

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

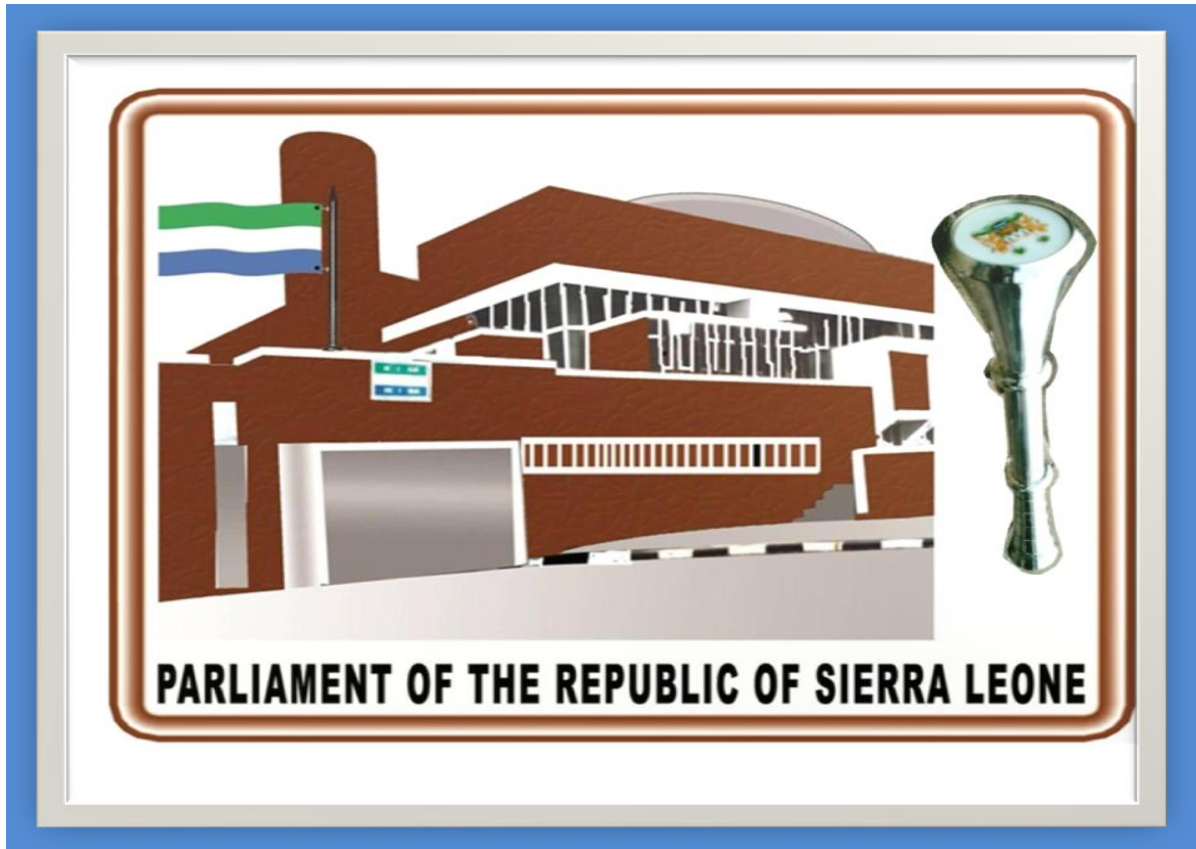
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

THIRD SESSION –FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 21ST APRIL 2026

SESSION – 2025/2026



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
held on Tuesday, 21st April, 2026

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THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

TUESDAY, 21ST APRIL 2026

1. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Ms Asha Koroma, read the Prayers]

[The House met at 10:03 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]

[The Speaker, Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas, in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S. O. 5[2]

II. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON THURSDAY, 16TH APRIL 2026.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we shall consider the record of Votes and Proceedings for the Parliamentary sitting held on Thursday, 16th April 2026 at the next adjourned date.

III. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I will like to recognise the diligence of the following Members of Parliament who were in the Well before the commencement of this sitting.

Honourable Joseph Williams-Lamin
Honourable Ibrahim Kabba
Honourable Alhaji Yusuf Mackery
Honourable Emerson S. Lamina
Honourable Musa Fofanah
Honourable Alie Bayoh
Honourable Umu Pyne
Honourable P.C Alameen Kanneh
Honourable Fatmata Bintu Soukenah
Honourable Foyoh Tholley
Honourable Rosaline Hawa Siafa
Honourable Mohamed Rahman Coker
Honourable Alice Jebbeh Kumabeh
Honourable Idriss Sahid Kamara
Honourable Capt Sylvester A. Boima
Honourable Abdul Karim Bangura
Honourable P.C Alhaji Sheku Marrah III
Honourable P.C Bai Feramata Bubu Gbak II
Honourable Brima Manseray
Honourable Beatrice Iyamide Yankley
Honourable Fallah Tengbeh
Honourable Alhaji Christopher K. Vandy

Honourable Momoh Bockarie
Honourable P.C Desmond Kargobai
Honourable Charles Osman Abdullah
Honourable Mohamed Billoh Shaw
Honourable Mohamed Kanneh
Honourable Neneh Lebbie
Honourable Massay Ngahiteh Aruna
Honourable Mohamed Fofanah-Tarawallie
Honourable Idrissa M. Dauda
Honourable Alpha F.M. Jabbie
Honourable Mustapha M. Sellu
Honourable Mohamed Bangura
Honourable Emilia Lolloh Tongi
Honourable P.C Prince Bio Lansana
Honourable Abubakarr Fofanah
Honourable Amie Nyava Moriba
Honourable Rugiatu Tarawallie- Mussiaffa
Honourable Festus M. Lansana
Honourable Edward George
Honourable Komba Quee
Honourable Sahr Kortu Momodu
Honourable Ishmael Sankoh Yillah
Honourable Veronica Kadie Sesay
Honourable Abdul Suliaman Marray-Conteh
Honourable Sheik Santigie I. Kargbo
Honourable Joseph Bash Kamara
Honourable P.C Paul Ngaba Saquee V
Honourable P.C Kandeh Paria Kawaleh II
Honourable Francis A. Kaisamba
Honourable Alex M. Rogers

IV. GOVERNMENT MOTION.

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND AVIATION

MR ALHAJI FANDAY TURAY [*Minister of Transport and Aviation*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratify the following Agreement, which was laid on the Table of this House on Tuesday, 16th December 2025:

Amendment to Article 10[4] of the Constitution of the African Civil Aviation Commission [AFCAC] was adopted by the Twenty-Eight [28th] Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 31st January, 2017.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Constitution of the African Civil Aviation Commission, which was originally enacted in 1969 and updated in 2009, establishes a specialised Agency of the African Union to coordinate civil aviation policy, safety and security across the African Continent. Article 10[4] of the African Civil Aviation Act establishes the quorum requirement for its meetings. Specifically, it deals with how the plenary, being the supreme organ of the Commission, functions. It states that a two/third majority of the member states must be present for the plenary to hold a valid session. The aim then was to ensure broader consensus and representation before decisions were made. However, while the 2009 Constitution sets the quorum for two/third majority of member states, operational efficacy proved quite challenging. The amendment of Article 10[4] aims at:

- Operational efficiency- The primary intent is to facilitate faster decision making within the organisation.
- Strengthen African Civil Aviation Commission [AFCAC] membership- Member States are actively encouraged to ratify this specific amendment; i.e., Article 10[4] of the Constitution of the African Civil Aviation Commission [AFCAC] to 2009 revised Constitution and deposit it at the African Union to ensure efficient operation.
- Streamline decision-making- By adjusting the threshold for votes or quorum, it reduces the delays caused by absenteeism and crucial meetings.

