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**24th MAY 2018**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**SPEAKER ISSUES STERN WARNINGS ON ABSENTEEISM**

The Speaker of the Parliament of Sierra Leone, the Right Hon. Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu has on Thursday 24th May 2018 issued stern warnings to Members of Parliament, who are in the habit of absenting from Parliamentary Sittings without excuse.

He thundered that any MP who absented himself or herself for an aggregate of Thirty Sittings (30) will lose his or her seat in Parliament, whilst explaining on the existential biometric and manual registration in the House.

Dr. Bundu referenced Section 77 (e) of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone in tandem with Standing Order 77 in the House's rules of procedures, saying he believed he would not have cause to invoke the above during the course of his Speakership.

Clerk of Parliament, Hon. Umar Paran Tarawally had earlier made similar calls to MPs.

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Senior PRO

**UNDP RESIDENT COORDINATOR PAYS COURTESY CALL ON THE SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT**

The United Nations Development Programme's Resident Coordinator to Sierra Leone, Sunil Saigal on Friday 25th May 2018 paid courtesy call on the Speaker and the Leadership of Parliament, since its reconstitution after the conduct of the 2018 General Elections.

Congratulating the Speaker and the Leadership of the Fifth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone, he said in spite of the long standing relationship, this is the first time he had the opportunity in particular of meeting the Speaker in his new capacity. He spoke further of "wearing many hats", such as Resident Coordinator and a Representative of UNDP in Sierra Leone, whilst introducing his Team including Mr. Doe, and Lakshmi Pillai, UNDP's Chief Technical Adviser to the Parliament of Sierra Leone.

Speaking on UNDP's support, Saigal said that governance; including a functioning Parliament is at the pinnacle and that they are privileged to work and also looking forward to a continued engagement with the Parliament of Sierra Leone.

In his response, the Speaker of Parliament, the Rt. Hon. Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu recalled the electoral campaigns and the longevity of their relationship, whilst saying that he was delighted to have ongoing relations with UNDP in the governance sector. He also said that “until the economy improves, we have to continue to seek assistance from our development partners, including new areas”, whilst introducing the Leadership of the House.

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