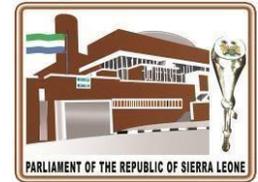




**OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF PARLIAMENT
PARLIAMENT BUILDING
OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL
FREETOWN**



E-mail: sierraleoneparliament@hotmail.com/admin@parliament.gov.sl

5TH MAY, 2022

PRESS RELEASE



PARLIAMENT OBSERVES SECOND OPEN DAY

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has on Thursday 05/05/2022 observed its second Open Day at State Hall of Parliament Building in Freetown on the theme: "bringing more people closer to Parliament". The event was also broadcast on satellite in Bo, Makeni and Kenema City Councils. Academics, Think Tanks, Citizens, Councilors, Traditional Rulers, Development Partners, Civil Society Organizations, Students, Pupils, Ministers of Government and Members of Parliament were all in attendance in Freetown and provincial headquarters.

The aim of the Parliament Open Day is to make Parliament open, accessible, transparent and accountable to the people of Sierra Leone, and it will run from the 5-7 May 2022 with support from Parliament, European Union and other partners. The Open Day will also promote a culture

of openness and information sharing on the operations of Parliament and will also give citizens the opportunity to directly engage their MPs and ask questions on their roles and responsibilities in the overall governance of the country.

In his welcome remarks, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas said the overall objective of the Parliament Open Day was to showcase the Parliament of Sierra Leone and make it open and accessible to the public and to create better understanding about what constitutes its core mandate of the supreme legislative body in Sierra Leone. He emphasized the need for making Parliament accessible to the people of Sierra Leone in order to promote citizens' participation and understanding about the legislative process in the country. He also said that on completion of the three days Parliament Open Day, it would increase public understanding about the workings of Parliament, and spoke on the need for an open, accountable, and a transparent Parliament.

He appreciated the work of Parliament, Staff and donor partners for supporting the Parliament of Sierra Leone in its strides for being a responsive and an accountable Parliament to the needs and aspirations of the general citizenry.

Speaking on behalf of the Leader of Government Business, the Deputy Leader of Government Business, Hon. Bashiru Silikie appreciated the work of the Fifth Parliament of Sierra Leone and underscored the working relationships between CSOs and Parliament. "The Leadership of Parliament in 2021 signed a memorandum of understanding with 52 CSOs with a commitment to making the work of Parliament more open, inclusive and more participatory with regards to legislation, representation and oversight.

Leader of NGC, Hon. Kande Kollah Yumkella who spoke on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition thanked the Staff of Parliament for organizing the Parliament Open Day and underscored the need for an open Parliament in a democratic dispensation. He praised students, Civil Society Organizations, Development Partners present and spoke on the roles and responsibilities of Parliament, relative to legislation, representation, and oversight. He also spoke on the need of holding duty bearers accountable for the development of the country.

Representing the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Kobi Bentley, Development Director commended Parliament for organizing the event with the view of promoting a culture of openness and information sharing on the workings of Parliament to the citizens through its "Parliament Open Day". She also noted the bilateral relationship between Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom such as development assistance and cooperation between the two countries through Commonwealth Parliamentary Association amongst others.

Head of European Union Delegation to Sierra Leone, Ambassador Manuel Muller appreciated the Leadership of Parliament for the initiative to bringing the people to the doorstep of Parliament. He spoke on the EU support in Sierra Leone aimed at strengthening infrastructural development, good governance and democracy in the country. Speaking on technical support to the Parliament of Sierra Leone he mentioned capacity building of MPs and Staff, improvement of the website, the Bo Declaration, and development of a strategic plan and a

communication strategy amongst others. He also said that the EU would continue to work with the People of Sierra Leone and promised to work with the Government of Sierra Leone in the promotion of gender issues in politics.

Speaking on e-Parliament, ICT Director in Parliament, Joseph Conteh said the e-Parliament was to make the work of Parliament effective and efficient by going paperless through digitization. He spoke on the five components of the e-Parliament and their significance to the development process of Parliament. He commended the EU for supporting the process and pleaded for more assistance in the digitalization of the Parliament of Sierra Leone.

Following his presentation, the Deputy Speaker and the EU Ambassador launched the e-Parliament.

Speaking on behalf of the Clerk of Parliament, with presentation of the Sessional and Financial Report, Madam Director-General, Finda Findosia Fraser said the Annual Summary Report for 2021 under review was "embracing change", and spoke on the various reforms in the management of the Parliament of Sierra Leone under review. Madam DG highlighted the successes of the Parliamentary Service Commission and the Parliamentary Service in its development strides on service delivery. She spoke on the performance-related goals of the Parliament of Sierra Leone relative to strengthening institutional capacity, enhanced legislative capacity, strengthened oversight capacity, representation and relationship with citizens, and resource mobilization. She also commended International Partners and the Staff of Parliament for their assistance and support to the Parliament of Sierra Leone.

Making his keynote address on behalf of the President, Deputy Minister of Information and Communications, Solomon Jamiru Esq. commended the work of the Sierra Leone Parliament relative to legislation, representation, and oversight. He said Parliament Open Day was a reflection of the work of the Parliament of Sierra Leone and encouraged all to make a difference in their public and private work for the development of the nation.

He said the business of Leaders was to govern and advised them to govern well.

He highlighted the responsibilities of the three Organs of Government toward the socio-economic development of the state.

He used the occasion to highlight the accomplishments of the government in the areas of education, media reforms, judiciary, and other sectors of governance. He said as a Government they were thinking holistically for the development of the state and cheered the Leadership of Parliament and requested for unity in diversity in the transformative drives of the governance of the state. He spoke on the abolition of the death penalty and a repealed of Part V of the Public Order Act of 1965 which criminalized libel amongst others.

Director of Parliamentary and Public Relations Department in Parliament, Sheku Lamin Turay moderated and served as Master of Ceremony.

A tour to the exhibition booths climaxed the first-day of the opening session of the Parliament Open Day which will be followed by side events on Friday and Saturday on various topics including gender, media, budgeting, and partnership and CSOs engagements amongst others.

Parliamentary and Public Relations Department

Parliament of Sierra Leone

+23278495023/+23276625960/+23278426851/+23278697776