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PRESS RELEASE

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JOINT COMMITTEES ON TRADE AND LANDS ENGAGE LEOCEM

The Parliamentary Committees on Trade and Industry and Lands, Country Planning and the Environment, chaired by Hon. Mohamed Sidie Tunis and Hon. Rosaline J. Smith respectively; on Tuesday 09th June, 2015 held a joint meeting at the premises of LEOCEM to discuss their operations, successes, challenges and to chart the way forward.

The Chairman of the Committee on Trade and Industry, Hon. Mohamed Sidie Tunis said among other things that the joint oversight meeting was constitutionally obligatory pursuant to necessary provisions in the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone; to ascertain production standards, controls, quality and the protection of the environment. He praised LEOCEM for not abandoning the country since the outbreak of the ebola virus disease; and for building Sierra Leone, as he put it.

In her submission, the Chairlady for the Committee on Lands, Country Planning and the Environment, who doubles as the host MP for Constituency 103 where LEOCEM is operating, eulogized the top management of LEOCEM for their efforts in corporate social responsibility such as support to quarantined homes, scholarships, construction of a multi-purpose canteen to name a few; and expressed dissatisfaction that her constituents formed the bulk of the labourers, but are not represented in the top management of LEOCEM. She challenged the management of LEOCEM that she has constituents at Clinetown who are equally qualified to serve in the top management of the Company.

The Managing Director for LEOCEM Sierra Leone, Mr. Arne B. Johansen described the event as historic to host joint Parliamentary Committees, the first such experience since he started working in Africa. He gave an historical overview of LEOCEM in Sierra Leone, and regarded them as the third cement company globally; and spoke about quality and supplies ranging from 50kgs and bulk trailers to big corporate customers. He also said that despite challenging years, since 1994 to date the market has “developed fantastically” for which any businessman can be happy; noting they can now supply 40,000 tonnes per month. He said regardless of ebola in 2014, the demand for cement was very high of which the Western Area is the biggest consumer; and pointed to the fact that LEOCEM pumps out daily 30-40 thousand bags for consumption. He furthered that they have challenges in the areas of water supply from GUMA;

road network; additional land for expansion purposes; importation of raw materials; and above all, energy. He said that in order to cushion the energy need they had bought a 6.2 Megawatts generator whose operation per month is depriving EDSA a much needed government revenue in excess of Le 2,000,000,000.00 (two billion leones).

The meeting discussed a lot of issues bordering on chemicals that are used for production; waste management; adherence to local content policy; relationship with standards bureau, EPA, compliance and safety gears for workers; creation of depots to service provincials; pricing for certain areas in the country; CSR and EIA license; EDSA and Energy and Water Regulatory Commission.

The meeting resolved that the concerns raised should be harmonized with other relevant Committees in Parliament for necessary considerations.