

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

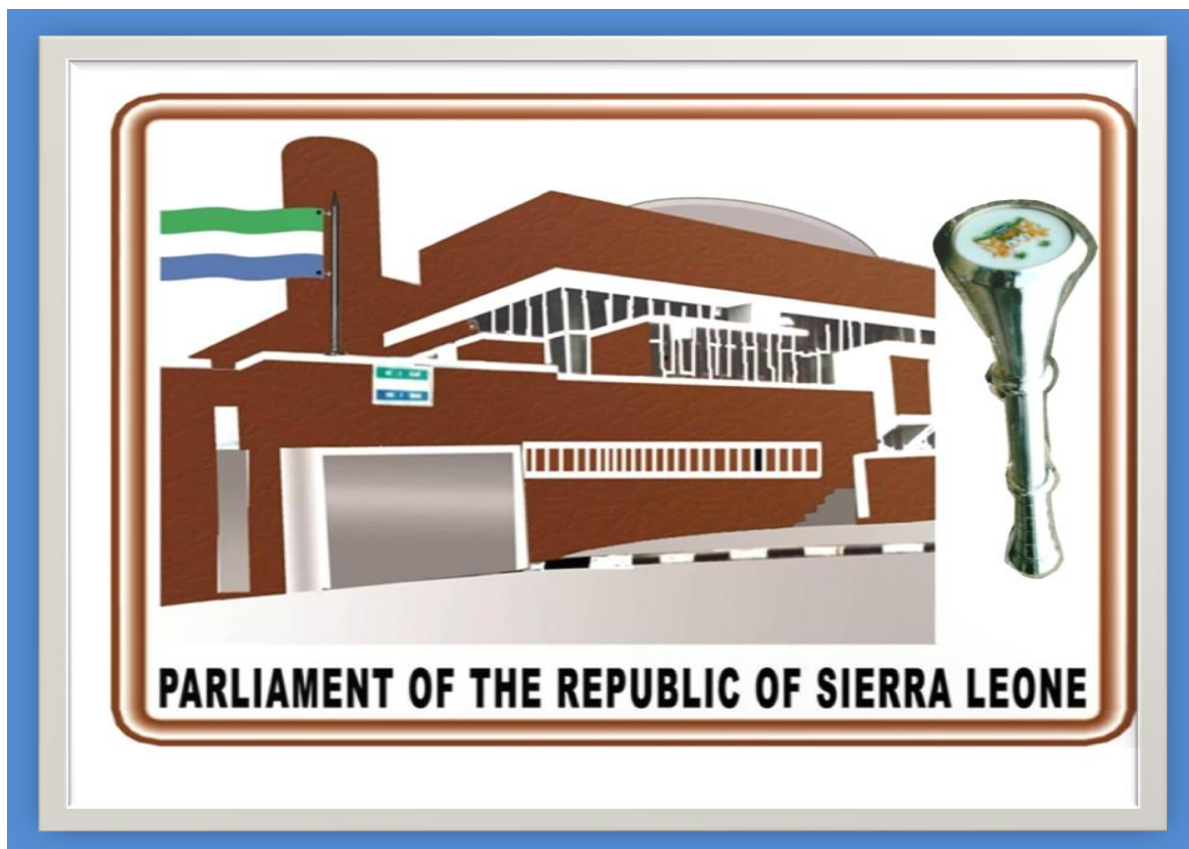
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION –FIRST MEETING

THURSDAY, 15TH MAY, 2025

SESSION – 2024/2025



OUA DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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First Meeting of the Second Session of the Sixth Parliament
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
held Thursday, 15th May, 2025



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

SECOND SESSION – FIRST MEETING OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Thursday, 15th May, 2025

I. PRAYERS

[Miss Esther Boima read the Prayers]

*[The House met at 10:00 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]
[The Speaker, Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas in the Chair]*

The House was called to Order

II. THE RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR TUESDAY 13TH MAY 2025

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we will do the Record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday 13th May, 2025 at the next sitting.

III. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, in the first place I am extremely proud of you and this House. You have been extremely supportive of my leadership in this Sixth Parliament, and you know as I sit here today I bless you in the name of Jesus. I thank you very much. Let me recognize the following Members who are here always on time. I told the Clerk to always write the first thirty [30] Members that will come to Parliament, is very important for future reference so I doff my hat to Honourable Joseph Williams-Lamin, Honourable Alie Bayoh, Honourable Umu Pyne, Honourable Amy Moriba, Honourable Ibrahim Kabba, Honourable Sarty Banya, Honourable Beatrice Iyamide-Langley, Honourable Beatrice Maaya Kangbai, Honourable Nenneh Lebbie, Honourable Idriss Sahid Kamara, Honourable Alpha Foday Jabbie, Honourable Fallah Kenawah Tengbeh, Honourable Daniel Fornah, Honourable Ella Goba, Honourable Rugiatu Rosy Kanu, Honourable Veronica Kadie Sesay, Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara, Honourable Abdul Latiff Sesay, Honourable Lucinda Kellie, Honourable Memunatu Jalloh, Honourable Ibrahim Koroma, Honourable Idrissa Dauda Moiwai, Honourable Alice Jebbeh Kumabeh, Honourable PC Alhaji Sheku Thorgus, Honourable Alex M. Rogers, Honourable Paul Samba Conteh, Honourable Charles Abdulia, Honourable Tamba Kellie, Honourable Massey Ngahiteh Aruna, and Honourable Abdul Karim Kanu. I truly appreciate your role in this Parliament in the Republic of Sierra Leone for doing your work diligently. I am mindful about the first thirty Members that will come to the Well and the Clerk is always here to record the names of the first thirty Members that will come to the Well.

Honourable Members, I am sounding so clear and loud because I have urged the Information Technology [IT] Department to ensure that all the microphones are fit. They have not made all the microphones they have just done five including mine. They have done the one for the Leader of Government Business and the Deputy Leader of Government Business. They have done for the Leader of the Opposition and his Deputy. By the close of business today, they would have done all the microphones so we do not have to move microphones around. So like I said, I have instructed the Information and Technology [IT] Department to ensure that all the microphones are made properly so that we do not have to pass mobile microphones around in the fear that we do not get ourselves wrap up with Mpox. Honourable Members, we will have all the microphones

fit, even though I have mentioned the first thirty Members that came, I also want to doff my hat to those who were here before I entered. You are also extremely very important and I want to say you have been very diligent in your role as Members of Parliament [MPs], and you have been serving not only this House but the Nation diligently, and I told Mr Clerk as long as a Member of Parliament is here before I enter that Member of Parliament is worthy of note because we need to continue to tell the Public the Members of Parliament [MPs] that are treating their work very seriously, I truly appreciate you.

Honourable Members, in addition, I wish to inform you that we will be bringing the Minister of Communications to this Well to address us on the state of mobile communications. We are all aware that mobile communication these days is very difficult due to the network and so many problems in connectivity; I think we need to invite the Minister to come here to address us. We would not only invite the Minister, we will also invite the Heads of the Mobile Companies to be here, they will not address us but we want them to be here, so that when Members of Parliament debate they will listen to what we have to say, because they are the operators. They have been supervised by the Ministry and NATCA so as the Minister addresses us, we need to have the Mobile Operators and even NATCA to come and listen carefully. I want Members of Parliament to tell the public exactly how we feel not only as Members of Parliament but as citizens of this Nation. We are paying so much to buy top up cards, and we are paying so much to maintain our phones. We are doing so much to ensure that we support their businesses but they have not served this country well. They have not served us well and we need to indicate that clearly to them in a debate when we invite the Minister of Communications to this House.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: In line with Members coming before 10 a.m in the morning I also want us to carefully look at the provisions of the Standing Orders which talks about absenteeism which I believe is very important. Mr Speaker, S.O [77] in tandem with Section [77] of the Constitution is very clear for those who do not come to Parliament. Mr Speaker, we need to get quorum but perhaps if we use this provision, we can also tie this provision to give it legitimacy in what we are doing. Mr Speaker, I need your attention Sir but if the Chief Whip wants to talk to you I will sit down.

THE SPEAKER: Yes proceed Leader of Government Business.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: This is a very serious matter, I just want to draw your attention to important issues that have to do with our own integrity of Parliament because Section [97] is very clear about that and also in our Standing Orders [77] in tandem with Section [77] of the Constitution is very clear on that. Mr Speaker, with

your leave let me read these provisions to tie your institutional way of doing things by having Members coming to Parliament before 10 O'clock a.m. S.O [77] Paragraph [E] of Sub-Section 1 of 77, 'any Member who for good cause is prevented from attending a sitting of Parliament shall acquaint the Speaker in writing as early as possible of his inability to attend and the cause thereof.' S.O 77[2] in tandem with 77 of the Constitution I read: "Any Member who without good cause during any Session is absent from the sittings of Parliament on a number of days amounting to any aggregate period of thirty [30] days shall vacate his seat." There will be no force of Law but we are motivating people to come to Parliament as earlier as possible especially for sittings but this one is also very important for a Session because we have certain numbers of days we should sit for every Session it is also in the Constitution. Mr Speaker, with your actions for more pro-activeness and given some force of Law let us do it in tandem with Section 77[D] of the Standing Orders an alternative of the mandate to the Committees on Privileges and Standards to address the conduct of Members of Parliament [MPs] special selected Committees may be appointed by the House from time to time to decide on cases of absenteeism. Such Committees shall consist of the Speaker, the Members nominated by each Political Party and groups of Paramount Chiefs and independent Members such as to reflect as much as possible the strength of the three groups in the House. Mr Speaker, these are the provisions you cannot ignore them they are clearly stated in the Standing Orders tied with the Constitution that is just the submission I want to make. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much Leader of Government Business, as we go along we would start calling out names of those who do not come to Parliament who are always absent. We will call out their names is a way of urging every Member to be here because that is why we have been paid by the State out of the taxpayers money. We do not just sit at our homes and relax we get others to come and do the work while you collect your salaries and entitlements. We will not allow that, we will start calling out names very soon.

IV. LAYING OF PAPER

[I] HONOURABLE VERONICA K. SESAY

MEMBER OF ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN

STATES [ECOWAS] PARLIAMENT

HON. VERONICA K. SESAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table of this Honourable House, the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS]. Mr Speaker, with your leave, I would like to read the Report verbatim,

because of the importance of the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Region and what Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] has done so far within this 50 years, for the benefit of us who are not yet 50 years and for the benefit of the listening populace to know the importance. We are not just here going to Parliament as delegations, but you need to know what it entails, and what is the importance of the sub region.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you have to bear with me, because talking about 50 years of somebody, or 50 years of an association is a long journey, and with that, we do not want to leave anything behind. It is no secret; we really want you people to know what the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] has done so far. So you have to bear with me so that I can read the document.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is with great honour and great sense of responsibility that I rise before you here today as the Leader of the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Parliament from Sierra Leone, as we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Economic Community of West Africa States [ECOWAS] I must say that we are not merely celebrating a milestone, we are compelled to engage in the profound milestone and compelled on the inflicting reflection on the trajectory of our journey. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a time for critical interception, a time to acknowledge not only the consideration achievements that have marked our paths, but also the complex and multifaceted challenges that now confront us, threatening to derail the very progress we have so far diligently pursued. As we celebrate this Golden Jubilee, we are reminded of our shared aspirations for peace, development and prosperity, but we are also confronted with the sovereign reality, one that demands not only reflection, but urgent and courageous actions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, over the last 50 years, the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] has demonstrated its capacity space for boosting regional economic integration playing a frontline role in peacekeeping and post conflict reconstruction. The community has not only survived the political and economic turmoil that has afflicted our continent, it has at many times led the way. We remember the successful interventions in Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Gambia we stand as a testament to our collective ability to defend democracy and restore constitutional order. We have witnessed significant strides in fostering regional peace and stability, facilitating the free movement of people and goods across the borders, promoting trade liberalization to enhance economic growth and implementing a diverse array of programs aimed at enhancing the quality of life for our citizens.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, from infrastructural development to agricultural initiatives, from educational exchanges to cultural collaborations the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] has played a pivotal role in shaping the destiny of our sub region. However, despite these successes over the five decades, we cannot ignore the significance setbacks that currently threatened to unrivaled decades of integration and corporation, West Africa's Regional Block; the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] faces disintegration. We are witnessing perhaps more than ever before the growing fragmentation of her Block. Recent years have seen challenges to the stability of the Block, including political unrest, security threats and the withdrawal of breakaway of countries from the Block. On January 28, 2024 Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso announced by a joint statement that they were withdrawing from the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] following the Military Coups, the withdrawal was granted in January 2025 even though the tied can still be granted in July 2025. Today, other countries are expressing dissatisfaction with our Union's effectiveness and responsiveness. The very notion of a united, peaceful and integrated West Africa now appears under siege. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this present reality in which we find ourselves demands that, we cast a critical eye on emerging threats that jeopardize this hard won games and undermine the very foundation of our collective aspirations at this point.

