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Parliament Calls for Screening of NGO Vehicles

Parliament on Monday 22nd August 2016, engaged the Sierra Leone Police, Sierra Leone Non - Governmental Organizations (SLANGO), the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED) and the Sierra Leone Roads Safety Authority (SLRSA) on vehicles using NGO registration plates.

The Majority leader, Hon. Ibrahim Bundu, highlighted several correspondences in which the police, on the one hand, and SLRSA, which is responsible to register NGO vehicles, should have acted since 2010.



Leadership of Parliament addressing stakeholders

He said that for the purpose of national security, vehicles of NGOs operating in the country should be included in regular checks as they do not carry diplomatic status and must always provide life cards to the Police for screening purposes.

He also frowned at the sale of NGO properties unknown to the Ministry of Finance and SLANGO, noting that many NGO vehicles have been sold with no payment of duty fees made to government. The Leader asked that the Police and SLRSA take remedial action in order to provide government with its much needed revenue to run the state.

The Chief Whip of Parliament, Hon. Claude Kamanda, quoting the revised NGO policy of 2009, pointed out that any vehicle owned by an NGO should be clearly marked; noting that section 2.7.4 states that all equipment and asset transfers should be done by NGOs, with the involvement of MOFED and SLANGO. He regretted that many NGOs have flouted this policy.

Mr. Solomon B.E. Scott, NGO Coordinator in the Ministry of Finance, outlined the responsibilities of the desk office in the Finance Ministry and called on other partners dealing with NGOs to implement government policies.

In her statement, the Executive Director of SLRSA, Dr. Sarah Bendu, acknowledged the role of her agency and promised to carry out their mandate and implement policy regulations on NGO vehicles registration. Dr. Bendu called on the Ministry of Finance and SLANGO to present a full list of all NGOs operating in the country, whilst the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Richard Moigbeh promised to uphold the laws and policies of government.

In turn, the National Coordinator SLANGO, Madam Shellac Davies, asked for proper collaboration with other stakeholders dealing with NGO activities in the country and reassured the submission of a full list of all registered NGOs.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Chernor Bah, acknowledged the role and responsibility of NGO operations in the country, adding that as a Parliament they are not witch hunting any NGO; rather, helping to address the issues of fake NGOs, which pose a threat to national security.