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**PRESS RELEASE**



**PBO ENGAGES CSOs AND THE MEDIA ON THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT IN THE NATIONAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION PROCESS AND THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW REFORMS**

The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) has on Monday 25/10/2021 engaged representatives from CSOs and the Media on a day's training at the New Administrative Building in Parliament on changes in the budget appropriation process.

The training is supported by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in collaboration with the Parliament of Sierra Leone.

Welcoming participants, Director of PBO, Ibrahim Jimissa thanked the Leadership and Administration of Parliament for gracing the workshop aimed at building the capacity of CSOs and the Media regarding changes in the budget appropriation process including a review of the 2020 questionnaire in respect of same. He also spoke on the work of PBO including costing and budget analysis and simplicity.

Speaking, Clerk of Parliament, Hon. Dr. Paran Umar Tarawally spoke on the duties of Parliament including legislation, representation and oversight. Following the signing of a joint communique between Parliament and CSOs, he said the workshop is a testament of the commitment to working together for the development of the country. He said the establishment of a NGO Desk in Parliament is aimed at integrating CSOs in the general workings of Sierra Leone Parliament including education of the citizenry on its work. He also said that Parliament intends to move from budget approval to budget making as mandated by the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone.

Submitting, the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Chernor R.M. Bah said the Clerk of Parliament had done justice to the purpose of the workshop, and thanked the Clerk of Parliament for ongoing reforms in Parliament under his watch. He called on CSOs and the Media to collaborate and work with Parliament as partners for the development of the country. He praised the Leader of Government Business, Hon. Nyuma for being consultative on issues than ever before. However, he requested for certain financial documents that should precede the reading of the national budget, which he said was doable as it was done before in Parliament.

Delivering his keynote address, Leader of Government Business, Hon. Mathew Sahr Nyuma thanked development partners for their invaluable support to improving the budgetary process in the country. Citing the signed communique between Parliament and CSOs, he called on them to work together with Parliament for the good of the country. Regarding real-time reporting, Hon. Nyuma has called on CSOs to sit at the gallery of Parliament with the media and report accurately on proceedings in Parliament. He also called on the not to report favourably, but accurately and truthfully report on the proceedings of Parliament, devoid of other considerations. He referred to the current Parliament assembled as "open and consultative". He emphasized the need for CSOs to regularly visit Parliament and accurately report its proceedings to the general citizenry, and spoke on the need for CSOs educating the masses on the roles and responsibilities of MPs.

Topics for the workshop include the role of Parliament and reforms in the national budget appropriation process, introducing the PBO, reflections and learning opportunities from last year's process, and techniques in reviewing the appropriation questionnaire among others.

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