Mr Speaker, we can no longer afford to be complacent or to shy away from confronting the difficult truths that lie before us. Our Region is increasingly beset by a confliction, influence of destabilizing factors that threaten to unravel the very fabric of our community, pushing us towards the edge of uncertainty and instability. Mr Speaker, political unrest often fueled by deep-seated socio-economic inequalities that left millions of our people marginalized and disenfranchised, ethnic tensions that are often manipulated for political gains and governance deficit that erode public trust in our institutions continue to plague several Member States. These factors create a fertile ground for instability, undermining the rule of law, and hindering our efforts to build cohesive and harmonious societies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, security challenges ranging from the escalating menace of terrorism and violence extremism that spill across our porous borders to the surge of transitional organized crime, including drug and human trafficking and the persistent threats of maritime piracy that disrupts trade and endangers the lives of our people which has posed a direct and immediate threat to the safety and wellbeing of our citizens. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the proliferation of this threat has not only created a perceived climate of fear and uncertainty, undermining investors' confidence and hindering economic growth, but has always diverted scarce resources

away from critical development priorities such as education, health care and infrastructure, further excavating the vulnerabilities of our populations and perpetrating a vicious circle of poverty and instability. We find ourselves caught in a complex web of interconnected challenges that demand a comprehensive and coordinated response, a significant factor contributing to this deeply troubling state of affairs and in some cases, the undeniable failure of national and regional Parliaments to effectively address these multifaceted challenges. This failure can be attributed to a combination of factors, including capacity limitations that hinder our ability to conduct thorough oversight of the Executive branch, and formulate sound and evidence based policies, financial constraints that limit our operational effectiveness, independence and ability to adequately represent the interests of our Constituents, and most concerning, a lack of political will which undermines our ability to take diversity action in the face of difficult choices and to hold those in power accountable for their actions. We as Parliamentarians must accept our share of responsibility in this regard, we must acknowledge that we have not always lived to the expectations of our citizens, and we must commit ourselves to doing better. The erosion of public trust in our institutions, including Parliament, is a serious and deeply concerning issue that must be addressed with the utmost urgency. We must strive to enhance our legitimacy, strengthen our accountability mechanism, and improve our responsiveness to the needs and aspirations of our people we represent, ensuring that their voices are heard and their concerns are addressed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we stand at a critical juncture in the history of our Region, a moment of profound decision that will determine the future of Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] and the fate of millions of our citizens. The sub region with this history of civil war, ethnic conflict, and violent, political transition cannot afford further fragmentation. The painful lessons of our past should serve as a stark and sobering reminder of the devastating consequences of division, discord and the failure to address the legitimate grievances of our people. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in some member states, there exist a growing perception that Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] is either slow to act or detach from the real realities of ordinary citizens. Others feel that its mechanism is squealed in favor of certain political or economic elites, leaving the high nations whose concerns may differ due to geographical security threats or governance structures. At the heart of these challenges lie critical institutional questions. What has been the role of national and regional Parliaments in either addressing or fighting to mitigate this crisis? As Legislators, our duty extends beyond representation. We are tasked with upholding democratic norms, ensuring Government accountability, and safeguarding the rule of Law. Yet in too many instances, national Parliaments have been sidelined, weakened or

corrupted by narrow interests. The Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Parliament itself, although a symbol of regional cooperation, has often lacked the strength to act decisively in moments of continental turbulence. The Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Parliament and indeed all National Parliaments have a vital and dependable role to play in ensuring stability, promoting good governance and fostering sustainable development in our Region. Our influence must be brought to bear through a multi-pronged approach that compasses to strengthen our oversight of the Executive branches of our Governments, ensuring that we adhere to democratic principles, uphold the rule of Law and respect fundamental human rights. We must proactively formulate policies that address the root cause of instability, promote inclusive governance that empowers all segments of society and foster sustainable development that benefits present and future generations. We must hold the Executive arm accountable to the people they serve, ensuring transparency, responsiveness and meaningful participation in decision making processes, actively engaging in conflict resolution efforts, promoting dialogue mediation and reconciliation as alternatives to violence and confrontation tirelessly and with unwavering dissemination, to restore trust among Member States and between Governments and their citizens, and above all, demonstrates the political will to act decisively, collectively and with a sense of urgency in the face of these unprecedented challenges. This is not a time for despair. It is a time for leadership. It is a time for moral courage, and it is a time for vision. We the Parliamentarians of Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS], must rise to this occasion, not merely as political actors, but as stewards of the Region. Our people look up to us, not only for Laws but also for hope, not only for policies, but also for progress, not only for debates, but also for directions. In the recent high level meeting convened in Abuja, Nigeria, the participants rose with a call to reform the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Parliament to play a more positive role in the community. 50th anniversary should not just to celebrate our past, but to commit to a future that is more united, more democratic and more prosperous, and Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Parliament must play a greater role. Let it be said that in the face of regional fragmentation and rising uncertainty, the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Parliament stood firm in diversity, the result to reform, to transform our Constitutions, to deepen our integration, and to reaffirm our faith in a common West Africa destiny.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I conclude, I urge the right Honourable Speaker to use his office, to refer this statement to the Parliamentary Sub Committee of Foreign Affairs for further deliberations and presentation of the House Reports to the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Commission in the commemoration of the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] at 50th celebration, especially

as West Africa seeks to redefine the future of regional integration and resilience. Let this Golden Jubilee be reminded not as a time of decline, but as the beginning of our renewal. I want to thank the House for giving me the attention to present this document on behalf of the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] delegation of Sierra Leone Parliament. God bless Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Parliament, and may God bless the people of West Africa. I thank you.

Mr Speaker, on that note I beg to lay on the Table this wonderful document from the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS]. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. The Mama of West Africa, your Leadership has just been exceptional. Keep it up we truly appreciate you.

[II] STANDING ORDERS 16, BUSINESS STATEMENTS

THE LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Business Committee was stated in the Standing Orders of the House from the Internal Notice Paper. Documents to be considered for Legislative action, laying of Papers under the Office of the Chief Minister, the Independent Commission for Peace. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I ask that this document be withdrawn because of financial provisions are not attached to the document *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: What is that?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Independent Commission.

THE SPEAKER: Okay.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Laying of Papers by the Deputy Speaker: Performance Audit Report on the implementation of Youth Empowerment Programs by the Ministry of Youth Affairs February 2025. Performance Audit Report on the implementation of Wetland Conservation February 2025, Performance Audit Report on Access to Education for Children with Special Need February 2025, Performance Audit Report on the Management on Wetland Catchment by the National Water Resources Management Agency February 2025, Performance Audit Report Government Report in Achieving Food Sufficiency by 2023 and the Impact of Climate Change-B Agriculture February 2025, Performance Audit Report on Disaster Risk Reduction Activities by the National Disaster Management Agency February 2025. Under the Minister of Finance: Articles of Agreement of the Islamic Corporation for Insurance of Investment and Export Credit.

Under laying of Papers again, African Development Fund Project; Preparation of the Sierra Leone Rural Electricity Access Project [SLREAP] Republic of Sierra Leone 5th January 2025, Subsidiary Grant Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone represented by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Energy, Preparation of Sierra Leone Rural Electricity Access Project [SLREAP], the Attorney General and the Minister of Justice, the Criminal Procedure Commencement Regulation 2024, the Criminal Procedure Act 2024 Act No.8 of 2024, Statutory Instrument No.18 of 2024. Under the Attorney General again, the Copy Right Regulations 2024, the Copy Right Act 2011 Act No.8 of 2024, Statutory Instrument No.12 of 2024. Minister of Environment, The Protection of the Ozone Layer and Substances covered in the Monteria Protocol Regulations 2025, The Environment Protection Agency Act 2002, Act No.15 of 2022, and Statutory Instrument No.4 of 2025. Government Motions: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Corporation. Mr Speaker, I brought this to your notice that we are going to withdraw the Agreement that has to do with the Kingdom of Morocco and Sierra Leone for judicial issues. We wrote series of letters to them but they have not responded base on certain legal issues since the last Speaker so we have decided to withdraw, this is the last time you are hearing of it in the Chamber.

Bills: The Public Financial Management Amendment Act 2023, The Minister of Finance. The State Owned Enterprises and Governance Act 2025, The Minister of Finance, committed to the Legislative Committee for further scrutiny, presently they are on it. The Deposit Protection Fund Act 2024, The Minister of Finance. The Petroleum Exploration and Production Amendment Act 2024, The Attorney General and Minister of Justice. The Sierra Leone Correctional Service Amendment Act 2024, The Attorney General and Minister of Justice. Child Right Act we are going to do today. The National Country Planning Act 2024, The Minister of Lands, Housing and Country Planning. The Sierra Leone Electricity and Water Regulatory Commission Act 2024, The Minister of Energy. The Workers Compensation Act 2024, Minister of Labour and Social Security. The Occupational Safety and Health Act 2024, the Minister of Labour and Social Security. The Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Healthcare 2024, The Minister of Health. The Merchant Shipping Act 2024, The Minister of Transport and Aviation. We have also requested this Bill for the Business Committee to have a Pre-legislative meeting on this particular Bill. Again under consideration for today, The Early Warning and Response Mechanism Centre Act 2024, The Minister of Planning and Economic Development. The Investment Framework Agreement Ratification Act 2025, this will be the Chief Minister. Thank you very much Honourable Members.

V. BILL

THE CHILD RIGHT ACT 2024

COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING

THE MINISTER OF GENDER AND CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS

[THE HOUSE RESOLVES INTO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE]

REPORT ON THE CHILD RIGHT ACT 2024

HONOURABLE ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH

CHAIRMAN LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE.

FIRST REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE, SECOND SESSION OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE, ON THE BILL ENTITLED "THE CHILD RIGHTS ACT, 2024" PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT ON THURSDAY 15TH OCTOBER 2024.

INTRODUCTION

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I rise to present the first Report of the Legislative Committee, Second Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone, on the Bill entitled: THE CHILD RIGHTS ACT, 2024. "Being an Act to repeal and replace the Child Rights Act, 2007 [Act No. 7 of 2007], to make provision for the promotion of the rights and responsibilities of children and the obligation of the State to provide for such rights as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children and to provide for other related matters."

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Bill having gone through the Second Reading, was committed to the Legislative Committee for scrutiny pursuant to Standing Orders 51[1]. Subsequently the Committee met on the following days, Tuesday 10th December, Wednesday 11th December, and Friday 13th December 2024, in the Committee Room No.1 of Parliament Building, with the following objectives:

- To scrutinize in detailed the principles and provisions of the Bill and to make amendments if necessary.
- To ascertain the Constitutional and legal implications contained therein.
- To report to Plenary for consideration by the Committee of the whole House in line with S.O. [53].

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, in attendance were the Chairman Legislative Committee, Members of the Legislative Committee, Members of the Committee on

Gender, other Members of Parliament, the Minister and Deputy Minister of Gender and Children's Affairs, the Permanent Secretary and Directors of the Ministry.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Legislative Committee having scrutinized the Bill line by line and Clause by Clause recommends the following amendments to the House for approval. The Short Title of the Bill be approved. The Long Title of the Bill be approved.

PART I – PRELIMINARY:

1. CLAUSE - 1 INTERPRETATION: The word "**chairman**" be expunged.

2. CLAUSE - 1 INTERPRETATION: The phrase "**child betrothal**" be inserted after the word "**chairman**" to read "means the practice of arranging or agreeing to marry a child to another person."

3. CLAUSE - 1 INTERPRETATION: The phrase "child right violation" be inserted after the phrase "**child betrothal**" to read, "means when a child's fundamental rights and freedoms as enshrined in local, regional and international human rights Laws are infringed upon and denied by actions, omissions, negligence or neglect by State institutions or individual State Actors."

4. CLAUSE – 1 INTERPRETATION be amended by inserting the definition of the phrase "**Collective Violence**."

5. CLAUSE – 1 INTERPRETATION: "Collective Violence" for the purpose of this Act "means the perpetration of physical, psychological or emotional pain to a child by a group or member of a group leading to non-medical injury to any part of the body."

6. CLAUSE - 1 INTERPRETATION: The word "**diversion**" be amended by deleting the word "**children**" at the end on the first line and replacing it with the phrase "**of a child**" to now read, "means the conditional channeling of a child who commits a minor or misdemeanor offence away from formal criminal proceedings towards a non-judicial process of holding a child accountable and addressing the offending behaviour."

7. CLAUSE - 1 INTERPRETATION: The phrase "**female genital cutting**" be expunged.

8. CLAUSE - 1 INTERPRETATION: The phrase “**foster parent**” be amended by deleting the words “**and foster**” on the fourth line after the word “**parent**” and before the word “**and**” to now read, “means an adult person who is not a biological or legal parent of a child but is willing to provide care and support usually provided by the biological or legal parent and “foster care” shall be construed accordingly.

9. CLAUSE - 1 INTERPRETATION: The phrase “**harmful practices**” be expunged.

10. CLAUSE - 1 INTERPRETATION: The phrase “**protection officer**” be inserted after the phrase “**probation officer**” to read, “means a person appointed as such under this Act to help children stay safe, access their rights and recover harm and includes senior protection assistant and protection assistant 1 and 2”

PART II –

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHILDREN AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STATE be amended by deleting the word “**CHILDREN**” and replacing it with the phrase “**a child**” to now read, “RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CHILD AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STATE”
PART II – RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CHILD AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STATE

11. CLAUSE – 3 DEFINITION AND VERIFICATION OF AGE OF CHILD be approved.

12. CLAUSE – 4 RIGHT TO NAME, NATIONALITY AND IDENTITY be approved.

13. CLAUSE – 5 RIGHT TO LIFE, SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT be approved.

14. CLAUSE – 6 RIGHT TO GROW UP WITH PARENTS be approved.

15. CLAUSE – 7 RIGHT TO PARENTAL PROPERTY be approved:

16. CLAUSE – 8 RIGHT TO SOCIAL ACTIVITY be approved.

17. CLAUSE – 9 RIGHT TO OPINION PARTICIPATION AND ASSOCIATION be approved.

18. CLAUSE – 10 MINIMUM AGE OF MARRIAGE AND RIGHT TO REFUSE BETROTHAL MARRIAGE be expunged.

19. CLAUSE – 11 MINIMUM AGE OF RECRUITMENT INTO ARMED FORCES numbering be amended to become Clause “10.”

20. CLAUSE – 10 MINIMUM AGE OF RECRUITMENT INTO ARMED FORCES be approved.

21. CLAUSE – 12 RIGHT TO NATIONAL CULTURE AND PRIDE numbering be amended to become Clause “11.”

22. CLAUSE – 11 RIGHT TO NATIONAL CULTURE AND PRIDE be approved.

23. CLAUSE – 13 RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHILD numbering be amended to become Clause “12.”

24. CLAUSE – 12 RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHILD be approved.

25. CLAUSE – 14 RESPONSIBILITIES OF STATE numbering be amended to become Clause “13.”

26. CLAUSE – 13 RESPONSIBILITIES OF STATE be approved.

27. CLAUSE – 15 PENALTY be expunged.

PART – III

GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

28. CLAUSE – 16 BEST INTEREST OF CHILD numbering be amended to become clause “14.”

29. CLAUSE – 14 BEST INTEREST OF CHILD: [sub clause 1] be amended by deleting the word “**children**” on the second line after the word “**concerning**” and before the word “**whether**” and inserting the phrase “**a child**” to now read, “In every Law, public or private initiative, problematic situation and action, concerning a child, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of Law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.”

