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**PRESS RELEASE**

**LEADER OF THE DELEGATION PRESENTS ECOWAS SPEAKER**

Speaking on the composition of Sierra Leone's Delegation to ECOWAS Parliament, the Leader of the Delegation to ECOWAS Parliament and Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Chernor Bah has formally presented Hon. Sidie M. Tunis as the new Speaker of ECOWAS Parliament; adding as a group they have always glued and focused together as a united Team.

He also talked about Sierra Leone's position of a single candidature who was presented and elected unopposed. Speaking on Committees, he introduced Hon. Veronica Sesay as a second rapporteur to the Committee on Administration and Finance; Hon. Ajibola Manly-Spain, first rapporteur to the Committee on Infrastructure and a member of the Rules Committee; Shiaka Sama, a member of the Committee on Education; and Hon. Chernor Bah, Chairman of the Committee on Legal and Judicial Affairs, that have been merged for the first time with the Committee on Human Rights.

Hon. Sidie M. Tunis, the Speaker of ECOWAS Parliament thanked President Bio and the People of Sierra Leone for the confidence reposed on him; promising not to destroy the trust bestowed on him to serve in that capacity in the Regional Parliament.

He also said that a Committee had been put together to allow direct elections to the ECOWAS Parliament; having regard for commitments to national legislatures; assuring that the President of Niger, Issoufou Mahamadou is willing to assist for a realization of this dream.

He spoke about President Buhari's excitement and support for the establishment of a Public Accounts Committee to guarantee prudent fiscal management in the ECOWAS Parliament; adding the PAC is new and has not been budgeted for.

He also clarified and recognized Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu as the only Speaker in Sierra Leone; noting the friction that had existed between his predecessor and the Speaker of the national assembly of Senegal.

The Speaker of Parliament, Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu thanked the ECOWAS Delegation for presenting a single candidate and returned victorious in fulfilment of the national agenda; noting the the extraordinary meeting in Liberia and the inaugural session in Niger for the installation of the Fifth Legislature of the ECOWAS Parliament to wit Hon. Tunis has been duly elected unopposed as the Speaker of ECOWAS Parliament.

Recalling 27 years ago during the last year of his tenure as Executive Secretary to ECOWAS; he spoke about transforming a very old and moribund ECOWAS Treaty of 1975 to a modern ECOWAS Revised Treaty of 1993; expressing his gratification that emerging developments in ECOWAS owe it to the 1993 Treaty.

Recognizing Sierra Leoneans as people who excel in elevated offices; he recognised the achievements of Dr. Kandeh Yumkella at UNIDO and other places; adding it would take another 60 years before Sierra Leone could be eligible for the position of ECOWAS Speakership again.

Thanking President Bio for his invaluable support to the Parliament of Sierra Leone and its Delegation to ECOWAS Parliament; he promised to work in harmony with the ECOWAS Speaker; noting there is no need for conflict between the Speaker of the Parliament of Sierra Leone and the ECOWAS Speaker.

He thanked the Leader of the Opposition and Leader of Sierra Leone's Delegation to ECOWAS Parliament, Hon. Chernor Bah for being a man of his words and full of imbued magnanimity.

This event takes place in the Speaker's Office in the presence of Hon. Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu, Hon. Chernor Bah, Hon. Sidie M. Tunis, Hon. Veronica Sesay, Hon. Dr. Kandeh Yumkella, Hon. Paran Tarawally, Hon. Dickson Rogers, Hon. Alusine Kanneh, Hon. Hassan Sesay, Sheku Lamin Turay, Alie S. Kanu, Hassan Koroma, Mohamed Turay and other members of the press gallery this Tuesday 17/03/2020 in the year of our Lord.

Department of Public Relations

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