



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION - THIRD MEETING

TUESDAY, 19TH MARCH, 2019

SESSION – 2018/2019



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMEN TARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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Third Meeting of the First Session of the Fifth Parliament
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Tuesday, 19th March, 2019.

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PROPOSER: HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS

SECONDER: HON. EMILIA LOLOH TONGI

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THE TWENTY-NINETH REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE BE ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE AND THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN BE APPROVED.



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

FIRST SESSION – THIRD MEETING OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Tuesday, 19th March, 2019.

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Mrs Bintu Weston, Read the Prayers]

[The House met at 12:15 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]

[The Speaker, Hon. Dr Chernor Abass Bundu, in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S. O. 5[2]

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTINGS HELD ON FRIDAY, 22ND AND THURSDAY, 28TH FEBRUARY, 2019.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I would like to make one or two observations. I understand that the Order Paper did not come to the attention of Honourable Members until this morning. I know you have been raising this matter with a great deal of concern over time and promises after promises have been made that every effort would be made to improve on the situation by ensuring that the Order Paper is prepared and distributed on time. Our relocation to Kingtom has not helped matters; if anything it has compounded certain physical problems. However, it is still incumbent upon Management to ensure that the Order Paper is made available and on time. I wish to once again record our apologies, on behalf of Management, but I want to give you the assurance that we will try to improve the situation.

Honourable Members, there are other concerns that have also been brought to my attention. I have invited the leadership of all political parties to meet with me tomorrow at 11:00 O'clock with a view to addressing some of those concerns. We shall be meeting in my chambers at Tower Hill.

Honourable Members, with regard to the record of Votes and Proceedings for Friday, 22nd and Friday the 28th February, 2019 we shall shelve consideration of those records until we receive the regulations or whatever amendments that are proposed to be made to the relevant laws that we have been dealing with over the past few sittings. So, we shall not consider the record of Votes and Proceedings of those two dates today. We shall shelve them to be considered alongside whatever regulations are presented to us in due course. It may be at the next adjourned date or at a date that will be duly announced to Honourable Members. I hope we can agree on that. With that, we would proceed with the rest of the items on the Order Paper

HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before I present the report I just want to bring to the notice of Honourable Members that I would want to make some adjustments in this report on Page 1, item No.3. I want No. 3 to be removed for today. Also, I want No. 4 on Page 4 to be removed. No.3 on Page 1 is the proposed Electoral Commissioner. We will bring it up at a later date.

III. MOTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE

PROPOSER: HON SIDIE M. TUNIS

SECONDER: HON. EMILIA LOLOH TONGI

HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I present to you the Twenty-Ninth Report of the First Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service:

1. Introduction

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service that is charged with the responsibility of vetting Presidential nominees and selecting the most fitted and qualified persons to serve in public offices in the Republic of Sierra Leone, met on Tuesday 26th February, Tuesday, 5th March, and Thursday, 7th March, 2019 and interviewed thirteen presidential nominees for the under-mentioned appointments:

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, permit me to inform the House that this edition of the Twenty-ninth Report which, blends three sittings of the Committee, supersedes the earlier 'twenty-ninth report' already in the possession of Members. We have the following nominees:

[i] Four Supreme Court Judges;

[ii] Four Appeal Court Judges;

[iii] Electoral Commissioner, Southern Region;

[iv] Member, Sierra Leone Police Council;

[v] Two Members, Statistics Sierra Leone Council;

[vi] Members, Board of Trustees, National Social Security & Insurance Trust [NASSIT]

2. Procedure

The Committee conducted the hearings within the ambit of its established criteria set out to elicit facts as to whether the nominees are fit and qualified for their proposed appointments. The deliberations of the Committee were guided by the principle of objectivity to the extent that beside perusing the specified documents provided by the nominees, the Committee went further to request for public input into the vetting process by furnishing the Committee with information of relevance to the suitability of the nominees or otherwise for their proposed appointments.

The Committee certified that the nominees were cleared of any criminal records by the Criminal Investigation Department [CID] and that they have the relevant qualifications and necessary backup experience to man such important offices of state. Inquiring questions put to the nominees covered wide ranging issues pertaining to their track records in pertinent work situations, their declared assets and liabilities, fulfilment of their tax obligations and their visions for a successful and nationally productive tenure.

3. Thirty-Third Sitting of the Committee on Tuesday, 26th February, 2019

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the following nominees were interviewed on oath:

[i] Mr Prince Terenah Quee, Proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council.

Mr Prince Terenah Quee is a political role model and a strong opinion leader in the Kenema District. He has once served as Commissioner, Income Tax Appellate Commission.

Mr Prince Terenah Quee viewed his nomination as a call to national service at a higher level. **"I believe this is an opportunity for me to serve my country at the national level. Statistics Sierra Leone is a very important institution that is meant to produce reliable statistical data for use by the Government to plan for the development of the country. I promise to work to the best of my ability to ensure that the right thing is done to achieve those objectives for which the institution was established,"** he said.

[ii] Alhaji Alie Badara Yillah, proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council.

Alhaji Alie Badara Yillah is a veteran Civil Servant who joined the Sierra Leone Civil Service in 1978, rose through the ranks and retired as Assistant Director, Agricultural Engineering Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security from 2011 to 2017. Alhaji Alie Badara Yillah promised to collaborate with his colleague Council Members, the management and the general work force to actualise His Excellency's dream. **"I will therefore instil discipline in the work place, so that we do the right things in a timely manner,"** he said.

[iii] Mr Samuel B. Vandj, Proposed Member, Sierra Leone Police Council.

Mr Samuel Benedict Vandj is a former police officer of thirty-two years [32] of work experience. Mr Vandj served in several senior management positions in the Sierra Leone Police Force before his retirement.

Responding to the concerns of the Committee, Mr Vandj said, **"I have had the opportunity to serve as a Senior Officer in the Sierra Leone Police Force for a little over three decades, during which time, I believe, I had contributed my bit towards promoting law and order in this country. The function of the Sierra Leone Police Council is very important and I believe I have the knowledge and experience required to advise and make necessary policies that will ensure the maintenance of law and order in Sierra Leone. I want to assure this Honourable House that I will work collaboratively with my colleague Council Members to ensure that the objectives of the Sierra Leone Police Council are achieved.**

[iv] Mr Jennings Anto Brian Wright, proposed Member, Board of Trustees, National Social Security and Insurance Trust [NASSIT]

Mr Jennings Anto Brian Wright is a Trade Unionist of no mean standing. He is the current President of the Sierra Leone Labour Congress [2017 to date] and the representative of that union on the NASSIT Board of Trustees. He has served a term as a Trustee [2015-2017] and has been nominated for a second term.

Reacting to the Committee's concerns about NASSIT's delay in paying the benefits of retired workers, Mr Wright said, **"I will endeavour to draw the attention of fellow Trustees and management to the provision in the law that 'retirement benefits should be paid in the time period of fifteen [15] days after a worker's retirement' and I will try to ensure that the right thing is done as provided by law."**

4. Thirty-Fifth Sitting of the Committee on Thursday, 7th March, 2019

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, the following nominees were interviewed on oath:

[i] Mr Sulaiman Ahmad Bah, Proposed Appeal Court Judge

Sulaiman Ahmad Bah is a Legal luminary with proven knowledge and skills in International Law, Leadership, Human Rights Law, Intellectual Property Rights and Transnational Organised Crimes. From 6th June, 2016 to 15th February, 2019, Mr Sulaiman Bah was until recently, the Director of Public Prosecution [DPP] in the Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice.

Reacting to probing questions, Mr Sulaiman Bah said: **"I believe without doubt that I am qualified and very capable for a job on the Bench particularly after having served as Director of Public Prosecution for a couple of years. I believe I am a very humble man and I have integrity. I believe in promoting justice and the 'Rule of Law.' I believe in fairness, equality and in providing a level playing field for all. If I obtain the blessings of approval of this Honourable House and its Members, I will ensure that my judgment would not be influenced by any political, ethnic, regional or personal considerations. My mission is to judiciously serve my beloved country and I promised to do my very best."**

[ii] Honourable Justice Alusine Sani Sesay, proposed Supreme Court Judge

Honourable Justice Alusine Sani Sesay is an Appeal Court Judge and a recipient of the 'Chief Justice's Award' for hard work and dedication.

Reacting to prompts about maintaining independence and impartiality in his rulings, Honourable Justice Alusine Sesay said: **"I believe in collective judgment when it is right. By this I mean that, in the Court of Appeal, every Judge has the right to give his or her own judgment. Where it is right, you can give a collective ruling and where it is not right, you can give an independent judgment because you are independent."**

Questioned on the issue of backlog cases, Honourable Justice Alusine Sesay said: **"I can assure the Committee that I am one of very few Judges who has worked on backlog cases in the entire country. Before the 2018 General Elections, I covered five districts: Moyamba, Bo, Kono, Port Loko and Bombali to deal with backlog cases and I single-handedly dealt with about 900 cases. In the Provinces, I discovered that some accused persons had spent more time in prison waiting for their cases to be heard than they would have if they were sentenced. During my tour, some accused persons pleaded guilty and I sentenced them for the time they have spent in prison. That assisted us and even helped to reduce prison population and congestion in the Correctional centres."**

[iii] Honourable Justice Allan Baami Halloway, proposed Supreme Court Judge

Honourable Justice Allan Baami Halloway is a Judge of the Superior Appellate Courts of Judicature. He has also served as the Executive Secretary of the Law Reform Commission from 2005 to 2006.

