

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

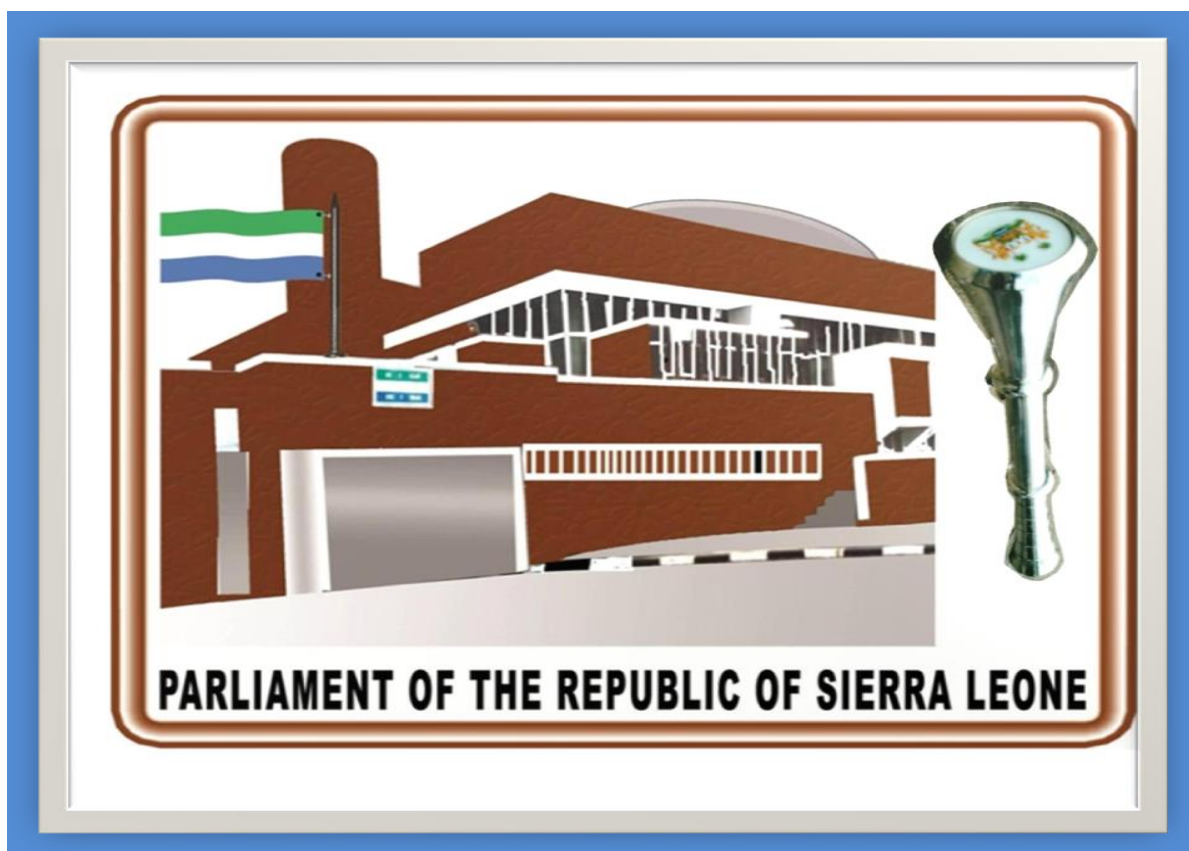
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

SECOND SESSION – SECOND MEETING

TUESDAY, 1ST JULY, 2025

SESSION – 2024/2025



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held on Tuesday, 1st July 2025

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THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

TUESDAY, 1ST JULY 2025

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Madam Sam-Kpakara, read the prayers]

[The House met at 10:18 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]

MR GILBERT BOSCO NHABAY [Deputy Clerk]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, pursuant to Section 89 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991, in tandem with S.O. 7 [1], this House has now formed a quorum for the commencement of the business of the House.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY, 24TH JUNE 2025

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Tuesday, 24th June 2025. As usual, we shall skip pages 1-4 and start with Page 5. Do you have any comments or corrections to make on Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? If there are no comments or corrections, can someone move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sittings held on Tuesday, 24th June 2025 as presented?