30. CLAUSE – 14 BEST INTEREST OF CHILD: [Sub Clause 2b] be amended by replacing the word “**interpretive**” with the word “**interpretative**” to now read, “a fundamental and interpretative legal principle.”

31. CLAUSE – 17 NON-DISCRIMINATION numbering be amended to become Clause “15.”

32. CLAUSE – 15 NON-DISCRIMINATION be approved.

33. CLAUSE – 18 CHILD’S OPINION AND VIEW numbering be amended to become Clause “16.”

34. CLAUSE – 16 CHILD’S OPINION AND VIEW be approved.

35. CLAUSE – 19 CHILDREN TO BE TREATED EQUALLY numbering be amended to become Clause “17.”

36. CLAUSE – 17 CHILDREN TO BE TREATED EQUALLY be amended by replacing the phrase “**boys and girls**” at the beginning of the paragraph with the phrase “**Every child**” and also deleting the word “**negative**” on the first line after the word “**from**” and before the word “**tradition**” to now read, “Every child shall be protected from traditions and norms that create unequal access to resources, unequal social status and unequal opportunities for their development.”

37. CLAUSE – 20 CHILD REPRESENTATION numbering be amended to become Clause “18.”

38. CLAUSE – 18 CHILD REPRESENTATION be approved.

PART – IV

PROTECTION FROM ABUSE, VIOLENCE, EXPLOITATION AND NEGLECT

39. CLAUSE – 21 PROTECTION FROM ALL FORMS OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE numbering be amended to become Clause “19.”

40. CLAUSE – 19 PROTECTION FROM ALL FORMS OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE: [Sub Clause 1] be amended by deleting the phrase “**and cultural practices**” after the word “**punishment**” and before the word “**which**” on the third line to now read, “A child shall not be subjected to physical violence including torture, other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, or punishment which dehumanizes or is injurious to the physical and mental welfare of a child.”

41. CLAUSE – 19 PROTECTION FROM ALL FORMS OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE be amended by deleting Sub Clause 2.

42. CLAUSE – 22 PROTECTION FROM PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE numbering be amended to become Clause “20.”

43. CLAUSE – 20 PROTECTION FROM PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE: [Sub Clause 1] be amended to read, “A child shall not be subjected to

psychological and emotional violence including persistent attacks on the child's sense of self, through habitual humiliation, belittling, threats, public shaming and exposure to violence."

44. CLAUSE – 20 PROTECTION FROM PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL

ABUSE: [Sub Clause 2b] be amended by deleting the word "**legal**" after the word "**parent**" and before the word "**guardian**" on the fourth line to now read "appropriate legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of psychological and emotional abuse, while in the care of a parent, legal guardian or any other person who has the care of the child."

45. CLAUSE – 23 PROTECTION OF CHILD FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE

numbering be amended to become Clause "21."

46. CLAUSE – 21 PROTECTION OF CHILD FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE:

Side note be amended by inserting the letter "**a**" after the word "**of**" and before the word "**child**" to now read "protection of a child from sexual violence."

47. CLAUSE – 21 PROTECTION OF A CHILD FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE be amended by inserting a new [Sub Clause 1] to read, "A child shall not be subjected to any form of sexual violence, exploitation and abuse."

48. CLAUSE – 21 PROTECTION OF A CHILD FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE be amended by changing the previous [Sub Clause 1] to become [Sub Clause 2]. [Sub Clause 2] be amended by deleting the phrase "**bilateral and multilateral**" after the word "**national**" and before the word "**measures**" on the third line and inserting the phrase "**and international**" to now read, "A person, court or other authority shall protect a child from all forms of sexual exploitation, violence and sexual abuse and take appropriate national and international measures to prevent -"

49. CLAUSE – 21 PROTECTION OF A CHILD FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE: [Sub Clause 2b] be amended by deleting the word "**children**" and replacing it with the phrase "**a child**" to now read, "the exploitative use of a child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices."

50. CLAUSE – 21 PROTECTION OF A CHILD FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE: [Sub Clause 2c] be amended by deleting the word "**children**" and replacing it with the phrase "**a child**" to now read, "the exploitative use of a child in pornographic performances and materials" [interruption].

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Point of Order Mr Speaker. If you want to alter something from the substantive Report you should make it clear in the Report so that we can follow and we would note it down.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Leader.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: So let me take you back because there is an area where you talked about typographical error that you did not make it clear to us. So I beg you through Mr Chairman for you to go over that and give us the appropriate correction.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Thank you very much. Page 7 of the Report line 50 Clause 21 Protection of the Child from sexual violence sub-Clause 2 [c] be amended by deleting the word 'children and replacing it with the phrase 'a child' to now read the exploitative of a Child then the changes there instead of prostitution or unlawful from pornographic performances and materials. Clause 21 Protection of a Child from Sexual Violence be amended by changing the previous Sub Clause 2 to become Sub-Clause 3 and Sub-Clause 3[a][b] be amended by adding the letter "S" at the beginning of the third line to be "support" to now ready effective procedures for the establishment of social programs to provide necessary support for the Child and for those who have the care of the Child as well as other forms of prevention and for identification reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow up instances of Child sexual abuse.

51. CLAUSE – 21 PROTECTION OF A CHILD FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE be Approved.

52. CLAUSE – 21 PROTECTION OF A CHILD FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE: [Sub Clause 3[b] be amended by replacing the word "**legislative**" with the word "**legal**" on the first line after the word "**appropriate**" and before the word "**administrative**" and inserting the word "**or**" after the word "**and**" and before the word "**educational**" and also deleting the word "**legal**" on the third line after the word "**parent**" and before the word "**guardian**" on the fourth line. To now read, "appropriate legal, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of sexual abuse, while in the care of a parent, legal guardian or any other person who has the care of the child."

53. CLAUSE – 24 PROTECTION FROM EARLY OR FORCED MARRIAGE AND BETROTHAL be amended to become Clause 22.

54. CLAUSE – 22 PROTECTION FROM EARLY OR FORCED MARRIAGE AND BETROTHAL be amended to read, “the minimum age of marriage shall be as stated in The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2024 [Act 5 of 2024].”

55. CLAUSE – 25 PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL PRACTICES be amended to become Clause 23.

56. CLAUSE – 23 PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL PRACTICES be expunged.

57. NEW CLAUSE – 23 be inserted with side note to read, “Protection from collective violence against a child”

58. Clause – 23 PROTECTION FROM COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE AGAINST A CHILD: The committee recommends the following insertions for the Plenary to decide;
OPTION1: No child shall be subjected to collective violence.

OPTION 2:

- It shall be an offence for any person, group, or authority to perform, assist, or facilitate any procedure that intentionally causes harm or alteration to the body of a person under the age of 18, including but not limited to [Interruption].

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Why are you shouting? He is reading the Report, I hope you not shouting.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Honourable Members, please bear with me I still have twenty-nine [29] more pages to read, have just read nine pages, so we have twenty-nine pages to go, please exercise patient.

- [a] The removal, cutting, or damaging of any organs that is typically associated with reproduction or sexual function; or [b] any other procedure or action that results in physical harm, injury, or permanent alteration.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, you have gone down the chair and you are drinking your tea or coffee because yesterday was your birthday. Colleagues, he is just reading a Report by the mandate given to him by the Standing Orders so I ask that you patient with him. We do not want to discourage the Committee they have done a very good job, they are presenting a Report to the House.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Chairman, for the purposes of this Section: “Legitimate medical purpose” refers to any medical procedure carried out by a licensed medical practitioner, which is necessary for the prevention, treatment, or management

of a recognized medical condition, in accordance with accepted standards of care and practice, as outlined in National or International Medical Guidelines, complying with the World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases, and the International Classification of Violence against Children.

59. CLAUSE – 26 PROTECTION FROM NEGLECT be amended to become Clause 24.

60. CLAUSE – 24 PROTECTION FROM NEGLECT be amended to read, "[1] A person court of authority shall take appropriate legal, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of neglect and negligent treatment while in the care of his parent, legal guardian or any other person who has the care of the child. "[2] A child shall not be subjected to any form of neglect or negligent treatment while in the care of his parent, legal guardian or any other person who has the care of the child. A person who contravenes this Section, the local council may request a Probation Officer and a Police Officer to remove the child from such negligent caregiver to a place of safety and refer such as case to the family Court.

61. CLAUSE – 27 PROTECTION FROM CHILD TRAFFICKING be amended to become Clause 25.

62. CLAUSE – 25 PROTECTION FROM CHILD TRAFFICKING

63. CLAUSE – 28 PROTECTION FROM EXPLOITATIVE CHILD LABOUR be amended to become Clause 26.

64. CLAUSE – 26 PROTECTION FROM EXPLOITATIVE CHILD LABOUR: [Sub Clause 1 be amended to read, "No person shall subject a child to any form of exploitative labour including recruitment.

65. CLAUSE – 29 PROTECTION FROM CYBER-ATTACK be amended to become Clause 27.

66. CLAUSE – 27 PROTECTION FROM CYBER-ATTACK be amended to read, "A person, court or other authority shall take appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of online violence and exploitation, including bullying and harassment, economic exploitation, personal data misuse and harmful content."

67. CLAUSE – 30 PROTECTIVE MEASURES be amended to become Clause 28.

68. CLAUSE – 28 PROTECTIVE MEASURES be approved.

69. CLAUSE – 31 FAMILY SUPPORT UNITS be amended to become Clause 29.

70. CLAUSE – 29 FAMILY SUPPORT UNITS be approved.

71. NEW CLAUSE – 30 be inserted, side note to read, "Prohibition of corporal punishment."

72. CLAUSE – 30 PROHIBITION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT be inserted to read, "A child shall not be subjected to corporal punishment."

73. CLAUSE – 32 PENALTY FOR CONTRAVENTION be amended to become Clause 31.

74. CLAUSE – 31 PENALTY FOR CONTRAVENTION be amended by replacing the word "**exceeding**" with the phrase "**less than**" on the second line to now read, "A person who contravenes a provision of this part commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not less than Le30, 000 or to a term of imprisonment not less than 2 years or to both such fine and imprisonment."

PART V –

EMPLOYMENT OF THE CHILD be expunged because this is already in the Employment Act we never needed to restate it here.

PART VI – CHILD JUSTICE be amended to become "**PART V**" because if you check it is from Page 14 and it is in the Employment Act so we do not need to restate it here just like we did for the reference of Child Marriage to the Act itself. Thank you Mr Leader.

PART V – CHILD JUSTICE:

75. CLAUSE – 47 ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTION OF CHILD PANELS be expunged.

76. CLAUSE – 48 COMPOSITION OF CHILD PANEL be expunged.

77. CLAUSE – 49 MEETING OF CHILD PANEL be expunged.

78. CLAUSE – 50 JUVENILE COURT be amended to become Clause 32.

79. CLAUSE – 32 JUVENILE COURT: Sub Clause [3] be amended by deleting the phrase "**or a magistrate with over 5 years of experience**" on the second line to now read, "A juvenile court shall be presided over by a Magistrate."

80. CLAUSE – 32 JUVENILE COURT: Sub Clause [4] be amended by replacing the word “**sufficient**” with the word “**required**” at the beginning of the third line to now read, “A presiding Magistrate shall before commencement of proceedings in a juvenile court, ensure that a Probation Officer of required competence relevant to the requirements of this Act is present.”

81. CLAUSE – 51 JURISDICTION OF JUVENILE COURT be amended to become Clause 33.

82. CLAUSE – 33 JURISDICTION OF JUVENILE COURT: [Sub Clause 2[b] be amended by replacing the date “**1965**” with “**2024**” on the seventh line to now read, “a juvenile court, it appears to the court that the person charged or to whom the proceedings relate, is of the age of 18 years or over, the court shall proceed with the hearing and determination of the case in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Act 2024 but nothing herein shall be deemed to make it necessary for the court to adjourn the case into the public court room unless the court considers it desirable so to do and the court so constituted shall be a Magistrate court.”

83. CLAUSE – 52 SEPARATION OF CHILDREN FROM ADULTS ON TRIAL be amended to become Clause 34.

84. CLAUSE – 34 SEPARATION OF CHILDREN FROM ADULTS ON TRIAL: Side note be amended by deleting the word “**children**” and inserting the word “**child**” and also inserting the letter “**a**” after the word “**of**” to now read, “separation of a child from adults on trial.”

85. CLAUSE – 34 SEPARATION OF A CHILD FROM ADULTS ON TRIAL be approved.

86. CLAUSE – 53 JURY TRIAL IN CHILDREN MATTERS be expunged.

87. CLAUSE – 54 SITTING AND ATTENDANCE IN JUVENILE COURT be amended to become Clause 35.

88. CLAUSE – 35 SITTING AND ATTENDANCE IN JUVENILE COURT be approved.

89. CLAUSE – 55 PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION ON CHILD PROHIBITED be amended to become Clause 36.

90. CLAUSE – 36 PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION ON CHILD PROHIBITED be approved.

91. CLAUSE – 56 PARENT OR GUARDIAN TO ATTEND COURT be amended to become Clause 37.

92. CLAUSE – 37 PARENT OR GUARDIAN TO ATTEND COURT be approved.

93. CLAUSE – 57 ASSOCIATION WITH ADULTS WHILST IN CUSTODY be amended to become Clause 38.

94. CLAUSE – 38 ASSOCIATION WITH ADULTS WHILST IN CUSTODY be approved.

95. CLAUSE – 58 CRIMINAL PROCEDURE IN JUVENILE COURT be amended to become Clause 39.

96. CLAUSE – 39 CRIMINAL PROCEDURE IN JUVENILE COURT be approved.

97. CLAUSE – 59 FAMILY COURT be amended to become Clause 40.

98. CLAUSE – 40 FAMILY COURT be approved [*Interruption*].

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I have told the Chairman he has done a very good job and if we have to debate this Report we should do it in a correct order. You said Clause **59 FAMILY COURT** numbering be amended to become Clause 40? We do not have the numbering for the next Clause that you are reading. What is the Clause?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: That is Clause 40.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Okay, can you lead us to say Clause 40?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Clause 40 **FAMILY COURT** be approved. I thought I already stated it, but it is good to state it again, thank you very much.