Thus, the amendment is part of the broader drive, aimed at strengthening African Civil Aviation Commission's [AFCAC] capacity to lead the decision-making efficiency of the plenary.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of this House on Tuesday, 16th December 2025:

Amendment to Article 10[4] of the Constitution of the African Civil Aviation Commission [AFCAC] was adopted by the Twenty-Eight [28th] Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 31st January, 2017.

[Question Proposed]

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Mr Leader.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister has stated the reasons they wanted to amend Article 10[4] of the Constitution of the African Civil Aviation Commission [AFCAC]. This has to do with the quorum based on the presentation made by the Minister and based on the spirit of the Constitution of the African Civil Aviation Commission [AFCAC]. It indicates that decisions are supposed to be made based on general consensus and this has been pivotal to this Commission.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to read Article 10[4] of the Constitution of the African Civil Aviation Commission [AFCAC], so that you will understand the reason we need for this amendment. It was on the 16th December 2009, in Addis Abba, Ethiopia, that the idea to amend the Constitution of the African Civil Aviation Commission [AFCAC] came up. However, it was difficult for them to arrive at a consensus because of the absence of member states and their inability to meet the two/third majority threshold when it comes to decision-making. Owing to this particular provision, decision making was very challenging for them to come to final conclusion. This is why they thought it fit that Article 10[4] of the Constitution of African Civil Aviation Commission [AFCAC] must be amended. Since 2009 when this Article was amended, Sierra Leone has not done the needful and that is why the Minister, in his wisdom, decided to bring this Agreement before the House for ratification.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me state the importance of amending Article 10[4] of the Constitution of African Civil Aviation Commission [AFCAC] and by doing so, I want to read Article 10[4&5] of the Constitution of the AFCAC for better understanding and edification of all of us. Article 10[4] says: **"The quorum for the Plenary shall be two/third majority of Member States."** Article 10[5] states: **"Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 21, decisions of the Plenary shall be adopted by consensus, failing which by two/third majority of Member States present and having the right to vote."** The emphasis is on the quorum, established under Article 10[4]. They have also given an insight into the number of Member States that are present to cast their votes. The Minister also stated that after ratification, he would submit this Agreement to the African Union Office. This is to show that we have ratified the Agreement. It is essential to consider quorum in decision-making process, just as in this Well. This means before the commencement of every sitting, we should have a quorum. We do refer to the relevant provisions in the Standing Orders that talk about the quorum before we take decision on behalf of our people.

Mr Speaker, I want to state here that the Minister is on track by bringing this Agreement before us. Even though the Agreement is coming very late for ratification, but it is better late than never. We want to support you in terms of ratifying this amendment. Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want us to speedily ratify this Agreement.

THE SPEAKER: I want to thank the Leader of Government Business for his statement. Please proceed, Mr Minister.

MR ALHAJI FANDAY TURAY: I want to thank the Leader of Government Business for his statement. The Leader has succinctly explained the reason I am here. I know that we are late in terms of bringing this Agreement to Parliament, but it is better late than never. Therefore, we will continue to ensure that other Acts will be brought to this Honourable House. Thank you very much, Honourable Leader. On that note, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratify the following Agreement, which was laid on the Table of this House on Tuesday, 16th December 2025:

Amendment to Article 10[4] of the Constitution of the African Civil Aviation Commission [AFCAC] was adopted by the Twenty-Eight [28th] Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 31st January, 2017.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[Government Motion by the Minister of Transport and Aviation has been ratified]

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Minister.

V. BILL

THE NATIONAL SECURITY AND CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE ACT, 2025

THE CHIEF MINISTER

COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING

THE HOUSE RESOLVES INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Parts 1-6, Clauses 1-31 Proposed

MR DAVID M. SENGEH [Chief Minister]: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 1-6, Clauses 1-31 stand part of the Bill.

[Question Proposed]

THE CHAIRMAN: Roman Figure i? ii? iii? and iv? Page 1? Page 2? the Long and Short titles? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, Page 6, Clause 34. It says: **"The Council shall meet at least once in every three months at such time and place as the Chairman shall determine."** Mr Chairman, if the House will permit

me, I want to insert the phrase 'as the Chairman may deem necessary,' instead of the 'the Chairman shall determine.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Where is that written?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: It is on Page 6, Clause 334.

THE CHAIRMAN: It says: **"The Council shall meet at least once every three months, at such time and place, as the Chairman shall determine."**

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Yes, Mr Chairman. This is just a suggestion and it is left with the House to accept or reject. I suggested 'as the Chairman may deem necessary,' instead of the 'the Chairman shall determine.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Leader, I think that is standard.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I know it is standard, but I am just trying to emphasise on the Clause, since this has to do with security issues. However, if we are going with the standard, I do not have an issue with that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 6?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Mr Chairman, this is just something that the House might want to look at. I do not know the current setup of the Security Council, but on Page 6, I want us to give it a thought around the Early Warning, whether they are part of this composition or not. I am looking at the setup on Page 6.

THE CHAIRMAN: On Page 6?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Mr Chairman, it might not be on Page 6, but having seen the composition, it might come to mind. Maybe as we proceed, we should take a look at it and see where it might be necessary to let Early Warning institution be part of it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Indeed and they are extremely relevant here. I totally agree with you. Mr Leader, what have you got to say on this?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, the provision for Early Warning should be inserted somewhere along the composition, especially the area that talks about the National Security Council [NSC], coordinating with the NSCCG. Let us look at the structure and determine where we can place the Early Warning Institution. They are already categorised as part of the Security Council meeting. So, we are going to look at it and I am happy that the Chairman of the Legislative Committee has informed us about this institution.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think when you talk about the structure of the National Security Council and the Early Warning institution; I think it is incumbent on them to be part of this particular body because when they notice any early warning signals, they have to bring that to the attention of this Council.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, if you look at the structure they have put in place, the NSCCG is the highest body and the Early Warning institution is just part of this body. So, when they meet, the Early Warning institution will make a representation to the NSCCG and the NSCCG by structure; will collaborate with the National Security Council which comprises the President and the Vice President. We should not forget that Early Warning is under the Office of the Vice President. So, to avoid too much duplication of the functions and to respect the structure of security apparatus, we want them to be at that level.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, this is a subject for debate. I will stick a pin on it and we will come back to it. Mr Minister, do you want to say something?