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: I so move, Honourable Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. MOSES A. EDWIN: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sittings held on Tuesday, 24th June 2025 has been adopted as presented]

ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: Honorable Members, let me at this stage, take this opportunity to formally announce in this Well that Honorable Musa Peter Moigua is dead. In the circumstance, I urge the Clerk of Parliament to formally inform the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone for his replacement. I declare that seat vacant by reason of his death. Mr Clerk, please communicate to the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone for his proper replacement. Thank you very much.

Honorable Members, I would also wish to inform you that we started very well, but we have started lagging behind. We are supposed to be here at 10:00 a.m. prompt. Upon my entering this well, I expect to meet the full complement of this House. We started very well, Members have been turning up, but it is unfortunate that we are not

complying. Well, I thank God that the lower level elections are over now. We are done with that and I want to believe that you were at their neck and you have adopted the results. I am sure we should start having the full complement of this Parliament. Let me now congratulate and doff my hat to the following Honorable Members who have been extremely diligent in their service to this nation and to this House. Like I said, at the end of this term of Parliament, I would properly communicate to the respective political parties regarding the attendance of their Members. Please ensure that you attend parliamentary sittings regularly and punctually. I would not want people to campaign to me to be on the list because I am going to create a clear picture to the political parties to encourage them to bring certain Members of Parliament by reasons of their diligence and their attendance. Honorable Members, let me start by recognising the following:

Honorable Alpha F. M. Jabbie

Honourable Umu Pyne

Honourable Williams-Lamin

Honourable Adama Bangura

Honourable Abraham Kabba

Honourable Marama Ella Goba

Honourable Musa Fofanah

Honourable Amie Moiba

Honourable Fallah Tengbeh

Honourable PC Kandeheh Baba Keita the III

Honourable Idrissa M. Dauda

Honourable PC Prince Lasana Bio

Honourable Alie Bayoh

Honourable Abdullahi Karim Kanu

Honourable Fatmata Sarah Sukunah

Honourable, Muhammad Tarawally Fofanah

Honourable Charles O. Abdullai

Honourable Foyoh Tholley

Honourable Brima Mansaray

Honourable Jibrila S. Moijueh

Honourable Ishmael Sankoh Yilla

Honourable Alice J. Kumabe

Honourable Boston Munda

Honourable Beatrice Maaya Kangbai

I thank you very much for your diligence to service and I want to believe that the public also appreciates your diligence to the House and to the Republic of Sierra Leone. I know that very soon I will start seeing these names over social media. I am sure they

will distinguish you from those who are not attending. Let me inform Members of Parliament that we have certain Members of Parliament who have made it their business not to come to Parliament. They deliberately refused to come to Parliament. This is for the attention of the public, because the day Parliament decides to act, we will not want CSOs or journalists to defend them. This is because they will begin to tell Parliament that no, you were not supposed to do this or do that; they were elected by the people. We want you to start warning those Members of Parliament who have made it their business not to come to the House and yet they are receiving salaries. I will urge the Clerk of Parliament to compile those names, so that we start naming them. Honorable Members, probably they are your friends or brothers and I want you to encourage them to come to Parliament and on time. This is why we have been elected to serve the people of Sierra Leone and nothing else. Thank you very much, Honorable Members.

IV. PAPER LAID

HONOURABLE MATHEW S. NYUMA

LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS AND HEAD OF THE SIERRA LEONE DELEGATION TO THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC STATES [OACPS] - WEST AFRICAN REPRESENTATIVE, 2025.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank you for bringing the House to order in terms of attendance. I however want to draw your attention to S.O.77, which gives you the greater power to impose disciplinary action you would like to take. So, I draw your attention to S.O.77 and you have been doing a very good job in trying to urge Members to come to Parliament. I think you need to look at the Standing Orders, particularly S.O.77, which gives you enormous powers to exercise your authority as Speaker of the House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table of this House the report of the Organisation of African Caribbean and Pacific States Sierra Leone Delegation [OACPS] on the sub-regional visit of the West African Bureau representative to the Republic of Liberia. I am Honourable Mathew Sahr Nyuma, Majority Leader and Leader of Government Business, head of delegation of the Organisation of African Caribbean, Pacific, West Africa Pacific States, West Africa Bureau Representative, 2025.

V. MOTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICES

PROPOSER: HONOURABLE MATHEW S. NYUMA

SECONDER: HONOURABLE BASHIRU SILIKIE.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, towards the end of the report, I would like to read a portion of the minutes of the Committee sitting. I would do that before I read the conclusion of the report. For obvious reasons which I will state in the minutes and you know very well that the letter was addressed to you relating to petition, but we have taken care of it.