99. CLAUSE – 60 COMPOSITION OF FAMILY COURT numbering be amended to become Clause 41.

100. CLAUSE – 41 COMPOSITION OF FAMILY COURT be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**” on the fifth line and the sixth line. To now read, “A Family Court shall be duly constituted by a panel consisting of a Chairman who shall be a Magistrate and not less than 2 and not more than 4 other members all of whom shall be appointed for their knowledge or experience in child rights issues, including a Social Protection Officer, appointed by the Chief Justice on the recommendation of the Chief Protection Officer.”

101. CLAUSE – 61 JURISDICTION OF FAMILY COURT numbering be amended to become Clause 42.

102. CLAUSE – 42 JURISDICTION OF FAMILY COURT be amended by deleting the word “**children**” and replacing it with the phrase “**a child**” on the second line. To now read, “A Family Court shall have jurisdiction in matters concerning parentage, custody, access and maintenance of a child and shall exercise such other powers as are conferred on it by this Act or under any other enactment.”

103. CLAUSE – 62 FAMILY COURT SITTINGS numbering be amended to become Clause 43.

104. CLAUSE – 43 FAMILY COURT SITTINGS: [Sub Clause 1d] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social worker**” with the word “**protection**” to now read, “Probation and Protection Officers.

105. CLAUSE – 63 PROCEDURE AT FAMILY COURT numbering be amended to become Clause 44.

106. CLAUSE – 44 PROCEDURE AT FAMILY COURT be approved.

107. CLAUSE – 64 RIGHTS OF CHILD AT FAMILY COURT numbering be amended to become Clause 45.

108. CLAUSE – 45 RIGHTS OF CHILD AT FAMILY COURT be approved.

109. CLAUSE – 65 PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION ON CHILD PROHIBITED numbering be amended to become Clause 46.

110. CLAUSE – 46 PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION ON CHILD PROHIBITED be approved.

111. CLAUSE – 66 DECLARATION OF GOALS OF CHILD JUSTICE SYSTEM numbering be amended to become Clause 47.

112. CLAUSE – 47 DECLARATION OF GOALS OF CHILD JUSTICE SYSTEM be approved.

113. CLAUSE – 67 AGE OF CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY numbering be amended to become Clause 48.

114. CLAUSE – 48 AGE OF CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY be approved.

115. CLAUSE – 68 DETERMINATION OF AGE numbering be amended to become Clause 49.

116. CLAUSE – 49 DETERMINATION OF AGE be approved.

117. CLAUSE – 69 DIVERSION AND SUPPORT SERVICES numbering be amended to become Clause 50.

118. CLAUSE – 50 DIVERSION AND SUPPORT SERVICES be approved.

119. CLAUSE – 70 DIVERSIONARY PROGRAMMES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS numbering be amended to become Clause 51.

120. CLAUSE – 51 DIVERSIONARY PROGRAMMES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS: [Sub Clause 4] be amended by changing the second letter “d” to letter “e.”

121. CLAUSE – 51 DIVERSIONARY PROGRAMMES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS: [Sub Clause 5] be amended by replacing the phrase “social worker” with the phrase “protection officer” at the end of the third line. To now read, “The Director of Children’s Affairs Directorate, of the Ministry shall establish and maintain a constantly updated registry of measures which serve as a reference guide for Protection Officer, the Family Support Units and the courts.”

122. CLAUSE – 71 PROHIBITION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN CARE OR DETENTION be expunged.

123. CLAUSE – 72 PRE-TRIAL INVESTIGATION PROCESSES numbering be amended to become Clause 53.

124. CLAUSE – 52 PRE-TRIAL INVESTIGATION PROCESSES be approved.

125. CLAUSE – 73 INTERVIEW numbering be amended to become Clause 53.

126. CLAUSE – 53 INTERVIEW: [Sub Clause 1] be amended by inserting the word “all” at the start of the sentence. To now read, “All interviews of a child in conflict with the law.”

127. CLAUSE – 53 INTERVIEW: [Sub Clause 1[a]] be amended by changing the second Roman number “ii” to Roman number “iii”.

128. CLAUSE – 53 INTERVIEW: [Sub Clause 1[d]] be amended by deleting the word “children” and replacing it with the phrase “a child” on the second line. To now read, “be in accordance with prescribed procedures for interview of a child emphasizing how and what questions are asked and who is present for the interview.”

129. CLAUSE – 74 DETENTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES numbering be amended to become Clause 54.

130. CLAUSE – 54 DETENTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES be amended by replacing the word “**hother**” with the phrase “**have other**” at the beginning of the paragraph. To now read, “have other appropriate assistance as well as the right to challenge the legality of the deprivation of his liberty before a court or other competent, independent and impartial authority, and to a prompt decision on any such action.”

131. CLAUSE – 54 DETENTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES: [Sub Clause 5] be amended by changing the second letter “**a**” to letter “**b**” and continue the process to letter “**k**” which now becomes letter “**l**”.

132. CLAUSE – 75 DETENTION OF CHILD AWAITING TRIAL numbering be amended to become Clause 55.

133. CLAUSE – 55 DETENTION OF CHILD AWAITING TRIAL be approved.

134. CLAUSE – 76 TRIAL PROCEDURE numbering be amended to become Clause 56.

135. CLAUSE – 56 TRIAL PROCEDURE be approved.

136. CLAUSE – 77 SUMMONS numbering be amended to become Clause 57.

137. CLAUSE – 57 SUMMONS be approved.

138. CLAUSE – 78 SENTENCING numbering be amended to become Clause 58.

139. CLAUSE – 58 SENTENCING: [Sub Clause 2] the Committee decided that this provision be sent to the Plenary for decision [*Interruption*].

HON MATHEW S. NYUMA: hold on, is it Sub-Clause 2?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: It should be Sub Clause 2.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Okay.

140. CLAUSE – 79 REVIEW OF SENTENCE numbering be amended to become Clause 59.

141. CLAUSE – 59 REVIEW OF SENTENCE be amended by inserting the letter “**a**” after the word “**of**” and before the word “**child**” on the first line. To now read, “The Court may, review non-custodial sentence of a child in conflict with the Law where the child has failed to comply with the initial sentence and conditions set out therein.”

142. CLAUSE – 80 REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION numbering be amended to become Clause 60.

143. CLAUSE – 60 REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION be approved.

PART VII –

CHILDREN IN NEED OF SPECIAL CARE AND PROTECTION be amended to become part “VI.

PART VI –

CHILDREN IN NEED OF SPECIAL CARE AND PROTECTION

144. CLAUSE – 81 CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION numbering be amended to become Clause 61.

145. CLAUSE – 61 CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION: [Sub Clause 1k] be amended by replacing the phrase “**the Anti-Human Trafficking Act 2005**” with the phrase “**The Anti-Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Act 2022;**” at the end of the sentence. To now read, “is a person in relation to whom an offence has been committed or attempted under the Anti-Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Act 2022.”

146. CLAUSE – 82 PERSONS TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE AND PROTECTION CASES numbering be amended to become Clause 62.

147. CLAUSE – 62 PERSONS TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE AND PROTECTION CASES be approved.

148. CLAUSE – 83 CARE ORDER OF A FAMILY COURT numbering be amended to become Clause 63.

149. CLAUSE – 63 CARE ORDER OF A FAMILY COURT: [Sub Clause 1] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**” and also changing the number “**88**” to number “**68**”. To now read “A Family Court may issue a care order to a Local Council on application by a Probation Officer or Protection Officer under section 68.”

150. CLAUSE – 84 SUPERVISION ORDER OF FAMILY COURT numbering be amended to become Clause 64.

151. CLAUSE – 64 SUPERVISION ORDER OF FAMILY COURT: [Sub Clause 1] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**” and

also changing the number “88” to number “68.” To now read, “A Family Court may issue a supervision order to a Local Council on an application by a Probation Officer or Protection Officer under section 68.

152. CLAUSE – 64 SUPERVISION ORDER OF FAMILY COURT: [Sub Clause 3] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**” on the second line. To now read, “The supervision order shall place a child under the supervision of the Probation Officer or Protection Officer while he remains in the custody of his parent, guardian, or relative.”

153. CLAUSE – 85 DUTIES OF SOCIAL WORKERS, SOCIAL SERVICES AND PROTECTION OFFICERS numbering be amended to become Clause 65.

154. CLAUSE – 65 DUTIES OF SOCIAL WORKERS, SOCIAL SERVICES AND PROTECTION OFFICERS be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**” on the first line. To now read, “The duties of a Probation Officer or Protection Officer with respect to a care or supervision order are to”

155. CLAUSE – 86 HOME VISITS numbering be amended to become Clause 65.

156. CLAUSE – 65 HOME VISITS be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**” on the first line. To now read, “A Probation Officer or Social Welfare Officer shall be permitted by a parent, guardian or relative of the child to visit the child while he is with any of them.”

157. CLAUSE – 87 GENERAL PROVISIONS ON ORDERS numbering be amended to become Clause 67.

158. CLAUSE – 67 GENERAL PROVISIONS ON ORDERS: [Sub Clause 1] be amended by inserting the word “**and**” after the word “**Police**” and before the word “**returned**” on the third line. To now read, “A child who contravenes an order from the Family Court and runs away may be apprehended without warrant by the Police and returned to the place of the care or supervision order.

159. CLAUSE – 88 DISCHARGE OF ORDERS numbering be amended to become Clause 68.

160. CLAUSE – 68 DISCHARGE OF ORDERS: [Sub Clause [c] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**”. To now read, “a Protection Officer; or.”

161. CLAUSE – 89 CARE ORDER AND ADOPTION numbering be amended to become Clause 69.

162. CLAUSE – 69 CARE ORDER AND ADOPTION be approved.

PART VIII –

PARENTAGE, PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES, CARE, CUSTODY AND ACCESS:
be amended to become **PART VII.**

PART VII –

PARENTAGE, PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES, CARE, CUSTODY AND ACCESS

163. CLAUSE – 90 PARENTAL RIGHTS numbering be amended to become Clause 70.

164. CLAUSE – 70 PARENTAL RIGHTS be approved.

165. CLAUSE – 91 CONFIRMATION OF PARENTAGE numbering be amended to become Clause 71.

166. CLAUSE – 71 CONFIRMATION OF PARENTAGE: [Sub Clause 1[e] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection.**” To now read, “a Protection Officer.”

167. CLAUSE – 92 EVIDENCE OF PARENTAGE numbering be amended to become Clause 72.

168. CLAUSE – 72 EVIDENCE OF PARENTAGE: [Sub Clause [b] be amended by replacing the word “**father**” with the word “**parent.**” To now read, “performance of customary ceremony by the parent of the child.”

169. CLAUSE – 93 MEDICAL TESTS numbering be amended to become Clause 73.

170. CLAUSE – 73 MEDICAL TESTS be approved.

171. CLAUSE – 94 PARENTAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES numbering be amended to become Clause 74 [Interruption].

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we have some visitors among us this morning, they are dignitaries from the Republic of Liberia and they are here purely on a peer-learning visit to the Republic of Sierra Leone Parliament. They are among us this morning and let me at this stage recognize their presence for your attention. We have among us Honourable Moima Bricks-Mensah, is the Chair of the Women’s Legislative Caucus in the House of Representatives of Liberia. We have Honourable Rugie Yatu-

Barrie, are you here? Oh she is not here. She is also a Member of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Liberia. We have Honourable Julie Weah, she too is not here for now. We have Honourable Gbesseh Sonia-Feykia, is she here? She is not here; let me get the updated list. Let me start with Honourable Helen Arthur-Reah, she is the Chair Women's Legislative Caucus, she is representative of District No. 3 Magibikatu, Honourable Moima Bricks-Mensah, she is representative of District No. 6 Borncatie, a Member Women's Legislative Caucus, she is actually a Member not the Chair. Honourable Mildad N. Sayurt, she is the Chief Clerk what we called here the Clerk of Parliament, she is the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives Republic of Liberia. Honourable Priscilla Abraham Cooper, Mr B. Macalthy- Wei, he is the Director of Legislative Information Service in the House of Representatives in Liberia. We have Mr Michael K. Kollie, he is the Information and Technology [IT] Director of Senate. We have Ernest Dorgu-Jalla, is the Head of Secretariat Youth Legislative Caucus in the House of Representatives and they are accompanied by CSOs and some media houses. One of them is Mr Joshua Clawson, he is the Deputy Program Director for NAMOD in Liberia. We have Madam Esther Wango-Davies; she is the Executive Director of WANGOSOR. We have Mr C. Rogett-Chair, he is the program Manager for IREP, we have Madam Rosetta Fadollow, is the Secretary General of FLY. We have Jackson C. Clay Junior, is the Vice President of LEGISPO in Liberia, we have Councilor Oscar Blur, am I right to call you Councilor? Is he Councilor? He is the Country Director for NIMD, and then we have Councilor Darren Doema, is the Program Manager for NIMD. I hope I have not left anybody out. You are heartily welcome to the House of Parliament; this is the People's House. Of course, I do not need to inform you further what Parliament does, this is the House of the People and Members of Parliament these are our visitors. They are here on a peer-learning visit to this House, very soon immediately after sitting they will be meeting Leaders of Parliament, and I do not know if you have a program with the Female Caucus of Parliament. We have a very active Female Caucus here and they have been doing extremely well. The Female Caucus of this Parliament championed a whole Bill to be passed into Law where we now have into our Laws not less than 30% of Women to come to Parliament. So they have worked with all the Political Parties to ensure that 30% of them come to Parliament so if you engage with them you will learn a whole lot from them. I often tell people I so believe in women because throughout my days as a pupil then as a student I was thought mostly by women and when I completed my studies and at a point I taught for a couple of years and I saw the diligence of women. I do not say women are not corrupt but the level of corruption among women is so less when compared to men because we think about different things at the same time but for the women even if they have to indulge into it, it is at a very minimal level because they want to take care of something just at home that is why their corruption is far less as compared to men. I will say that anywhere so

if you engage them you will learn a lot. They are strong women just look at them every one is fire brand. When they stand to deliver you know a woman is talking so you will learn a lot from them. Thank you very much for coming; this is the House of Parliament.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Chairman. I hope along the line there will be more people to be recognized.