MR DAVID M. SENGEH: Mr Chairman, as the Leader was saying, it is a tripartite system. The National Security Council comprises the Office of National Security [ONS] and the Early Warning should report to ONS who later reports to the National Security Council. So, I would like to suggest that the views of the Leader should be accepted. The Early Warning institution should not be there because the ONS is already included in the Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: We stick a pin on it because it is debatable. Mr Deputy Leader of Government Business, do you want to say something?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, I wanted to say the National Security Coordinator is just serving as secretary to that Committee. He is not a member of the Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: Why are they making him just a secretary to the Committee? He should be a member.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, if you look at the proposed Bill, he will be serving as Secretary to the Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: We can make him a member and at the same time a Secretary to the Committee. We are the ones that are making the law. We can make him a member as well as Secretary.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Mr Leader, Clause 2 of the Act says: **"There shall constitute an exercise body known as the National Security Council, which shall consist of the President as the Chairman and the following other members."**

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: It is true, but when you go to that Clause, it is clearly stated that the National Security Coordinator is serving as a Secretary rather than being a member.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Mr Chairman, we need to review this issue.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Mr Chairman, when you look at Clause 2, Paragraph 'g,' it falls under the membership of the Committee and Paragraph 'n' talks about his duties or functions as Secretary. This is similar to other Bills we have enacted in this Well. It says: "The President, as the Chairman and the following members..." If you read under the following members, it includes, the Chief Minister, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, etc. If you go to the aspect that has to do with the Secretary, it says: **"...the National Security Coordinator as Secretary."**

THE CHAIRMAN: Do not worry, Honourable Mustapha Sellu; we will take care of it. Under Paragraph 'n,' we will say the National Security Coordinator, who shall also serve as Secretary, shall serve as both Member and Secretary to the Committee. You cannot talk about the National Security Coordinator in Sierra Leone and you just want him to be a Secretary. He should add his voice or take part in the deliberations.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, let us go back to the substantive law, which is the National Security and Central Intelligence Act, 2023. The aim is to look at the interpretation Clause. It says: **"The National Security Coordinator refers to Section 25[1], which gives a thorough detail with regard the functions of the National Security Coordinator."**

Mr Chairman, if you have read some of the provisions in respect of 'a person acting as secretary' in some of the Bills we have enacted in this House, you would realise that the Secretary is giving a pivotal role to coordinate the Security Council. In this Bill, the National Security Coordinator is very important at the NSCCG level. So, the National Security Coordinator is responsible to present documents as Secretary to that particular body and it is the highest body in the National Security Council. The Chairman of that body is the President, followed by the Vice President and other Ministers. Therefore, I believe that acting as Secretary also means he is a member. This is because he is pivotal to the National Security Council. The Secretary presents minutes of meetings from the NSCCG to the National Security Council. So, you have to get a person who will be in charge to coordinate the security sector and make presentation to the President and Members of the Council. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr Leader.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have corrected it. We move to Page 6. Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9?

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Mr Chairman, Page 8, Clause 5 has to do with 'Restriction on Access to Information.' All of us know what is going on in the public domain. However, in the previous Act, which is the Right to Access Information Act, 2013, it talks about the right of citizens to access information from the Council. In this Bill, it is clear that this is an issue of security that the public should not just get access to. Let it be specified here that there will be certain category of information

that should not be accessed by the public due to their sensitive nature. This is my suggestion, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Honourable Joseph Williams-Lamin.

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: Mr Chairman, in Right to Access Information Act No. 2 of 2013, citizens have the right to access information, but it has been made very clear that the right to access information is not applicable to this particular Act. So, I do not think we should be laboured ourselves on this issue.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the suggestion made by Honourable Mustapha M. Sellu is somewhere in the Act. Page 8? Page 9?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I suggested that we should have the National Security Coordinator to act as Member, as well as Secretary to the National Security Council Coordinating Group. Mr Chairman, permit me to read the provision that is established in Part 4, Clause 6[1]. It says: **"There shall continue in existence a body known as the National Security Council Coordinating Group [NSCCG], which shall consist of the National Security Coordinator as Chairman and the following members."** My colleagues were saying if we can have the National Security Coordinator as Member instead of a Secretary. This provision has given real meaning to the National Security Coordinating Group to incorporate other bodies that are essential. In this Clause, we see various institutions emerging to give more security outlets or contributions to this structure. I want us to carefully examine this structure and I ask that we have the security sector to give meaning to this structure. However, we do not have any challenge identifying the position of the following members: the Deputy National Security Coordinator, the Chief of Defence Staff, the Inspector General of Police, the Director General of Central Intelligence and Security Agency, the Director General of the Sierra Leone Correctional Service, the Chief Fire Officer, the Chief Immigration Officer, the Joint Force Commander, the Assistant Inspector General of Police for Operations... - *[Interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Hold on, Mr Leader. Do you think we need the Chief Fire Officer?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Yes, Mr Chairman. They are all part of the security network in the country.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, in the case of the Head of Strategic Situation Group, which is the Office of the National Security, we need the Minister, through the professionals, to explain this structure to us because this is a critical body we have setup in terms of crisis management in this country. For example, when we had the mudslide on the 10th August 2017 and the attempted coup that occurred on the 26th November 2024, this office was created for this purpose. So, we need some edification on this, Mr Minister.

Mr Chairman, Part 4, Clause 6 also includes the Senior Civil Servants of other Ministries, Departments and Agencies [MDAs] [as the Chairman in consultations with members] may deem necessary. This is what I want us to pick out because this has to do with security matters and we have to discuss them very seriously. Mr Minister, I do not tend to demean the functions or the responsibilities given to the civil servants because they are doing tremendous or fantastic job. However, for this purpose, we want to know the necessity of having the Senior Civil Servants of other MDAs in this Act.

Mr Chairman, we want to know the head of the Strategic Situation Group, which is the Office of National Security. I think the National Security Coordinator is in better position, through the Minister, to tell us about this sector. Finally, Paragraph 'k' in this Clause is the problem. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Maybe the Minister would want to explain it to us.

MR DAVID M. SENGEH: Mr Chairman, in the report from the Committee, Paragraph 'k' was changed. In the amendment report, it says: **"Permanent Secretaries, Directors General and Senior Civil Servants of other Ministries, Departments and Agencies [MDAs], not below the rank of a Director, as Chairman in consultation with the members, may deem necessary."** There are many things within the security sector that touch on the different line ministries. If you think about the Early Warning, you would realise that sometimes there are security concerns from the Ministry of Basic Education regarding teachers' strikes or if the school buses are not running can pose a security risk in the country. The reason we said it should be left open is because security is much broader than a strait jacket and these socio-economic situations have impacts on the security of the country. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Minister, we are posing this challenge, so that we can understand the structures better. We do not want to have a lame duck representation in this particular sector. This should be read in tandem with the report presented to us. I have not been able to access the report, but let me refer you to Clause 6, Sub-clause 1[k] of the report. It says: **"The National Security Council Coordinating Group [NSCCG] be amended to read 'Permanent Secretaries, Directors General and Senior Civil Servants of other Ministries, Departments and Agencies [MDAs] not below the rank of a Director, as the Chairman in consultation with the members may deem necessary.'"** Mr Minister, think your explanation is accepted; and with regard to security issues, it is necessary. However, we are not trying to water down the structure, but to strengthen it. We now have the cadre in the report which says, 'not below the rank of Director.' We are satisfied with it for now.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, my next point has to do with the Strategic Situation Group in the Office of the National Security. We want to know the head of the Strategic Situation Group, Office of National Security. This is just for our own understanding because we are moving to a situation where technology is becoming more advanced. Mr Chairman, even the Cyber law we passed here, which you are aware of, you are now seeing what is happening in the modern world and how people are treating the Cyber law with levity. In fact, most of the things that are happening are largely misinforming the public and we are not as advanced as other countries in terms of controlling our cyberspace.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, there are tensions around the issues that have to do with the security sector and these issues are on social media. We want to know, in this Strategic Situation Group, its main functions and how do we minimise these situations because this is a critical entity. Mr Chairman, can we be edified on this Clause?

THE CHAIRMAN: Have we exhausted the list that has to do with the members?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: We have not, Mr Chairman. We are addressing Paragraph 'K.' We have not exhausted them.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let us hear from the Minister

MR DAVID M. SENGEH: Thank you, Mr Chairman. The Strategic Situation Group is the think-tank of the Office of National Security and of the National Security Council Coordinating Group.

