



**OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF PARLIAMENT
PARLIAMENT BUILDING
OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL
FREETOWN
Tel: 232-076-615187
E-mail: admin@parliament.gov.sl**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
22ND NOVEMBER, 2017**

PRESS RELEASE

JOINT DELEGATION INTERFACES WITH PARLIAMENT ON 2018 ELECTORAL PREPAREDNESS

Speaking to the Leadership of Parliament on 22nd November 2017 in the precincts of the House, Head of Joint-Delegation, including ECOWAS, AU and UN, H.E Ibn Chambas, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General for West Africa said that the three organizations have jointly visited Sierra Leone and had discussions with stakeholders in the electoral process with the aim of giving support to countries that are preparing for elections. He also said that such support is geared towards holding a free, fair and credible election whose outcome is generally acceptable by all the parties. He furthered by congratulating the Parliament of Sierra Leone for the passage of important bills for the development of the country, whilst urging the House in respect of residual work to quickly look into and pass any legislation relating to the electoral process before the dissolution of Parliament in December.

Responding, Majority Leader of the House, Hon. Leonard Fofanah said that constitutionally Parliament stands dissolved on the 7th of December 2017, though there is residual work that is before Parliament prior to dissolution. He also assured the Joint-Delegation of Parliament's support towards the electoral process, having regard for a number of legislations that had been passed to facilitate the conduct of the next general elections. He also informed the Delegation that MPs have raised concerns that if their gratuities are not paid on or before the dissolution of the House, they would not pass the 2018 National Budget, part of which will be used for funding the elections in March 2018. Relating to the nomination fees, he said that Parliament is in receipt of a Statutory Instrument on nomination fees to wit all political parties have agreed for a reduction, having regard for consultations; the House will use a convenient route to pass the Instrument into law, without disrupting its dissolution on 7th December.

Minority Leader of the House, Hon. Dr. Bernadette Lahai described the visit as very important towards the conduct of the general elections for president, council and parliament. She also spoke on the need for holding elections using constitutional and other legal instruments and acknowledged the role played by ECOWAS in resolving the political impasse in The Gambia. Speaking on the electoral process, she cited the obsolete 2004 Census that has been replaced

with the 2015 Census, and the would-be distribution of voters identification cards for the 7th March 2018 elections, which she will not contest, having served Parliament for almost 16 years.

Department of Public Relations
Parliament of Sierra Leone
OAU Drive, Tower Hill
Freetown
Tel: 076840285/078495023 /078426851