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**PRESS RELEASE
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PARLIAMENT ENACTS THE SIERRA LEONE METEOROLOGICAL AGENCY ACT 2017

The Parliament of Sierra Leone on Thursday 20th July 2017 debated and enacted into law the Bill entitled: “The Sierra Leone Meteorological Agency Act 2017” with some amendments.

The Bill is aimed at establishing the Sierra Leone Meteorological Agency with the view of replacing the Department of Meteorology and to provide for other related matters.

Presenting the Bill to Parliament, the Minister of Transport and Aviation, Balogun Koroma spoke on the need for the establishment of the Agency to replace a Department that had outlived its usefulness over 80 years ago. He also said that the Agency will be responsible for informing the public about weather patterns based on the recordings of credible and reliable weather data for the purposes of agriculture, marine and disaster preparedness relating to early warning signs. He furthered that with the replacement of the Department with an Agency, Sierra Leone will comply with international best practices and as such will benefit immensely as a signatory to the Paris Agreement.

MPs who spoke to the motion commended President Koroma, the Ministry of Transport and Aviation, and the Parliamentary Committee on Transport and Aviation, chaired by Hon. Babatunde Lewally for seeing the need to set up a Meteorological Agency in order to address issues surrounding the impacts of climate change, cognizant of the country being a signatory to the Paris Agreement aimed at mitigating the effects of climate change.

In concluding the debate, both the Acting Majority Leader of the House, Hon. Claude D.M Kamanda, and the Minority Leader of Parliament, Hon. Dr. Bernadette Lahai supported the initiative of Government aimed at replacing the Department with an Agency that deals with the collection, analysis and dissemination of data relating to weather conditions to mitigate and prevent environmental hazards.