THE CHAIRMAN: Hold on, Mr Minister. I am still on Clause 6[1]. Where do you have Strategic Situation Group?

MR DAVID M. SENGEH: This is in Clause 6[1] Paragraph 'j.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR DAVID M. SENGEH: The Majority Leader was asking as to why the head of Strategic Situation Group is in this Committee.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: We are not questioning the presence of the head of Strategic Situation Group in this Committee; we want to know its relevance to this sector. Mr Minister, I cited the mudslide that occurred on the 10th August, 2017 and the attempted coup on the 26th November, 2024. So, we just want to know the essence of having them here since we want to see the efficiency of MDAs coming to this sector. We believe they are not only coming there to fill the space, but to give us an outlook of the security sector. So, we want to know their relevance to the sector.

MR DAVID M. SENGEH: Mr Chairman, the Strategic Situation Group is the think-tank, and they conduct assessments, conversations and strategic planning on

security matters. Therefore, the head of that group is important in terms of briefing and providing updates. That is why they are there. I agree with Honourable Mathew S. Nyuma that the Strategic Situation Group is very important in the security sector and they play pivotal role in the sector.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Honourable Joseph Williams-Lamin!

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, we have to bear in mind that we are talking about security; and if we look at the Western world, you would find out that not everybody is allowed to be in the security sector. This body [Strategic Situation Group] can call on any Department or Agency to report to them. It does not necessary mean they have to be on board as a group, but they should be a body that could be called upon at any time to give report. Mr Chairman, as people's representatives in this House, we have the right to summon any institution in this country to report to us. When you talk about confidentiality in security issues, I am sure as the number gets enlarged, confidentiality is undermined. So, we have to bear that in mind, Mr Chairman.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, by extension, I want to be edified on the Head of Statistics Sierra Leone. During the period of crises, you set up the Situation Room. Obviously, the Situation Room has to do with all layers made in the provincial areas. For example, during elections, we had a lot of tension and insecurity in the country. My question is that is this entity in charge of setting up the Situation Room?

MR DAVID M. SENGEH: No, they are not the one setting up the Situation Room. It is done by the National Security Coordinator [NSC].

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Okay, well understood.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Deputy Leader.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, due to the sensitive nature of this Council, I want to propose additional institutions to be added. For instance, if you look at Paragraphs 'L,' 'M' and 'N,' they talk about the Director General of National Civil Registration Authority, the Executive Director of the National Protected Area Authority and the Director General of National Disaster Management. I want to propose that we add the Executive Secretary of the Sierra Leone Maritime Administration. This sector is extremely important in terms of security; even the Sierra Leone Ports and Harbour Authority should be part of this sector. If we are talking about security, all of us know that the Sierra Leone Ports and Harbour Authority is the main access point to the country. So, they should be part of the security apparatus because when sensitive discussions are held, the Sierra Leone Ports and Harbour Authority should be able to operationalise these discussions. So, I propose that we add the Director General of the Sierra Leone Ports and Harbour Authority, and the Executive Secretary of the Sierra Leone Maritime Administration.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Deputy Leader, we cannot get everybody on this Council. Like what Honourable Williams-Lamin was saying, certain institutions can be directed to do certain things. The Council can direct certain institutions to do certain things; they do not necessarily need to be part of the Council. They can issue directives to them.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Mr Chairman, Clause 3 on Page 6 has to do with the proceedings of the Council. It says: **"The President shall preside, at the meeting of the Council, and in his absent, the Vice President."** Clause 2[a] says: **"Invite such persons or person as he may consider necessary for any deliberation of the Council."** I think these two Clauses explained everything. The President, in this case, may invite other persons or members to that meeting as he may deem necessary.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, Paragraph 'k' on Page 9 talks about sensitive security matters. The submission made by the Chief Minister clearly explains the reason we should have certain institutions which are listed by the Minister. If the President wants to consult, for instance, with the Ministry of Health, he will do that in consultation with other members and he can refer to the Minister of Health to come and listen to the deliberations and the Minister of Health will now take it to the line Ministries in the sector and discuss with the Permanent Secretary or whosoever, rather than having a civil servant on the Council. It will definitely undermine the entire process.

Mr Chairman, security issues are serious matters and they should be treated in closed doors. Let us restrict it to those institutions already mentioned, instead of adding more institutions. Let us stick to Clause 6[a], where the President may deem it necessary to invite a Ministry, rather than being part of the Council. Therefore, I suggest that we stick a pin on it, so that we can examine it from different angles to see whether we can add more institutions or not. Since the Bill is before us, let us work with the professionals who are piloting the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr Leader of Government Business.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, we do not need to mumbo jumbo these things. In my presentation, I said that we are doing it by layers and the layers are very clear. When the issue of the National Security Coordinator came up with regard to his role as just a secretary instead of being a member of the group, I explained the qualifications of the National Security Coordinator. This tells you that we are analysing this Bill by layers in order to ensure proper security coordination.

Mr Chairman, if you have read the amendments in the report, they clearly explain the aspect of consultation. It says: **"The rank of a Director as the Chairman in consultation with members as he may deem necessary."** So, the National Security Coordinating Council Group is not available to everybody. I agree with

Honourable Mustapha Sellu when he said that security matters are serious matters and we have to leave room to create intelligence in order to gather relevant information from other institutions without including them in the Council. When I was debating, I mentioned that the veracity of intelligence you gather from one layer must be properly scrutinised before sending same to another layer and that is stated in this Bill. Let me reply to the suggestion proposed by my colleague, Honourable Bashiru Silikie. He suggested that we should add the Executive Secretary of the Sierra Leone Maritime Administration. I want him to know that they are mentioned on Page 16, Clause 11. It says the Council shall have a true Maritime Committee. They are placed in the professional layer.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, Page 17 indicates certain institutions, such as the Director of Operations, Sierra Leone police; the General Manager of Sierra Leone Ports and Harbour Authority and the Executive Secretary of the Sierra Leone Maritime Administration. Mr Chairman, we cannot continue to duplicate functions. This Bill is intelligently papered by layers and the information gathered must properly filter before taken to the National Security Council for final decision. This is why we brought the Early Warning to be part of the structure. However, Mr Chairman, I propose that the Executive Director of Early Warning and Response Mechanism Center be added in Clause 6[1], Paragraph [o]. Also, in line with what Honourable Mustapha Sellu said regarding the seriousness of security issues, we also need to be mindful when dealing with it. In fact, when you go to the Chiefdom Councils, you will see other players being involved. This is my submission, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let me hear from the Chairman of the Legislative Committee.

HON. ABDUL S MARRAY-CONTEH: Mr Chairman, I hate to waste time on this because the Leader has already made it explicit. There is nothing to buttress on this. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr Chairman of the Defence Committee.

HON. ALEX M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to add my voice by saying that those arrangements should be viewed as strategic necessity and not administrative adjustment, as we are looking at it. I want to draw your attention to the previous pages which include the strategic necessity. Mr Chairman, Part 2 on Page 4 talks about the Composition of the National Security Coordinating Council Group. I also suggest the need to include the Ministry of Energy and I will tell you why. Mr Chairman, you would agree with me that security threat includes the intersection of those institutions, for example, the nuclear facilities. Sometimes when there is war, this institution will play a great role. I suggest that we include the Ministry of Energy to the National Security Coordinating Council Group. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do not worry, Honourable Chairman. When we become a nuclear state, we will take that into consideration.

