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PRESS RELEASE

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PARLIAMENT INSPECTS WATER FACILITIES IN FREETOWN

The Parliamentary Committee on Water Resources, chaired by Hon. Sualiho M. Koroma on the 12th June, 2015 inspected GUMA's water facilities in Freetown to get a first-hand information about their operations, water quality, and supply to the Western Area and its environs. In this light, the Committee visited GUMA's facilities at Mile 13, Spur Road, Barbadorie, and Botanical Garden at FBC.

The Chairman for the Committee on Water Resources has called on Government to preserve, support, maintain, and protect the water catchment areas around the water sources for sustainable and quality water supply to Freetown. The Committee noted that people had built houses around the Spur Road and Barbadorie reservoirs, which they said constitute security threats to safe drinking water in Freetown. In this light, the Chairman said that the Ministries of Water Resources, Agriculture, and Lands should come together to adequately protect the water facilities of GUMA. This he said is the essence of oversight, and spoke about the pending debate of the Committee's report which had been tabled in Parliament, and encouraged Members not to slant the would-be debate, whilst saying that "water is not a political tool, but a political goal". He furthered that "as an opposition, my goal is to see people get quality and sustainable supply of water", and called on Government to give subvention to GUMA to achieve its goals and objectives. The Committee also encouraged GUMA to improve on its public relations activities in Freetown.

The General Manager for GUMA VALLEY WATER COMPANY, Mr. Bankole Mansaray, in welcoming the Committee at Mile 13 said that the GUMA treatment works was commissioned in 1965; and said that the dam could not be expanded because of its original foundation. Thus the need for an alternative dam to control and store water spillage during the rains; and pumped during the dries; noting cost-benefit-analysis for its realization. He spoke about the need for Government subvention to GUMA, and told the Committee that 7 Rivers are emptying into the dam at Mile 13. He also said that GUMA on a daily basis supplies 16.5 million gallons of water per day, and spoke about the threats of building houses around the water catchment areas, which has the potential to deplete and destroy our water sources. The acting Production Manager of GUMA, Mr. Mohamed Koroma, explained about the water production process which he said meets WHO's standards for safe drinking water; noting sedimentation, filtration, self-generation of electricity, and distribution of water to the end-users.

The Committee will visit other water facilities in the Western Area.