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PRESS RELEASE

### COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONCLUDES OVERSIGHT

The Parliamentary Committee on Local Government and Rural Development, chaired by Hon. Abu Bakarr Koroma has returned from a week-long oversight to Councils in the North, East, and Southern Regions of Sierra Leone.

In his opening remarks at the various venues, Chairman of the Committee said among other things that the Committee is the principal supervisory body for the Ministry of Local Government & Rural Development, including its departments and agencies. He furthered that the Committee is constitutionally obliged to inquire into its activities and recommend to Parliament for appropriate actions which have potentials that may lead to legislations. He also said that the oversight is pegged on funds received and expended for the development of their localities, including revenue mobilization and the successes and challenges of the various Councils.

Chairperson for the Association of the 19-Councils who doubles as the Mayor of the Makeni City Council, Her Worship Sunkarie Kabba-Kamara in her welcome remarks said that “looking at the sub-region, Sierra Leone has made tremendous strides in decentralization”, whilst calling on Parliament’s support to Councils for success in service delivery, particularly noting continued oversight regarding judicious use of funds. She also called on MPs to use the carrot and stick approach in order not to “scare officials away from the Councils”. She further assured MPs that her Chairmanship of the Councils is dependent on “revenue generation and fiscal management”, whilst promising “50% of the challenges in the 19-Councils will be resolved next year”, and feared the saying that “we don’t want the Councils to be shut down again as was done in the 70s”. She therefore decried poor performance and fiscal management in the Councils and noted that “decentralization has the propensity to make Sierra Leone a paradise”, provided the “decentralization and the devolution process is complete”. The “center is still directing and controlling the affairs of Councils, particularly noting human resource as a major challenge”.

The findings of the Committee will be tabled and debated in Parliament for the adoption of its recommendations.

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