1. Introduction

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service that is charged with the responsibility of vetting Presidential nominees to serve in important offices of state, met on **Monday, 30th June, 2025**, and interviewed **Ten** nominees for the following appointments; **Six Board Members, Two Directors General and two Chairpersons**; all of renown institutions of state.

2. Procedure

The Committee conducted its hearing within the usual framework of procedures and interviewed the Presidential nominees on issues pertaining to their long serving experience in public and private lives how they would intend building a strong institutions given the current circumstances. Further probing questions put to the nominees covered wide ranging issues relating to their declared assets, tax obligations and visions for productive tenures. Issues of unsuitability or otherwise were also closely looked into by the Committee.

3. Thirteenth sitting of the Committee on Monday, 30th June, 2025

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

i. Mr Abu Bockarie Kokofele, Proposed Director General, National Social Protection Authority

Mr Abu Bockarie Kokofele is a humanitarian and development practitioner with over 20 years of practical experience in designing and leading child protection interventions, education, social protection, and community development initiatives during emergencies, transition and development periods. He spent nine years of his illustrious career as an international expatriate working in emergency and post emergency recovery/development in Kenya, Somalia and Liberia. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Fourah Bay College [1998] and a Master in Business Administration in Leadership and Management from York St. John University, Zurich, Switzerland [January 2023]. His rich professional experience has earned him the following positions:

- August 2018 – January 2020, Commissioner, National Commission for Social Action [NaCSA]; January 2015 – December 2015, Child Protection Advisor/Technical Manager, Save the Children, Liberia;

- January 2013 – December 2014, Technical Specialist, Child Protection, Save the Children, Somalia;
- October 2010 – December 2012, Child Protection Expert, Save the Children, Somalia
- July 2008 – August 2009, Child Protection Manager, Save the Children, Kenya;
- July 2007 – June 2008, Emergency Child Protection Technical Advisor, Save the Children, Kenya; and
- April 2005 – June 2007, Child Protection Coordinator, Save the Children, Sierra Leone.

Responding to the Committee on how he is expected to transform the lives of the poor and vulnerable Sierra Leoneans through social services, he assured that with his extensive professional experience in Child Protection, Social Protection, and emergency humanitarian and development interventions over the years, he is confident that he will deliver on the agenda of His Excellency the President.

ii. Mr Prince Bernard Comatech Cotay, Proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council.

Mr Prince Comatech Cotay has several years of experience working with Statistics Sierra Leone as regional Council member for Western Area. He is a seasoned community relations and development executive with more than four decades of leadership, coordinating community activities and development initiatives. He is an astute, result oriented and decisive leader with proven success in managing post conflict development programmes and community relations. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree and post graduate diploma in adult education from the Fourah Bay College.

The nominee's brief profile of work experience revealed the following:

- From January 2015 – September 2017, he was manager, special project, Sierra Rutile Limited;
- November 2012- December 2014, Community Affairs Manager, Sierra Rutile Limited;
- September 2007 – December 2008, National Project Coordinator, Medical Research Centre, Sierra Leone; and
- January 2000 – August 2007, Country Director, CAUSE Canada, Sierra Leone Programme.

Responding to questions from the Committee on his contribution towards ensuring maintaining standards at Statistics Sierra Leone, he said: **"The Board collaborates with the administrative structure to implement critical activities of state through technical advices and ensuring the institution keeps to the laws."**

iii. Mr Mohamed Kpana-Gboto Kemokai, Proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council

Mr Mohamed Gbato Kemokai is a calm personality with strong inter personal and communication skills with firm knowledge and experience in community relations and development programmes. He is currently pursuing his Bachelor's degree in community development studies at the Evangelical College of Theology. Prior to this assignment, he served in the following capacities:

- April 2020 – July 2022, district coordinator, Covid 19 Emergency Response Center, Pujehun District;
- 2019 – 2020, Enumerator, Social Safety Net [SSN] National Commission for Social Action;
- 2017 – 2020, Programme Officer, Action for Community Tasks, Pujehun
- 2019 – 2020, Enumerator, Social Safety Net [SSN] National Commission for Social Action; and
- 2017 – 2020, Programme Officer, Action for Community Tasks [CSO] Pujehun

In his response on his work as Board member at Statistics Sierra Leone, he told the Committee that the work as a Member of the Statistics Board has been inspiring and collaborative and this helped the institution to deliver on its numerous programmes.

