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PRESS RELEASE

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BIG PROMOTIONS IN THE JUSTICE SECTOR

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has on Tuesday 04th July 2017, debated and unanimously ratified the Seventh Report of its Committee on Appointments and the Public Service, approving five presidential nominees to the Superior Courts of Judicature. They include Judges of the Supreme, Appeal, and High Courts.

Congratulating the nominees after approval, the Right Hon. Speaker of Parliament, SBB Dumbuya called on them to speedily dispense justice without fear or favour, whilst telling Glenna Thompson to follow the footsteps of her late father Justice Thompson. He also said that “women are less corrupt and in most cases more efficient than men”.

A battery of lawyers and relatives filled the galleries of the House in solidarity with the appointees, including the former Speaker of Parliament, Justice Cowan and the Chief Justice of Sierra Leone, Justice Charm.

The following presidential nominees were approved:

- I. Ms. Glenna Thompson as Supreme Court Judge
- II. Mr. Eldred Taylor-Camara as Justice of the Court of Appeal
- III. Magistrate Manuela A.J Harding as High Court Judge
- IV. Magistrate Mrs. Tonia Barnett as High Court Judge and
- V. Magistrate Dr. Abou Bhakar Benneh-Kamara as High Court Judge

Seconding the motion, Hon. Komba E. Kodoeyoma thanked President Koroma for “improving and re-surfacing” the judicial landscape with experienced and new faces. He spoke of the need for the speedy conclusion of awaiting cases in the High Courts referred by Magistrates.

Hon. Hellen Kuyembeh called for a review of obsolete laws such as the Land Lease Law of 1928 through the Law Reform Commission, as landowners are receiving pittance because of this law.

Reacting, Hon. Rado Yokie said that the onus of law-making lies with Parliament. Whilst applauding the Judiciary “for deciding the SLPP’s matter with no winner or loser”, he called on Judges to dispense justice without fear or favour.

Whilst speaking on speedy hearings and dispensation of Justice Hon. Ajibola Manly-Spain also said that it is the duty of Parliament to make or amend laws, but that Parliament is incapacitated because most of the Bills emanate from the Executive.

Hon. Jariatu Smith eulogized President Koroma for nominating women to serve in high offices of State as they have integrity in the performance of their duties, citing the enviable work of the Auditor General and the Commissioner General of NRA, amongst others.

Acting Minority Leader, Hon. Sidie Tunis called on the nominees to dispense justice in a speedy manner with integrity. He praised the Chief Justice for the remarkable transformations taking place in our judicial landscape, saying that “from now to March 2018 elections, the Judiciary will be tasked with a lot of cases”.

Concluding, Majority Leader of the House, Hon. Leonard Fofanah said that Judges have security of tenure and that they should not be bothered with political promises. He also said that “President Koroma is phenomenal when it comes to the transformation of the Judiciary”, whilst noting that litigants go to the Judiciary to seek redress with speed and accuracy for the peace, stability, and development of the country.

Other MPs spoke to the motion.