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**PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE LUNSAR AND TOMBO INCIDENTS**

11th May, 2020

## INTRODUCTION

Following the recent incidences of violence in Lunsar and Tombo, the All Political Parties Association Sierra Leone (APPA-SL), visited both communities to ascertain the causes. The team departed Freetown on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2020 to Lunsar and Tombo with the following objectives;

- To ascertain whether the riot was politically motivated
- To ascertain the role played by the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) in quelling the violence
- To obtain first-hand information from the indigenes
- To proffer solutions to the problems or the causes of the violence

## METHODOLOGY

Interviews were conducted with the leadership of the Sierra Leone Police, the Local Authorities and a cross section of the residents in Lunsar.

Interviews were also conducted with the leadership of the Sierra Leone Police in Tombo, the management of the Tombo Community Hospital, the Local Council and a cross section of residents in Tombo.

## FINDINGS FROM LUNSAR

- That the attack was well orchestrated and coordinated by the former Member of Parliament (MP) of the All People's Congress (APC) Party **Hon. Osman Karanke Conteh** and **Ibrahim Sulaiman Kabia** aka 'Bulgar'
- That Ibrahim S. Kabia incited the youth and threatened the Paramount Chief through several audio messages circulated via WhatsApp
- That the former MP, Hon. Osman K. Conteh picked up Ibrahim S. Kabia after his release from Police custody and was seen parading with him within the township in his vehicle



- That Ibrahim S. Kabia also threatened the Chiefdom Speaker on his way to the house of the Paramount Chief
- That two individuals commonly known as “**Million pound**” and “**Two bible**” led the attack on the Police Quarters in Lunsar
- That Ibrahim S. Kabia and an individual commonly known as “**Shabalala**” led the attack on the residence of the Paramount Chief which resulted to the burning of his vehicles, the destruction of his house and the death of a blind man called **Alie Kabia**
- That the attacks were done simultaneously in the township. Strategic entering points were barricaded by the youth during the attack
- That the attack was primarily directed at members, supporters and sympathizers of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) in Lunsar
- That the Total Fuel Station in Lunsar was also destroyed by the youth because they were of the opinion that it is owned by the Paramount Chief
- That the Police received threats via telephone calls from senior members of the All People’s Congress (APC) Party
- That the youth freed all the prisoners although some were apprehended after the incident
- That the Police response to the complaint received from the Paramount Chief before and after the incident was very inappropriate
- That the SLP were under-staff and could not repel the force from the youth

## FINDINGS FROM TOMBO

- That the attack was also well coordinated and executed
- That a WhatsApp audio message from an individual commonly known as “**Adebayor**” incited the youth to launch an attack on the Police Station and innocent citizens in Tombo
- That the Family Support Unit (FSU) of the SLP in Tombo was burnt down and the Police Station vandalized by the youth
- That the community hospital was set ablaze and some medical and laboratory equipment were carted



- That the youth freed over ten (10) people who were in quarantined homes
- That the house of the Community Health Officer (CHO) was also vandalized and some of his personal effect carted
- That several vehicles and motor bikes were destroyed
- That a Police Officer died in a car accident while others sustained injuries on their way to the incident area

## **GENERAL RECOMMENDATION(S)**

### **Government**

- ✚ That Government should ensure that all involved in the violence in Lunsar and Tombo be speedily brought to book and if found wanting, Government should ensure that they all face the full force of the law
- ✚ That Government should enact policies with punitive measures around the dissemination of divisive hate messages in the country
- ✚ That Government should without fear or favour focus on curbing lawlessness and indiscipline as promised by the President
- ✚ That the Government should review policies on the use of narcotics and robustly wage war against its use, as it is gradually destroying the future generation of our beloved nation
- ✚ That Government should embark on job creation opportunities for youth, regardless of political lines, regions, tribe and ethnicity. This will help in de-escalating tensions between and among the youth of the land
- ✚ That Government should revive Community Development Committee (CDU) beyond political lines across the country with a view to help foster peace, unity and development
- ✚ Government should work towards enable the SLP with adequate resources including manpower and mobility to enhance their operational efficiency



- ✚ We call on Government to continue to engage political party leaders on issues of national interests

### **Judiciary**

- ✚ That the Judiciary swiftly hear all matters relating to the violence in Lunsar and Tombo and ensure fairness in the dispensation of justice

### **Political Parties**

- ✚ The leadership of the All People's Congress (APC) Party should disassociate themselves from the action of the former Member of Parliament and apologise to the people of Lunsar for his action
- ✚ The leadership should rain in on their supporters and address the spate of hate messages perpetrated by them
- ✚ That political party leaders, members, supporters and sympathizers should desist from disseminating divisive hate messages including the governing Sierra Leone People's Party
- ✚ That political party leaders constructively engage government on issues of national interests rather than inciting their membership to resort to violence
- ✚ That political party leaders should respect state institutions in the discharge of their duties
- ✚ That political parties should embark on civic educational activities with emphasis on Non-violence, conflict prevention and political tolerance

### **General Public**

- ✚ That citizens should respect the rule of law and use the appropriate remedies available to seek redress, while at the same time they should discourage every form of divisiveness and violence

- ✿ That citizens should fly the Green, White and Blue at all times rather than political party colours
- ✿ That citizens should engage in constructive discussions and criticisms rather than those that will ignite conflict and tensions

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, APPA-SL is of the firm opinion that this is the time our people need us the most, therefore as political parties, we must all embrace a united front in the fight against COVID-19.

The role of political parties in tackling this virus is vital. APPA-SL hereby call on all Sierra Leonean to resist all forms of divisiveness and desist from disseminating hate messages through social media, that are inimical to national peace and stability of our beloved country. Political Party leaders should espouse and promote national unity, peace, cohesion and respect for the rule of law.

Finally, we encourage the general public to respect compliance all preventive measures regarding COVID 19.

Long live APPA!!!

God Bless Sierra Leone!!!



Chairman



Deputy Secretary General