MR DAVID M. SENGEH: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Let me start by replying to the suggestion made by the Honourable Member who spoke about the President, who is the Chairman of the Council, shall invite such person or persons, as he may consider necessary. That is already written. In Part 3 of Page 9, there are seven different committees as mentioned by the Leader of Government Business, starting with the National Security Coordinator to the National Security Coordinating Council Group, the Provincial Security District and Chiefdom, Joint Intelligence and Joint Maritime. The reason I wanted to mention this is that some of these suggestions that are being proffered are already captured in other committees as explicitly listed. I also agree that we add Early Warning and maintain the other lists as we have them, bearing in mind what the Chairman of Defence Committee had also said. I thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: In Paragraph [o], we insert the Executive Director of Early Warning. Mr Leader, can you move the Motion?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I move that the Executive Director of Early Warning and Response Mechanism Center be included in the list of National Security Coordinating Council Group.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any seconder?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: I so second.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[The Motion to include the Executive Director of Early Warning and Response Mechanism Center has been carried]

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Clerk, I hope you are taking note. Page 10?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, Page 10, Clause 'f.' I want us to examine it properly. It says: "**Perform such other functions as a Council shall assign to it.**" I want us to insert 'direct,' instead of 'assign' to it. These are volatile institutions and there should be directives by giving them specific instructions. For instance, you are directing an individual to perform a particular function. You can assign without giving directives. So, I suggest that we use the word 'direct,' instead of 'assign.' I do not know how the Minister and the professionals will look at it, but that is my suggestion because these are the words that are mandatory.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr Chairman, what have you got to say?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. I was thinking that the word 'assign' is appropriate in this context because it directs them to carry out a particular responsibility.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Leader, I am sure you were overthinking.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, looking at the exigencies of certain activities, it is appropriate to use mandatory words. I know that this is a matter of semantics; but in this area, we are talking about security and we need to be specific with our choice of words. We are going to maintain the word 'shall,' but my suggestion is to insert the word 'direct,' instead of 'assign,' which expresses the mandate of giving functions to certain institutions.

Mr Chairman, one can assign functions, but that does not necessarily mean a directive is being given to do something. For instance, I can assign this phone to my Deputy, but I have not given him the directives.

THE CHAIRMAN: If that makes the Leader happy, it is appropriate. Let us say 'assign' or 'direct.'

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I am happy.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 10? Mr Clerk, please take note.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Sometimes these Table Clerks tend to do something different from what we are doing and that is why I want the Clerk to take note.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 11?

HON, MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I want to say something about the Composition of the National Security Coordinating Council Group. We need to have serious discussions on this issue. As I said, we are not doing intelligent gathering because we want to put members in the group; we are doing this by structures. We want to get vital information that will protect the state. Page 11 talks about the Regional Chairman and the Council of Paramount Chiefs. These two members are nominated by the Chairman, after consultation with other members. My question is that what are the parameters that the Chairman is going to use to consult other members to get the Regional Chairman and the Council of Paramount Chiefs on the Board? This has not been explained anywhere in the Super-Clause and this has to do with the Provincial Committee.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, my next question is, are we okay with two representatives? Why not three, or four or five? Why just two? They need to convince us on this issue. This is serious business and we should take the intelligence gathering to the Chieftdom or District level. That is why the Minister has given a caveat that this area is going to be redefined in order to ascertain the veracity of the National Security Coordinating Council. So, you have to clarify their functions. We are not going to the administration, but for the edification of this House and my very self, we want to know the parameters that the Chairman is going to use to consult other members to get the Regional Chairman and the Council of Paramount Chiefs on the Board. Why do we limit the membership to two instead of three? What are their functions? Mr Chairman, I want to know before we proceed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr Minister.

MR DAVID M. SENGEH: Mr Chairman, security is not just a function of titles and positions, particularly at the granular level. Every member has a title and a portfolio. Mr Chairman, if you look at the functions of the Provincial Security Committee in this instance, you will find out that it has a title and a portfolio and it is attached to an area. The Chairman will be consulting with other members by bringing persons whom they have agreed to incorporate and can add value to the process.

Mr Chairman, in relation to the number of representatives, we do not want it to be bloated. The Council has already had a large Committee and we think one is not enough. I am sure two representatives offer a counterbalance and we do not want to make any addition. However, there are people at this level of security who are stakeholders and the Chairman, in consultation with other members, could deem such people as important and should be included in the Committee.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Minister, even though I am not too convinced with your statement, but let us assume we want to open the platform, so that we can have consultations. Why not inserting the phrase, 'incorporate members in consultation with other members' and remove the numbers? If we are looking at the importance of having other members, we should not limit the number to two members. These members will play a role as members, not part of the Committee. However, if we want them to be part of the Committee, why not creating and inserting a phrase that will bring them on board when necessary. We can even bring four or five members, instead of limiting it to two.

Mr Minister, we are not trying to remove the intent; we are removing the number of membership you have included in the Bill. Again, we are not limiting you; we are giving you the leverage to add more members, depending on the situation at hand. For instance, you want to investigate the issue of Ndogbo Yosoi in Pujehun District, do you think this number will be adequate to do so? Of course not; you need to broaden the membership in order to conduct a comprehensive investigation. To me, having two members in the Committee does not make sense.

THE CHAIRMAN: What do you advice?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I advise that we incorporate members as deemed necessary by the Chairman, in consultation with the other members.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Chairman of the Legislative Committee, I consider this very prudent. I do not know how you look at it.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, this provision is just an import from the extant law. I am sure before this time, this is how it has been.

THE CHAIRMAN: But this does not mean we have to keep it that way.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, this is not an ad hoc committee. These people are permanent members of this Committee. Let us give leverage to the resident Minister, who will represent the President at that level, to nominate members.

THE CHAIRMAN: Hold on, Honourable Members. We are all men of the world. Some will decide to provide employment for their friends or brothers who are not even related to security apparatus.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, it has not been abused for a very long time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Leader, this does not mean it will not be abused. What I am saying here is that we cannot give a blank Cheque to the resident Minister to choose, in consultation with other members. The Chairman can always have his way of getting some people on board and there is nothing you can do about it. So, the fact that these provisions have not been abused before does not mean they cannot be abused. We have to be very careful. Maybe we should try to tie that up with something, so that at the end of the day, we will have some qualifications attached to it.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, we should give free hands to the resident Minister. They have been using these provisions long before this time without being abused. At this moment, let us allow it until we notice otherwise.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, Mr Deputy Leader. I do not have problem with that at all. I am just thinking aloud.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I do not think my Deputy was paying attention when I was talking. The Bill is before us for amendment or to look at some of the grey areas and make some changes. We are not demeaning or reducing the powers of the Chairman; we are making him more responsible in this Bill. We are talking about the fluidity of the security sector. We realise that there is no provision that incorporate additional members because it is limited to two members. We just want to maintain the efficiency and the efficacy of having people in this particular Committee. I asked a question as to why the Bill only caters for two members, instead of three or more members. I cited the example of Ndogbo Yosoi. In this case, you need to have more people on board, so that they can help to investigate such matters. It is not about giving the Chairman the laxity or comfort. What we are saying is that the Chairman, in consultation with other members of the Committee, will bring other members on board, which the Chairman said is a wise decision.