Responding to the Committee's inquiries about his independence in dispensing judgment, Honourable Justice Baami Halloway said: **"Since becoming a Judge, I have always exercised an independent mind and I will continue to do so. If I am working with a panel of Judges that express a similar view on an issue, then all I can do is to work with them as a team. I will give space to each of the Judges to ensure that we all display our independent minds. At the end of**

the day, the majority would carry the vote. But I cannot be influenced in any way by others if I hold a contrary view.”

[iv] Honourable Justice Ansumana Ivan Sesay, proposed Appeal Court Judge

Honourable Justice Ansumana Ivan Sesay is a Judge of the High Court of Sierra Leone with sound working knowledge in Legal Empowerment, Advocacy, Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation.

Answering to inquiries as to why he accepted the nomination of His Excellency the President, Honourable Justice Ansumana Ivan Sesay said that there were several reasons why he has opted to accept the nomination of His Excellency, the President. **“My main reason, however, is to help fast-track delayed cases in the Court of Appeal. As a High Court Judge, I have noticed that there is a huge pile of cases waiting to be heard by the Court of Appeal. The general saying is that, ‘Justice delay is justice denied.’ I have done both civil and criminal matters and I have been in practice for quite a while. I intend to use my experience to reduce the backlog of cases waiting to be heard by the Court of Appeal.”**

[v] Honourable Justice Miatta Marie Samba, proposed Appeal Court Judge

Honourable Justice Miatta Marie Samba is a Judge of the High Court of Sierra Leone who is currently assigned to fast-track and to help clear the backlog of cases in the Commercial Court at Government Wharf, Freetown.

Asked to give an opinion on women’s empowerment under the ‘New Direction,’ Honourable Justice Miatta Maria Samba said: **“I thank the Almighty God for the opportunities being offered to women. As to how I would want to see women’s progress in the next five years, I must say that I very much appreciate His Excellency’s declaration of ‘Free and Quality Education’ nationwide because that is the backbone and the actual source of women’s empowerment. I am even happier that a lot of emphasis is being put on the protection of the girl-child under the ‘New Direction.’**

As to why she deemed herself qualified to be a Judge of the Court of Appeal, Honourable Justice Miatta Marie Samba said: **"I think I have had enough experience at the High Court. I have both local and international experience at the office of the Prosecutor, Special Court for Sierra Leone and the International Criminal Court, where I manned the Prosecutor's office in Uganda. I am a Senior Prosecutor at the Anti-Corruption Commission. I believe that with these experiences, I can effectively and efficiently manage the Office to which I have been nominated by His Excellency, the President."**

[vi] Honourable Justice Sengu Mohamed Koroma, proposed Supreme Court Judge

Honourable Justice Sengu Mohamed Koroma is currently an Appeal Court Judge and the President of the Industrial Court of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

Outlining his competence for his proposed position, Honourable Justice Mohamed Sengu Koroma said: **"I was called to the Bar in 1990 and I have been in active professional practice up to date. I became a High Court Judge in 2015. I came to the Bench to serve in the Commercial and Admiralty Division of the High Court. A year after that, I was elevated to the position of Justice of the Court of Appeal; and today, as a result of my performance in the Court of Appeal, I am before you again for approval as a Justice of the Supreme Court."**

Reacting to prompts on Judges writing their own Judgments, Honourable Justice Mohamed Sengu Koroma said: **"It depends on the nature of the matter. In the Court of Appeal or Supreme Court, I believe in each Judge writing his own judgment especially where it involves critical issues relating to national development, public policy, and so on. So it would be a collection of all our views that would constitute the majority judgment. But it is always advisable at that level for judgment to be written individually."**

[vii] Honourable Justice Manga Fana Deen Tarawally, proposed Supreme Court Judge

Honourable Justice Manga Fana Deen Tarawally is a Judge of the Sierra Leone Court of Appeal and the current President of the Sierra Leone Court of Appeal from 2016 to date. Making a humble submission on his capacity to serve as a Supreme Court Judge, Honourable Justice Manga Fana Deen Tarawally said that there was every reason for the Honourable House of Parliament to approve his nomination. **"I have been a Magistrate, a Judge of the High Court, a Judge of the Court of Appeal and presently, I am the President of the Court of Appeal. I am also a member of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission. I have been groomed through the ranks and I believe I have the requisite qualification, experience and the competence to serve as a Supreme Court Judge. Mr Speaker, if I obtain your blessings of approval, I promise to work without fear or favour but to do justice to all,"** he said.

[viii] Honourable Justice Jamesina Essie Leonara King, proposed Court of Appeal Judge

Honourable Justice Jamesina King is a Judge of the High Court of Sierra Leone and the Vice President of the Industrial Court. She is also a Member of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights.

Responding to the Committee's inquiries about the services female lawyers were providing to women seeking justice, Honourable Justice Jamesina King opined that female lawyers have certainly done quite a lot to advance the course of women's rights. **"You may recall that prior to 2007; many of our laws were discriminatory against women. We stood firm to amend some of these laws and we achieved a lot and we will continue to do so. We have a female lawyers' group that was founded in 2007. The group is still vibrant. They have continued with activism and advocating for women's rights. I am sure that most of us on the Bench, who were Members of that group, will continue to promote the rights of women,"** she said.

5. Recommendation[s]

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee adjudged the following Presidential nominees to be fit and qualified for their proposed appointments and they are recommended to the House for approval:

- [i] Honourable Justice Alusine Sani Sesay, Supreme Court Judge;
- [ii] Honourable Justice Allan Baami Halloway, Supreme Court Judge;
- [iii] Honourable Justice Sengu Mohamed Koroma, Supreme Court Judge;
- [iv] Honourable Justice Manga Fana Deen Tarawally, Supreme Court Judge;
- [v] Honourable Justice Jamesina Essie Leonora King, Court of Appeal Judge;
- [vi] Honourable Justice Miatta Marie Samba- Appeal Court Judge;
- [vii] Honourable Justice Ansumana Ivan Sesay, Appeal Court Judge;
- [viii] Mr Sulaiman Ahmad Bah, Appeal Court Judge;
- [ix] Mr Edmond Sylvester Alpha, Electoral Commissioner, Southern Region;
- [x] Mr Prince Terenah Quee, Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council;
- [xi] Alhaji Alie Badara Yillah, Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council;
- [xii] Mr Samuel Benedict Vandi, Member, Sierra Leone Police Council;
- [xiii] Mr Jennings Anto Brian Wright, Proposed Member, Board of Trustee, National Social Security and Insurance Trust [NASSIT]

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Twenty-Ninth Report is the unanimous decision of the Committee. I therefore move that the Twenty-Ninth Report of the First Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations contained therein be approved.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, any seconder?

HON. EMILIA L. TONGI: I second the Motion, Mr Speaker.

Question Proposed

HON. EMILIA L. TONGI: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very happy today. As I have always said, there is a characteristics about SLPP and those characteristics are S.O. [2] 'den sabi book too much.' Today, we are here to confirm our nominees and I want to specifically talk about the two ladies who have been nominated by His

Excellency the President. The President is trying his best to please the women of this country. The women are doing their best to ensure justice. Sometimes ago, a child was victimised and the case was supposed to go to Kailahun, but because it was expensive to travel from the village to Kailahun, the parents decided to give up. I want to admonish the two women to do their best, so that justice is felt in the provinces. The people in the provinces are crying for justice. They are suffering and they are on the verge of giving up, because the perpetrators are usually set free. It is high time we tell them that their time is up and you are going to implement the law and must avoid nepotism. This is because there is a lot of nepotism in courts. Our women do not have money, so they let the perpetrators go free.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I went to give a speech in one of the secondary schools in my constituency. I was actually encouraging them to concentrate on their studies and one of the girls told me that she would not become a Lawyer because lawyers might end up going to hell. The girl said lawyers have failed to defend them in court. I tried to educate them to let them know that being a Lawyer is not just what they have seen. I want to remind the proposed judges about the rape cases in courts. Please make sure that no woman stays without being honoured and respected. Let the perpetrators be punished this time round. This is the 'New Direction' and it should also be the right direction. Thank you very much.

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO. Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, please allow me to lend my voice to this debate. Today is a very special day for me and for my colleague Lawyers in this House. The Honourable Osman Timbo will tell you that the proposed Judges in front of us are doing a great national service to this nation. I am being very honest. When I was called to the Bar in 2003, people used to run away from the Bench because there was nothing to write home about. There are Lawyers who denied going to the Bench. Two months ago, I pleaded with somebody to see reasons why he must go to the Bench. This is because as Lawyers, we make more money than those who choose to go to the Bench. So, when you are a successful Lawyer like these ones, you choose to leave your lucrative practice to go and serve your

nation. This is a huge sacrifice. Honestly, I would like to recommend to the Executive Arm to ensure that Judges and members of the Bench are well-paid.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having laid that premise, I will speak about all of them because I have had the opportunity to come across almost all of them while they were in active practice. I will start with Justice Alusine Sesay, who personally touched my life when I was a Pupil Barrister. I met this brilliant criminal law practitioner some time ago. He used to practice with Claude Campbell at a time when Pupil Barristers were making money. I was actually doing my pupillage with D.B. Quee, who was specialised in criminal law. There was a time when I took my shoe to a Cobbler, but unfortunately, the Cobbler could not finish mending the shoe. So, the only option I had was to put on my father's brown shoe to go to court. As I was going, I met Justice Alusine Sesay around the canteen. He tapped me on the back and we moved together. He told me he loved my shoe, but that was not what they were wearing to go to court. He pleaded with me to go back to my office. Mr Speaker, if it were another Lawyer, he would have molested me, but he understood my plight. We have actually come to know him to be one of those fierce Judges in Sierra Leone. He has always maintained the scale untainted, which is the scale of justice.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Honourable Justice Allan Baami Halloway, proposed Supreme Court Judge. Honourable Justice Allan Baami Halloway was my Lecturer. He lectured me Contract Law in those days when I wanted to be a Lawyer. This is because anytime I saw Honourable Chornor R. M. Bah, I prayed to God for help because I wanted to be like him. Those were the days when you go to Wright and Co. you just want to be like Honourable Chornor R. M. Bah. This was the time we had a Lecturer who would not spend a minute of his time outside the lecture room. If you get an 'f' grade, he would not hesitate to give it to you; likewise if you get an 'A' grade, he would give it to you. In those days, even if you got 90 in your modules or 145, you would still be given an 'Allowed to Pass' degree and you would not be called to the Bar.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, God has given us one of the best Sierra Leoneans like Alhaji Alie Badara Yillah, Honourable Justice Allan Baami Halloway and others. They

are no nonsense Sierra Leoneans and students would have to work for their grades at Fourah Bay College. When I heard that he had been accepted to go to the Bench, I was very happy. Mr Speaker, we have Sierra Leoneans who are willing to leave everything in order to serve their nation and he is one of those Sierra Leoneans. I am very proud of him because he has made this Nation proud as well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Honourable Justice Manga Fana Deen Tarawally, proposed Supreme Court Judge. He is a fine gentleman in criminal law. He started as Magistrate and he is one of the most successful Lawyers in this country. He is very accommodating. If you postulate the wrong law, Honourable Justice Deen would call to teach you after court. He would tell you to read books. He has been a mentor and continues to be a mentor. He is one of the finest gentlemen this nation has.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Justice Jamestina King. I believe in female Judges who are on the Bench. I admire Justice Jamestina King quite a lot and she is very accommodating. She is one of the Judges who believes that there is sense in everything another Lawyer postulates. Even if your colleague thinks you are not speaking sense, Justice Jamestina King would want to allow you to speak your mind. To me, one of the attributes of a good judge is listening to every opinion. People should be allowed to speak their minds. I met her when she was also at the Human Rights Commission and she is somebody who is very personate about human rights issues. That is why when the Honourable Member for Constituency 001 was commenting on sexual violence issues, she implored you to help your fellow women. I want to assure the Honourable Member that these women are presently holding the scale of justice in this country even before they came to the Bench. I have no doubt that they will continue doing great things in this country. They will continue to mentor other young Sierra Leoneans who will be coming to the Bench, particularly the Magisterial Bench. They will teach them the qualities they need to have in order to push this country forward.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about Mr Sulaiman Ahmad Bah, proposed Appeal Court Judge. He was the DPP. Honourable Members, I took somebody

to Mr Sulaiman Bah as the DPP. He said S.O. 2 'wae we go, watin ar for gee?' I told him not to attempt it, but he did not heed to my advice. We went to him and after we have finished speaking to Mr Sulaiman Bah, the man I went with attempted to offer something to Mr Sulaiman Bah, but he refused and said; 'papa wosai ar da ya nar God put me dae, read the duwawo for me.' That was what Mr Sulaiman Bah told us and I was touched by that statement. This nominee is one of the finest Sierra Leoneans in this legal profession. The man who attempted to go contrary to my advice was rebuffed by this man and he proved to him that we still have descent and upright Sierra Leoneans who believe in God in doing their jobs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about Justice Sengu Koroma. If you are looking for a Judge who is versatile in Commercial Law and Law of Torts, you have to start with Justice Sengu Koroma. His judgements are all over the world. When he delivers judgement, other Lawyers would want to read from his judgements. It would be a precedent not only for West Africa, but for the entire world. I was privileged to appear before him in a very critical matter and he delivered a judgement. Somebody said he was going to appeal. The person met me, but I told him that the judge who had delivered the judgement was one of the few learned judges on the Bench.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to admonish all the nominees in a very simple language. I have told the Attorney General and Minister of Justice who is working very hard to ensure that people access justice in Sierra Leone. There are places in Sierra Leone where we do not have Magistrates, particularly in Kailahun. I want to take this opportunity to thank a particular Magistrate who has gone to Kailahun, Magistrate Seray Wurie. He told me he was going to start sitting in 'Kissidom.' I told him he would be the first Magistrate to give the Kissi people the opportunity to see a Magistrate. They have never seen a Magistrate. Mr Speaker, Kissi Kama, Kissi Tongi and Kissi Teng have never seen a Magistrate. I want to plead with the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, and all those around the Chief Justice to help Kailahun District. We need more Magistrates in that District. Mr Speaker, the Magistrate who sits in Kailahun usually covers Segbwema and Daru and this is creating problem.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that there are Sierra Leoneans in Kissi Tongi, Kissi Kama and Kissi Teng and those Sierra Leoneans deserve justice. Let us enable these people to access justice. The Honourable Loloh Tongi was telling you the truth. In my Constituency, we are recording between five to ten sexual penetrations, but we do not even have a police post and the people do not have money to move from Kissi Kama to Kailahun to report these matters. I think if we have a Magistrate who is covering those areas and a police post, it will be easier for them to access justice.

With these few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank you very much. I want to ask my colleagues to approve these nominees. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution to the debate. I have no doubt that the 'duwawo' he made reference to has proved to be priceless and as indeed being answered today by the Almighty God.

HON. AJIBOLA MANLY-SPAINE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I stand at this stage because I would like to ask for your permission for me to leave. This is because I am bereaved and we have the funeral this afternoon, but my contribution is very short. I always try to propagate the theory that Parliament is one and it is continuity. The Judges who have been presented to us were appointed previously as Judges. This means this is not the first time they are appearing before us. I do not believe that anyone of them would tell you that they are appointed because of the party that was in power. They accepted the appointment because they are people of justice who wanted to work for the country to dispense justice without fear or favour. So, since they are before us today, we should not embarrass them to say they have been appointed by the present political dispensation. They have accepted because they want to continue to do what they have been doing over the past years and some of them have served for over twenty years as Judges.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to admonish them to continue to be impartial in dispensing justice without fear or favour. I want to state here the Judiciary does not

have a good name in this country. I have been part of the judiciary for over forty years and it has been the same.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start with a senior colleague in the legal profession, Honourable Justice Allan Baami Halloway, proposed Supreme Court Judge. He has been part of the judiciary for at least forty-five years, but we have been having the same problems. In 1987, I was contract Magistrate in Kenema and what Justice Sesay has described is exactly the same situation I met there. I discharged over forty-seven prisoners who have just been in prison and without any action taken. The problems continued and persisted over the years. This is what gives Lawyers a bad name.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the seconder of the Motion quoted a school girl to have said Lawyers would go to hell. I want to however state here that Lawyers are not bad people. I do not know of any Lawyer who would deliberately try to turn black to white. When you appear in court, the person that sits on the Bench is somebody who is qualified or more than qualified than you. You cannot go and convince that person to do the wrong thing. I am trying to say Lawyers do not leave their houses to go and do something wrong. This is the only profession wherein you do not usually have collaboration when you go to Court; and you take a position, you would have four or five other Lawyers who would come up with different positions. It is not like the medical profession wherein if five medical doctors have come together to solve a problem, they can solve it together without opposition. In law, every lawyer has his/her own position. Mr Speaker, Justice Allan Baami Halloway said that even if he has a different position on an issue, he would try to convince the others, but his position is his position. If you ask judges to define marriage, you will have eight different definitions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think we should approve these nominees. I know they are people who are matured enough to take criticisms. They are going to have some criticisms today. I thank you very much.

HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH: Mr Speaker, I thank you very much for allowing me to catch your eyes this afternoon. As I join Honourable Ajibola Manly-Spain and

Honourable Hindolo M. Gevao, I would like to premise my argument in three folds; first, I refer you to Section 123 of the 1991 Constitution. Today, you have been nominated to serve in these positions. I want to tell you that you are surrogate of God. This means you have to ensure that all your activities should be fair and just. You should try to uphold the balance. If you fail to do so, you will face the judgement. If you read Section 120[3] it is clear that your functions could not be influenced by any person or any institution. I would however like to remind you that Section 105 of the 1991 Constitution vests the legislative power in Parliament. Mr Speaker, you can relate Section 105 of the 1991 Constitution to Boron De Montesquieu's doctrine of Separation of Powers. I want to ask the Judiciary to maintain the balance because it is beginning to lose public confidence, particularly the recent action taken by the Chief Justice. Since you have been nominated to these positions, please try to solve the problem. For instance, if the President makes a proclamation, the Chief Justice should not instruct the Judges to implement that proclamation without Parliamentary approval. You have to ensure that you do the correct thing before you go ahead. Please, do not put the cat before the horse next time. Well, some of you may say it is not our business, but I am telling you we are representing Sierra Leoneans in this House of Parliament. This means that everything that touches a Sierra Leonean is our business. A Sierra Leonean been sentenced for life. You have abused the rights of that individual and by extension, abusing the powers of the Judiciary and the Constitution. I want to ask that since the issue was just a proclamation and whether the concern family flags up the issue or not, I want to raise the issue here that you review that decision for justice to prevail for the poor people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, since the Attorney General is here, please do the needful and the correct thing. Let me refer you again to the Hansard of May, 2018. I spoke about the Judiciary when the President presented his Address to Parliament on the 10th of May. If you look at that Hansard, you will see my position. When he stated that he was going to overhaul the Judiciary, I took note of that statement they should

not interfere into your functions. Once again, go and do the needful. What has already been done was not correct. I am not a Lawyer or a Judge, but it was not correct.

So on that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want you to go and do the needful. I now ask my colleagues to approve these nominees. I thank you.

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have another batch of presidential nominees before this House for approval. Already, they have gone through the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service and they have been presented to the plenary for approval. With the exception of two nominees to Statistics Sierra Leone one Board member to NASSIT, the rest are going to the Judiciary, which is one of the three organs of Government. Their roles or functions in running the affairs of the country and the maintenance of peace, law and order, is very critical. Therefore, the challenges in the Judiciary are captured in this report presented by the Leader of Government Business. The nominees have acknowledged the fact that one of the key challenges is the backlog of cases. The other problem is the perception the public holds about the fairness and the impartiality of the Judiciary. All the nominees have promised to ensure that they deal with the backlog cases speedily and of course in a fair and impartial manner.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would want to admonish the nominees to ensure that they implement what they have said before the Committee and of course to Parliament as a whole. This is because if you talk to a Committee, you are eventually talking to the entire Parliament. We were all in this country when the civil war broke out and one of the causes of that war was injustice. The TRC report made it very clear and the judges are expected to be people of high integrity. They are highly educated people and much is expected from them in whatever capacity. I want to encourage them to ensure fairness and inject justice into the system. I want to wish them well and I know this House will approve them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would conclude with the proposed Board member for Statistics Sierra Leone, Mr Prince Terenah Quee. We hailed from the same district. He is one of the staunch supporters of the Sierra Leone People's Party. He served as

District Chairman for two consecutive terms; and during those periods, he was able to manage both the party as an institution in that District and of course the people. Of course we all know what it means to manage a political party. It is one of the difficult things to do. Even when he retired, he did not go home and sit back, but he has been there, advising the current administration in Kenema District Party office to ensure that they do the best for the interest of the District. The role he played, particularly in the 2018 Elections was very great. He was mobilising and advising the people to remain peaceful. I hope the experiences he acquired while he was Chairman of the Kenema District would be taken to Statistics Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Statistics Sierra Leone is a very important institution in this country. It deals with demographic surveys and planning the development programmes of the country. I hope he would be able to serve there judiciously and to guide his colleagues on the Board. I want to wish all the nominees good luck in advance and recommend them for approval. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. For environmental reasons, I will like to limit the debate for just one hour from now where we will try to conclude.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity to lend my voice to this important debate. Mr Speaker, certain issues have already been raised. I am somehow embarrassed, but I tried to hold my peace. The Honourable Member from Kailahun did say, S.O. [2] 'we in the SLPP sabi book.'

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, that statement goes for all of us. I will implore you to just proceed to avoid further comment on that statement.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, for the records, I need to tell the public what I know because it hinges on our integrity and should be defended.

THE SPEAKER: S.O. [2] Honourable Members, 'you no sabi book? I think it goes for everybody.'

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, the book issue is not my problem. I know as human beings every individual has a right to belong to any political party that is convincing to him or her, but equally so there are proofs here which I can further support that based on what I know about the Honourable Miatta Samba, whether she is an SLPP or not, she taught me at Fourah Bay College. What I know about her, especially her professionalism can by no means be compromised by any political conviction. Mr Speaker, the Honourable Jamesina King said on Page 10: **"You may recall that prior to 2007, many of our laws were discriminatory and we stood firm to amend some of these laws and we achieved a lot and we will continue to do so."** Prior 2007 most of the laws were discriminatory against women and I want to assure you that that role was recognised. And that was one of the main reasons why the APC picked you up not because you are SLPP, but because of your role *[Applause]*. This is why we put in place the three gender Acts.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to inform the public that the two female nominees before us are professional Judges. We have appointed them earlier, not because of where they belong, but because of their professionalism. What you are doing today is just a matter of promotion.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have a burning issue regarding the laws governing criminal procedures in this country. Mr Speaker, by way of informal report, the Legislative Committee met the Chief Justice and the former Director of Public Prosecution [DPP]. I know he will be a Court of Appeal Judge, but I will continue to meet you in your capacity as DPP because of the wealth of knowledge you have got. I will meet you in your personal capacity to discuss what is contained in the current Criminal Procedure Act. What is contained is exactly what is being interpreted by Honourable Ajibola Manly-Spain. People are saying Lawyers know that this is black, but they tend to say it is white. Well, others will not change black to white, but the current dispensation of the criminal procedure is against the present justice system. I am pleased to inform you that right in the Chambers of the Chief Justice, I was duly informed that the final version of the Criminal Procedure Bill is now available. The final

Bill is now available, but my question is even though I am the Chairman of the Legislative Committee, we need the political to enact that Bill into law.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have sat on this issue and the session is coming to a close. Please, with your commitment, ensure that before the end of this Session, this Bill is brought to Parliament for enactment. I am passionately pleading in the presence of everybody to work towards solving this issue. I think the Attorney General has left, but I also met her in her office on this same issue. She is willing to do something about this. I want to state here that this has nothing to do with a particular political party. This touches on every political party supporters, including SLPP and APC supporters. They are all victims of this current dispensation if cancerous thing called PIL. It is a cancer to the justice system of this country. I want to plead with all of us to look into the Preliminary Investigation issue. This is why matters that are supposed to be tried by the High Court are sent to Magistrate Court first. This is one of the problems we have in our justice system. Let us have the political will to solve this problem. I belong to the APC, but what I did was to plead with you, so that all of us can further lobby for political will; otherwise our people will continue to suffer.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will not go into the details, but there are people you charge for certain offenses and there is no need to keep them in prison without bail. There is no provision in our law books for compensation. This is my main concern for the attention of the Attorney General and the proposed Judges. We have to put hands on deck, so that the bill in question is brought to Parliament. I want to ask the Leader of Government to support this campaign because the people of Pujehun District are suffering. The last time we went to Bo, there was only one High Court Judge covering Pujehun and Moyamba. If the Judge gets sick, you will not see him for the rest of that period. If there are cases the Magistrate Courts cannot grant bail, like murder and robbery, they will stay there until the Judge comes back.

With those few words, I thank you very much and God bless you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for that very constructive contribution.

HON. NENNEHLEBBIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker for giving me this chance. I stand to add my voice in appreciating His Excellency the President for choosing very fine Sierra Leoneans to serve in different capacities to develop this country. Perhaps, I come to the specifics later, but I am going to make a general statement for all the nominees. I want them to consider themselves as the chosen few, because we have other fine Sierra Leoneans out there who may have the capacity and capability to serve in such positions they have been nominated to serve. However, if the lot has fallen on them, I want to congratulate them in advance because I know this House will approve their nominations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like what Honourable Loloh Tongi was saying, I have some views I collected from few girls. Some of them said they would not venture to become Lawyers. I asked some children in my school how many of you would want to be lawyers or teachers. Of course, they have long since denied being teachers. Some of them would want to become lawyers, but the fear they expressed was that lawyers would end up in hell. One of them said they usually give Lawyers their certificates by throwing them on the ground. I have not witnessed that scene yet, therefore I cannot ascertain the truth of that statement. They usually tell me that lawyers make money from fools. In other words, the girls were trying to do the 'Laura's play' on the minds of people to make money. I am sure these fine nominees we have before us are going to do things in a justified manner.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, 'justice delayed is justice denied;' and in Sierra Leone, this has been the case for far too long. People suffer injustice because our courts delay a lot of these judgements. We are representatives of our people or the representatives of the voiceless. We speak on their behalf and we have our Sierra Leonean brothers and sisters languishing in the cells. We want to see fair judgement being expedited on their behalf. The Honourable Hindolo M. Gevao mentioned the Human Rights Commission. I am a member of the Human Rights Committee in Parliament, but in 2009 I visited Kailahun District. There are cases in Kailahun District for a very long time. When the Committee on Human Rights went there, they said they