169. CLAUSE – 93 MEDICAL TESTS numbering be amended to become Clause 73.

170. CLAUSE – 73 MEDICAL TESTS be approved.

171. CLAUSE – 94 PARENTAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES numbering be amended to become Clause 74.

172. CLAUSE – 74 PARENTAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: [Sub Clause 2[a] be amended by deleting the phrase “**they believe**” after the word “**that**” and before the word “**are**” on the second line and also replacing the word “**his**” with the word “**the**” after the word “**of**” and before the word “**child**” on the third line. To now read, “the authority to make decisions concerning the child’s upbringing, that are in the best interests of the child; choices about education, healthcare, religious upbringing, and other important matters that impact the child’s life.”

173. CLAUSE – 95 DUTY TO INSTILL CULTURAL AND NATIONAL PRIDE numbering be amended to become Clause 75.

174. CLAUSE – 75 DUTY TO INSTILL CULTURAL AND NATIONAL PRIDE be approved.

175. CLAUSE – 96 RESPONSIBILITY OF FOSTER PARENT numbering be amended to become Clause 76.

176. CLAUSE – 76 RESPONSIBILITY OF FOSTER PARENT: [Sub Clause [c] be amended by correcting the spelling “**enrol**” to “**enroll**” on the second line. To now read, “attending to the education of the foster child, if of age, enroll him in school and take active interest in the education of the foster child.”

177. CLAUSE – 76 RESPONSIBILITY OF FOSTER PARENT: [Sub Clause [e] be amended by replacing the word “**nurturing**” with the word “**caring**” on the second line and also replacing the word “**difficult**” with the word “**challenging**” on the fourth line. To now read, “managing the behaviour of the foster child by being caring, patient and understanding and having a system in place to handle challenging behaviour to help the child deal with their situation.”

178. CLAUSE – 76 RESPONSIBILITY OF FOSTER PARENT: [Sub Clause [f] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social service**” with the phrase “**case management**” after the word “**the**” and before the word “**care**” on the third line. To now read, “encouraging contact with family by promoting healthy contact between the foster child and his family and employ the case management care plan to ensure contact is maintained and managed appropriately.”

179. CLAUSE – 97 GUARDIANSHIP numbering be amended to become Clause 77.

180. CLAUSE – 77 GUARDIANSHIP be approved.

181. CLAUSE – 98 APPLICATION FOR CUSTODY numbering be amended to become Clause 78.

182. CLAUSE – 78 APPLICATION FOR CUSTODY be approved.

183. CLAUSE – 99 APPLICATION FOR ACCESS numbering be amended to become Clause 79.

184. CLAUSE – 79 APPLICATION FOR ACCESS be approved.

185. CLAUSE – 100 CONSIDERATION FOR CUSTODY numbering be amended to become Clause 80.

186. CLAUSE – 80 CONSIDERATION FOR CUSTODY be approved.

187. CLAUSE – 101 UNLAWFUL REMOVAL OF CHILD numbering be amended to become Clause 81.

188. CLAUSE – 81 UNLAWFUL REMOVAL OF CHILD be approved.

189. CLAUSE – 102 DUTY TO MAINTAIN A CHILD numbering be amended to become Clause 82.

190. CLAUSE – 82 DUTY TO MAINTAIN A CHILD be approved.

191. CLAUSE – 103 APPLICATION FOR MAINTENANCE ORDER numbering be amended to become Clause 83.

192. CLAUSE – 83 APPLICATION FOR MAINTENANCE ORDER be approved.

193. CLAUSE – 104 CONSIDERATION FOR MAINTENANCE ORDER numbering be amended to become Clause 84.

194. CLAUSE – 84 CONSIDERATION FOR MAINTENANCE ORDER be approved.

195. CLAUSE – 105 REQUEST FOR SOCIAL ENQUIRY REPORT numbering be amended to become Clause 85.

196. CLAUSE – 85 REQUEST FOR SOCIAL ENQUIRY REPORT: [Sub Clause 1] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**” after the word “**or**” and before the word “**officer**” on the second line. To now read, “A Family Court may request that a Probation Officer or Protection Officer should prepare a social enquiry Report on the issue of maintenance before it for consideration.”

197. CLAUSE – 85 REQUEST FOR SOCIAL ENQUIRY REPORT: [Sub Clause 2] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**” at the end of the second line. To now read, “A Family Court shall, in making any order consider the social enquiry report prepared by the Probation Officer or Protection Officer.”

198. CLAUSE – 106 FORM OF MAINTENANCE ORDER numbering be amended to become Clause 86.

199. CLAUSE – 86 FORM OF MAINTENANCE ORDER: [Sub Clause 1[c] be expunged.

200. CLAUSE – 107 PERSONS ENTITLED TO MAINTENANCE ORDER numbering be amended to become Clause 87.

201. CLAUSE – 87 PERSONS ENTITLED TO MAINTENANCE ORDER be approved.

202. CLAUSE – 108 DURATION OF ORDER numbering be amended to become Clause 88.

203. CLAUSE – 88 DURATION OF ORDER be approved.

204. CLAUSE – 109 CONTINUATION OF MAINTENANCE ORDER IN CERTAIN CASES numbering be amended to become Clause 89.

205. CLAUSE – 89 CONTINUATION OF MAINTENANCE ORDER IN CERTAIN CASES be approved.

206. CLAUSE – 110 VARIATION OR DISCHARGE OF ORDERS numbering be amended to become Clause 90.

207. CLAUSE – 90 VARIATION OR DISCHARGE OF ORDERS be approved.

208. CLAUSE – 111 ENFORCEMENT OF ORDER numbering be amended to become Clause 91.

209. CLAUSE – 91 ENFORCEMENT OF ORDER be approved.

210. CLAUSE – 112 NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT TO HAVE ACCESS TO CHILD numbering be amended to become Clause 92.

211. CLAUSE – 92 NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT TO HAVE ACCESS TO CHILD be approved.

212. CLAUSE – 113 AVOIDANCE OF MULTIPLE MAINTENANCE APPLICATION numbering be amended to become Clause 93.

213. CLAUSE – 93 AVOIDANCE OF MULTIPLE MAINTENANCE APPLICATION be approved.

214. CLAUSE – 114 OFFENCES UNDER THIS PART numbering be amended to become Clause 94.

215. CLAUSE – 94 OFFENCES UNDER THIS PART: Fine provision be amended by replacing the word “**exceeding**” with the phrase “**less than**” at the end of the first line. To now read, “commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not less than Le 5,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.”

216. CLAUSE – 115 PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION be amended to become Clause 95.

217. CLAUSE – 95 PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION be approved.

218. CLAUSE – 116 WAIVERS OF FEES numbering be amended to become Clause 96.

219. CLAUSE – 96 WAIVERS OF FEES be approved.

PART IX –

ALTERNATIVE CARE ADOPTION AND DAYCARE be amended to become **PART VIII.**

PART VIII – ALTERNATIVE CARE ADOPTION AND DAYCARE

220. CLAUSE – 117 GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PROVISION OF ALTERNATIVE CARE numbering be amended to become Clause 97.

221. CLAUSE – 97 GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PROVISION OF ALTERNATIVE CARE be approved.

222. CLAUSE – 118 GUIDANCE FOR FOSTERAGE OF CHILD numbering be amended to become Clause 98.

223. CLAUSE – 98 GUIDANCE FOR FOSTERAGE OF CHILD: Side Note be amended by inserting the letter “a” after the word “of” and before the word “child.” To now read, “Guidance for fosterage of a child.”

224. CLAUSE – 98 GUIDANCE FOR FOSTERAGE OF A CHILD be approved.

225. CLAUSE – 119 PERSONS WHO CAN FOSTER A CHILD numbering be amended to become Clause 99.

226. CLAUSE – 99 PERSONS WHO CAN FOSTER A CHILD be approved.

227. CLAUSE – 120 CONDITIONS FOR FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT numbering be amended to become Clause 100.

228. CLAUSE – 100 CONDITIONS FOR FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT be approved.

229. CLAUSE – 121 APPLICATION FOR FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT numbering be amended to become Clause 101.

230. CLAUSE – 101 APPLICATION FOR FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT be approved.

231. CLAUSE – 122 MONITORING FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT numbering be amended to become Clause 102.

232. CLAUSE – 102 MONITORING FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT be approved.

233. CLAUSE – 123 REUNIFICATION OF CHILD IN FOSTER CARE WITH BIOLOGICAL PARENTS OR GUARDIAN numbering be amended to become Clause 103.

234. CLAUSE – 103 REUNIFICATION OF CHILD IN FOSTER CARE WITH BIOLOGICAL PARENTS OR GUARDIAN be approved.

235. CLAUSE – 124 ADOPTION APPLICATION BY FOSTER PARENT numbering be amended to become Clause 104.

236. CLAUSE – 104 ADOPTION APPLICATION BY FOSTER PARENT be amended by replacing the number “30” with the number “25” after the word “least” and before the word “years” on the last line. To now read, “Subject to the Adoption Act, 1989, a person who has resided with and taken care of a child as a foster parent for not less

than a continuous period of 6 months may apply to adopt a child if he is at least 25 years of age.”

237. CLAUSE – 125 APPROVAL OF A RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME FOR CHILDREN numbering be amended to become Clause 105.

238. CLAUSE – 105 APPROVAL OF A RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME FOR CHILDREN be approved.

239. CLAUSE – 126 ADMISSION OF CHILD INTO APPROVED RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR CHILDREN numbering be amended to become Clause 106.

240. CLAUSE – 106 ADMISSION OF CHILD INTO APPROVED RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR CHILDREN be approved.

241. CLAUSE – 127 PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF IN RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR CHILDREN numbering be amended to become Clause 107.

242. CLAUSE – 107 PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF IN RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR CHILDREN: [Sub Clause 2] be amended by inserting the word “**best**” after the word “**the**” and before the word “**interest**” on the fourth line. To now read, “Notwithstanding Sub Section [1] the parents, guardian or relatives of a child in a home for the care of children shall supplement the efforts of the home to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child by visiting the child and otherwise protecting the best interests of the child.”

243. CLAUSE 128- COURT MAY ORDER PARENT OR GUARDIAN TO CONTRIBUTE TO MAINTENANCE OF CHILD IN A RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR CHILDREN numbering be amended to become Clause 108.

244. CLAUSE 108- COURT MAY ORDER PARENT OR GUARDIAN TO CONTRIBUTE TO MAINTENANCE OF CHILD IN A RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR CHILDREN be approved.

245. CLAUSE 129- LOCAL COUNCILS TO MONITOR RESIDENTIAL HOMES FOR CHILDREN numbering be amended to become Clause 109.

246. CLAUSE 109- LOCAL COUNCILS TO MONITOR RESIDENTIAL HOMES FOR CHILDREN be approved.

247. CLAUSE 130- POWER OF MINISTER TO GIVE DIRECTIVES TO RESIDENTIAL HOMES FOR CHILDREN numbering be amended to become Clause 110.

248. CLAUSE 110- POWER OF MINISTER TO GIVE DIRECTIVES TO RESIDENTIAL HOMES FOR CHILDREN be approved.

249. CLAUSE 131- INSPECTION OF RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR CHILDREN numbering be amended to become Clause 111.

250. CLAUSE 111- INSPECTION OF RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR CHILDREN be approved.

251. CLAUSE 132- REUNIFICATION OF CHILDREN IN RESIDENTIAL HOMES FOR CHILDREN numbering be amended to become Clause 112.

252. CLAUSE 112- REUNIFICATION OF CHILDREN IN RESIDENTIAL HOMES FOR CHILDREN: [Sub Clause [1] be amended by inserting the phrase “**home for**” after the letter “**a**” and before the word “**the**” on the first line. To now read, “It shall be the responsibility of the staff of a home for the care of children, the Probation Officer, Social Welfare Officer and any other person to assist a child resident in a home for the care of children to become reunited with its parents, guardian or relatives.”

253. CLAUSE 112- REUNIFICATION OF CHILDREN IN RESIDENTIAL HOMES FOR CHILDREN: [Sub Clause [2] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**” at the end of the second line and at the beginning of the third line. To now read, “After a child has been returned to his family home from a home for the care of children, the Probation Officer and Protection Officer shall keep regular contact with the child and his family to ensure that the best interests of the child are sustained.

254. CLAUSE 112- REUNIFICATION OF CHILDREN IN RESIDENTIAL HOMES FOR CHILDREN: [Sub Clause [3] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**” after the word “**and**” and before the word “**officer**” on the fourth line. To now read, “Where a child is unable to return to his parents or to go to foster-parents or has no parent or foster-parent, he shall be encouraged and assisted by the home for the care of children and the Probation Officer and Protection Officer to become independent and self-reliant.”

255. CLAUSE 133- ADOPTION OF CHILD IN RESIDENTIAL HOMES FOR CHILDREN numbering be amended to become Clause 113.

256. CLAUSE 113- ADOPTION OF CHILD IN RESIDENTIAL HOMES FOR CHILDREN be approved.

257. CLAUSE 134- REGULATIONS ON RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR CHILDREN numbering be amended to become Clause 114.

258. CLAUSE 114- REGULATIONS ON RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR CHILDREN be approved.

259. CLAUSE 135- ADOPTION OF CHILD IN NON-RESIDENTIAL CARE SETTING numbering be amended to become Clause 115.

260. CLAUSE 115- ADOPTION OF CHILD IN NON-RESIDENTIAL CARE SETTING be approved.

261. CLAUSE 136- OFFENCES numbering be amended to become Clause 116.

262. CLAUSE 116- OFFENCES be amended to read "A person who operates a home for the care of children without a license issued by a Local Council; or [b] continues to operate a home for the care of children in contravention of this Act; or [c] obstructs or hinders a person conducting an inspection under Section 111, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not less than Le10, 000 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding one year or to both such fine and imprisonment and in the case of a continuing offence, to a further fine not exceeding Le500 for each day on which the offence continues." [2] "A body corporate that– [a] operates a home for the care of children without a license issued by a Local Council; or [b] continues to operate a home for the care of children in contravention of this Act; or [c] obstructs or hinders a person conducting an inspection under Section 111, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not less than Le20,000 in the case of a continuing offence to a further fine not exceeding Le1,000 for each day on which the offence continues."

