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**STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT & LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS
HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU, ON THE PRESENTATION OF THE PAC EBOLA AUDIT REPORT ON THURS 4th
JUNE, 2015**

**MR. SPEAKER
HON. MEMBERS**

Personally, and hopefully for all of us as Members of Parliament, the laying of the PAC Ebola Audit Report today, marks an important milestone in the string of actions that the S/L Parliament has undertaken in the intensive battle against the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). More importantly, the tabling of the PAC Report, following a series of hearings with the auditees of the May – October, 2014 special audit, vindicates us as a Parliament.

Section 93 (e) of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone incorporates the Public Accounts Committee as one of 7 standing committees, which the Standing Orders elucidates in S.O. 70 sub-section 6. There is therefore no doubt about the mandate and responsibility of this critically important sessional select committee. Parliament which appropriates or authorizes expenditure of designated amounts from the public purse also has responsibility under the same 1991 Constitution of S/L (Section 112) to monitor the proper use of these funds. We therefore owe this duty under the Constitution, to the people of Sierra Leone.

You may well remember when the Auditor-General's Report was first laid and made public...the furore, intense public anger it ignited against perceived culprits. The public was quite impatient in those early days, breeding heated debates in the media and other public forums. They wanted Parliament to act immediately. But we are obligated to be impartial and represent the rights of everyone, including those who seemingly were indicted by that Report.

We cautioned the press, civil society and other dissenting voices in the wake of sweeping and untested statements and views from many quarters. They were quite defiant but we took it all in our stride, knowing fully well that as true representatives of the people and carrying the torch of the inexhaustible supremacy of Parliament, time would vindicate us. There was also suspicion that Parliament was trying to protect certain interests; but, **Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members**, the first step to a fair handling of the Auditor-General's Report was the transparent manner in which the hearings were conducted, in the full glare of the public and carried live on national radio & TV while the hearings were heavily subscribed by the public, with vacant seats filled long before the start of proceedings! What could be more transparent? Today as a Parliament, we are vindicated and the PAC Report is there for all to read and track the respective actions by Government.

Lately, some of our friends have been calling for the Public Emergency Regulations which we enacted in this House to fight Ebola, to be relaxed. We all remember what happened when HE the President first acceded to these calls! Now, WHO has just stated that the crisis is not yet over and warned against complacency. But if the worst of the Ebola is over, then perhaps we need to bear patience till we are totally out of the woods, i.e. Ebola free.

Mr. Speaker
Hon. Members

It now remains for me to call on all and sundry to continue to respect the Public Emergency Regulations and avoid any conduct that may place anyone at risk. Remember, to whom much is given, much is also expected. Let us keep up the good fight till we can finally rejoice.

I thank you.