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PRESS RELEASE

CHAIRMAN MINES ASSURES MINERS

The Chairman Parliamentary Committee on Mines and Mineral Resources, in the Parliament of Sierra Leone, Hon. Saa Emerson Lamina, who also doubles as Leader of C4C in Parliament has on Tuesday 31/05/2022 assured miners that, if they comply with all the mines and minerals laws in the country and act due diligence in their mining activities, the government would improve on the already created enabling environment for their activities. The Leader of C4C made this statement during a serial oversight visit at Sierramin Bauxite and Leone Rock mining companies in Port Loko District respectively.

In a brief meeting with Sierramin, the chairman in his opening statement spoke about the mandate of the committee and asked the miners to elucidate how they can help to diversify the economy and what guarantees the latter can give as well. It could be recalled that the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources had terminated the mining license of Sierramin.

Senesie Rogers who spoke on behalf of Sierramin's management expressed appreciation for the step of the oversight. According to him, they have over 400 staff amounting to 99% Sierra Leoneans. He affirmed in terms of current status, that they have the technical capacity, manpower, and other requisites. He spoke about the death of their former Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and showered praises on the current CEO and went on to reassure us that they have got investors who are ready to finance the company.

"The company now had the financial capacity to mine" he reaffirmed.

He went on to say, they have the database and all other requirements that would facilitate their mining operations and informed that, had it not been for the termination of their license, they would have started exporting.

He assured the committee that the company will continue to give support to the community, irrespective of the termination and that, they are still paying surface rent. "We are in a very good relationship with the community," he said and pleaded to the government to assist them to remove the termination, considering the current economic situation.

"If they give us our license, we would commence mining and exporting in 6 months" he concluded.

At Leone Rock a subsidiary of Kingho Mining, the committee discovered rapid transformation at the Pepel Port and rail facilities. The company also disclosed several achievements and development plans in the future including the expansion of the rail and port, construction of a processing plant, and skill development amongst others. The company's challenges include weather, the downward trend in the world price market, a low-quality grade in the iron ore, and a hike in fuel price.

The company workers also stated that they need to upgrade the railway and port facilities, but as it is now, they are yet to achieve their target and would not share the facility with other interested companies. The rail and port are properties of the Sierra Leone Government which were emphasized by the Parliamentary Committee Chairman. Adding, he assured the management of Leone Rock that, whilst critically considering the exclusivity aspect of the Mining Lease Agreement (MLA) guiding rail and port, it behooves all for a strategic partnership for expansion to diversify the economy of Sierra Leone. The Chairman also re-echoed communication, participation, and good community relation as the magic key for development.

Other committee members also made meaningful contributions.

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