263. CLAUSE 137- PERMIT TO OPERATE DAY-CARE CENTRE numbering be amended to become Clause 117.

264. CLAUSE – 117 PERMIT TO OPERATE DAY-CARE CENTRE be approved.

265. CLAUSE 138- INSPECTION OF DAY-CARE CENTRES numbering be amended to become Clause 118.

266. CLAUSE 118- INSPECTION OF DAY-CARE CENTRES be approved.

267. CLAUSE 139- BYE-LAWS AND GUIDELINES numbering be amended to become Clause 119.

268. CLAUSE 119- BYE-LAWS AND GUIDELINES be approved.

269. CLAUSE 140- POLICY DIRECTIVES numbering be amended to become Clause 120.

270. CLAUSE 120- POLICY DIRECTIVES be approved.

271. CLAUSE 141- EXISTING OPERATORS numbering be amended to become Clause 121.

272. CLAUSE 121- EXISTING OPERATORS be approved.

273. CLAUSE 142- GENERAL OFFENCE AND PENALTY numbering be amended to become Clause 122.

274. CLAUSE 122- GENERAL OFFENCE AND PENALTY: Fine provision be amended by replacing the word "**exceeding**" with the phrase "**less than**" at the end of the first line and also replacing the figure "**2,000**" with the figure "**10,000**", on the second line and replacing the figure "**5,000**" with the figure "**500**" on the fourth line. To now read, "commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not less than Le10,000 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding one year or to both fine and imprisonment and in the case of continuing offence to a further fine not exceeding Le500 for each day on which the offence continues.

PART X –

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN be amended to become part "**IX.**"

PART IX – NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN

275. CLAUSE 143- ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION numbering be amended to become Clause 123.

276. CLAUSE 123- ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION be approved.

277. CLAUSE 144- INDEPENDENCE OF COMMISSION numbering be amended to become Clause 124.

278. CLAUSE 124- INDEPENDENCE OF COMMISSION be approved.

279. CLAUSE 145- COMMISSIONER AND DEPUTY COMMISSIONER numbering be amended to become Clause 125.

280. CLAUSE 125- COMMISSIONER AND DEPUTY COMMISSIONER be approved.

281. CLAUSE 146- COMPOSITION OF COMMISSION numbering be amended to become Clause 126.

282. CLAUSE 126- COMPOSITION OF COMMISSION be approved.

283. CLAUSE 147- TENURE OF MEMBERS OF COMMISSION numbering be amended to become Clause 127.

284. CLAUSE 127- TENURE OF MEMBERS OF COMMISSION: [Sub Clause [1] be amended by inserting the phrase **"for a further term of 3 years only"** at the end of the sentence. To now read, "A member of the Commission shall hold office for a term of 3 years and shall be eligible for reappointment for a further term of 3 years only."

285. CLAUSE 127- TENURE OF MEMBERS OF COMMISSION: [Sub Clause 2[d] be amended by inserting the phrase **"sexual offence"** at the end of the sentence. To now read, "if he is convicted of an offence involving fraud, dishonesty or sexual offence."

286. CLAUSE 148- RENUMERATION AND ALLOWANCES OF MEMBERS numbering be amended to become Clause 128.

287. CLAUSE 128- RENUMERATION AND ALLOWANCES OF MEMBERS be amended by deleting the phrase **"other than the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner."** To now read "The Chairman and members of the Commission shall be paid such remuneration and allowances as Parliament may determine and such remuneration and allowances shall not be altered to their disadvantage during their tenure of."

288. CLAUSE 149- PROCEEDINGS OF COMMISSION numbering be amended to become Clause 129.

289. CLAUSE 129- PROCEEDINGS OF COMMISSION be amended by inserting a new **"Sub Clause 4"**. To read, "in the absence of the Chairman the Vice Chairman shall act in his absence."

290. CLAUSE 129- PROCEEDINGS OF COMMISSION: [New Sub Clause 6] be amended by changing the number **"6"** to **"3"**. To now read, "the quorum at a meeting of the Commission shall be 3."

291. CLAUSE 150- DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST numbering be amended to become Clause 130.

292. CLAUSE 130- DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST be approved.

293. CLAUSE 151- IMMUNITY OF MEMBERS numbering be amended to become Clause 131.

294. CLAUSE 131- IMMUNITY OF MEMBERS be approved.

295. CLAUSE 152- COMMITTEE OF COMMISSION numbering be amended to become Clause 132.

296. CLAUSE 132- COMMITTEE OF COMMISSION: [Sub Clause [1] be amended by inserting the word “**of**” at the start of the second line. To now read, “the Commission shall, for the effective performance of its functions under this Act, appoint such committees with such functions as it considers fit” [Interruption].

HON. DICKSON M. ROGER: Mr Chairman, the time is past 12, I therefore move that we suspend S.O 5[2] so that the business of the House will continue.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any Secunder?

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: I so second Mr Chairman.

[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH Thank you very much Mr Chairman.

PART XI –FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF THE COMMISSION be amended to become Part X

PART X – FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF THE COMMISSION

297. CLAUSE 153- FUNCTIONS OF COMMISSION numbering be amended to become Clause 133.

298. CLAUSE 133- FUNCTIONS OF COMMISSION be approved.

299. CLAUSE 154- POWERS OF COMMISSION numbering be amended to become Clause 134.

300. CLAUSE 134- POWERS OF COMMISSION: [Sub Clause [3] be amended by replacing the word “**supreme**” with the word “**high.**” To now read, “A person who is aggrieved by a decision of the Commission made in a Report under paragraph [c] of Sub-Section [3] of Section 153 may appeal to the High Court against such decision.”

PART XII –

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS be amended to become “**PART XI**”

PART XI – ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

301. CLAUSE 155- SECRETARIAT OF COMMISSION numbering be amended to become Clause 135.

302. CLAUSE 135- SECRETARIAT OF COMMISSION be amended by deleting "Sub Clause 2."

303. CLAUSE 156- EXECUTIVE SECRETARY numbering be amended to become Clause 136.

304. CLAUSE 136 EXECUTIVE SECRETARY be amended to read, "[1] The Commission shall have an Executive Secretary and head of the Secretariat who shall be recruited by the Commission. [2] A person shall not be appointed Executive Secretary under Sub Section [1] unless he- [a] is a citizen of Sierra Leone; [b] has, at least, 7 years of proven knowledge and experience in child welfare related field; [c] Holds, at least, a Bachelor's degree from a recognized university; and [d] has not been convicted of a criminal offence or sexual offence. [3] The Executive Secretary may be removed from office for – [a] inability to perform the functions of the office arising out of mental or physical incapacity; [b] gross misconduct or misbehavior; [c] incompetence or neglect of duty; or [d] any other ground that would justify removal from office under his terms and conditions of service. [4] The Executive Secretary shall hold office for a term of five years upon such terms and conditions as shall be determined by the Commission and shall be eligible for reappointment for one term only of another five years.

305. NEW CLAUSE 137 be inserted with Side Note to read "functions of the Executive Secretary."

306. CLAUSE 137- FUNCTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY be inserted to read, [1] "The Executive Secretary shall be the head of the Secretariat and shall be responsible for; [a] The day to day administration of the Commission; [b] The supervision and discipline of other staff of the Commission; [c] The arrangement of the business and the recording and keeping of the minutes of the meetings of the Commission; [d] The initiation and maintenance of high-level contacts or relations with local interest groups and maintenance of international child rights bodies or institutions; and [e] Performance of such other functions as the Commission may assign to him.

307. CLAUSE 157- DEPUTY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY numbering be amended to become Clause 138.

308. CLAUSE 138- DEPUTY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY be amended to read, [1] "The Deputy Executive Secretary shall be the principal assistance to the Executive Secretary in the administration of the Secretariat who shall be recruited by the Commission." [2] A person shall not be appointed Deputy Executive Secretary under Sub Section [1] unless he- [a] is a citizen of Sierra Leone; [b] has, at least, 5 years of proven knowledge and experience in child welfare related field; [c] Holds, at least, a Bachelor's degree from a recognized university; and [d] has not been convicted of a criminal offence or sexual offence. [3] The Deputy Executive Secretary may be removed from office for – [a] inability to perform the functions of the office arising out of mental or physical incapacity; [b] gross misconduct or misbehavior; [c] incompetence or neglect of duty; or [d] any other ground that would justify removal from office under his terms and conditions of service. [4] The Deputy Executive Secretary shall hold office for a term of five years upon such terms and conditions as shall be determined by the Commission and shall be eligible for reappointment for one term only of another five years.

309. NEW CLAUSE 139 be inserted Side Note to read "other staff of the Commission."

310. CLAUSE 139- OTHER STAFF OF THE COMMISSION: [1] "The Commission shall have in addition to the Executive Secretary and the Deputy Executive Secretary, such other staff, including a wide variety of professionals and support staff, as may be required for the efficient performance of the Commission's functions, the number of which shall be determined by the Commission, taking into account the budget at the disposal of the Commission." [2] "The Commission may delegate to the Executive Secretary power for the appointment of such grade or categories of staff as the Commission may determine."

311. CLAUSE 158- PROTECTION OF OFFICERS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES OF COMMISSION numbering be amended to become Clause 140.

312. CLAUSE 140- PROTECTION OF OFFICERS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES OF COMMISSION be approved.

313. CLAUSE 159- PROVINCIAL OR DISTRICT OFFICERS numbering be amended to become Clause 141.

314. CLAUSE 141- PROVINCIAL OR DISTRICT OFFICERS be approved.

PART XIII –

FUNDS OF COMMISSION be amended to become "**PART XII.**"

PART XIII - FUNDS OF COMMISSION

315. CLAUSE 160- FUNDS OF COMMISSION numbering be amended to become Clause 142.

316. CLAUSE 142- FUNDS OF COMMISSION be approved.

317. CLAUSE 161- ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT numbering be amended to become Clause 143.

318. CLAUSE 143- ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT be approved.

319. CLAUSE 162- FINANCIAL YEAR OF COMMISSION numbering be amended to become Clause 144.

321. CLAUSE 144- FINANCIAL YEAR OF COMMISSION be approved.

322. CLAUSE 163- ANNUAL REPORT OF COMMISSION numbering be amended to become Clause 145.

323. CLAUSE 145- ANNUAL REPORT OF COMMISSION: [Sub Clause [1] be amended to read, "the Commission shall prepare and submit to the Minister, not later than 3 months after the end of each financial year, to which the report relates, including the state of Children's Right in Sierra Leone, the number and types of child related projects undertaken by the Commission."

PART XIV –

DECENTRALIZATION, LOCAL COUNCILS AND WARD WELFARE COMMITTEES be amended to become "**PART XIII.**"

PART XIII – DECENTRALIZATION, LOCAL COUNCILS AND WARD WELFARE COMMITTEES

324. CLAUSE 164- WARD WELFARE COMMITTEE be expunged.

325. CLAUSE 165- FUNCTIONS OF WARD WELFARE COMMITTEE be expunged.

326. CLAUSE 166- RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTRY be expunged.

327. CLAUSE 167- JURISDICTION OF WARD WELFARE COMMITTEE AND POWER TO ISSUE INSTRUCTIONS AND ADVICE be expunged.

328. CLAUSE 168- PROCEEDINGS OF WARD WELFARE COMMITTEE TO INFORMAL be expunged.

329. CLAUSE 169- APPEAL FROM WARD WELFARE COMMITTEE be expunged.

330. CLAUSE 170- FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH INSTRUCTION OF WARD WELFARE COMMITTEE be expunged.

331. CLAUSE 171- LOCAL COUNCIL TO PROTECT CHILDREN numbering be amended to become Clause 146.

332. CLAUSE 146- LOCAL COUNCIL TO PROTECT CHILDREN: [Sub Clause [2] be amended by replacing the phrase “**child welfare**” with the phrase “**social services**” at the beginning of the second line. To now read, “subject to this part, the Local Council by its appropriate social services department shall investigate cases of contravention of child rights within the District that are reported to it or come to its notice.”

333. CLAUSE 172- INVESTIGATION BY LOCAL COUNCIL numbering be amended to become Clause 147.

334. CLAUSE 147- INVESTIGATION BY LOCAL COUNCIL: [Sub Clause [1] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**” after the word “**or**” and before the word “**officer**” on the third line. To now read, “If the Local Council has reasonable grounds to support child abuse or a need for care and protection of a child, it shall direct a Probation Officer or Protection Officer accompanied by the Police to enter and search the premises where the child is kept to investigate.”

335. CLAUSE 147- INVESTIGATION BY LOCAL COUNCIL INVESTIGATION BY LOCAL COUNCIL: [Sub Clause 2] be amended to read, “the Local Council shall direct the Probation Officer or Protection Officer to refer the matter to the Ministry, if the child is not in immediate need of care and protection.”

336. CLAUSE 147- INVESTIGATION BY LOCAL COUNCIL: [Sub Clause 3] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**” after the word “**or**” and before the word “**officer**” on the third line. To now read, “If after investigation, it is determined that the child has been abused or is in need of immediate care and protection, the local council shall direct a Probation Officer or Protection Officer accompanied by the Police to remove the child to a place of safety for a period of not more than 7 days.”

337. CLAUSE 147- INVESTIGATION BY LOCAL COUNCIL: [Sub Clause 4] be amended by replacing the phrase “**social welfare**” with the word “**protection**” after the word “**or**” and before the word “**officer**” on the third line. To now read, “Before the expiry of the seven-day period referred to in Sub Section [3], the child shall be

brought before a Family Court by the Probation Officer or Protection Officer for an order to be made. "

338. CLAUSE 147- INVESTIGATION BY LOCAL COUNCIL: [Sub Clause [5] be amended by replacing the phrase "**social welfare**" with the word "**protection**" after the word "**or**" and before the word "**officer**" on the third line. To now read, "Until the Family Court determines the order; the Family Court may commit the child to an approved residential home or to the care of a Probation Officer, Protection Officer or other suitable person."

