, Fuji Rock in Japan, Central Park SummerStage and Celebrate Brooklyn.

