



ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION
CATHEDRAL HOUSE
3 GLOUCESTER STREET
FREETOWN
SIERRA LEONE, WEST AFRICA

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MEDIA RELEASE

**UPDATE ON ACC's ACTIONS AND INTERVENTIONS ON AUDITOR GENERAL'S
REPORTS 2019 AND 2020 (No.1)**

In this first media release, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) wishes to update the general public of the actions and steps it has taken to address critical issues raised in the 2019 and 2020 Auditor General's Reports of Sierra Leone. These interventions focused on aspects of possible, or alleged corruption, and conducts inconsistent with provision(s) in the Anti-Corruption Act of 2008 as amended in 2019.

After a thorough review, and analysis of the aforementioned Reports, the Commission initiated actions; with a view to investigating, prosecuting, or recovering public funds, public revenue, public property, as the case maybe, in accordance with Sections 7, and 48 of the Anti-Corruption Act of 2008 as amended in 2019, respectively.

Furthermore, the public may recall that, the ACC through its serialized Media Releases had updated the public that, it recovered and returned to the State a total sum of over **Two Billion Leones**, arising from issues in the 2015-2018 Audit Reports, charged Two matters to court and examined the practices and procedures of public bodies, advised on changes in practices with a view to limiting the corruption opportunities and structural vulnerabilities and the development of best practices accordingly.

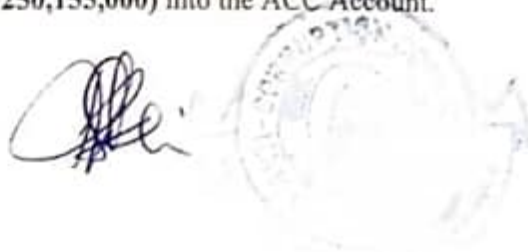
Below are some of the issues, and areas of ACC interventions, and the outcomes of same:

1. **BOMBALI DISTRICT COUNCIL.** The 2019 Auditor General's Report alleged misappropriation of Public Funds emanating from unmerited sitting fees paid to Councilors amounting to **Six Million, Three Hundred and Thirty Thousand Leones (Le 6,330,000)**. ACC investigation established that indeed unmerited sitting fees totaling the said sum were paid to absentee Councilors and the Commission ordered the Council to refund the full amount. The full amount has been refunded by the Council.
2. **KOINADUGU DISTRICT COUNCIL.** The 2019 Auditor General's Report alleged that the Koinadugu District Council failed to pay withholding tax of **Sixteen Million**



Seven Hundred and Fifty-nine Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty-three Leones (Le 16,759,853) to the National Revenue Authority (NRA). ACC investigations showed that the said withholding tax was actually paid by the Council as evidenced by NRA receipts submitted by the Chief Administrator of the Council and confirmed by the NRA Officer in which three different payments, all amounting to **Sixteen Million, Seven Hundred and Ninety Six Thousand, Four Hundred and Ninety One Leones (Le16, 796,491)** were made into the NRA Account at the Union Trust Bank in Kabala.

3. **FREETOWN CITY COUNCIL.** The 2019 Auditor General's Report alleged that the Freetown City Council paid sitting fees to absentee Councilors totaling the sum of **Sixty Million, Six Hundred and Ten Thousand Leones (Le 60,610,000)**, which included the sum of **Forty-three Million, Four Hundred and Seventy Thousand Leones (Le 43,470,000)** which was paid as sitting fees to Councilors even when there were no sittings. According to the ACC investigations, Section 30 (1)(a) of the Local Government Act of 2004 states that, remuneration, transport and other allowances shall be paid to Councilors, Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons as the Local Council may determine, whilst Section 30(2) states that, any allowances or remuneration paid shall be financed by the Local Council under the guidelines issued by the Ministry after consulting the Ministry of Finance. The Commission sadly found out that no such guidelines exist. The Commission also discovered that, in some of the meetings, the Chief Administrator of the Council said some of the absentee Councilors were either attending other official functions, sick or took excuse for their absence. The Commission has therefore instructed its Prevention Department to work with the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the Ministry of Finance with respect to the payment of allowances, including sitting fees.
4. **KAMBIA DISTRICT COUNCIL.** It was highlighted in the 2019 Auditor General's Report that Management of the Council misappropriated the sum of **Twelve Million, Nine Hundred and Sixty-nine Thousand Leones (Le 12,969,000)** as NASSIT contributions for staff of the Council. There was no evidence of misappropriation as, during the ACC investigations, the Council produced payment documents which were confirmed by NASSIT.
5. **ERNEST BAI KOROMA UNIVERSITY.** The 2019 Auditor General's Report alleged that the University deducted withholding taxes from contractors in respect of procurement carried out for the years 2016 and 2017 but did not pay same to the National Revenue Authority. During the investigations, officials of the University took responsibility to refund the deducted withholding taxes and they have now paid a total sum of **Two Hundred and Fifty Million, One Hundred and Fifty-five Thousand Leones (Le 250,155,000)** into the ACC Account.



6. **NJALA UNIVERSITY.** The 2019 Auditor General's Report made claims that the officials of the University deducted the sum of **Three Hundred and Twenty-seven Million Leones (Le 327,000,000)** as withholding taxes from contracts awarded to contractors for the various procurement activities undertaken covering the periods 2016 to 2018 without paying the said deductions to the NRA. During the ACC investigations, the University officials admitted not paying the said withholding taxes and were therefore ordered to do full payment; which they have made into the Commission's Account.

Meanwhile, the ACC wishes to reassure the general public of its commitment to protecting public property and revenue at all times.

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