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29th September, 2021

PRESS RELEASE

Female Caucus President Urges EU

The President of the Female Caucus in the Parliament of Sierra Leone, Hon Veronica Kadie Sesay who also doubles as the longest serving MP has on Wednesday, 29th September, 2021, made a clarion call on the European Union Ambassador to Sierra Leone, Manuel Alexander Muller to support and empower women to attain their levels in society. The Parliamentary Leader made this patriotic statement at a training workshop organized by EU in collaboration with Parliament, at the Brookfields Hotel in Freetown. The workshop aimed at building partnerships with Male Allyship and consulting on the Gender Empowerment Bill, which is now in Parliament.

The Female Caucus President told EU Ambassador that only 12% of women representation was in Parliament among 146 Members of Parliament and assured that, if women are given the chance, they would live to the highest expectation of the people. "We need your support" she noted vehemently and said that with abundant support and unity from women's organizations, donor partners and male champions, victory will be celebrated by women.

Hon Veronica Kadie Sesay also recalled that President Bio had reassured them of political will in lieu of the Gender Bill and women's empowerment. She made passionate appeal to the EU Ambassador to give them moral and financial supports to go across Sierra Leone, in light of awareness and advocacy of the Gender Bill passage.

Also following the position of the Female Caucus, Chairperson of Gender Committee in Parliament, Hon Catherine Zainab Tarawally said the event was very renowned for women emancipation, but there were still challenges referencing 52% of the national population as women who are the least developed. She went on to inform that the Affirmative Action Bill will address five of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and requested for the implementation of Agenda 5 of same document, which she insisted will yield dividend. The MP appealed to the Ambassador to give his support to the course, in order to influence all quarters to see the light of days. "We are here to affirm to EU that we will do it" she maintained.

Representing the Speaker of Parliament, Hon Saa Emerson Lamina said women's emancipation from various struggles were taking a new trend. He categorically stated that, if women were serving in most of the driving seats of the state of affairs, corruption will be minimized. As Male allyship, he reassured women of the passage of the bill. The Leader spoke about the challenges women encounter from political parties in awarding of symbols among others.

Delivering his keynote address, EU Ambassador expressed happiness over the political tolerant demonstrated by Parliament to enhancing the passage of the bill. He noted strongly that, it was impressive for an opposition MP to represent the Speaker, in light of the hallmark of the Bo Declaration and urged that Parliament should thrive on the said peace declaration, in order to benefit hugely.

Ambassador Muller recalled his previous gender roles several years ago and related it to current situation, relative to massive improvement in society.

The Ambassador emphasized on women equality as key to the course. "Equality means giving the same opportunity to women as to men or get what to get and get it equally" he reiterated and pointed on the implementation of the bill specifically on the female representation. He assured participants of their continuous support.

Several presentations on various topics including Gender Quotas, Candidate threshold Quota at Political Parties and Social Dimensions of Gender Empowerment formed part of the workshop.

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