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PRESS RELEASE
18TH JANUARY, 2017

DAY TWO: DEBATE CONTINUES ON PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH

Following the commencement of debate on the Presidential Speech delivered by President Koroma on Thursday 15th December 2016, the Parliament of Sierra Leone during the course of a thank you motion has entered the second allotted day on Wednesday 18th January, 2017.

Contributing to the motion, Hon. Alhaji Alhaji Seray Dumbuya prefaced his debate by saying that economies in the world are undergoing recession for which they are constrained by financial deficits. He recalled that before ebola struck and the fall in ore prices, our economy was performing very well. He said that with the support of all and sundry, our economy would surely bounce back, whilst acknowledging that “in spite of our economic difficulties, we have striven where others have failed”. He also said that President Koroma has won the confidence and admiration of the people for transparency that had earned him the reward of winning elections in even opposition strongholds. He thanked President Koroma for his efforts to strengthen the justice sector through the creation of additional courts and the Legal Aid Board to expedite judicial service delivery to the poor and vulnerable. He referred to President Koroma as an exemplary character who amongst all the Presidents of Sierra Leone has matched words with actions by empowering women and youth in the country, bringing them to the mainstream of governance, including the improvement of roads and electricity supply in the country.

For his part, Hon. James N.D Alie said that he was expecting a scorecard from President Koroma, whilst saying that the president’s praise singers had failed him, the resultant effect of the austerity measures in the country. He also said that the current economic decline is a result of corruption and a bloated administration that is being run by Government. He said that the President had reneged on his promise on zero corruption with no sacred cows.

Talking on the scorecard of President Koroma, Hon. Daniel Koroma recalled the unprecedented actions the President had taken in respect of building roads in every part of the country, the Free Healthcare Initiative (FHCI) for women and children, 15%

increment in salaries for public sector workers including MPs in July 2015, and the legislation on minimum wage, promoting education of girls in the sciences and the payment of public exams, and a turnaround in the energy sector since he came to power in 2007. He informed the House that President Koroma had procured an ultra-modern ferry for the people of Bonthe District. He acclaimed President Koroma for the exclusive creation of a youth ministry and a commission that are headed by youth. He also agreed with the President that with togetherness, nothing would stop our growth and development as a nation with a zeal that never tires. He recalled that under the watch of President Koroma, Parliament now has an additional administrative building to ease her work. He said also that under the scorecard of the people and in spite of the current economic malaise and the removal of fuel subsidy, President Koroma has won bye-elections in the West, East, South and the Northern Regions in the country.

Next, Hon. Moses Jorkie told the House that the President has done very well for the country, whilst noting that governance is continuity and that most of the programmes he had accomplished were initiated by the late President Kabbah in respect of infrastructural development. He decried the implementation of the FHCI because of poor monitoring and evaluation. He said that most of the health centers are not manned by doctors and that the referral system is poor as the ambulance is yet to be operational. He called on the Government for effective health service delivery in the country. He also said that only selected schools with serial numbers are benefiting from the distribution of teaching and learning materials. He also called on Government to pay attention to Bonthe District which is endowed with fertile land for rice cultivation.

Other MPs spoke to the motion as the debate continues.