have never seen a Judge in the Kailahun District. This is a very sad story. Having Judges in Freetown does not mean the entire Sierra Leone has judges. We must make sure that we decentralise our judicial system to the provinces. We have our Sierra Leonean brothers and sisters in those areas.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on behalf of the parliamentary Female Caucus, I want to congratulate the female nominees in advance. We are proud of you and each time we go on programme, we usually tell people that we want to see more women in respectable positions, particularly the female Judges in front of us. Sometimes we are asked, where are the women? We have two female nominees among the gentlemen. We know that Sierra Leone, like Africa, is patriarchal, but we still appreciate the two women who have been nominated. We appreciate the President for this nomination. I would however say, on behalf of the Female Caucus you should serve Sierra Leonean women diligently. Women are suffering out there and you are also aware of that. Women are suffering from injustice, especially on issues relating to rape. I do not want to delve into rape issues, but there are other injustices women are facing. Please, we want you to stand up and help these women how they could access justice. If you do this, I think the accolade will go to you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, access to justice is very important, but the women are always saying that they do not have money. I know you are now moving in the right direction and you are going to work with the President to move in the right direction. You have to ensure that things are properly done. Women have been facing lots of embarrassment in terms of accessing funds to further their cases. Let us have access to justice without asking for too much money.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we want to see neutrality in all spheres of life. There has been a time in Sierra Leone when lots of issues have seriously been politicised. I want to state here that His Excellency Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio cuts across party, regional and tribal lines [*Applause*]. We are all human beings and we may have our shortfalls, but the President is more than **80%** in terms of neutrality. This is my assessment and it is very important in your performance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when Statistics Sierra Leone performed its duties in terms of data collection, some of us were querying the correctness of that process. We were querying it because we believed the work did not go as expected. Some of us wanted the officials to be neutral. We also thought that some of these figures were cooked in favour of certain areas. However, some of us did Geography, whether primary school geography or not, we did Geography in schoolss and we know where population density is in Sierra Leone. We know the areas where population density is, but for some very good reasons and we cannot leave politics behind, some areas were escalated. I want the nominee for Statistics to be neutral in terms of giving the correct figures. Let us make sure that Sierra Leone stands out for the truth. I cannot say much because I will keep repeating what others have already said. I want to wish you good luck in your endeavours. I want to assure you that Sierra Leone will be watching and assessing you individually as well as collectively. Perhaps, we will give our comments later about you. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for her comments and contribution to the debate. We will now use the time available to us judiciously. I will recognise five more speakers before we wind up the debate.

HON. DR KANDEH K. YUMKELLA: I thank you, Mr Speaker. I am very pleased to catch your eye after a very long recess. Mr Speaker, we have in front of us a group of Judges we are about to approve. In his opening Session of Parliament, His Excellency the President promised us that there would be a major overhaul of the Judiciary and I have no doubt with this pool of eminent Sierra Leoneans he is appointing to the Bench. He is trying to make the statement that he would set up a team of Judges who would deliver on that promise to the nation and to this Parliament. I have no doubt that these men and women can fulfil that promise. I do not know many of them, but I have heard some of them and we sat on issues that affected me since I came back almost four years now. I know one particular individual is Justice Miata Samba. She first set foot into the Judiciary when she was doing her tutelage with some other young men who

are now senior parliamentarians. It is wonderful to see all of you progressing in the Judiciary. There are others I know who are not part of these nominees.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President is putting lots of trust in these nominees to revamp the Judiciary. The nominees have heard the comments from my colleagues and the reputation of the Judiciary is not very good. You have highlighted the backlog of cases and other related issues. There is a seeming problem of protecting investments and enforcement of contracts in this country. This is scaring away investors, especially issues relating to human rights.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very pleased to see Justice Alusine Sesay and his interesting story in the provinces. He revealed how our people are languishing in the cells without proper representation and proper adjudication. I want to spend time talking about nexus between an effective, fair and independent Judiciary and the survival of political pluralism and multiparty democracy. I will give you a short story. In 1973, some SLPP Leaders went to Mobai in Kailahun and an incident occurred there. The then President arrested the SLPP Leaders and locked them at Congo Cross Police Station and later called his Attorney General to charge them with murder. L.A.M. Brewah took a very brave decision and he refused the President's request. Of course he received a lot of abuses, but he remained steadfast and told the President that was not the law.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have also seen a situation where a sitting President of this Republic was asking the Attorney General to charge some opponents with treason and one of the Judges was also locked up and charged with treason. I am trying to draw the nexus between a fair, independence and strong Judiciary and the existence of a real democracy. If you fast-forward, indeed we have seen the case of the dismissal of the Vice President and some of you sat on some of those cases when some of us were going to be denied even our nationality. I know some of you stood firm to say no, we will go according to the law. This is why we are hopeful that this crop of Judges the President has nominated will overhaul the Judiciary. So, we hope you will fulfil this aspirations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, after the 2012 General Elections, we heard the statement, S.O. [2], 'if e at u, go police.' The same trend has continued recently after the Tonko Limba elections, S.O [2], 'if e at u, go na court.' The question, is this a politics of revenge? The politics of revenge will destroy this nation. We in Parliament will do our best to make laws, but you also have the responsibility to make sure that the laws we make will be of help. I want to say excessive executive authority should not interfere with the independence of the Judiciary, otherwise our democracy will be in danger.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in my four years continuous stay in Sierra Leone, I have interacted, I have had issues and I have seen judgements from the Supreme Court that have been equivocal. I was involved in one of the issues where we were seeking interpretation, but a former Supreme Court Judge said he would not interpret what the Supreme Court has already decided on. He asked us to go back to the Supreme Court because the judgement was equivocal and it was a political issue. So, for our democracy to survive, human rights must be protected, the right of free speech and even the right to demonstrate politically is the right of political parties.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio has made a statement and we are very pleased with these crop of judges, but the future lies in your hands. If politics is going to be a clean contest, people have to be sure of their protection in the courts. If they have to stand for the human rights and defend human rights of ordinary citizens, they have to be sure that they would not be victimised and there is an Independent Judiciary that will protect them like in Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. There is one particular member who always rises very late.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, since my shadows darkened the Well of Parliament, this is the second time in one year I am rising to debate on presidential nominees. This means I do not talk because we have the opportunity as Members of Parliament to talk, but because I see the need to do so. Mr

Speaker, it is considered a criminal offence for somebody to discover water in the desert and keep quiet about it because I do not want to be incriminated. I would unhesitatingly talk on two personalities; i.e., Honourable Justice Sengu Mohamed Koroma and Mr Yillah. Mr Speaker, when I finally decided to tell my parents that I was going to participate in national politics, they called me in their closet and told me to kneel down. I knelt down and they prayed for me. One commitment I made to them was that I would try to the best of my ability to protect my family name. Mr Speaker, many people have traded their family names under party loyalty or the 'powers that be.' Some take instructions from above and we have seen that in this county.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, few days ago, when there were some topsy-turvy in this country, I went to my closet and read the TRC Report to see what precipitated the eleven years civil war. Mr Speaker, Chapter III, Volume 2 of the TRC Report says: **"The recommendations contained in this chapter are designed to facilitate the building of a new Sierra Leone based on the values of human dignity, tolerance and the respect for the rights of all persons."** What interested me most is the fact that the recommendations are intended to help create an open and vibrant democracy in which people are treated as equal before the law. Today, we have state actors in the court and some are here seeking parliamentary approval. I have witnessed, in this dispensation, a situation where the court has been highly subjected to the dictates of the Executive. Mr Speaker, upon the inception of this new Parliament, two political parties filed petition cases to the court. Two sets of petition cases from two political parties. The one set of petition cases were thrown under the carpet and were never heard in court, whilst the other set of petition cases is under consideration.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member!

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Yes, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: You are treading on very dangerous grounds. You are treading on very slippery and dangerous grounds. Be careful not to touch the merits of the cases before the courts.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: I am not going to do that, Mr Speaker. I just brought that issue up because the last sentence of Volume II, Chapter III of the TRC Report states: **“The recommendations are intended to help create an open and vibrant democracy in which all are treated as equal before the law, nobody should be above another person before the law.”** I want to confirm to this House that we have credible people that this House is about to approve. I gave an introspection of what precipitated the civil war because people allowed themselves to be remote controlled by the ‘powers from above.’

