



**OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF PARLIAMENT
PARLIAMENT BUILDING
OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL
FREETOWN**



E-mail: sierraleoneparliament@hotmail.com/admin@parliament.gov.sl

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PRESS RELEASE



GAMBIA PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS ON RELIGIOUS BELIEF VISITS SIERRA LEONE

A delegation from the Parliamentary Caucus on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) of the Gambia National Assembly, has on Thursday 02/03/2023, visited the Sierra Leone House of Parliament. The purpose of their visit was to exchange ideas on freedom of religious belief, religious tolerance, its achievements and challenges amongst others.

In a brief engagement with the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas and other Members of Parliament, the delegation expressed their profound appreciation and gratitude over the practice of religious tolerance and freedom in Sierra Leone.

Speaking on behalf of the Speaker and the entire Leadership of Parliament, Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas whilst welcoming the delegation, said that Sierra Leone is widely known for practicing religiously tolerance. "A Catholic Bishop recently constructed a Mosque for his mother and also went and participated in the opening ceremony", he disclosed to the religious delegation and further stated that "Our President is a Christian and but his Wife is a Muslim".

The MP said there were a lot of gains made by Sierra Leone in that direction, which other countries would need to emulate. Speaking on the importance of religious tolerance and also the gains made in Sierra Leone, the Deputy Speaker spoke about the atrocities that have been caused by religious conflicts in the West and other parts of the world.

He recalled the cultural and bilateral relationship between the two countries and expressed hope for more improvements through FoRB.

Earlier, Hon. Sahr Charles welcomed the delegation and said that, they had visited the Gambia and the latter are in Sierra Leone on an exchange visit.

ACEP Coordinator, Issifu Lampo who accompanied the delegation, acknowledged the gains made by Sierra Leone on religious tolerance and said that they were impressed by such developments. He informed all that they would want to use Sierra Leone's gains on religious tolerance to develop a documentary that they would showcase to other parts of the world. He said that they are a consortium that is working in partnership with academic and other institutions to ensure that, Africa promotes and protects the development and growth of FoRB in the Continent. He emphasized on the protection and freedom of people as stipulated in the UN Charter relating to religion. He also spoke on the effects of COVID-19 on the implementation of their planned programmes and activities over the years.

According to him, they are in Sierra Leone to share ideas and learn more from the country's perspectives. He spoke about an upcoming conference that is expected to be held in Kenya, Nairobi on religious tolerance, preservation, and protection in society.

In his statement, the head of delegation, Hon. Amadou Camara spoke about the cultural and bilateral relationships between both countries. He revealed that they are in Sierra Leone to learn and share religious tolerance and freedom as well as their challenges and successes in the country. He categorically stated that they are impressed with Sierra Leone's religious tolerance. Speaking on the relevance of the exchange visit, the Member of Parliament informed all that there are many enviable practices, qualities and gains that have been made by Sierra Leone in light of religious tolerance. He emphasized that the gains made by Sierra Leone would be showcased and shared worldwide.

The delegation was also introduced by the Speaker of Parliament, Rt. Hon. Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu in the Well of Parliament during plenary sittings and deliberations.

Other Members of the delegation include Honourable Scanneh Lamin J, Honourable Cham Fatou, Honourable Sarata Bajang, Honourable Saikou Bah, and, Honourable Alhajie Babou Cessay.

Parliamentary and Public Relations Department
Parliament of Sierra Leone
+23278495023/+23276625960/+23278426851/+23278697776

