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PRESS RELEASE

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PARLIAMENT ADOPTS SPECIAL SELECT COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON INGOS

Parliament of Sierra Leone on Tuesday 27th October 2015, debated and unanimously adopted the report of the Special Select Committee (SSC) that was created to investigate and inquire into the activities of various International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), and Non-State Actors (NSAs) operating in the country.

Presenting the Report to Parliament, the Chairman of the Special Select Committee, Hon. Claude Kamanda briefed Parliament on the background information of the Committee's work during which he said that INGOs are "soliciting money for and on behalf of the people of Sierra Leone; but that those funds are not fully utilized in the best interests of the targeted beneficiaries in the country". Hon. Kamanda noted further that the Committee investigated 87 INGOs out of a total of 128 and revealed that of the funds received on behalf of the people of Sierra Leone; "70% are spent on administration". He therefore recommended that regular monitoring and evaluation be done on projects that are pioneered by INGOs and implementing partners to yield the desired results.

The Committee also recommended that MPs should be adequately informed by INGOs about projects that are to be implemented in their Constituencies; failing which such projects should be halted by the MPs, and those INGOs and implementing partners involved be taken to task.

The SSC recommended that INGOs should also discuss with the NGO Desk at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) and other line ministries before the implementation of their projects, which should be in accordance with provisions in the revised NGO policy.

Seconding the motion, Hon. Jariatu Smith commended the work of the Committee for probing into the activities of INGOs operating in the country. She called on MoFED to set up effective monitoring mechanisms to track the operational activities of INGOs in the country. She said the current NGO revised policy should be transformed into an act to properly regulate the conduct of INGOs in the country.

In his contribution to the debate, Hon. Sualiho M. Koroma, highlighted the role played by the Leadership of Parliament in the establishment of the Special Select Committee to probe into the activities of INGOs. He also said that "our people are losing much needed

resources to INGOs operations” and noted that most of their projects are sub-standard”. Hon. Koroma said that there was need for “the SSC to be made a Standing Committee in Parliament and provided with resources to investigate INGOs operations”.

Hon. Hassan Sesay appreciated the recommendations of the Select Committee and noted that the 41 INGOs which failed to appear before Parliament had shown “disrespect”, and called “for tougher actions to be meted on them”. He also said that it is required by law for the appropriate Minister to notify Parliament about gifts, loans, and grants for the people of Sierra Leone.

In his contribution, Hon. Mustapha Braima called on the Sierra Leone Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (SLANGO) to be capacitated in order to do their job of monitoring and evaluating the activities of INGOs in the country.

Hon Isata Kabia,said that the “pattern of spending by INGOs should be reversed as our economy is donor-driven and called on MPs to individually monitor projects that are being implemented in their constituencies”.

Hon. Sidi Tunis lambasted sub-standard works that are carried out by certain INGOs. He called on INGOs to work with the government’s plan of action so as to complement its efforts in terms of development.

For his part on the debate, the Leader of the House, Hon. Ibrahim Bundu commended the Committee for their work and praised MPs for their contributions. The Leader also urged Parliament to bring MoFED to book for failing to do their job in monitoring INGOs operations in the country. He called on MPs to investigate projects that are being implemented in their constituencies and report to Parliament. He also encouraged Parliament to enact a law to regulate the activities of INGOs operations as in Uganda, Ghana, and UK who had done the same.