Mr Chairman, in line with what the Minister said, instead of limiting or bringing them to the board, we should leave it open and that will help to bring people from different background within the security network and this will help the Committee to have a broader view of their work. The Deputy Leader was talking about having a

fixed number, which you will rely on in terms of investigation. We are not against that, Mr Leader; and in fact, we are giving more responsibilities to the Chairman in order to make sure that he moves around to get members based on the situation we have at hand. We cannot limit it to two; it can be three or four members. In my opinion, we should not allow them to be on the board permanently. They should only be on the board for short term as deemed necessary by the Chairman in consultation with other members. Thank you.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Leader, do not forget that this is at the regional level and not at district level. Mr Chairman, at the district level, I will go with the position of the Leader to say at the district level, a lot of people can be coopted.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, what do you suggest at the provincial level?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, at the provincial level, let us leave it as stated here.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Chairman, what do you say?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Mr Chairman, looking at the point the Leader is making, we have a Clause, even though it is not very clear regarding the process, but it has to do with members.

THE CHAIRMAN: Which Clause, Honourable Member?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: The Clause that has to do with two members nominated by the Chairman, after consultation with the other members. So, based on that, we can remove this Clause and make provision for coopting members as and when necessary, than having two members with no clear method of selection.

THE CHAIRMAN: Deputy Leader, I think this makes sense.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, let me make my position very clear on this matter. I want to take it step by step regarding the membership of the Committee. We have the Provincial Secretary as Deputy Chairman, the Deputy Provincial Secretary, the Brigade Commander and the Police Commander in the region. The Bill makes provision for two members, but the question I asked was that what are the parameters for having two members and why two members?

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, my position before was to leave it open rather than restricting it to just two members, especially when it comes to the provincial area. So, this can create more room for people residing in Kailahun, Kenema or Kono to be part of the process because these members can be changed at any time based on the prevailing circumstance.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not know what the National Security Coordinator [NSC] thinks about it.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: The National Security Coordinator has not filtered the rhythm of what is before us.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Leader, if we make room to co-opt people, I think that can produce more results than just having two people.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, it is appropriate in the provincial level. At the district level, where the operations happen, they can coopt and report to the Pro-sect.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Leader, I think even at Pro-sect level, we need to coopt. We have some security experts you can coopt to deal with a particular situation. For instance, if you are dealing with a particular traditional issue and you want to coopt traditional leaders for guidance, you can bring two or more traditional leaders together for proper advice in handling such situation. However, since the National Security Coordinator and others are the experts, they know what is appropriate. We are here to make laws and they are the experts; they have the experiences in dealing with some of these issues. However, you can provide guidance to the Minister. We will listen to what the Minister is going to say. This is because even though we are making laws, we do not want to interfere too much into the domain of the experts because they have empirical evidence. I do not know why the Leader and his Deputy are not on the same trajectory.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, the Minister was talking about coopting members, but looking at it, the same provision that is given in the pro-sect, is the same provision given at the district level. Now, they are talking about two members and I am now convinced, but I want to know the parameters they are using to have two members?

Mr Chairman, for the pro-sect in provincial area, everybody is represented at the regional level and there is no restriction regarding the number. Logically, in order to make this as information gathering intelligence, you should apply the same method by coopting either three or five members. The proposed text given to us does not create room for cooption at all levels. We are not removing the two; we want to create a provision of how these two are nominated. Let the Minister tell us the parameters for having two members.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let me hear from Honourable P.C Alameen Kanneh.

HON. P.C ALAMEEN KANNEH: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman for giving me the opportunity to add my voice to this debate. Generally, this Bill focuses on security, but I think we should not forget to pay attention to both biosafety and biosecurity. Mr Chairman, for the edification of the public and this House, biosafety focuses on protecting people and the environment from accidental exposure or release of dangerous biological agents through proper procedures. Biosecurity on

the other hand, involves protecting, controlling and ensuring accountability for biological materials to prevent intentional misuse, theft or deliberate release.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I wanted to raise a Point of Order when we were looking at Page 9, but I could not catch your eye. It is rather unfortunate that we do not have the Executive Chairman of the EPA in the National Security Coordinating Council Group. He should be part of the national security architecture. However, if we cannot get the Executive Chairman of the EPA on the National Security Coordinating Council Group, we can get the Regional Coordinator of EPA at the regional level to be a member in the Pro-sect level. That is my submission, Mr Chairman. Of course, there are other areas the National Council of Paramount Chiefs will be involved, but we will talk about it when we come to the composition of the Chieftdom Security Committee. Thank you.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, today's sitting is a clear indication that we scrutinise laws even when the Opposition MPs are not around. You can see this through our heated debate. It shows that this is not a rubber stamped Parliament. Mr Chairman, Clause 7[6] on Page 12 states: **"The Provincial Security Committee shall regulate the procedure of its meetings."** This implies that they can coopt when necessary. This particular aspect was imported from the extant law which has been in existence and it still stands the test of time. I will continue to appeal to the Leader of Government Business to accept the law as it is stated in the extant law. I thank you very much.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you, but I cannot be moved by sentiments. I want to state here that we are not operating under a parliamentary system of government. I want to make it clear that we should try to understand the dynamics of these structures. As my colleague Paramount Chief on the other side of the aisle said, we have the Director General of the National Disaster Management Agency, the Executive Director of the National Protected Area Authority and we have agreed that the amendment should include these two Ministries in Paragraph 'k.' I believe these two entities are professionals to deal with the issues we are discussing. I do not see the relevance of the EPA to be part of this Group to address the need based on the assessment, but we will see how best we can take care of that aspect.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I do not quite understand the difference between the biosecurity and the biosafety that were mentioned by the Paramount Chief Member of Parliament. Also, my colleague mentioned the regulations; but in this case, I want him to understand that we are talking about what constitute a Committee. I am sure constituting a committee comes before the regulation. Our focus is on constituting the committee and not the proceedings of the committee. These are two opposing views we are talking about and they are not in the same category. Clause 94 says that before you regulate yourself, you have to first of all meet and constitute a Committee. Mr Chairman, in order to constitute the National

Security Coordinating Council Committee at the Pro-Sect level, we should look at the foundation of the Pro-sect level; and by looking at it, it is clear that two members are not enough when it comes to the provincial areas. This is due to the fluidity of the security sector, which creates laxity given to the Chairman to coopt more people and set up certain structures within the security sector when it is deemed necessary. In this case, relevant issues that are brought up during meetings will be looked into by the Chairman and other members who have knowledge of the issues.

Mr Chairman, I asked a question regarding the parameters being used by the Chairman. I have illustrated many examples to fit into this position. I made mention of the Kono District incident and other areas that if you want to get intelligence regarding the protest in Kono, the Chairman can coopt two members from that district to give you comprehensive information of the issue. We need to make this part flexible. We are not limiting the powers of the Chairman. What we are saying is that it is appropriate to give the Chairman the leverage to bring people on board in order to enhance the functions of the Pro-Sect level. That is why we are appealing to the National Security Coordinator [NSC] to consider this issue very seriously. We are not talking about the regulation; we are talking about the composition of the Committee. I thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr Minister.

