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PRESS RELEASE

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PARLIAMENT COMMITS BILL ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE ACT 2017

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has on Wednesday 29th March, 2017 extensively debated and committed the Bill on The National Security and Central Intelligence Act 2017 to its Legislative Committee for fine tuning and further scrutiny aimed at addressing emerging security threats, cognizant of human and logistical support, through security coordination from chieftdom to national level.

The Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, Ishmael Sengu Koroma presented the Bill during its first and second readings, saying that it is divided into ten parts and intends to provide for the continuation of the Office of National Security (ONS), including the powers of arrest, oath taking, confidentiality, and the disclosure of relevant information.

Members on both sides of the aisle who spoke to the debate welcomed the Bill because it aims at addressing emerging security threats through the establishment of new units, through security sector coordination that is all inclusive of civilians, military, and police personnel. MPs also noted that security is the “sine qua non” for national development. However, they raised some concerns that military and police personnel are not present in certain chieftdoms, and cautioned that the execution of arrest warrants should be done within the due process of the law, and that the seizure of computers or laptops should be carried out cognizant of the human rights of the persons involved.

The motion on committal was moved and seconded by Hon. Ansumana J. Kaikai and Hon. Leonard Fofanah respectively.

In another development, the Speaker of Parliament, Rt. Hon. SBB Dumbuya has announced under the instruction of the Chairman and Leader of the All Peoples Congress (APC), who incidentally is the President of Sierra Leone, Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, that Hon. Ibrahim Bundu has been relieved of his duty as Majority Leader of the House and the Leader of Government Business, because of his recent declaration as a presidential hopeful for the March 07th elections 2018. Following this announcement, Hon. Leonard Fofanah is now the new Majority Leader of the House and the Leader of Government Business, and Hon. Hassan Sheriff is now the new Deputy Majority of the House. Hon. Speaker has also asked

the Clerk of Parliament to put on hold the re-arrangement of seats, pending further instructions.

Also, it has been moved and seconded in the House that because of the challenges associated with the on-going registration process, the time for registration should be extended by the National Electoral Commission (NEC) because it is critical for the conduct of credible and transparent elections.

This motion was moved by Hon. Ansumana Kaikai and seconded by Hon. Abu Bakarr Koroma.