



PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

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PRESS RELEASE



PAC CONCLUDES NATIONWIDE OVERSIGHT FUNCTION WITH LOCAL COUNCILS ON THE AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORTS

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Parliament of Sierra Leone, under the chairmanship of the Deputy Speaker, Hon. Ibrahim Tawa Conteh, has successfully concluded its nationwide oversight engagements with Local Councils. The final session was held on Monday, 2nd September 2024, at the Port Loko District Council Hall, following an extensive review of Local Councils in the North-Western region.

The primary objective of this oversight exercise was to address the queries raised in the Auditor General's Reports for the financial years 2021 and 2022. During the proceedings, officials from the Kambia District Council were surcharged for their failure to present auditable documents as required.

The Chairman commended the PAC members and the Secretariat for their unwavering commitment and dedication throughout these engagements, ensuring that the principles of transparency and accountability were upheld.

To enhance revenue mobilization, the Chairman emphasized the need for closer collaboration between District and Chiefdom authorities. He acknowledged the challenges faced by Local Councils in asset disposal and budget preparation and highlighted the need for corrective measures. The Chairman also called on the Public Financial Management Reform Unit (PFMRU) and the Ministry of Finance to engage a contractor with at least five local technicians to resolve challenges with the cadastral and PETRA systems to optimize revenue collection for local development.

Moving forward, the Chairman announced that future oversight activities would be conducted on a district-by-district basis, enabling the Committee to physically verify project sites in response to queries raised in the Auditor General's Reports. The PAC also intends to review the devolved sectors and provincial MDAs to address outstanding queries against them in the reports.

The Chairman further disclosed that the Ministry of Finance is in the process of establishing an Escrow Account to secure all monies recovered by the Public Accounts Committee, which will subsequently be transferred to the government's consolidated revenue fund.

He stressed that, henceforth, any official who fails to submit the necessary documents during the audit exercise will incur a penalty of NLe 5,000 per missing document. He urged all officials to adhere to established laws and regulations in conducting expenditures to avoid sanctions arising from preventable audit queries.

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