MR DAVID M. SENGEH: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I am grateful for the contributions made by the various speakers. Mr Chairman, we already have sixteen members in the Committee and we want to maximise efficiency and inputs in the Committee. We already have representation from the Police, Senior District Officer and many more. We also have other people who play functional roles in the Committee and these include, the Regional Chairman, Council of Paramount Chiefs, etc. We think these two members, as have been listed, are important to this sector. We also believe that the people who His Excellency the President will appoint in this role [I am talking about the resident Minister], will act professionally and will act in the furtherance of promoting what the President and the government wants. So, I do not want us to make a decision, assuming that such appointed person may go the wrong way.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, we agree to insert a phrase that allows other members to be co-opted. We do not want to say these committee members are coopted members, but we are going to be explicit by inserting the phrase 'other members may be coopted.' However, we want to maintain those two members in a more permanent position because many of these security concerns last over a month or a year. So, we do not want a situation where we will be changing those two members in every sitting. They have to work along with some of these issues within the Pro-sect and district. I want to make a suggestion, Mr Chairman. I am

sure to make the composition of the Committee explicit, I want to suggest that the two members should be one man and one woman. This is meant to enhance gender parity, which aligns with the President's interest of putting gender equality before everything. So, I suggest that Paragraph 'L' be modified to be two members; one man and one woman, to be nominated by the Chairman, in consultation with other members. We also insert another phrase, if the House so wishes, so that other members may be coopted as and when necessary. Thank you very much.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I suggest that we stick a pin on this issue. Mr Minister, I want to be frank with you that I am not convinced. In your first presentation, you confused us that we should not bloat the number. I want you to know that this is not a gender fight; this is about security issues and they are very serious. Mr Minister, you are a proactive and pragmatic individual, but I do not agree with your first presentation. First, you spoke about over bloating of the membership of the Committee. I stated that we should ascertain the veracity of having two members. We are not trying to undermine the function of the Resident Minister, but the question is what will these two people be doing? Let me go over the list for you understand what I am trying to say. In the Provincial Security Council Committee, you are explicit with the names of members indicated and even the Senior District Officer is clearly mentioned. There is also the Regional Chairman of Paramount Chiefs, the Deputy Regional Registrar for the region is mentioned. However, on Page 2, it does not indicate the essence of having them on board.

Mr Chairman, I want the Minister to know that this cannot take off anything if we say, based on the dynamics of the situation, intelligent gathering that provides relevant information can be given to the National Security Coordinating Council Group. If someone is coming from the pro-sect to the National Security Coordinating Council Group, the person should be able to carry some certified information to the National Security Coordinating Council Group. Mr Minister, you made mention of trusting the Resident Minister. We are not questioning the caliber and the respect given to the Resident Minister. My question is on which grounds are we going to have these two members on board? You have confused us further by mentioning the women into the sector. How can you bring women in security related issues? Let us give leverage to the Chairman to coopt members. If you put another layer in this structure, you are bloating the number of this Committee. Can we stick a pin on this matter, so that we can have an outside discussion?

THE CHAIRMAN: We are going to stick a pin on it.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Minister, I am not trying to throw your views under the carpet. I just want you to convince us as to why we should have two people. For the National Security Coordinator, you have done in that regard; but for him to be a better Coordinator, you need to have something that is established by a legislation. Mr Minister, this is not to water down your efforts; you have made a good

presentation, but let there be a veracity of your performance in that particular sector. It is the responsibility of the members in the Pro-sect to report to you under the National Security Coordinating Council Group. Mr Minister, we have listened to your presentation, but you have confused us further when you spoke about having two members on board and the issue of gender parity. Do you want women to be represented? I do support the idea, but we should know the type of woman you want to bring on board. Mr Chairman, I want you to stick a pin on this matter.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, I do not want the women of this Parliament to rise against the Leader. Therefore, I am sticking a pin on this matter. I hereby announce the following names of Members who have been nominated for the Inter-Parliamentary Union [IPU] Committee, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association [CPA] and the Turkish Parliament.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT NOMINATED FOR THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION [IPU] COMMITTEE.

Honourable Mustapha M. Sellu
Honourable Alice Kornya Sandy
Honourable Hawa Rosaline Siafa
Honourable Sia Mahawa Tommy
Honourable Benjamin Turay
Honourable Mohamed Kanneh
Honourable Osman Charles Abdullah
Honourable Umu Pyne
Honourable Tamba Simeon Johnny
Honourable Alie Bayoh
Honourable Alfred A. Thompson
Honourable P.C Kandeh Paria Kawaleh II

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT NOMINATED FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION [CPA].

Honourable Abdul Suliaman Marray-Conteh
Honourable Bernadette Wuyatta Songa
Honourable Alhaji Abu Kemokai
Honourable Fatmata Sarah Soukenah
Honourable Brima Mansaray
Honourable Amara Momoh Kargbo
Honourable Mohamed Fofannah-Tarawallie
Honourable Sarty Banya
Honourable Princess Kadie Daramy
Honourable Fallah Kenewah Tengbeh
Honourable Fatmata Bintu Bockarie
Honourable P.C Alameen Kanneh

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT NOMINATED FOR THE TURKISH PARLIAMENT.

Honourable Neneh Lebbie
Honourable Massay Ngahiteh Aruna
Honourable Adama Bangura
Honourable Idriss Sahid Kamara
Honourable Abu Bakarr Fofannah
Honourable Ambrose Maada Lebbie
Honourable Beatrice Iyamide Yankley
Honourable Emilia Lolloh Tongi
Honourable Festus Mohamed Lansana
Honourable Alie Bayoh
Honourable P.C Desmond Kargobai

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[The lists of Honourable Members to serve in the Inter-Parliamentary Union [IPU], Commonwealth Parliamentary Association [CPA] and the Turkish Parliament have been approved]

THE CHAIRMAN: There are vacancies and these vacancies are reserved for the All Peoples Congress [APC] Members of Parliament. When they return, they will nominate their members. Thank you very much. We are sticking a pin on Page 11, but we will come to it at the next adjourned date. We move to Page 12.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I also want us to stick a pin on the same Clause that has to do with the two members at the lower level nominated by the Chairman, in consultation with other members of the Committee . It is on the same page.

THE CHAIRMAN: Which Clause, Honourable Member?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Clause 8[g].

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, that is on Page 12. Page 13?

[Suspension of S.O 5[2] being 12:00 noon]

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 14?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, Page 14. Mr Chairman, Page 14, Paragraphs [D], [E], [F] and [G], we had an argument with regards to the scrutiny based on the type of Civil Service that are supposed to report to Parliament. Mr Chairman, Parliament is not an ordinary place that you can make report to just like a

normal press conference. Reporting to Parliament is quite different from how you made report during Press Conference and this is because, you have to go through the Standing Order and you must be trained and be aware of the proceedings in Parliament.

Mr Chairman, in this sector, I am still going to repeat the statement made by the Chief Minister. This sector Mr Chairman is a sector that is made up of intelligent gathering and it is the bases where relevant information is being gathered from various institutions. Mr Chairman, I am talking about the Chiefdom Security Council Committee and this is mentioned on Page 14. They said, two representatives from Civil Society as co-opted members.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to know whether the Minister is co-opting only members from the Civil Society Organisations that have do with security issues, especially crisis management or do you think co-opting members is applicable to all Civil Societies? In this page, they are generic but I am suggesting for us to make it specific because, Civil Societies have different procedure. There are those that have nothing to do with security matters. Why not focusing or bringing those Civil Society members that have to do with security matters on board, instead of co-opting them? They are also relevant to governance and in fact, in some states, they are being called Members of the Fourth Estate. Mr Chairman, in modern term democracy, Civil Society Organisation plays an important role in the society as well as governance.

Previously Mr Minister, I asked a question that, on what grounds are we co-opting these two members that are coming in? Do Civil Societies really need to be part of the matters related to security or should we just Co-opt them when we need them with regards to matter related to crisis managements or events that occur in a particular chiefdom? I just want to know that Mr Minister.