"As we enter the Census phase, I am sure the Board will support the process as required by law."

iv. Mr Alhaji Alie Badara Yillah, Proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council

Mr Yillah is a retired Civil Servant, educationist and Agriculturist. He has a rich profile of administrative ability with more than a decade experience working in various divisions of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. He is a quiet and unassuming character that pays much attention to timely and quality job delivery. His collaborative work of with other Statistics Board Members has helped the Statistics Sierra Leone implementation machinery in most of its programmes executions. The nominee holds a Bachelor of Science Degree Education in Geography and Mathematics and an advanced Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Agricultural Meteorology. He is a strong alumnus of the great Kolenten School of the Kambia District.

In his remarks on his role on the Statistics Board, he said as Members, they always complement the Institutions effort to deliver. **"Our role as in the Act is clear and we always to execute this to the fullest."**

v. *Mr Prince Terenah Quee, Proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council*

Mr Quee is a well-known personality in countrywide. He hails from Koidu, Kono District and has always been a very strong political advocate for the ruling party in the Kono District where he served as Chairman of the SLPP from 2002-2007. Prior to his first time appointment on the Statistics Council [2019-2025], he worked as finance clerk in the Ministry of Agriculture [1976-1998] and as Appellate Commissioner of the Income Tax Commission [1998-2006]. He promised to give his unwavering support, as had always been, to Council Members to complement the work of Statistics Sierra Leone.

vi. *Mr Kalie Sallue Samura, Proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council*

Mr Kalie Salieu Samura hails from the Falaba District and has worked as Statistics Board Member from 2019 to 2025 with diligence. Prior to this appointment, he has served as teacher and worked extensively in various chiefdoms in the District. He is a quiet and hardworking personality that believes in team work. He is currently pursuing his first Degree at the Ernest Bai Koroma University of Science and Technology. Mr Samura promised to help the Board achieve its objectives within the Statistics Act.

vii. *Mr Brima Baluwa Koroma, Proposed Director General, National Petroleum Regulatory Authority*

Mr Brima Mohamed Baluwa Koroma is currently the Chief Executive Officer, of the National Petroleum Regulatory Authority, where he has been widely accredited for transforming Sierra Leone's downstream petroleum sector through robust regulation, infrastructural expansion and global engagement. He holds a Master of Business Administration [MBA] in Analytics, from Eaton Business School, and a Bachelor degree in Accounting and Finance from the University of Sierra Leone. A glance at his plethora of experience reveals the following:

- From 2018 to present, he has led the Petroleum Industry with his leadership by significantly boosting gas station access, storage capacity, revenue streams, and diversified the market. His recent appointment to the World Petroleum Council highlights his rising international profile;
- 2008 – 2016, he served as Chief Finance Officer, Safecon Petroleum, Sierra Leone;
- 2007 – 2008, he served as Director, Fixed Income Sales, Global Markets, Standard Chartered Bank [China] Limited; and
- 2006 – 2007, director, Global Corporate Sales, Global Markets, Standard Chartered Bank [Hong Kong] Limited

Asked how he intends to raise the profile of the just established Authority, the Financial expert in an assuring tone said: **"My transformational leadership would be the**

driving force to achieve fiscal growth of the industry.I intend to do bench marking with similar oil organizations in the sub region so that we can improve on our models of operations.”

viii. Mr Michael Hallie Kendoh, Proposed Chairman, National Petroleum Regulatory Authority

Mr Michael Hallie Kendor holds a Bachelor in Business Administration with Honours in Finance and a master in Financial Management from the Irish University Business School, London, United Kingdom in 2009 and 2013 respectively. Mr Michael Kendor’s proven track record in the corporate sector over the years has been remarkable thus:

- From 2019 to date, he has been a Board Member at the National Petroleum Regulatory Authority ;
- 2014 – 2015, he served as deputy national coordinator, IRACODE Sierra Leone;
- 2011 – 2013, Programme Manager, IRACODE Sierra Leone ; and
- 2009 – 2011, Operations Manager, Segbwema Community Bank

Having served as a member of the Board of the Petroleum Regulatory Authority for the past six years, as he mentioned in his response, would provide him with a sound institutional memory, administrative prowess and technical abilities, to Chair the Board to achieve a significant mark in the petroleum Industry.