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I can tell you unhesitatingly that Honourable Justice Sengu Mohamed Koroma is a man of repute. He is a man of repute and by associating with him, you have lots of things to learn. I am by profession an Engineer; and in Engineering, electromagnetism which is a sub-topic under induction and electromagnetism in Engineering is defined as the process of getting an uncharged body by bringing it closer to a charged body. Whenever you associate yourself with somebody who is forthright, intelligent or clever, there is every tendency that he would transmit those attributes to you. That is what I have benefited from the Honourable Justice Sengu Mohamed Koroma.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Alhaji Alie Badara Yillah, proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council. Mr Speaker, since the SLPP led Government assumed power, I have seen one or two appointments from my constituency and that is why I have always said that when you have good people, you should talk about them. I have seen in this country where the characters of good people are being tainted because they did not belong to the same political parties. I have stated that for Sierra Leone to transcend from where we are to an unprecedented level of development, we have to commend good people, regardless of the fact that we do not find ourselves in the same political parties. That is why I am similarly worried because the good people in this country have been summarily dismissed because they do not share same political ideology with the current dispensation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to remind the present dispensation that these people should be maintained, so that is knowledge and experience transfer. You should not dismiss people because they did not vote for you or because you do not share the same political ideology. Let us maintain good people in this country because of their experience and knowledge. The human resource base will retrogress in this country, while other countries progress.

With these few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to implore my colleagues to approve these nominees. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his comments.

HON. OSMAN A. TIMBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg the learned Judges to forgive me because I will not be making specific reference to any particular person, but send a message to His Excellency the President, the Speaker of Parliament and Members of Parliament to hands-off our Judiciary. Well, you will say past Presidents have interfered into the functions of the Judiciary, but this is 'a New Direction.' Mr Speaker, if this is a 'new direction,' then we have to be sure that this is a 'new direction.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to reference to what the Honourable Independent Member from Kailahun said; i.e., praising the President for identifying and nominating these people to the Bench. However, I want to educate this House, especially those who are not lawyers that the position of Judges is provided for in Section 135[1&2] of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, particularly Section 135 [2][c]. It reads: **"The other Judges of the Superior Court of Judicature shall be appointed by the President by a warrant under his hand acting on the advice of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission, subject to the approval of Parliament."** This constitutional provision has refuted the comments made by the Honourable Member, who said that it was the President who identified these individuals. The 1991 Constitution clearly states that it is the Judicial and Legal Service Commission. If we start saying it is the President who identified these nominees, then

where is the independence that we are praying for. It is the responsibility of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with the exception of Mr Sulaiman Bah, all the other nominees were once appointed by either the late President, Dr Ahmed Tejan Kabba or Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. This is why I keep saying in this Parliament that governance is continuity. In fact, Mr Sulaiman Bah was the Director of Public Prosecution. He served diligently and that is why he has been elevated to the Bench.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable Hindolo M. Gevao said going to the Bench is a national sacrifice like coming to Parliament, where you are paid slightly above twelve million Leones to serve thousands of people. Serving on the Bench is a national sacrifice and it takes the grace of God for you to be upright and impartial. We all have family members and other affiliations. We all have external influences, but let us serve our consciences because the future of this country rests on a strong and impartial Judiciary. My colleague Honourable Member said that fingers were pointed at the Judiciary as one of the causes of the civil war in Sierra Leone. Today, the noises are very loud and the confidence in the judiciary is eroding. It behoves you to build that confidence. It is not the President or the political statements made by politicians that would build that confidence, but your impartiality and fairness.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we come from different regions and some will say because you are from Kailahun, you belong to this political party or you share the same sentiments. Some will say because you come from Freetown, you share sentiments with that political party. You have to put that behind you if you want to dispense justice. I want to add that the peace, security and stability of this nation lie in the hands of the Judiciary. I am one of the youngest Members of Parliament and the young people of this country are the majority of our population. We do not want to revert to what has happened before in this country. An eye for an eye is not the solution to our problems. S.O [2] una bin don do dis to Sam Sumana. Others will say 'fire for fire.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to end by saying that God rest the soul of my dad. He was Chief Justice of the Judiciary. May God bless Sierra Leone and her people
[Applause].

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution.

HON. SEGEPOH S. THOMAS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today is my day. It is like receiving my elders back home. I thank the Honourable Members for their nice sentiments in respect of these judges before us. I am a happy man and I want to believe am not alone. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition, Honourable Chernor R. R. Bah, Honourable Daniel B. Koroma, Honourable Osman Timbo, Honourable Hindolo M. Gevao and Honourable Manly-Spain are also happy. I listened carefully when different speakers tried to cast what I will call a slur on the Judiciary for delaying cases and for what they termed injustice. I am sure every nominee is capable, credible and willing to work for this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure one of the reasons why citizens cast a slur on the judiciary is because of the fact that they do not understand how the law works. As lawyers, we have a common saying that 'a lawyer is as good as his case.' Sometimes if you do not understand the law, you may think you are right; but at the end of the day, it turns out the other way. Usually, those who are not lawyers will interpret the law using common sense, but the law is not always about common sense. I want to say this for the benefit of the public that part of the reason why our judiciary has not been performing is because as a nation, we have refused to treat them seriously. If you go to court, you will surprise to see the appalling conditions under which judges work. I want to inform the public that judges are still writing their cases using longhand in this 21st Century. If you go to other countries, they have moved far ahead of us. They do not only have stenographers, they have researchers and lawyers. Do we care to know, as a Parliament? That is why when I heard speaker after speaker spoke about cases being delayed, I smiled.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have to call things as they are. The problems in the Judiciary are enormous. Section 138 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone makes

provision for the emolument of judges, but we have not respected that as a nation. We instead allow the Judiciary to go 'cap in hands' to the Executive Branch of Government, begging for their salaries and other things. What we do in Parliament is to go round and cast the slur on them. I believe this is unfair and Members of Parliament, as the representatives of every facet of this society, are expected to do the needful. Let us do something that would enable them to work for the interest of this nation. Of course this is not surprising because as a Parliament, we have allowed ourselves to be taken advantage of by the Executive Branch of Government. We have allowed the tyranny of the Executive Arm to overshadow us. We have not discussed how we are going to address issues relating to the Judiciary.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our judges are capable and willing to do their work, but they have to be capacitated. We have the best Judiciary in the whole world, but I am one of those who does not believe in blind sacrifice. If you want somebody to sacrifice, provide the basic necessities before you tell the individual to sacrifice. If you want somebody to undertake community work, provide the tools and what the person will eat on that day. We have refused to do the needful. Anytime we talk about the Judiciary, all what we do is using 'deep friend occasions' to cast blame on the Judiciary. Honourable Members let us do the needful; let us work as a Parliament this time to ensure that we have an effective Judiciary before we begin to criticise them for delaying cases.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I can assure you that every one of the judges before us is going to do his/her best. I am not going to call names because I know all of them and all of them know me. Mr Speaker, all these nominees are equally capable and willing to make us proud and in spite of the conditions they have worked they have done their best. It is for us, as a Parliament, to applaud them and not to criticise them *[Applause]*. I hope we will begin to see exactly where the problem is. As a Parliament, we have Section 74 [4], but we have not used that Section. We have to do something in respect of Section 138 for the Judiciary.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Section 138[4] provides that as long as you are a sitting judge, you are not required to do anything of profit. Are we aware of that provision? As long as you are a judge, you are not required to hold any office of profit or any office that gives you allowance. This is the kind of situation the judges find themselves. Therefore, this House has a responsibility to help them.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I urge you all to approve them. We cannot continue to blame them for what is going on in the Judiciary. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member, who combines as Deputy Speaker of Parliament for his contribution. We will now roundup the debates starting with the Honourable Hassan A. Sesay, follow by the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of Government Business.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. There is a statement I could have used, but that would compromise what I wanted to say about how the Judiciary should look like. This is because the bedrock of our democracy is the independence of the judiciary. The proposed judges we have in front of us are all familiar. Honourable Allan Hallowell was my college mate. He was a student of economics, but he ended up as a lawyer. Today, he is somebody in the Judiciary and I have no reason to doubt his competence or his ability to deliver. I can go to sleep believing that he will do the right thing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Honourable Alusine Sani Sesay. This is another time I am having an opportunity to talk about him because he was my student. I taught him in school and I am proud and happy for his elevation. Therefore, their understanding of government started with me and I am proud to say it here. And of course, the Honourable Sengu Koroma was my college mate and we joined the same clubs. We had a lot in common and that is why I have no reason to doubt his ability to deliver.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Honourable Justice Miatta Marie Samba, proposed Appeal Court Judge. She has always been and will always be a younger sister, but that will not in any way suggest that I will commit a crime. This is because I do not want her to tell me that 'this is law and we have to respect it.' However, this is what we expect from her because like I said earlier, the success of our democracy hinges on the independence of the Judiciary. Like my colleague said, I am happy because all of us are singing from the same hymn book. If Parliament is to function properly, we have to do the needful. We must also ensure that the judges perform their functions without interference from the Executive and the Legislature. This is because the theory of Separation of Powers indicates that the Judiciary must be independent, Parliament must be sovereign and the Executive must execute the law. If we do this, I think our democratic institutions will be stronger and that is what we are looking forward to see.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have no reason to doubt Honourable Sulaiman Bah, Honourable Sengu Koroma, Honourable Manga Fana Tarawally, Honourable Alusine Sesay, Honourable Allan Hallowell, Honourable Ansumana Ivan Sesay, Honourable Justice Jamesina Essie Leonora King and Honourable Justice Miatta Marie Samba. I have no reason to doubt their abilities to perform. They are fine nominees and I know they will perform exceptionally well. These are people I can call and tell them that I expect much from you. Honourable Sulaiman, Honourable Sengu Koroma, Honourable Allan Hallowell and Honourable Manga Fana Deen Tarawally can attest to it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like what Honourable Sengepoh S. Thomas said, let us encourage these judges by providing the tools and other resources that will help them maintain their independence. The Honourable Member went further to quote the relevant sections in the Constitution that inhibit the judges from involving in anything that brings profit. In other words, everything they do must be within the law, and if that is the case, let us improve their conditions of service. If we have to do it, let us do it, so that we can boast of our Judiciary. Mr Speaker, anything it takes for them to dispense justice in a very fair manner must be provided. We want fairness in the Judiciary and not the other way around.

