



PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

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PRESS RELEASE



PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE DISCUSSES EXPLOSIVE HANDING

The Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Defence, chaired by Hon Alex Rogers, on Friday, 30/05/2025, engaged some officers of the Ministry of Defence, Office of National Security (ONS) and Law Officers to know about the management and control of explosives in the country. The meeting was held at ONS at Tower Hill in Freetown.

According to Members of Parliament, the engagement was geared towards enhancing the management, proper handing, use, control, transportation, and law on explosives. Participants discussed and agreed that robust sensitisation on explosives was timely and necessary in light of the proliferation, management, and operation in the country.

In his opening remarks, the Chairman Hon. Alex Rogers said their attention has been drawn to the operation and management of explosives in the country and expressed concern over the risk of the same. He also expressed concern over law regulating the operation and management of explosives, taking into consideration the hazardous effect of chemical substances. He underscored

the needs for proper control and due diligence on explosives. The Chairman used the opportunity to request proper regulation on the management of explosives.

The Chief of Staff, who doubles as the Chief Inspector of Explosives in the country, Major General Amara Idara Bangura did a comprehensive presentation on the current trend, whilst a lawyer from the Law Officers Department gave an update on the review of the obsolete Act. A presentation was also done by ONS representative on gains made so far.

During the discussion, it was observed that the Ministry of Defence in consonance with ONS and Law Officials Department are working in synergy to properly regularise the management, operation, transportation, and manufacturing of explosives in the country.

It was also observed by the Committee that a transition team had been set to create a one-stop shop on the regulation of explosives, and a timely review of explosives ordinance is required to meet the current demand. It was equally discovered by the Committee that State's authorities had already constituted a team at the Law Officials Department to review the archaic 1955 Act on explosives. The Committee emphasised the support of indigenous companies in the management, control, and operation of explosives relative to national promotion of local content policy.

Also, the Committee observed that multiple players were playing with the explosive substance, and the security sector had raised a concern on their operation.

According to the Committee, it was observed that the 1955 Ordinance Act is not strong enough to issue companies that are desperately demanding licenses for the manufacturing and management of explosives in Sierra Leone and therefore a repeal of the aforesaid was required.

The dangerous nature of explosives, including its dual usage as weapon and ammunition, were part of the discussion.

The Committee discovered that the Ministry of Defence is now the Regulatory Authority, and they are working on modalities to have a comprehensive database of all players in the explosives. The risk and mitigation around explosives were also discussed, and participants should work together to bring sanity in the management and control of same.

Key outcomes of the meeting were:

1. Handing over notes should be delivered to the Chief of Staff by those who had been regulating explosives in order to have a One-Stop Shop
2. Speed up with the utilization of sensitisation on human security
3. That the 7 SOPs can serve as the fundamental framework for the review or repeal of the 1955 Explosives Act and
4. Regular periodic updates for MPs and site visits.

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