



## OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF PARLIAMENT

PARLIAMENT BUILDING  
OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL  
FREETOWN

Tel: 232-076-615187

E-mail: [admin@parliament.gov.sl](mailto:admin@parliament.gov.sl)



### PRESS RELEASE

17<sup>th</sup> February, 2015

#### **STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT BY THE MAJORITY LEADER ON THE REPORT ON THE AUDIT OF THE MANAGEMENT OF THE EBOLA FUNDS**

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the Public Accounts of Sierra Leone and all Public Institutions established by an Act of Parliament or Statutory Instrument or otherwise set up partly or wholly out of public funds, shall, pursuant to Section 119(2) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone Act No. 6 of 1991, be audited and reported on by or on behalf of the Auditor General.

The Ministry of Health and Sanitation, other key Institutions, some Civil Society Organizations and individuals have been factored in the report on the Audit of the Management of the EBOLAFUND for the period specified in the Report, (i.e.) May to October 2014.



*Majority Leader: Ibrahim R. Bundu Reading the Statement*

The funds utilized in the fight against the EBOLA constitute public funds pursuant to Section 111 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991, which must be accounted for.

Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members, let me at this juncture express profound gratitude to all donors, not forgetting NGOs, INGOS and even individuals for providing the necessary funds and materials to fight the EBOLA. If we are to succeed in this fight, it is because of our collective efforts in this great battle, which is not yet over. It still requires fortitude and courage to continue the fight unabated, without distractions that might lower the morale in the battle against the Ebola.

Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members, the audit exercise on the Ebola Fund was carried out with the Audit Service Sierra Leone as per its mandate and pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No 6 of 1991 and the Audit Service Act, 2014. The report on the Management of the Ebola Fund was published and laid before Parliament on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, this report has attracted wide publicity in the electronic, print and social media on issues bordering on accountability, transparency, probity and disregard for procedures.

Parliament as a legislature therefore, needs to clarify its position for the general public to be guided on matters of procedure regarding the Audit Report and the role of Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members, pursuant to Section 119 (4) and 119 (5) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991:

(4) "The Auditor General, shall within twelve months of the end of the immediately preceding finance year, submit his report to Parliament and shall in that report draw attention to any irregularities in the accounts audited and to any other matter which in his opinion ought to be brought to the notice of Parliament."

(5) "Parliament shall debate the report of the Auditor General and appoint where necessary in the public interest a Committee to deal with any matters arising therefrom."

Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members, the Auditor General has accordingly expressed her "Opinion" on the Audit of the Management of the Ebola Fund and has also submitted the report to Parliament, which the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee has laid before the House on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members, Section 93 (1) (e) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone Act No. 6 of 1991, established the Public Accounts Committee. Standing Order (SO) 68 (6) describes its constitution and mandate which includes the examination of the Audit report with powers enshrined in Section 93 (6), 95 and 96 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991. The report of the PAC after examining witnesses on oath on the Auditor General's report is therefore laid before the House and debated and a certificate of ratification sent to the Executive for appropriate action.

Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members, in accordance with Standing Order (SO) 75

(1) "Evidence given before or any papers forming part of the records of a Select Committee may be printed for the exclusive information of the Members of the Committee but shall not be published before the proceedings of the Committee are reported to Parliament."

(2) "The evidence given before any Select Committee and any documents presented to such Committee shall not be published by any member of such Committee or by any other person before the Committee has presented its report to the House."

(3) "Contravention of this order constitutes contempt of Parliament."

(Reference Section 95 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone Act No. 6 of 1991.

The Auditor General's Report on the Management of the Ebola Fund falls within the provisions in the Constitution and the Standing Order which are now before Parliament but have not disposed of them for public consumption. Any attempt

therefore to discuss the Auditor General's opinion on the management of the Ebola Fund in any media will be tantamount to undermining the relevant provisions of the Constitution and those of the Standing Order. Therefore, the responsibility to host discussion on Radio and TV programmes as well as other media, lies squarely with the presenter in accordance with the Media Code of Practice which states among other things that:

1. "All stories aired by Radio Stations must be presented with due accuracy, truth and impartiality."
2. "Phone-in and live programmes must be managed by Radio/TV Stations in such a way that they do not lead to public disorder."
3. "For live phone-in programmes, the Radio/TV Station must have the capacity for screening in-coming calls before putting the caller on air as well as the capacity for delayed broadcast."
4. "The management/ownership of Radio/TV Stations shall take full responsibility for the content of live broadcasts."

Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members, we therefore appeal to all concerned to allow Parliament to do its work and wait for the action that the Executive will take from the report of the PAC than to prejudice the general public with statements that will only kill the morale of our vigilantes in the fight against the Ebola, and create a bad impression on our donor partners.

Parliament will not therefore allow or entertain a breach of the statutory provisions bordering on matters pertaining to the procedures dealing with the Auditor General's Report. I therefore appeal to all and sundry to remain calm, with the firm belief that Parliament will go all out to do justice in dealing with the report, via the Public Accounts Committee.

I thank you all for your attention and God bless.

Hon. Ibrahim R. Bundu

Majority Leader of the House and

Leader of Government Business

17/2/2015

Department of Public Relations

Parliament of Sierra Leone

OAU Drive, Tower Hill

Freetown

Tel: 076840285/077669726/078495023