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**PRESS RELEASE
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DAY FOUR: PARLIAMENT CONCLUDES DEBATE ON PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has on Friday 20th January 2017, after a marathon debate ratified the motion of thanks to President Koroma for the Speech that he “graciously delivered to Parliament at the opening of the Fifth Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone”.

Submitting to the debate, Hon. Paramount Chief, Victor B. Kebbie of Pujehun thanked President Koroma for his stewardship of the country, whilst saying that we have never had a president that has worked so hard for the development of the country. He lauded President Koroma for his development strides across the country regardless of votes cast, whilst acclaiming improved health and other infrastructural developments in Pujehun District. He decried the opposition for negative propaganda directed at the Government. He called on MPs to appreciate President Koroma for raising their salaries and allowances to enhance their work, whilst noting ebola sensitization funds and the Constituency Development Fund. He said that the People of Pujehun District appreciate the work that President Koroma is doing for the country.

Acting Minority Leader of the House, Hon. Ansumana J. Kaikai thanked the President for delivering his “9th Speech” from the Throne as required by law, whilst awaiting his valedictory Speech to the House. He said that President Koroma did not struggle to enumerate his achievements in nine years of governance, but failed to recognize that the SLPP had laid a solid foundation for those successes. He also said that most of the infrastructural developments were initiated by the then SLPP Government led by late President Kabbah. He furthered that salaries of MPs were raised because of the foundation laid by SLPP and donor partners, since 2002. In tears, “he called on President Koroma to return late Sir Albert Margai’s property to his family, following the precedent that had been set by late Presidents Stevens and Kabbah, whilst calling for peace and unity to prevail in the SLPP to brace themselves as a formidable force for the next elections”.

As the Leader of the House, Hon. Ibrahim Bundu recalled when he received the Speech from HE after a successful delivery and laid it on the Table of the House for debate. He said “fellow citizens”, whilst thanking MPs who spoke to the motion for having done justice to the usual parliamentary rituals. He said that President Koroma was and still is a Member of Parliament, whilst referring to him as His Excellency, the Right Honourable, Doctor Ernest Bai Koroma. He agreed with the President that integrity is the real proponent for development that can attract jobs and wealth creation for the development of the country. He also said that integrity encompasses all, as it can neither be loaned nor bought in shops, whilst speaking on MPs, Ministers, public officials, contractors, suppliers, military and police personnel and ordinary Sierra Leoneans who had failed in carrying out responsibilities entrusted to them, including the misuse of overseas’ remittances by families, friends and relatives. And, he called on all and sundry to uphold integrity for the development of the country.

Earlier, other MPs spoke to the motion.