PART XV –

MISCELLANEOUS be amended to become "**PART XIV**"

PART XIV – MISCELLANEOUS

339. CLAUSE 173- REGULATIONS numbering be amended to become Clause 148.

340. CLAUSE 148- REGULATIONS: [Sub Clause 2[b] be amended by inserting the word "**matters**" after the word "**and**" and before the word "**related.**" To now read "publication of records and matters related to a child."

341. CLAUSE 174- REPEAL AND SAVINGS numbering be amended to become Clause 149.

342. CLAUSE 149- REPEAL AND SAVINGS be approved.

CONCLUSION

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, the Legislative Committee, having scrutinized the Bill entitled: The Child Rights Act 2024 recommends these proposals to the House for approval. The Report reflects the consensus of Honourable Members of the Committee. I therefore move that the House pass the Bill entitled: The Child Rights Act 2024 through Committee Stage, Third Reading and into Law. I thank you for your attention.
Signed:

Hon. Abdul S. Marray Conteh

Chairman, Legislative Committee

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much Chairman of Legislative Committee, you have done so well. Honourable Members, you know as a matter of fact that this Bill is a Bill that first came to this House a couple of months ago and was raised several questions. I hope those questions have been answered in the Report if not when we go line by

line, Clause by Clause, page by page, make sure you draw my attention to those issues that we need to address and of course we all know you are here representing your people whatever Clause you think that will cause problem tomorrow with your people please raise those issues up so that we can address them together as a House before the Bill is passed. Please take note of every page, every line, every Clause and every punctuation. Madam Minister, I am just seeing you now in the Well, no Minister comes to the House of Parliament without first going to the Chambers of Mr Speaker, you are here to do a Bill and I am just seeing you now in the Well please next time do not do it. I thank you very much.

[QUESTION PROPOSED]

[Part 1 to 5 Clauses 1 to 46 stand part of the Bill]

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I expect the Chairman to read the short title of the Report.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: The Report was 2024 and now we have changed it to 2025.

THE CHAIRMAN: It was just for you to address this in your Report, have you? Did you address this in your Report?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Well we are doing it now.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well move a Motion for the amendment.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Chairman, I move that the short title be amended to read the Child Right Act 2025.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any Secunder?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I so second Mr Chairman.

[QUESTION PROPOSED, PUT AND AGREED TO]

[SHORT TITLE AMENDED]

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we are on Roman figure one? Roman figure two? Roman figure three? Roman figure four? Roman figure five? Roman figure six? Roman figure seven? And Roman figure eight? Honourable Members, are we okay with the arrangement of Sections?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, we have recommendations from the Chairman of the Committee and we have to give him the space so that he can lead us. Mr Chairman, let us go to the definition of female which has been expunged from the Report. You know the Report has been presented and we have not yet adopted the Report. We have to compare the Report and he has to lead us in the interpretation because we are not new to this thing and we have not yet adopted the Report.

THE CHAIRMAN: We should eventually adopt the Report.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, can I approach your desk in few minutes?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes please. Honourable Members, Roman figure one to eight are we okay? Page 1?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, we have already done the first one the sub title. We have changed that one to 2025, as he said because we have over three hundred to deal with.

THE CHAIRMAN: Chairman Legislative Committee are you set?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Yes I think he is okay.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Chairman Legislative Committee please make sure you take lead when it comes to certain Clauses.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: If you have issues with a particular Clause as usual is not different from what we have been doing so we are encouraging the Chairman to lead us effectively in some of these Clauses especially where they have posed challenges we cannot have the consensus at the Committee level.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, I hope you have all seen the Report in your desktop, please let us pay attention to all the details. Now Page one the long and short title? Chairman, are you okay with the long and short title? Page 2? Take a look at the Report and the Bill you would find out that Female Genital Cutting is expunged not so?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Chairman, in Page three of the Bill and Page three of the Report, it is clear that the phrase Female Genital Cutting be expunged.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 2? Page 3?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman, from the Report on page two there is this number five expressly stated there Collective Violence but I have not seen that in the

Bill but we really want a clear understanding and explanation of this Collective Violence with examples of daily happenings in our society.

THE CHAIRMAN: Where is that?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: In the Report page 2.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Chairman, let me help you Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes Chairman.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: I am happy the Honourable Member said he did not see it instead of saying it is not in the Report.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: It is in the Report but not expressly stated in the Bill, I do not know where we can trace that in the Bill.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Point of Order. You have two Instruments in front of you, one coming from the Sub-Committee and the other one from the Government as a Bill. You can challenge either of the two so if you are against that one in the Report or both of them otherwise if you are going this way it will take a long time for you to understand.

HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA: Again, what the Honourable Member was saying if you look at the instant Bill we have before us the Committee has recommended a new definition of Collective Violence and it is not captured in the instant Bill. What the Honourable Member is asking what is Collective Violence and to explain further not that he is going against the recommendation of the Committee.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Until I get the clarity.

HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA: Not that he is against the Bill but he wants more edification so that it can be captured.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Thank you very much Honourable Member. Honourable Members, this is not the first time we are dealing with a Report.

THE CHAIRMAN: Hold on Chief Whip, let me hear the Chairman you will talk.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: This is not the first time we are dealing with a Report and the format is still the same. Now, let me clear this aspect of Collective Violence if you look at page eight of the Report which is talking about new Clause Twenty-three which is protection from Collective Violence is clearly stated and the Committee recommends the following insertions for the Plenary to decide. So it is used

here as option that no child shall be subjected to Collective Violence and the definition of this Collective Violence is provided for under interpretation. So we would look at that definition and see how it is applied under Clause 23. It is our responsibility to see whether the definition fits the application or not but it is there and it is clearly stated what the Committee recommended and of course for the Plenary to decide and that is why we are here to make the decision.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman, I think this is a clever way by the Chairman when he removed the word 'Cutting of Genital Mutilation' this is a clever way to put it. What we want to know is, what is the definition of Collective Violence? Mr Chairman, all of us here know that is a correct way or clever way of balancing the word 'Female Genital Cutting.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, all Leaders on both sides of the aisle please meet me in my Chambers now. Honourable Members, please resume your seats.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman, the Ministry of Social Welfare they have done a fantastic job because we have a lot of goodies for our children in this Bill but also Mr Chairman in this Bill there are Clauses that we should not tolerate therefore I want to move that we expunge Clause 23 totally from this Bill. Mr Chairman it is a Motion that I have moved Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay when we get there you would move your Motion again.

HON. DIXON M. ROGERS: We are there.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, we have not reached to Clause 23 yet, so take note when we reach Clause 23, you can move your Motion. Honourable Members, I know you are concerned about certain Clauses but please cool down we will arrive there certainly. We would find a way around it so please exercise patient we will certainly get there. Thank you very much. Page 3? Page 4?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Chairman, if we move on to page two and to the next pages that do not deal with the definition, it means we have accepted the recommendation of the Committee. Mr Chairman, the Committee has recommended that we defined Collective Violence and with your leave let me read for the purposes of this Act the Committee is recommending that Collective Violence means the preparation of physical, psychological or emotional pain a child goes through by a group or a Member of a group leading to non-medic injury to any part of the body. So Mr Chairman, I notice the Honourable Member who was raising a concern about Collective

Violence so we need to clarify and understand ourselves if we are going to adopt Collective Violence or we are going to expunge it.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are sticking a pin and move on we will get back to Collective Violence.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman is that a ruling? Because I do not want to challenge your ruling.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is a ruling, we are sticking a pin there we will come back to it certainly.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: And again, I just want to remind Colleague Members of Parliament the discussion on Collective Violence will be incomplete until we deal with Clause 23 which we are yet to get there.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, do not forget our Colleagues are here we cannot keep them waiting. The Leaders will have to meet with them; we have to accord them the relevant respect they deserved because they have been here for quite a while now. I will be standing this House down in the next 30 minutes to meet with them together with your Leaders and we will come back to continue. Page 3? Page 4?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Chairman, just to allay the fears of Honourable Members, when you look at page four the definition of Harmful Practice was also contentious at some point in time, so I just want to draw the attention of the House back again.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay thank you.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Chairman, is a suggestion if the House will accept or expunge, so I want to move a Motion that we expunge that one, the Female Genital Cutting.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes in the Report, we will eventually adopt the Report, Chief Whip when we adopt the Report all of those will be gone.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you Sir, I just want to draw your attention.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you Chief Whip. Page 5?

HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA: Mr Chairman, we are dealing with such a sensitive Bill because every line, every Clause could mean anything and could be interpreted as

anything. It is my candid opinion that we print both the Bill drafted and the recommendations of the Committee side by side and Members of Parliament have hard copy so we all can take responsibility but doing it in this manner where we are not too sure it is a bit conflicting. I know is the normal practice and I know we want to go technological but for this Bill and the interest placed on this Bill by the Nation is very important so that is my humble submission.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, we agreed we are going 90 to 95% paperless and we have been given tablets so if you cannot access your tablets due to fault of the tablets maybe we can provide you with the hard copy. Mr Chairman, I want to go in comparative terms with the Report which we have not adopted because it is a recommendation and the substantive proposal which is the Bill I think we have agreed on that so that is the reason we are going Clause by Clause and line by line.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will crave the indulgence of Members we cannot go down that line because we have to pass the Bill so what I will urge you to do is to listen to the Chairman he will be taking the lead on all what the Committee has done. So as the Chairman goes on to identify specific Clauses that are critical and we would all debate those specific Clauses. They have done a wonderful job as a Committee so let us allow the Chairman to take the lead as we move on so that we would be able to identify and trash those critical Clauses. Please for now we cannot print all the Report in hard copies so let us do with what we have.

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: As we speak Mr Chairman, we have been bombarded by our Constituents by sending messages to us requesting adjournment of this Child Right Bill 2025 for further consultation with Constituents and Traditional authorities. We have done a marvelous job for the past seven [7] years in this noble House but as we proceed today is becoming more and more like a threat to our lives and our lives matter.

THE CHAIRMAN: So the moment we pass this Bill do not go back home.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, we should not use emotions in enacting Laws. I do not want us to use emotions we are being carried by the pros and the cons. There are also Constituents who are also telling us to do A and others telling us to do B. we are bound by the Constitution of the Country which is the supreme body to make Laws. We should not be afraid to do what is right for our people, that is why we put the Motion on the Floor. They have right to tell us the same way they abused us when we asked for our welfare but we went ahead to do what is right for us, so in the same vein Mr Chairman, I crave on your indulgence that let them give us space we will do what is right for this Nation. It is this same Parliament under the Leadership of the former

Speaker and your Leadership; we have passed progressive Laws for this Country. 90% of what we are doing is good for our children, there are things that we will definitely vote for or we reject. We are good people of this Nation that is why they referred to us Honourable Men and Honourable Women of Sierra Leone. We cannot allow somebody to dishonour us. That is why we are saying these are proposals and we are going to look at them Clause by Clause. Let us pay attention to the edification of the Bill it is very important. Mr Chairman, I think we have to move on with the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have spoken well Leader of Government Business and let me take this opportunity to inform the Public, there is some kind of misconception about this Bill. We know there are certain Clauses that citizens do not agree with but the bulk of the Bill is good. We are going to expunge those Clauses that are not right for the citizens because we are here representing them but the bulk of the Bill is progressive. This is for the information or the edification of the Public. Please do not condemn the entire Bill. You know the problem most people do not read through a particular document. We are also from traditional backgrounds and we know that there are certain Clauses that the citizens do not agree with. We are not insensitive to the concerns of this Nation. In fact the Legislative Committee has done so well by expunging all of those areas that are critical. Thank you Mr Chairman of the Legislative Committee.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Chairman, I want to thank you for the opportunity of course we are all aware of the processes involved in making Law. This Bill has been handed over to us some months ago meaning we had ample opportunity to have consulted with our people and to sort out the challenges in the Bill. We are here today is for us to come together as a House and publicly express the opinions of our people in this Bill. I am confidence because the level of unanimity that I am hearing means that the Clauses that are very controversial in this Bill majority of Members of Parliament are against them. We can vote against them when the need arises but for us to keep procrastinating the passing of this Bill I am not sure that this House should run away from making Law. One of the primary reasons or one of the traditional roles of Members of Parliament is to ensure that we represent our people. We should not do anything in this Bill that is against the wishes of our people. Let us look at the Bill and we are here not to represent ourselves but to represent our Constituents. This is the opportunity. We have to look at the Bill and go against what we think our people do not want in this Bill. Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I think it is the rightful opportunity for us to exercise our legislative rights to look at the Bill and debate where we have to debate even if it causes us to vote on certain Clauses. We will vote and whosoever wins we will proceed but we cannot keep procrastinating the passing of this Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: So take note of the troublesome Clauses, when we get there we would do the needful.

HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA: Taking the queue from my Leader we must take the necessary steps to have this Law being passed. In making Law it is not just about the people but it is also about serving humanity and serving the future of this Nation. Sometimes you make a Law that is considered to be bad but if it is in the interest of the children of this Nation then we have to, we owe it to our people to defend them and to do that which is right for them. We are being voted by people and we have to listen to them. We must come out clear to make our positions that are in the interest of our people running away from not making the Law does not make us smart Members of Parliament. Let us face the battle if there is any and we must win in the interest of our Nation. Thank you Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, I will allow the Honourable Member now to debate after that we will proceed. Do not worry by the next adjourned date you will not need any mobile microphone.

HON. SIMEON JOHNNY: Thank you very much Mr Chairman. My own contribution to this discussion, I will take the House to Section 97 of our Constitution to the [B] part of it which says "All Members of Parliament shall regard themselves as representatives of the people of Sierra Leone and deceit from any conduct by which they seek improperly to enrich themselves or alienate themselves from their people." Mr Chairman, mankind and their activities will come and go but history will remain to judge humanity.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member be guided by what the Leader of Government Business said, do not be emotional.

