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**PRESS RELEASE**

**MINES COMMITTEE MAKES TOUGH RULINGS**

The Parliamentary Committee on Mines and Mineral Resources, chaired by Hon. Saa Emerson Lamina has made tough rulings after explanations advanced by the Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources, Timothy Kabba; following a question raised in Parliament by the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Chernor R.M Bah, that he had read a report published by Reuters that Kingho Mining Company had shipped iron ore out of the country without recourse to Parliament.

The following rulings were made by the Chairman of the Committee of Mines and Mineral Resources; after listening to the Minister's submissions and contributions by Members of Parliament:

1. "With immediate effect, not later than Monday 1st March 2021, the Mining Lease Agreement of Kingho Mining Limited should be submitted to the Clerk of Parliament.
2. Commencing 15th March 2021, an un-ratified Mining Lease Agreement dictates a blanket put on hold of all tax exemption accorded to Kingho Mining Company. In view of this, the Minister of Finance is hereby notified and ordered to fully execute order No. 2 and
3. That, the Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources must ensure that these orders are strictly carried out"

Prior to making the rulings, the Chairman alluded to Jenkins Johnston's Commission of Inquiry in 2007 relating to the Mining Lease Agreement of a particular mining company that was only brought to Parliament for ratification in 2010. He said he was proud to learn that the rail and port at Peppel now belongs to the people of Sierra Leone; that its haulage service could be used for agricultural purposes; and that the country stands to gain revenue by the advance sale of the iron that has lost its original commercial value.

Submitting, the Minister of Mines said he had received concurrence from the Ministry of Mines, Justice, Finance and NRA by determining a pricing formula; before seeking Cabinet approval in respect of the said shipment; adding it was done legally. He said the ore belongs to the people of the country and that the country stands to gain \$5 million from the sales.

However, the Minister said he was willing to come to Parliament for ratification if the need arises; and maintained that the sale was done in good faith and within the remit of existing laws. Members of Parliament made contributions relating to how much the country stands to benefit from the sales; whether constitutional provision of ratification by Parliament were duly followed among others.

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