With these few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now ask my colleagues to approve these nominees, so that they can work for Sierra Leone and to improve the quality of our justice system. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contributions and indeed for having mentioned some of the judges that have appeared before us. It shows you have done a wonderful job before. I recognise the Leader of the Opposition.

HON. CHERNOH R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, with the exception of what Honourable Loloh Tongi has said, I agree with all the other speakers. Mr Speaker, the Deputy Speaker spent a lot of time advocating or canvassing for the judges. Fortunately, he also spoke for Members of Parliament and that was very good of him. However, from what I had this afternoon, I am sure everybody that had the opportunity to contribute commended and appreciated the capacities of the proposed judges. So, their capacities are not in question at all. We want to distinguish them from the Judiciary or the actions of the Judiciary. In other words, we must separate their individual actions from the Judiciary. The perception is against the Judiciary and not the judges. However, they make up the Judiciary and we are expecting them to work hard and ensure that the institution they represent get out of that perception.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, they always tell us that justice should not only be done, but it must be seen to be done. That makes room for the layman outside the judicial system to have confidence in our judicial system. This is because you are serving the public and not just lawyers. Usually, Lawyers represent those who are not lawyers so what you do must satisfy them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also note the conspicuous absence of the Chief Justice. Normally, when we have a battery of eminent judges and some of them are going to sit with him in the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice escorts them to Parliament. He was not present at the interview and today again he is absent. What could be the reason for his absence? I am asking myself the question and I hope to find get answer.

THE SPEAKER: Find the answer?

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: I am saying this because this is unusual. I am not addressing the nominees individually, because I know all of them, probably even more than the Deputy Speaker because he met me in the judicial system; and fortunately for me, unlike the Deputy Speaker, one of them happens to be my junior. The Deputy Speaker knows them very well. Justice Manga Fana Deen Tarawally used to enjoy me when I was in active practice. I used to enjoy my profession and I was a very successful practitioner *[Applause]*. I did not just make money, but I contributed to the principle of jurisprudence. I represented high profile clients, both diplomats and none diplomats.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would not talk about the areas other Members have already spoken about. I want to conclude by saying that all what has been said will be summarised in few words; i.e., our democracy rests not only on your shoulders, but in your bosom. We normally say that the judge's bosom is where we will find the laws. So, our democracy rests in that very bosom because there will be no peace anywhere in the world if there is no justice. Mr Speaker Sulaiman Bah used to be my friend and Honourable Sengepoh knows. I am however happy because the Honourable Hindolo M. Gevao spoke about him, but I want to assure you that amongst the lots, he is the fresh man going to the Judiciary and I am sure he is going to add value to the judicial system. I endorse their approval *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Leader of the opposition for his statement, Leader of Government Business.

HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank all of my colleagues who have contributed to this Motion. For those who did not have the opportunity to catch the eye of the Speaker, I am sure they will contribute next time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before I come to the main issues, I want to react to four issues. First, there has been the issue of sentencing somebody for life by a Magistrate or a judge. I really do not know much about it, but I want to assure this

Honourable House that the law is the law. I had a meeting this morning with the Leadership of the Opposition, including Honourable Dr Kandeh K. Yumkella, Honourable Chernor R. M. Bah and the Honourable Speaker. The issue was very clear and we do not want to go into the details. The Criminal Procedure Act is very clear. However, I do not know whether this is new or it is something we inherited. Mr Speaker, if it is something we inherited, then I can assure you that under the 'New Direction,' you will see the positive changes.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the second thing I want to clarify is that the President did not handpick these judges. They were recommended and he only acted on those recommendations. The five proposed judges were recommended by the Judicial Service Commission to his Excellency the President. He could have said no, but he decided to go along with the recommendation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Leader of the Opposition spoke about the conspicuous absence of the Chief Justice. I want to inform this House that I spoke with the Chief Justice, but he said he was occupied. I personally asked the Chief Justice not to bother himself since he was very busy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a lot has been said about the Judiciary, but like what the Honourable Dr Kandeh K. Yumkella said, the President is determined to ensure that this country enjoys an impartial system. The approval of these judges is just the beginning of what is about to happen in our judicial system. We are aware, as a government, that we inherited a situation wherein some judges did not even have vehicles. So how did you expect them to go to court? We inherited this problem and we are going to ensure that we provide everything that they require. We want the Judiciary to do their work without hindrance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, having made those few remarks, I will now come to the nominees themselves. Today, I must also say we have fines nominees. I am not a lawyer, but I know almost all of them, especially Justice Ivan Sesay because he has saved my neck. He is a young man, but he is a gentleman. I have worked with him when I came back to Sierra Leone and I can state here that he is a very reliable person.

I had some issues, but he stepped in and that is why I am here today. I have a lot of respect for him.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Justice Alusine Sesay, Justice Allan Halloway, Justice Fana Tarawally and others have proved themselves before. They have proven to be committed judges. If you see a judge moving from one district to the other trying to work on the backlog of cases, it means that judge must be a very committed person and that is the person why I appreciated Justice Alusine Sesay so much. Honourable Justice Jamesina Essie Leonora King is a household name in this country, working in the interest of the women of Sierra Leone. She made herself very useful and that is why she has been elevated to this position. We hope you will continue to work very hard.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to my sister, Honourable Justice Miatta Marie Samba. Some of us know that she is a very good person and she holds an LLB, a BL and double masters in Human Rights Law and Petroleum Law. As young as she is, for almost four years, she sat as a loan judge, dealing with civil, criminal and commercial matters. And everybody who has followed her works will testify that she has delivered good judgements. Though I am not a lawyer, but I am aware that in the Appeal Court, three judges are expected to sit in the Appeal Court. Therefore, Justice Miatta Samba is not going to have any issue with that because of her work at the Special Court of Sierra Leone and in the international court of judges. She works with people who have diverse culture. So, she is not going to have any issue with that. She is a team player I no doubt in her ability to perform.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one thing that came out clearly during their interview was the issue of the independence of the Judiciary. Mr Speaker, even where they work as a team, most of them believe that they should be independent. Therefore, I will continue to call on them to do their job in partially. We as a government will ensure that they have the tools to enable them do their work. Normally, Honourable Members know that I do not talk too much, but today is a very special day and I am so happy that Parliament is ready to work. I want to assure the people of this country that under my leadership, we will continue to dialogue with the Leader of Opposition and

others Members of Opposition. So, I want you to have **100%** assured that it is continuity and we will continue to work with you. I am sure in the next sitting of Parliament, all other issues we are discussing in that small room would have been settled. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

[Question Proposed Put and Agreed To]

[Motion of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service has been approved]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, it is now my very pleasant duty because I am about to discharge a very pleasant duty of congratulating and extending my own personal congratulations and felicitations to these eminent nominees we have just approved. I think if there is common thread imagine from this debate, it is the public acknowledgement that in addition to the very eminent qualifications and experiences possessed by each and every one of the nominees, they have also demonstrated themselves to be men and women of proven integrity, probity and capability of the highest order. I am sure the nominees appreciate all your kind sentiments and the issues you have raised. This House fully endorses your nomination and the trust and confidence the President has reposed in you.

Honourable Members, we have no doubt whatsoever that they will truly live up to the expectations of not only the President, but also to the highest expectation of this Honourable House. We congratulate you and we give you the mandate to continue your work. I used the word 'continue because some of you were already judges. For those who are freshly appointed to join the ranks of very eminent men and women on the Bench to dispense justice without fear or favour to your own countrymen and to do so to the best of your consciences and your ability. We wish you well and this House knows and we want to believe that the public knows you will discharge your responsibilities to the highest degree. I am sure together you will help to dispense and dispel the sometimes unfavourable perception held by the public about the Judiciary of our country. We know you can change it and change it for the better. We thank you and good luck *[Applause]*.

Honourable Members, my attention has been drawn to the fact that we have lost one of our own former Member of Parliament, who is also the father of a sitting Member of Parliament in the person of Honourable M. L. Kallon. Shall we all rise and observe a minute of silence in memory of the departed? May his soul rest in perfect peace [*A minute of silence was observed*].