HON. SIMEON JOHNNY: I know Sir.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: The Honourable Member was asking if it is very impossible for somebody else to love his child more than him. I have an elder sister she is married and I want to assure you that her husband loves her more than the way our parents do love her, so it is impossible for someone else to love your children more than you.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, we do not know what you are talking about, are you talking about parental love or matrimonial love? Mr Chairman, this is an interesting one we are now going into the semantics about love. There is matrimonial love and that one is very clear that her husband loves his sister more than the parents themselves that gave birth to her. There will be a time when your child will love another

person more than you do. So are you talking about the parental love or the matrimonial love?

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member please conclude.

HON. SIMEON JOHNNY: I am talking about the Parental love Sir.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman Point of Order. I do not want the Honourable Member to use Section [97] to indict us; we have not eliminated ourselves from our people. We should put our entire fist on the ground to make sure that we do the needful, but if you attack us on Section [97] to eliminate ourselves from them. They are saying we are only enriching ourselves but the most important thing we have not moved ourselves from them.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you Leader of Government Business.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Chairman, the Leader of Government Business raised a very salient issue when the Honourable Member of Parliament referred us to the Constitution the Clause which specifically states that we should not enrich ourselves at the expense of our people. It would bring to mind the assumption that the Legislative role we are playing here is influenced by money so I want to categorically state here that money is not attached. We are not being induced in anyway. What we are doing is our Legislative role that is why when you watch critically the debate among Members of Parliament it is critical.

THE CHAIRMAN: The one relating to enrichment I will not tolerate in this Well, I think he is referring to the word 'alienation'.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, he did not make reference directly to Clause 97. He was not talking about alienation because we cannot alienate ourselves, please let him be specific.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think that is the area not the enrichment of course, Leader of the Opposition are you through?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman, in joining hand with my Leader and the Leader of the Opposition on the debate you will find out that even us from this side are against some Clauses in this Bill. The Chairman said the Bill is nice we support all the ones that have to do with the children but whatever has to do with our tradition we are against it. So if we are going to enrich ourselves there is no way the Leadership on this side will be against the Bill. Thank you very much Mr Chairman.

HON. SIMEON JOHNNY: What I was trying to present to this House I was trying to read the entire part [B] that was stated in the Constitution.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay proceed with your argument now.

HON. SIMEON JOHNNY: My argument is majority of Members of Parliament have already received text messages and remember we are here to represent our people and our people have informed us before coming to this place. I spoke to the Chairman of Council of Paramount Chiefs from Kono and other sub Chiefs, thank God one of our representatives is here, our Paramount Chief is here and some of our Chiefs are here and they know the reason why they were elected Chiefs is to protect the Customs and traditions of their people. I am coming from a typical traditional home in Kono District and I know how my people hold this thing in high esteem. I know what I am talking because the Paramount Chief is here and all the other Kono people are here. I know what they have told us before this Bill appeared on the Order Paper. So if your people are saying if you enact this Bill do not ever come again, are you not driving yourself from your people? When your people are saying do not come here again and stay where you are now since Parliament is now in Freetown because we sent you there and your purpose is to destroy what we believe in, do not come here is that not an elimination Sir? So when I talked about elimination that is exactly what I mean and I am not talking about monetary term Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, even as I sit here and I listened to your arguments I know that there are certain things in this Bill that are totally impossible to pass. Do you know why they are impossible to pass? Because they are provided for in the Constitution, the fact that they are provided for in the Constitution they can only come here by a Constitutional Instrument. We cannot amend the Constitution using an Act so there are certain things they cannot pass but I know as a matter of fact even as I sit here I know they are impossible to pass and I cannot preside in this House and pass them, because we will be doing the wrong thing. We will be doing the wrong thing for some Clauses if we pass them here they will have no effect because they are provided for under the Constitution that is why I am not in a hurry to deal with some of these issues.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, Point of Order. We just raised issues making clarification from both Leaders. We are in the Committee Stage now, and you put a pause on Collective Violence so please note that we do not want other Members to talk but our Colleagues are here we need to talk to them.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is what you wanted to say?

HON. WUYATTA BERNADETTE SONGA: That is all I wanted to say our guests are still waiting for us Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is alright.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Your ruling is very good you said thirty minutes.

HON. REBECCA YEI KAMARA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to join the Leader of Government Business and both the two Leaders so that we give some time for us to look at the good part of the Bill for the benefit of our children. Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, we should not use that to kill the other part of the Bill that is very good for our children so I am encouraging all of us to look through the Bill. I will ask others please let us look at the Bill Clause by Clause the ones we do not want we put them away but we need time to go and talk to our Colleagues, they are here on a very important purpose. I thank you very much.

HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA: I was just curious that she was not clear on what she was saying.

THE CHAIRMAN: She is clear now not so?

HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA: What are you enjoying?

HON. REBECCA YEI KAMARA: I am enjoying food, I am enjoying water and I am enjoying everything.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 5? Page 6? Page 7?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Page 7, I just want edification from the Committee Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 7? Page 8?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Page 8 Mr Chairman, I noticed the Committee is recommending that we expunge the penalty, I do not know why Mr Chairman, do you want to help us?

THE CHAIRMAN: Chairman, can you help us? That is Clause 15 it is not relevant really.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Let me look at it.

THE CHAIRMAN: S.O [2] 'e nor relevant to 14'.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Chairman, talking about the State shall subject to the Act be responsible because when you look at all the other things that are

there like right to National Culture and Pride, responsibility of a child and putting a penalty there is something like 15 years.

THE CHAIRMAN: Have you seen it? Page 9?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Page 8 Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, like other Members of Parliament have said this Bill is a very good Bill I doff my hat to the Minister and the Ministry like I said inter alia. Mr Chairman, there are certain Clauses in the Bill I will not be party to them and I do not want this House to be party to them, that is page 8 Clause 23.

THE CHAIRMAN: Not the Report?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: I thought we agreed looking at the Report in tandem with the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are looking at the Bill; we have not got to Clause 23 yet.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Okay alright.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 8?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I think we have the Minister and she needs to be following us. I have not been able to understand Clause 15 clearly why it should be expunged because they are talking about the Clauses ahead before coming down to the penalty. There must be a reason why they decided to put Clause 15 and they are talking about contravening provision of this part to commit an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment of not less than 15 years or to a fine not less than Le15,000 or to go with an imprisonment and fine. I want us also to get the Minister involves in this because these are things we are talking about our children. You have said it loud and clear that we are protecting them. We should not make crime lucrative but we should make crime punishable by Law. I just want to know why we should expunge Clause 15 that is my submission.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Mr Chairman, I just need clarification in respect of license marriage. Can we put something that has some clarification in terms of birth certification?

THE CHAIRMAN: Hold on, let me hear the Chairman on that.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: I am sure he is talking about Clause 10?

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Yes.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Thank you very much. I will take you to page 4 of the Report and look for line 18 Clause 10. We expunged that because it is already dealt with in the prohibition of child marriage and we never wanted to restate it here again. You have problem with that?

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: That was the clarification I wanted so we can move on now.

THE CHAIRMAN: So are you okay now?

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: I am perfectly okay.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: It is not really a clarification because you have not read that aspect of the Report.

HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA: Mr Chairman, he is okay but I am not okay because this Clause is referring to the Officer to verify before the issuance of a certificate that is where maybe the problem is. It is a must that you should be 18 years but in this Clause if it is going to be determined by the Officer something must be a deterrent before the certification.

HON. MUSATAPHA M. SELLU: But it is not even stated, the technical word here is 'certify.'

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Because if we have already expunged it, I do not know why we have to waste time in this discussion.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is alright, so are we clear on this?

HON. REBECCA YEI KAMARA: Mr Chairman, if we are done with this I still want to go back to Clause 14 that talks about the responsibilities of the State.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: You should not please. I was talking to the Chairman to explain and I even asked the Minister what is the intention of having that penalty Clause.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Chairman. Let us come back again to Right to National Culture Pride, Responsibilities of Child, Minimum Age of Recruitment into Arm Forces, who are we really going to levy that penalty of 15 years? Again, that is why we are here to take a good look at it.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, they did not subject fine to a particular Clause, they subjected the fine to the general as part of that provision. We have made

Laws in this House where institutions have been found guilty. We have levied institutional fines so you cannot say if the Military recruits a child below the age of 18 years, there are people who are responsible for that recruitment.

THE CHAIRMAN: My only take on this is that, that Section is misplaced.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, it is not misplaced, let us stick a pin on it and look for specific areas where we can levy fines. It has to be institutional fines because if you recruit a child in the Military there must be somebody who is in charge.

THE CHAIRMAN: He is saying that we expunge this one because it is misplaced. It cannot be placed in this particular area. Maybe they will find a way of putting it somewhere else or referring to a specific Clause. Clause 10[2] a child shall not be forced to be married, does that refer to the State? So you see Clause 10 is expunged that is why Clause 15 is irrelevant because just after Clause 14 then you have Clause 15.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I want us to have the Minister who has been in charge of this to say something about this because that is why I am asking that they should convince us in expunging that provision. The thing I am questioning there should be specific Clause that gives penalty in terms of birth certificate. If you fail to issue out birth certificate that is a human right abuse that is why now Councils are giving birth certificates.

THE CHAIRMAN: Hold on, I will ask the Minister but the Minister is not the Draftsman. The idea is good but it is only the misplacement of that particular Clause is in question, yes Madam Minister.

DR ISATA MAHOI: Thank you Mr Chairman. Having considered 10[2] which says a Child shall not be forced to betroth the subject of a dowry transaction or married this was the intention of this fine Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, we know that was the intention.

DR ISATA MAHOI: The reason why Clause 15 is expunged, because 10 [2] is also expunged from there.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is the only reason so without 10[2] that particular Section becomes superfluous, because you cannot go to arrest the State or to imprison the State, it becomes superfluous automatically.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Hold on Madam Minister. Madam Minister, I want to draw your attention to Clause 11. I have said the fine must be specific for specific Clauses is

very important. Child Recruitment is a whole issue under the International Child Right. I have asked the Chairman of Legislative Committee to tell us but we cannot just ignore penalty for all of them. I heard Honourable Member from Moyamba referred to that Clause because he was referring to the penalty. I am convinced because they have removed Clause 10 and even removing Clause 10 which I am not properly convinced but Madam Minister has accepted.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let me tell you one principle of Law, do you know why Divorce matters are filed the Court normally grants the Divorce? Is because the Court cannot monitor a situation where they force you to live with your wife or they force the wife to live with her husband. Any Law that cannot be enforced is superfluous; even the Court will not honour such Laws. Who are you going to imprison, the Government? You cannot enforce it, so that is what makes those particular Clauses superfluous, any Law you cannot enforce is superfluous.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Chairman, let me give the Leader two examples.

THE CHAIRMAN: Hold on, if someone comes up to say this wife has been married to her for ten years and I think I do not want to continue the relationship no Court is going to say no you will live together. S.O.2 'una get fo de by force.' Somebody will kill somebody, S.O. 2 'somtem d man don see orda uman e want go marade' he will eventually go all out to kill that wife just to go and marry somebody else. So because the Court or the Law cannot enforce some of these things they become superfluous.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I hate interpreting the Law maybe because you are a Lawyer and I am not a Lawyer. I make Laws I do not interpret the Laws. We have levied corporate charges and there must be somebody in charge of an institution.

THE CHAIRMAN: So the Government is now corporate?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Presently, they are recruiting people in the Military and it is done by the Chief of Defense Staff who has the Constitutional mandate to do that function. I still stand to be corrected that those who are involved in committing crime let them be cupable for what they are doing. I am not going to enforce the Law; I am just a Law maker. I want to be very consistent and homogenous to the Law. Are you saying we cannot fine corporate bodies? They have set the Military recruitment age under 18 years is a crime already. So why do you penalize people who join underage in marriage? Is the age I am questioning you cannot recruit a child in the Military below the age of 18 years and go unpunished. Mr Chairman, I rest my case, I will now listen to the Minister.

HON. ABDUL KARIM KAMARA: Madam Minister before you come in, Mr Chairman, we must not forget as a Country that we just came from a bloody civil war in which children were recruited to fight that war. We pray we do not get back to that level but if we reach back to that level where we have chaos in this Country and the Military for whatever reason recruit children, the line person who has done that recruitment must be punished by this Law.

THE HOUSE STOOD DOWN AT 1:45 P.M.

THE HOUSE RESUMED AT 4:15 P.M.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are all tired Honourable Members, so Madam Minister please it is obliged on us to come on Tuesday and complete this job, as you can see Members of Parliament are now willing to proceed with the Bill to its conclusion, their only queries are couple of Clauses as long as those Clauses are dealt with they are more than willing to proceed with the Bill. We have made very good progress initially nobody wanted to see that document in this House but now Members of Parliament are beginning to understand that in fact not everything in the Bill is bad. They are only questioning some Clauses so I think we have made enough progress but everybody is tired now. I actually thought we should have been in that Meeting for less than 30 minutes but it happens that we stayed in that meeting for over one and a half hour, everybody is tired now. So I crave the indulgence of Members of Parliament so that we adjourn and come on Tuesday certainly to conclude this Bill.

[THE HOUSE RESUMED]

THE SPEAKER: Mr Chairman, do you have anything to say?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: I think just for the record, we stopped at Page 8.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we stopped at Page 8 and we put a pin on page 2, please take note, and when coming on Tuesday please bring your Report and your Bills and page 7 we will deal with all those on Tuesday.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Sierra Leone People's Party Female Honourable Members of Parliament are invited to a meeting with Madam Fatmata Kaitibi Pinbi Siyoh immediately after sitting of Parliament at Committee Room One.

Sign: Honourable Bernadette Wuyatta Songa

President Female Parliamentary Caucus

THE SPEAKER: Madam Minister, you may leave, thank you very much Madam Minister and your staff you have been very patient with Parliament we have make good progress.

ADJOURNMENT

MR SPEAKER ADJOURNED THE HOUSE TO TUESDAY 20TH MAY, 2025

AT 10:00 A.M.

THE HOUSE ROSE AT 4:25 P.M.