



## **RESPONSE TO THE US EMBASSY'S PRESS RELEASE ON WEDNESDAY JUNE 3, 2009**

**Freetown June 5, 2009.** The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) wishes to comment on statements contained in the Press Release by Ms Dana Van Brandt, Public Affairs Officer at the United States Embassy in Sierra Leone that were inaccurately attributed to the National Chairman, Mr. John Benjamin. Ms Van Brandt asserted that Mr. Benjamin "used this attempt by the Embassy to extend to him a courtesy as a means to accuse the United States Government of unscrupulous acts" in connection with his interrogation at Dulles Airport.

We unequivocally repudiate that statement and would like the United States government, the United States Embassy in Sierra Leone and the Chargé d'Affaires, in particular, to note that Mr. Benjamin has never uttered such a statement and whoever attributed it to his person was misleading.

The National Chairman did not and could not possibly accuse the United States Embassy of being involved in such action that may have been hatched by APC party and/or its operatives in the United States for the sole purpose of embarrassing the Opposition.

We do see the Chargé d'Affaires' warning for what it was an extension of a courtesy and a very real sign of the friendly relationship the SLPP, under the leadership of the National Chairman, Mr. John Benjamin has continued to enjoy with the United States government through the Ambassador. We in the SLPP recognize that the United States Embassy in Sierra Leone has been pivotal in our quest to restart the political tolerance and peace which the SLPP introduced and maintained throughout its eleven year stewardship of Sierra Leone.

Finally, our offices are staffed throughout the day, Monday to Saturday and we invite Ms Van Brandt, and all Public Affairs Officers, to please call and verify accusations against any Officer and the Party before making public statements.

Dr. Kadi Sesay

Deputy National Chairman