



Sierra Leone Association of Journalists

1st Floor, 56 Campbell Street, Freetown, Sierra Leone P.M.B. 724,

Website: www.slajsl Email: slaj.salone@gmail.com

President: +232 76 470288 / +232 30 470288, **Secretary-General:** +232 78 445300

PRESS RELEASE

SLAJ Condemns Intimidation and Harassment of Journalist Amadu Lamrana Bah

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The **Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ)** acknowledges a complaint from journalist **Amadu Lamrana Bah** over maltreatment and embarrassment he faced at the hands of some officials of the **Lungi International Airport**, Lungi, Port Loko District, Northern Sierra Leone, who claimed to be acting on the ‘orders of someone above’.

Lamrana, who is the President of the **Sierra Leone Reporters Union (SLRU)** and Head of Digital Media at **AYV Media Empire**, was at the airport together with his colleague journalists and supporters of the national football team **Leone Stars** en route to Cameroon for the **AFCON 2021 tournament**. After going through the check-in processes, Lamrana’s name was repeatedly announced via the airport public address and alarm system requesting him to report to the **Air Maroc** check-in desk. When he reported at the Air Maroc desk, he said his tagged luggage was thrown at him and was told that his name was not on the list of passengers. But for the intervention of **BBC Correspondent Umaru Fofana**, Lamrana said he felt humiliated in front of onlookers while still trying to question the action of the officials.


According to Lamrana, the attempt to stop him from traveling to Cameroon, a trip that is paid for by mobile network company **Africell Sierra Leone**, may not be unconnected to his earlier post on Facebook on their uncomfortable experience at the airport in the early hours of Monday 10th January 2022.

SLAJ vehemently condemns the behavior of the airport officials, including Air Maroc, and finds it unfortunate that the journalist was targeted because of his opinion.

“This is outright intimidation and harassment and constitutes a serious attack on free speech and press freedom. No journalist, or individual for that matter, should be targeted for expressing their views. Authorities must learn to accommodate genuine criticism as part of their responsibility to the public,” said President of SLAJ, **Ahmed Sahid Nasralla**.

Meanwhile, as we continue to call for the safety and security of journalists at all times, SLAJ awaits an official explanation, and apology to the journalist, from the airport authority and calls for a speedy investigation into the circumstances leading to their action and to expose whosoever gave that order to drop the journalist from the list of passengers.

Signed:


Alhaji Manika Kamara
Acting Secretary General



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