



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

E-mail: [sierraleoneparliament@hotmail.com](mailto:sierraleoneparliament@hotmail.com)/[admin@parliament.gov.sl](mailto:admin@parliament.gov.sl)



14<sup>th</sup> October, 2021

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Information Committee Concludes Oversight**

Following an intensive oversight on departments, agencies and other entities working under the purview of the Ministry of Information and Communications, the Parliamentary Committee on Information and Communications chaired by Hon Boston Munda has on Thursday 14th October 2021, shared their findings with the latter for further considerations.

During an engagement at the Ministry's conference room at Youyi Building in Freetown, the committee presented its findings and also advised accordingly.

Keen issues brought to the attention of the Minister of Information and Communications, Mohamed R. Swaray includes the review of Sierra Leone Broadcasting Cooperation (SLBC) Act to enable the latter to partner with others, National Telecommunication Company Company (NATCOM) to properly apply its regulations and Universal Access Development Fund (UA F) to allow other mobile telecommunication companies to use towers meant for all.

Responding, the Minister expressed profound thanks and appreciations to the committee for 'scratching beneath the surface of most of the challenges that have bedeviled the ministry, departments and agencies'. He went on to commend Parliament for making frantic effort in light of supporting their operations.

The Minister also highlighted some of their challenges related to fund raising, collaboration and external partnership with others.

The committee had earlier probed departments, agencies and entities working under the purview of the ministry in Freetown, Bo, Kenema and other parts in the provinces.

For instance during the Committee probing in Bo City, Honourable Members observed that, NATCOM offices in the provinces needed more supports to perform their duties. They discovered that there was no mobility for the regional office, no device to monitor mobile companies, radio stations and other service providers. Office needed facelifts and staff members were overdue for human capacity building trainings. Few success stories the regional office told the committee include the monitoring of sim card registration, have complain desk

and do follow-up. The officials also told the committee that they use their common radios to monitor and evaluate radio stations during broadcasting. According to the staff members, they always engage operators in an interactive session and educating the people about NATCOM were part of their agenda.

Many challenges include the lack of appropriate device to monitor operators, confrontation of staff by fraudulent agents who sold unregistered sim cards, difficulty to ascertain regularized internet operators amongst others. The problems and success stories earlier discovered in Kenema were similar to that of Bo City.

At Sierratel office in Kenema, the Committee observed that there was nothing to write home about. The facility is becoming dilapidated and inefficient. Staff have not received salaries for recent months and no petty cash and impress. Same stories were told for Bo office.

For Right to Access Information (RAIC), it was observed that the regional office in Kenema had only one staff and inundated with lot of volunteers. The Commissioner for RAIC Mary Wuyata Karimu told the Committee that through her intervention, there is now an openness in the right to access information between Non-State Actors and some MDAs. She also informed that there is now a strong synergy between her office and other stakeholders including the press. Similar situations are envisaged in Bo and Makeni City.

Like Sierratel, the Committee observed with utter disappointment that the Sierra Leone Post Service posed to be in a moribund state.

The Committee Members recommended for upgrading of all regional offices, recruitment of more staff members for RAIC, for Public Private Partnership for Sierratel and Post Service and general improvement of staff capacities.

Department of Public Relations

Parliament of Sierra Leone

+23278495023/+23278697776/+23278032986/+23278426851