THE CHAIRMAN: Leader, if you are saying this, is like you will be blowing hot and cold on the same issue. At first, you were suggesting for the two members to be co-opted.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, the point that I am raising is different from the first one. In this case, they are saying that, under the Chiefdom Committee, two representatives from Civil Society as co-opted members. I agree with them.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, are you suggesting for the two members to be co-opted?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Yes, Mr Chairman. However, this should not only be limited to just two members. When you co-opt Civil Society Organisations into security issues, it will become a loose organisation. So, if you want to co-opt Civil Society individuals, you should look for those who are dealing with security matters

or those in crisis managements. We can co-opt members who are not even members of the Civil Society. In the report, you only stated them without specifying them. You should specify the type of Civil Society members you want to co-opt.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, are you paying attention to this issue?

MR DAVID M. SENGEH: Yes, Mr Chairman.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Mr Chairman, I am still on the composition. This is on Page 13, Clause 9[b&c]. It says: "The most senior Military Commander and Police Officer in the Chieftdom." Mr Chairman, for some of us, our Chieftdoms do not have Police Officers or Military Commanders. I only wanted to ask, since they are talking about senior police officer or military commander. Are they referring to the Chieftdom Police Officer or Military Commander? I want the professionals to help us; we need to be explicit when making laws. Furthermore, Clause 9[e] talks about the Chieftdom Counselor. I want to know which of the counsellors they are referring to. We have counsellors in the Chieftdom who are part of the electoral body and other entities. So, which one are we referring to? Also, do you think the National Security Coordinating Council Group intervenes if a Chieftdom does not have Military Commander?

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Chairman, was this captured in the report?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: No, Mr Chairman. This is an existing structure which the current setup has not really complained about, but we discussed them. That is why they are not placed in the report. However, as the procedure requires, Members of Parliament can bring it up. Previously, there were no issues with regard to this issue. Mr Chairman, inasmuch as this is also serving as proposed legislative scrutiny exercise, we noticed that there had been no compliance.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, I must confess that there are things to be done in this particular Bill. At this point, all of us will have to go to Committee Room One to discuss this Bill before it is finally brought for ratification. Honourable Alameen Kanneh, let me hear from you.

HON. P.C ALAMEEN KANNEH: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, with regard Clause 9 on Page 14, the National Council of Paramount Chiefs Mr Chairman, has a very great concern and as a result, we are asking that some amendments be made to this Clause. This document spells out the proposed amendments with regard to specific Sections in the Bill and to address the main risks that have been identified for chieftdom governance, which is the authority and dignity of Paramount Chiefs and the protection of the customary laws.

Mr Chairman, the proposed amendments aimed at preserving the security purpose of the Bill, while preventing unnecessary interference with lawful chieftdom institutions and customary laws. The proposed amendment is that there should be a new Section after Section 1 with the caption, 'preservation of chieftaincy institutions

and customary laws.” In other words, we should insert Section 1[a], which talks about the ‘Preservation of Chieftaincy institutions and customary laws.’

THE CHAIRMAN: Which page are you reading from, Honourable Paramount Chief?

HON. P.C ALAMEEN KANNEH: I am reading from Page 9.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Mr Chairman, the Honourable Paramount Chief is presenting the position statement from their Council. I do not know whether it is appropriate for us to look at it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Paramount Chief, can you present that to the Chairman of the Legislative Committee, so that the Committee can do an addendum to it? At this stage, we cannot consider a Position Paper.

HON. P.C ALAMEEN KANNEH: Okay sir.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, we cannot have a position paper here because it is not in line with what we are discussing presently. This is something that has to do with security matters and we are talking about the Composition of the National Security Coordinating Council Group. Fortunately, we have the extant law and these structures are already in existence. If we start to dilute some of these structures without effectively giving them the role they should be performing, the President will definitely refuse to sign it. In order to prevent the occurrence of some of these issues, there must be clear justifications regarding some of these issues.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let him give the position paper to the Chairman of the Legislative Committee. Mr Chairman, take note of his position and discuss that with your Committee. You will give us clear information about it in the next sitting.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Mr Chairman, except there is a provision for that, it will be included. I just want us to be guided.

THE CHAIRMAN: If it is relevant, it will be included. However, let him give you the Position Paper. Mr Chairman, it is for you to tell us whether it is relevant or not and I am going to give you a few minutes to address us when we come back.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Okay, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, let me hear from you.

MR DAVID M. SENGEH: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. These are productive contributions and we should definitely continue to make this a better one. With regard to the issue relating to the Chieftain Council, I want this House to know that the same point was made at the district as well as the provincial level. I do think that the law as it is now, is sufficient and these issues have not been brought up.

Mr Chairman, in the case of Non-Governmental Organisations, when we had the Yenga issue, the Non-Governmental Organisations and Civil Society Organisations that were there were very instrumental in providing inputs. These inputs went across

the chain; i.e., from the Chieftom to the district, province, Office of National Security and the National Security Coordinating Council Group. I think we should allow the people, at the local level, to choose the NGOs or CSOs' members who can contribute or provide relevant information. Mr Chairman, I do not think we should be too prescriptive with that because it has been working very well and we want to trust the people on the ground to do it.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Practically, Mr Chairman, I think we are just curious about having all types of Civil Society Organisations on security matters. I want it to be specific. With regards to the number, that might be good depending on what they want to do. I was just suggesting that the number be increased because I am seeing it from a regional perspective. Mr Chairman, we do understand the dynamics at the chieftom level, but not all chieftoms are being exposed; for instance, Karene District. You cannot have some of these CSOs in some of the remote areas to deal with security related matters. However, they have said that we should co-opt them based on certain circumstances as you mentioned the issue of Yenga. To me, even though we can come to this matter later, I want to believe that we have been co-opting two members for a very long time. Mr Minister, can we expand it to three members instead of two? Normally, there are chieftoms where women are marginalised based on traditional practices. Mr Minister, can you make you make provision for women to be co-opted?

THE CHAIRMAN: It is like these women have intimidated the Leader of Government Business.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, since we are now working towards gender equality. I think the other layer in this Bill is female representation. That is my suggestion, Mr Minister.

MR DAVID M. SENGEH: Mr Chairman, I want to agree with the Leader of Government. The point he is making in terms of co-opting three members is already indicated in this Bill. We are going to be explicit by saying, two men and one woman. This is because gender issues need to be carefully looked into. In the proposal, we are going to insert two men and one woman.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Minister, I do not want to interfere with the provision given in the proposal. I suggest that we add another layer for women.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Leader, we do not need a particular layer for this.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, the Minister mentioned about inserting two men and one woman, but if you are considering the rules of procedure, it should be "three representatives, one of which shall be a woman." That is the standard version.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, it should be at least one woman.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: However, Mr Chairman, if we have agreed not to create another layer specifically for women, I think we should allow the Chairman of Legislative Committee to review this one.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Leader of Government Business.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, have we accepted that the three representations should be sanitised?

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you know what I am doing at this stage?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: No sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am resuming the House.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Has the proposal that I made granted? I am talking about the three representations.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been granted and we will talk about that later.

[THE HOUSE RESUMES]

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, thank you very much for coming. Honourable Members, I genuinely think we should do more on this Bill. We need to retreat behind our cotton and have this Bill properly discussed, so that when we come to this Chamber, we would have agreed on all the issues; and by that time, we would only come and flip through the pages and proceed to ratify this Bill into law. At this stage, it will be very difficult and you will agree with me that the debate is extremely difficult at this point. So, we need to get ourselves behind the cotton to properly discuss this Bill. In the circumstance, Honourable Members, this sitting is adjourned to Thursday, 23rd April, 2026 at 10am prompt.

Adjournment

The House was adjourned to Thursday, 23rd April 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

The House Rose at 12:20 p.m.