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PRESS STATEMENT

The Sierra Leone Bar Association hereinafter referred to as the SLBA is extremely perturbed by the rate of infection of the Corona Virus pandemic (Covid 19) in the Country. As we write, the Country has officially recorded about thirty confirmed cases with over Five hundred persons quarantined all over the Country - this, by every estimation is worrying and therefore a cause for concern.

We applaud the effort of Government for the timely declaration of a State of emergency and for the measures taken thus far. We however firmly believe that more affirmative actions need to be taken to nip this menace in the bud.

As an initial step the SLBA on the 4th day of March 2020 (long before the index case) initiated preventive measures by donating Veronica buckets, several cartons of liquid soap, and boxes of thermometers to the Judiciary for same to be distributed among all Court houses in the Country.

The SLBA remains firmly committed to the fight against the deadly Corona virus pandemic. As recent as Tuesday the 14th instant, a letter was dispatched to Brigadier Rtd. Hassan Kellie Conteh, Interim Head of the Covid 19 team (the EOC) requesting a meeting to discuss issues touching on the pandemic.



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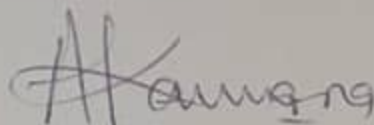
Whilst we await a response to our letter aforesaid, we hereby make the following recommendations for the urgent attention of the Government of Sierra Leone and its partners;

1. That Government takes immediate measures to ensure that facial masks are used in public places.
2. That a Nationwide lockdown be declared and implemented for a period of at least Fourteen (14 days), albeit the State and its partners should ensure that essential services are available and efficient.
3. That the Judiciary should;
 - a. adjourn all Civil matters for at least a period of one month.
 - b. ensure that the hearing of Criminal Matters are regulated in compliance with the measures announced by the Government and its partners.
4. That security personnel in implementing the preventive measures put in place to fight Covid 19 must respect the rights and dignity of every member of the public.

At this juncture we encourage all members of the public to strictly adhere to the preventive measures implemented by Government and its partners to ensure we win this deadly war.

END

Signed:



Abdul Karim Kamara Esq.
General Secretary

