

Sierra Leone Peoples Party UK & Ireland Branch Hosts National Chairman John Oponjo Benjamin

London, United Kingdom – 19 July 2009

The SLPP UK & Ireland Branch held a Grand reception and fundraising gala in honour of the dynamic National Chairman, John Oponjo Benjamin on Saturday 18 July at the Wavelengths' Leisure Centre, in Deptford, South London.



MC Ken Kowa introduces JOB

JOB addressing well wishers

The Centre was packed with party supporters and well wishes who turned out to welcome and thank JOB for taking on the challenge of governing our great party, and of ensuring that good governance and democratic structures established by the previous SLPP Government led by President Kabba are not unravelled by the APC government.

MC Ken Kowa noted that in the short time that JOB and the new National Executive Committee have taken over the reins, there has been an injection of dynamism and a fundamental shift in policy with the party focusing on the preservation of our nascent democracy, national unity and political tolerance. JOB was commended for his insistence that change can happen in Sierra Leone within a spirit of bipartisan unity with parties focusing on achieving pluralism and the common developmental goals and aspirations of our people.

In a brief address, JOB highlighted the increasing erosion of democratic structures put in place by our party while in government, the increase in impunity enjoyed by the APC and their supporters - the violent destruction of our party HQ and atrocious rape of our sisters, as well as the increasing threat to civil liberties and attempts to silence the voice of our party by destroying Radio Unity. He reiterated his message that party members in the Diaspora **must** engage and be involved in supporting not only the on-going root and branch reform of the party but also in garnering resources to win back power in 2012.



JOB has had a busy schedule during his weeklong visit in London which has included - meeting the Chair of the Select Foreign Affairs Committee Mike Gates on the 14 July, the BBC and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy on the 15 July, [groups of UK & Ireland Branch members](#), the UK Council of Elders and the Sierra Leone High Commissioner, as well as addressing cross-section of the Sierra Leone community in London at the [Sierra Leone Community Forum](#), held at the Walworth Road Methodist Church Hall in Camberwell, London Borough of Southwark, where more than 25% of local population are Sierra Leoneans by birth. HJOB has also held several interviews.



Mike Gapes – Chair Foreign Affairs Committee and John Oponjo Benjamin –Chair of Sierra Peoples Party with members of the SLPP UK & Ireland branch at the House of Commons in London.



National SLPP Chairman John Benjamin, UK Chair Harold Saffa & Chair UK Council of Elders Alhadj Khalil Mustapha with UK Branch members in Parliament Square - House Parliament + Big Ben in the background.

While JOB has focused on driving home the need for an effective opposition in Sierra Leone and for effective engagement of the UK & Ireland Branch with the party in Sierra Leone during his visit, he also intervened in the nagging internal dispute within the branch and assured members last night that he will leave behind a unified Green family in London.

JOB returns to Sierra Leone early next week.

One country, One people, One Nation, One Destiny