



PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

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PRESS RELEASE



PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS CONCLUDES OVERSIGHT

The Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Human Rights Chaired by the Opposition Whip of Parliament, Hon. Abdul Karim Kamara on Friday 9th August and Saturday 10th August, 2024 embarked on its oversight visitation to certain Correctional facilities and Police Divisions in the country. The oversight tour was in collaboration with the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone and Prison Watch. Some of the areas inspected include Police Stations and Correctional Services in Freetown, Waterloo and Port Loko.

The purpose of the two days oversight visitation according to the Chairman, Hon. Abdul Karim Kamara was to get first hand information on the activities of the Correctional Services and also issues related to the work of the Family Support Unit in Sierra Leone. He said the oversight would help the Committee make better policies for both inmates and security personnel.

On Friday, the Committee visited the Female Correctional Center at New England Ville and the Main Correctional Center at Pademba Road in Freetown. In the Female Correctional Center, the Committee met with inmates and gathered some vital information from them. Inmates were willing to speak up, explained their conditions and the crimes for which they were incarcerated.

At the Male Correctional Center, the head of the facility accompanied the team to tour the facilities. During the tour, the team observed that the hospital and catering center were burnt down. It was also discovered by the team that the bakery in the prison is operational bakes bread for inmates breakfast, tailoring shop is running, the borehole is supplying water and the Adult education center is running. The head of the facility also took his time to explain some of the rules inscribed on the wall for inmates and noted that all new inmates go through orientation on arrival.

At the Waterloo Police Division on Saturday, the Committee was well received by the Local Unit Commander, AIG Joe Kamanda Bongay and his team. The chairman and his Members applauded the turnout of the Waterloo police officers for their exemplary performance.

Hon. AKK assured unhindered collaboration with the Human Rights Commission for Sierra Leone and other partners in supporting the FSU in their work.

The Chairman reiterated the huge challenges the FSU Unit is facing in executing its terms of reference.

The LUC and his team of personnel commended the work of Parliament and appreciated their visit, in order to understand their challenges and also went on to brief MPs on their operational activities in the Western Area Rural District.

Some of the challenges were highlighted by Superintendent Andrew Mansary relative to the work of the FSU and other operational activities of the police division.

Line managers of various Police posts around the Waterloo Division also briefed MPs on the challenges encountered by the FSU Unit and also called on authorities concerned to assist them in their operational mandate.

At the Port Loko Correctional Center, the Committee paid on the-spot visit to ascertain the working conditions of the correctional centre relative to the treatment of inmates, challenges and the way forward.

The Chairman, Hon Abdul Karim Kamara and Colleague MPs, officials of Prison Watch and officials of Human Rights Commission for Sierra Leone made a conducted tour into prison yards and highlighted the work of the committee and their intended action towards the oversight visitation.

However, the Committee was very displeased with engagement of the Regional Police in the Port Loko District for failing to adhere to the correspondence of the meeting with the Parliamentary Committee.

The committee therefore, ordered that the Regional Police Division in Port Loko be summoned to Parliament.

Parliamentary and Public Relations Department

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