

A JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF CSOs AND PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

PREAMBLE

We, leaders of fifty-two civil society organization (CSO) drawn from all districts across Sierra Leone and the leadership of Parliament of Sierra Leone, at a meeting held at the New Brookfields Hotel from 17th to 18th August 2021 discussed and agreed on the process of promoting constructive engagements between civil society and parliament for better results in governance and accountability;

Cognisant of the need for a stronger and more constructive relationship between the Parliament of Sierra Leone and its civil society counterparts;

Recognising the need for non-state actors to support elected officials to be more effective in their lawmaking, representative and oversight roles;

And aware of the need for building and strengthening structure, systems and mechanisms governance and accountability in Sierra Leone.

Now therefore, delegates of the conference resolved on the following:

RESOLUTION

Establish a CSO desk in parliament to develop a comprehensive CSO-Parliament programme. The desk will be overseen by a steering committee comprising MPs and CSO leaders and will work to solicit funding for first two years. The CSO/Parliament programme will comprise the following

Representation

- Parliament and CSOs to undertake joint public education on the roles of MPs
- Parliament and CSOs to establish accountability forums for sustained public on the roles and responsibilities and accountability of parliament
- CSOs to track and share the work of MPs in key constituencies
- CSOs and NGOs to take steps to get MPs involved in their programmes as part of the broader confidence building between MPs and their constituents

Law making

- CSOs to engage constituents on the policy making role of MP and minimise the party politics in policy making
- CSOs to educate parliamentary constituencies in real time on bills, policies and programmes discussed (approved/rejected) in parliament
- Parliament to invite CSOs in pre-legislative briefing and as expert witnesses on committees
- CSOs to share their thematic work areas with relevant MP committees

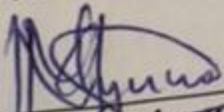
Oversight

- CSOs to advocate for the operational and financial suitability of Parliament.
- Parliamentary leadership to engage political party leadership on retention of MPs and recruitment of highly qualified parliamentary candidates
- Organise training and learning events on CSO/Parliamentary collaboration

- Parliament to utilise CSO data and representation in the oversight of key committees

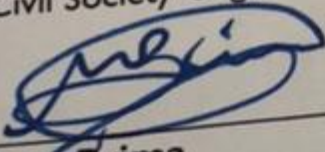
General resolve to have a CSO/MP joint session in parliament this 2021 and joint district level meetings

For Parliament of Sierra Leone



Hon. Mathew S. Nyuma
Leader of Government Business

For Civil Society Organisations



Mr. Abu Brima
Executive Director
Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD)