



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

---

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**FIRST SESSION - FOURTH MEETING**

**THURSDAY, 28<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2018**

*SESSION – 2018/2019*



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMETARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

---

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**VOLUME: I**

**NUMBER: 52**

---

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 Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2019.

---

# **CONTENTS**

## **I. PRAYERS**

## **II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON FRIDAY, 22<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY, 2019**

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

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 –FOURTH MEETING  
OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT  
OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC**

---

**Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2019.**

**I. PRAYERS**

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

*[The House met at 3:10 p.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]*

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

The House was called to Order

**II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON FRIDAY, 22<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY, 2019**

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, with regard to the record of Votes and Proceedings for Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2019 a copy of a letter addressed to His Excellency the President has been brought to my attention. In light of that correspondence which obviously suggests to my mind the initiation of some discussion that affects the record of Votes and Proceedings for Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2019. I want to believe that it will be appropriate for us to postpone consideration of this particular item for today. Honourable Members, you are making my life very difficult in this Parliament. Both sides are making my life absolutely impossible. The rate at which you are provoking each other is not good for national interest.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. With regard to the words you have just spoken, what transpired on Friday relating to the State of Emergency was that we on this side were expecting that the record of Votes and Proceedings for that particular sitting actually captured details of what happened on that day. This is because to our knowledge, we believe that the sitting on that day was inconclusive and today's Order Paper is expected to be a continuation of that particular process [*Applause*]. But Mr Speaker, even taking this decision now, it is not on the Order Paper. So, we are concerned and we trust you. We want you to give us a particular date because we are interested in the State of Emergency and we want it to be conclusive.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we know that you put a question on that day which was not supposed to be recorded by 'collection of voices.' We were supposed to vote as provided for in Sections 29 [3] and 44 [4] of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone. In this regard, we are waiting to hear from you in relation to the state of emergency. Thank you.

**HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS** [*Leader of Government Business*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with all due respect to my colleague on the other side, a man that I have so much respect for, a man that I have worked with for over five years, a man that belong to a party that I actually like, I am a bit confused. This is because to the best of my knowledge, my colleagues on the other side have met and in their own wisdom, they have decided to write to the President of this country on the issues relating to what transpired here on Friday. The Honourable Speaker said that since your party would be writing to His Excellency the President that was why the issue of votes and proceedings is shelved or put aside for now. I want to ask a question and I am very serious. Do you think the letter written to the President is a serious letter that needs response from His Excellency the President? Do you want the issue to be addressed by the President? If it is very serious like what the Honourable Leader of Opposition has said and I also believe that it is very serious, I will ask that we listen to the Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I am trying to protect you as I am duty bound to do so and to every other speaker besides you. Honourable Members, please allow the Honourable Member to complete his statement.

**HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS:** My position is that, I support the Speaker on his decision or request to put aside the Votes and Proceedings for today. I thank you [*Applause*].

**HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH** [*Leader of the Opposition*]: Mr Speaker, something surprising is happening. The SLPP was clapping when the Clerk of this House was entering the Chamber. This is surprising, Mr Speaker. His entrance attracted the pleasure of the SLPP [*Undertones*].

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you very much for this opportunity. Unfortunately, I was not here on Friday. If I was here on Friday, maybe this would not have happened. We have however found ourselves in a quagmire. If I understood the Honourable Member from Falaba District correctly, I am sure he wanted to confirm that the record of Votes and Proceedings that was circulated was the correct document of what actually transpired on that day, which confirmed that the House was in disorder and as a result, you adjourned. I think that was what he wanted to confirm. If that is

the case, then we would make progress, but we have to ascertain that the debate on that day was not concluded because there were still outstanding issues to be resolved. We have the record of Votes and Proceedings with us. We have a lot of respect for this institution and we believe, as Members of Parliament, it is our responsibility to continue making this House a respectable place *[Applause]*. Parliament used to be a respectable place and it should continue in that direction. We want to make sure that this House is respected and we can only do that by respecting the Standing Orders and the Constitution of this country.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to agree with the Leader that he has a lot of respect for the Honourable Member from Falaba and we will encourage you to use your position to respond to the issues he raised. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank both the Leader of Government Business and Leader of the Opposition. Let me take this opportunity to repeat what I said earlier with regard to item II on the Order Paper that has to do with the record of Votes and Proceedings for Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2019. I was told that a letter has emanated from the main Opposition party leadership to His Excellency the President. A copy of which has been sent to me and the content of that letter, I also understand, relates to the very record that we are about to consider. In light of that, it is my decision that we set aside this record, in terms of its consideration, until the next adjourned date over which I will preside. I do not want us to waste our time on this particular issue any further. I would ask Honourable Members out of deference to what has happened and what is on-going to allow me to proceed in the manner I have just described.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, with all due respect to you and with respect to the procedures of this House, we are saying that the sitting on Friday was inconclusive and we are expecting the issue that brought the controversy to be captured on this Order Paper before you start talking about the letter *[Applause]*. I think you prepared your mind not to discuss this particular issue again, but we want it to be discussed because it was not properly concluded.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if look at the Report of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service, under 'Names of Honourable Members that were present,' you will see that the Leader of Government Business, Honourable Sidie M. Tunis, who is also the Chairman of that Committee, allowed his Deputy, Honourable Mathew Nyuma to act as Chairman while the substantive Chairman was present. To us, there are lots of mistakes. So, this particular document is not properly before the House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are saying the State of Emergency debate should have continue on Tuesday, but it is not on this Order Paper [*Applause*]. For the respect of Parliament, the Office of the Speaker and because you have stated earlier that we have written a letter to the President, we will wait. I am sure the President will reply, so that we adjourn this particular sitting to another date till we hear from the President. We want this particular item to be included on the Order Paper, so that this Parliament will once again continue as it has always been. I thank you.

**HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will continue to respect my colleague on the other side and I will continue to reply to him because he seemed to be acting as the Leader of Opposition when the substantive Leader was absent. I will respect that, but I want the Honourable Speaker to understand that it is not the Honourable Member that determines whether Parliament should sit or not. He does not determine whether Parliament should sit or not and I want him to understand that very well. I would continue to respect his opinion because we are colleagues and we would remain as colleagues even after this sitting today, but the fact of the matter is that, we have a Speaker who is very fair and impartial. He is so God fearing that he has just made a passionate request to Honourable Members, so that we can tentatively put on hold this particular item. This is not the first time we are doing that at all. I want Honourable Members to understand this and the Leader of the Opposition knows it very well. He used to be our boss and he knows what I am talking about.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to plead with the Honourable Members, particularly the Leader of the Opposition for us to proceed with the business of the

House. We will continue to ensure that this Parliament works for the people of this country. I however support Mr Speaker's ruling for us to put aside the Votes and Proceedings and move to the next item.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, all of you standing take your seats. A great deal has been said and letter written in and outside this House relating to the proceedings of last Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2019. Honourable Members, I want to make it abundantly clear that I cannot continue like this. If you are not prepared to listen to me, then I will do the needful. You would recall that we had the same pandemonium last week Friday and I will not like a repeat of it. However, without prejudice to what has transpired since our last sitting and taking into account the Votes and Proceedings of the 7<sup>th</sup> of August, 2014 and the 27<sup>th</sup> August, 2015, let me state here that any provision of the Constitution or any provision of the Standing Orders that requires a two-third majority, for example Section 29 [3] of the Constitution set the provisions enumerated under Section 108 of the Constitution. Let me make it clear that provisions requiring two-third majority cannot be determined by collection of voices, except where there is unanimity in the House. This is because if there is unanimity, it immediately captures the two-third majority that the provisions are seeking for. Now, we were in the process of our deliberation last Friday when 'all hell broke loose' and I was compelled by that to adjourn the House. Nevertheless, what I have said is without prejudice to what has obtained since Friday to now in respect of which, it is my understanding that a letter has emanated from the Opposition to His Excellency the President. In deference to that, and in order to restore decorum in this House, the Votes and Proceedings for the 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2019 will be set aside until the next adjourned date, when we would take them up again for consideration. That is my ruling.

**HON. SAA E. LAMINA [*Leader of Coalition for Change*]:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what is transpiring now in the Well does not need an interpretation from a sorcerer or a meticulous observer. This gives me a very sharp reminiscence of the very day we darkened this door last year. As much as we would respect your view, we also want to categorically state our dissatisfaction for the fact that we were not given a

single bite on that day *[Applause]*. We know that the drafters of the Standing Orders did not give much premium to other political parties, but the Majority and Minority in Parliament, which is also an assignment for the drafters in the future.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all is not well in this House. It is very clear that all is not well and that is why I want to call on the office of the Speaker to give a considerable swiftness as you have already stated to the 22<sup>nd</sup> scenario. As a political party, the Coalition for Change recommends for more negotiations in this House; secondly, there should be political compromise between and among political parties; and lastly, there should be consultative building, especially where we look forward to critical decisions. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Leader of the C4C for that comment. Let me bring to the attention of this House that I am currently engaged in consultations with the various Leaders with a view to setting up a Committee that I would describe as 'Friends of Mr Speaker.' The 'Friends of Mr Speaker' will be working towards restoring decorum in this House and ensuring that the wrong signals are not given to the general public about the behaviour in this House. It is absolutely important for us to maintain decorum in our proceedings at all times.

**HON. FODAY M. KAMARA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that since the start of the Fifth Parliament, we have been rushing things in this House. I was telling some colleagues my opinion, which is the opinion of the NGC, is that we support the Government when things are in the interest of the country, but if those things are not in the interest of the country, we will object and oppose them. I want to believe in this particular instance that colleagues are asking for what happened on Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2019 to continue and they are on the right track. We believe that if we continue to bulldoze ideas, then there will be no need for us to be here *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe you would have noticed that we are not talking about any particular thing today, but what happened on Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2019. We will wait till it pleases you to bring it back to this House. For now, what we

are asking for is that instead of shelving the record of Votes and Proceedings of that date, we shelve all sittings until we come back to reality. I thank you.

**HON. SIDI M. TUNIS:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe it is about time we continue with the Business of the House. You have requested for a ruling.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, what kind of image do you want to portray to the general public?

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, on that very day, I rose on S.O. [44] and that provision relates to the voting process in Parliament. If we are to rank them, it will always mean majority carries the vote. Mr Speaker, we also have S.O [45], which talks about voice collection. What you did on that day was that you denied the majority of their votes. I am saying the laws are not bad, but individuals are making them to be bad. Therefore, because of what is on this Order Paper, I will plead to you once again to defer this sitting. Mr Speaker, as much as you force it to continue, this Order Paper will not succeed here today because as you have seen already, we will vote against everything that is on this Order Paper. We will continue to use S.O. [46] till we have positive result. We are not inferior people and our voices should be heard.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, I have listened to you carefully. You have cited relevant provisions. I would have thought the first thing you should do is to ensure that there is decorum on your side. I am giving you the privilege of stating your point, but I would have thought you would have taken cognisance of the behaviour of some of your Members. We cannot proceed like this and you have to call them to order. I want you to exercise your Leadership role to ensure that there is decorum before we proceed.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, I believe that you are the Speaker of this Parliament and not the Speaker of SLPP. As a Speaker, you must be a listening speaker. If we on this side are presenting our points, but you are not taking those points into consideration, it will suggest as if you have a set of twin, but you are neglecting one. That could also mean that we are not important to you. We are begging you to defer

this sitting to another date. In fact, the time is far spent and it will be inappropriate for us to continue this sitting.

Mr Speaker Honourable members, when we were debating the State of Emergency on that day, I told you not to conclude that sitting on that day. I told you not to put the question because I did not want us to reach where we are. We were pleading with you and we raised certain issues. You made it clear in your last submission that 'there is no State of Emergency considering S.Os 29[3] and S.Os 44[4]. You stated it here and it means we are on the right track.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, be careful and always listen to what I say. I do not want you to put words into my mouth. You are imputing me and you are attributing statements to me that I have not made. I want that to be clearly understood. I am a man who chooses my words very carefully. I am sure you must have gathered that by now.

**HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS:** Mr Speaker, I was expecting you, as Speaker of this House, to tell the Honourable Member to withdraw that statement. He said: **"There is no State of Emergency."** Mr Speaker, you were supposed to ask him to withdraw.

**THE SPEAKER:** He is not speaking for me, Honourable Member. He is speaking for himself and I want that to be clearly understood.

**HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS:** I am glad you have made that clarification. I am beginning to see a trend under your speakership which I did not see in the last Parliament. I was in the last Parliament and there has never been a situation where a decision taken by Parliament was discussed the following day. You want to introduce a dangerous system in this Parliament *[Applause]*. I want to state here that if you bring again that issue in this House, we on this side are not going to participate.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, if I hear any more of that unnecessary noise, I will send the Members concerned out of this House. I will definitely do that. You are testing my patience. Honourable Lahai Marah, I am sorry to say you have not been helpful at all. I cannot allow your side of the House to continue with this kind of the

pandemonium. It is most unbecoming and I will implore you to put your side under control.

**HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH:** Mr Speaker, I want to believe that my Members of Parliament are under control.

**HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS:** Mr Speaker, any attempt to reintroduce that proclamation will be resisted from our own side. I thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, I have ruled on the Votes and Proceedings for Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2019 to be set aside till the next adjourned date.

**HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the language of the House is taking a different direction. As I said in my earlier submission, we should use our Constitution and Standing Orders as our weapons. I want to however state that certain words that have been used in the last few minutes are not palatable. I hope we will not take those words to another level. The bottom line is that we have a copy of the Votes and Proceedings which your good self is requesting that we should postponed till the next adjourned date. However, our position is very simple and we have not asked for anything extra-ordinary. As per the record of Votes and Proceedings of Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2019 we did not conclude the business of the House on that day. This is very simple to understand. It is stated in the Votes and Proceedings and we are going to continue to respect your office and this House. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that comment. I am sure he is not expecting a response from me since I have already said that the item under discussion be deferred to the next adjourned date.

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

**HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I wish to make some amendments on the seconder of the motion.

**HON. OSMAN W. JALLOH:** Mr Speaker, I rise on S.O [37]. I move that the House is adjourned till the next adjourned date. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** The Motion has been moved and seconded.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[The Motion to adjourn the House was carried]*

### **ADJOURNMENT**

*[The House rose at 3:50 p.m. and was adjourned to Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2019 at  
10:00 a.m.]*