



PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

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PRESS RELEASE



WESTMINSTER FOUNDATION FOR DEMOCRACY CHAMPIONS LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN SIERRA LEONE

Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) on Monday 04/08/2025 commenced national engagements, bringing together Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from across Sierra Leone to discuss 'Legislative Engagement Agenda'. The event was held at the Civil Service Training College, State House Avenue in Freetown, on the theme: “Enhancing Civil Society Engagement in Legislative Public Participation.”

The event attracted well-established CSOs with the shared goal of influencing and shaping the country’s legislative processes through improved public participation and accountability.

Welcoming participants, Rev. Alusine Diamond Suma, Country Director for WFD, emphasized the organization’s continued commitment to building the capacity of civil societies in understanding and engaging with legislative processes. He noted that such engagements are vital to strengthening democratic governance and ensuring transparency in public institutions.

Rev. Diamond-Suma also commended the Parliament of Sierra Leone, describing it as one of the most open in Africa. He praised the parliamentary leadership for fostering a culture of transparency and accessibility.

Mr. Jeremy B. Simbo, representing the Steering Committee of ParLCSO Net (Parliament–Civil Society Network), highlighted the crucial role of CSOs in democratic development. He elaborated on ParLCSO Net’s ongoing collaboration with Parliament to promote civic engagement and enhance citizen participation in legislative affairs.

Speaking on behalf of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) Steering Committee, Mr. Joseph Munda Bendi, who also serves as Chairman of the National Council for Civic Education and Democracy (NaCCED), underscored the importance of civic education in national development. He affirmed that the government continued to work closely with CSOs to promote openness, transparency, and citizen empowerment through the OGP framework.

Delivering the keynote address, Director General of Parliament Mrs. Finda F. Fraser described CSOs as "the collective voice of the people." She stressed the importance of sustained collaboration between civil society and Parliament, adding that efforts are ongoing to make the legislative body more accessible and responsive to citizens’ needs.

“Parliament is committed to deepening its relationship with civil society as part of its broader agenda to promote good governance and democracy,” she stated. “This engagement reinforces our resolve to ensure inclusive participation in the legislative process.”

The discussions focused on several priority areas:

- Legislative transparency and public engagement
- Parliamentary oversight and public debt management
- Validation of the Legislative Engagement Framework
- Legislative scrutiny and climate accountability

The event was moderated by Mr. Sheku Lamin Turay, Director of Parliamentary and Public Relations at the Parliament of Sierra Leone.

This forum marks another milestone in the ongoing collaboration between Parliament, civil society, and international partners to strengthen democratic governance in Sierra Leone.

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