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you would recall that I stood in this Well sometimes ago to inform this House about the National Civil Registration Authority's [NaCRA] intention to sack staff working in that institution. I was however told by the Speaker to stop listening to rumours. Mr Speaker, immediately after that sitting,, I went to my office and I saw over fifty [50] jobs adverts in the Newspapers, seeking Sierra Leoneans to work at the NaCRA. Mr Speaker, I hid to the Speaker's call in terms of not reducing this Parliament to rumours. Mr Speaker, this is a call for concern. As I speak, over fifty jobs have been advertised at the Maritime Administration. The question is, were those working in those institutions incompetent to serve in those capacities? I want to call on the attention of the relevant Committee to make sure this is not happen at all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is becoming a characteristic of people in those institution to dismiss people at will. We are all Sierra Leoneans and the President stated in his Address delivered in this House that he would ensure inclusion. Mr Speaker, this is serious and if this continues, we do not know where it will end. I want to call your attention to this and maybe to call the individuals to come to this House to explain to us why this is happening. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I must express some degree of dissatisfaction with this House. Sometimes ago, I announced the revival of question time in this House, but not a single Member has taken advantage of that opportunity. Some of these issues can be easily brought to the attention of the House and the country under Question Time. I do not know whether some of you cannot draft simple questions. Could that be the reason or what? I am sure a lot of you are educated to draft these questions. The legislative Department of Parliament is at your disposal to assist and your question should be

addressed to the relevant Ministers. In that regard, I want you to take advantage of Question Time. I am sorry to say this, but it seems as if all of you are hiding behind S. O. 23. I am showing you another line of approach. I want you to read S.O. 19 and you would see what you should do. I am reminding you again that we have revived Question Time and we are anxious to see it come to fruition.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O 11[7, 8 & 13]. Mr Speaker, this relates to the duties of the Clerk. If you go to S. O. 11[7], it is simply saying that on the first meeting of each meeting, circulate to Members a paper known as the Notice Paper...’ This is the ‘New Direction’ and we on this side are going to force you to do the right thing. I know you are surprised to know that this is in the Standing Orders.

THE SPEAKER: I am not surprised, Honourable Members.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, when you go to S. O. 11[8], it says: **“Not later than the day preceding each sitting, distribute to Members a paper to be known as the Order Paper.”** Mr Speaker, but this has not been happening since we started meetings at the Bank Complex. We only receive the Order Papers on the very day we meet. This is very wrong and we want this to change. Mr Speaker, under your watch, we want a new Parliament, a Parliament that will work according to established procedures. We want a positive change and we want that change to happen now. If you go to S.O, 44 it states that the majority has the final say, but that has not been happening in this Parliament. We want the majority, the All People’s Congress [APC] Party Members of Parliament to be involved in decision making in this Parliament. We want to be part of the Administration of this Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please Honourable Members.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. Usually, they should control the House in terms of having majority in the House, but this is different. In this case, the majority is in opposition. Therefore, to say this is how it used to happen, it is absolutely different. We want a positive change and the majority to be involved in decision making. Mr Speaker, even the formation of Committees in this Parliament is a

misnomer. We have been deprived of everything that is good in this Parliament. The Public Accounts Committee [PAC] is the worst. Thank God the Chairman is here. Mr Speaker, the PAC is almost moving towards a one man Committee and that is how we call it now. It is almost a one man Committee and we want things to change for the better. We cannot continue with this bullying and it is reaching its limit. We are Members of Parliament and our constituents voted for us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I refer you to S.O. 70[3], which talks about the Standing Order Committee. This is very important for the smooth running of Parliament. I want to state here that any Member of Parliament who refers to our Leader as 'Opposition Leader' will be taken to court or we will decide otherwise against that person. This is because Standing Orders 73 is very clear. If you want to amend a provision in the Standing Orders, the procedure is very clear. You cannot just stand and move a Motion to call the majority leadership as 'Leader of the Opposition.' We are not Opposition Leaders because we are in majority. The Standing Orders makes provision for Majority and Minority Leaders. This should be made very clear to the understanding of every Member of Parliament. The APC is in majority and nobody can take that right from us. I thank you [*Applause*].

THE SPEAKER: I want to thank the Honourable Member for his observations. However, let me remind the House that right from the outset, I apologised for the absence of an Order Paper for this sitting, which ought to have been issued yesterday. I also indicated that the issue along other concerns, would be addressed tomorrow at 11:00 a.m. in my chamber by the Leaders of the various political parties whom have been invited to that meeting. So, let us be patient and I am glad you have brought it up, but you were present when I called for that meeting.

Honourable Members, the issue relating to the House Committee and Business Committee will be addressed tomorrow. We want to see how best we can activate these Committees and set them to work effectively. I am sure change will come gradually, and that means it might take time. We are about to celebrate the first anniversary of this Parliament and we would be very accommodating and very tolerant.

We will try to ensure that we work more efficiently and effectively than we have done in this first year. I want to thank you for your indulgence over this first year. I want to assure you that we will introduce changes in the second year for a more effective and efficient way of discharging our responsibilities. Therefore, we should not belabour the point.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to use this opportunity to remind you of our previous meeting. You and the Leader of Government Business met with all Members of Parliament in the Speaker's Conference Room and there were certain agreements we arrived at. I want to use this opportunity to inform you that nothing has happened as promised.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Daniel B. Koroma, I have summoned a meeting in my chamber tomorrow at 11:00 and the Leaders of the various political parties will attend that meeting and I want you to channel your concerns through your Leader.

HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during the announcement of the various Committees, we forgot to reconstitute a particular Committee and I want to notify this Honourable House that we will reconstitute the Young Legislations Network in the next adjourned date. Leader of Opposition and I have discussed about it. I will not discuss it with the Leader of the NGC because they do not have any young people in their midst. So, it will be the Leader of Opposition, the Leader of C4C and myself. This Committee is very important. In the first week of April, the Honourable Speaker will be leading a delegation to Qatar and the President of this Network will have to participate in that meeting. This is why it is very important to reconstitute this Committee.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, in conjunction with that, I want to bring to the attention of this House that I have recently attended two very important international conferences. One of them was hosted by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association [CPA], both at Regional and International levels. The second one is the Parliamentary Union of Islamic Countries, and was held in Rabat, Morocco. One thing I have discovered that is lacking is that we do not have Desk Officers to take charge of

responsibilities relating to those very important organisations. We would be filling those gaps in the very near future. We will discuss this tomorrow. We need Desk Officers to man the affairs of those two important organisations.

HON. ALUSINE K. ALU-CONTEH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on S.O.23 to give report on the fire disaster that took place in one of my communities in my Constituency at the Kroobay Slum Community. This happened on the 11th March, 2019 at 2:00 a.m. We however thank God because there was no fatality. We want to appreciate the President for His prompt response on that day. We also appreciate the Office of National Security [ONS] and NGOs. I want to also commend All People's Congress for what they did for the people. We are appealing for more assistance because people are still suffering in that community. Approximately, there are seven hundred [700] people who are still looking for accommodation. I thank you, Mr Speaker and Honourable Members.

HON. PAUL S. SAM: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is a very serious problem in my Constituency regarding the Guineans. Of course there is a river that separate Sierra Leone the Guinea. There are two crossing points they are using to loot our gold and diamond. That river belongs to both Guinea and Sierra Leone, but this is very serious. The youth in that Constituency wanted to go into rampage, but I intervened and quelled down the situation. I informed the security Committee in the district, together with the Battalion Commander of the Ninth Battalion. They went there and engaged the Guineans, but they later said that the river belonged to Guinea and not Sierra Leone. This problem is very serious and I want to draw the attention of this House, the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Deputy Minister of Defence to take this issue very seriously. The Guineans want to invade that part of the country as they invaded Yenga. We do not want to see the repeat of the actions that were taken at Yenga. Mr Speaker, you can call the Chairman of the Internal Affairs Committee to discuss this issue with the Minister of Internal Affairs to take action. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please be patient with me. I observed we are stretching S.O 23 beyond its limits. Some of these issues are better brought to this House under S.O.19 by way of Question Time. You have explained your concerns and the concerns of your constituents, but if you want to bring it to the attention of the relevant Minister or Ministry, the best approach is S.O 19. Again, I will remind this House to utilise the facility provided in S.O 19 and subsequent S.Os.

HON. ALEX M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I rise on S.O.23 to report to this House about the fire accident that took place two weeks ago in my constituency. About 23 houses were burnt down and a total of 432 people were displaced. Mr Speaker, when I was coming to Parliament this morning, I received a call that there was another fire outbreak in another village in which twenty [20] houses were burnt down. This accident is within the Chieftom covered by our colleague Paramount Chief Member of Parliament, Matilda Yayu Lansana Minah. The reason why I am bringing this to your attention is the fact that such situations negate the socio-economic development of this country. Mr Speaker, what is disturbing is the fact that it seems as if more attention is paid to fire disasters within the Western Area than in the provinces. Therefore, I want to move a Motion for the establishment of a Parliamentary Committee on Disaster Management and response. To me, the ONS and other organisations are not doing much. If we have a Committee on Disaster Management, I think it will address some of those issues.

THE SPEAKER: I do not think we need a multiplicity of Committees because there is already one. We have the Internal Affairs Committee and they should handle that. Thank you, Honourable Members.

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at...3:15...p.m. and was adjourned to Tuesday, 26th March, 2019 at 10:00a.m.]