ix. Mr Brima Abdulai Sheriff, Proposed Chairman , National Commission for Persons with Disability

Mr Brima Abdulai Sheriff is a dynamic professional with extensive expertise in humanitarian Programmes, Governance and Leadership, complemented by a strong background in project management, advocacy and communications. He has a proven track record in institutional development, strategic planning and corporate management. He holds a Master’s degree in Peace and Development studies from Njala University in 2008 and a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Education in 2001. He has worked with the following institutions in several capacities mostly on a pro bono basis:

- Ministry of Social Welfare - development of accountability framework for the monitoring of the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with disabilities;
- Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary School – Development and roll out of the strategy on Anti – Stigma campaign on inclusive education;
- National Council of Paramount Chiefs – technical support to leadership, policy development and general administration of the institution of Paramount Chiefs;

- National Commission for Persons With Disabilities – development of strategic plan 2021-2026 and evaluation of implementation of the National Commission of Persons With Disabilities Act; and
- Chairman, Human Rights Commission

In his response to Members , the proposed Chairman said: **“I am not only a disabled, but have been part of all land mark development of the Commission ranging from the drafting of the Disability Commission Bill to giving pro bono technical inputs to the operations of the Commission. I am aware of the needs of disabled population, operational gaps of the Commission and how to march our aspirations with the Ministry of Social Welfare agenda.”** He promised to exhibit inclusive transformational agenda that will cater for all disabled across the country.

x. *Mr Josiah Murphy Kargobai, Member, Sierra Leone Water Company [SALWACO]*

Mr Josiah Murphy Kargobai is a human resource management consultant with several years of experience both in the public and private sector. His efficient leadership and mentoring in capacity building, with a strong sense of cultural diversity, enabled him to traverse various institutions in Sierra Leone.

He holds a Master’s degree in Business Administration from the Institute of Public Administration and Management [IPAM] in January 2004 and a diploma in Human Resource Management from the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. The nominee has a rich work profile as were noted:

- March – September 2019, Human Resource Consultant, World Bank, Freetown, Sierra Leone;
- November 2013 – August 2018 – Human Resource/Administrative Manager, Financial Intelligence Unit [FIU], Freetown;
- January – June 2012 - Human Resource Management Consultant, Sierra Leone Road Transport Authority [SLRTA];
- October 2010 – September 2012 – Human Resource Administrative Manager, Sierra Minerals Holdings Limited [Vimetco]; and
- January 2003 – March 2008 – Human Resource Manager, World Vision International, Sierra Leone

Responding to the Committee on his plans to develop SALWACO, he said: **“Driven by the passion for developing the human capital of the nation, his aim is to utilise the human resource potential to the fullest at SALWACO to enhance efficiency in service delivery. Strengthening the technical wing would be one of my priorities.”**

4. Recommendations

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

- i. Mr Abu Bockarie Kokofele, proposed Director General, National Social Protection Authority;
- ii. Mr Prince Bernard Comatech Cotay, proposed Member, Statistics, Sierra Leone Council;
- iii. Mr Mohamed Kpana-Gboto Kemokai, proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council;
- iv. Mr Alhaji Alie Badara Yillah, proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council;
- v. Mr Prince Terenah Quee, proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council;
- vi. Mr Kalie Sallue Samura, proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council;
- vii. Mr Brima Baluwa Koroma, Proposed Director General, National Petroleum Regulatory Authority;
- viii. Mr Michael Hallie Kendoh, Proposed Chairman, National Petroleum Regulatory Authority;
- ix. Mr Brima Abdulai Sheriff, proposed Chairman, National Commission for Persons with Disability; and
- x. Mr Josiah Murphy Kargobai, Member, Sierra Leone Water Company [SALWACO].

5. Conclusion

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the **Thirteenth Report** reflects the **unanimous** view of the Committee. I therefore move that the **Thirteenth Report** of the Second Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations contained therein be approved.

Signed.....

Hon. Mathew Sahr Nyuma (JP)

Chairman and Leader of Government Business

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: I so second Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed]

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to begin by thanking His Excellency the President for presenting to this House these nominees.

These are nominee who have been selected from among over seven million Sierra Leoneans to help His Excellency in achieving his agenda. We barely have three years plus for the next elections and excuses will not be tolerated by the people of Sierra Leone. Performance should be the focus. What the nominees will be doing at the end of the day will be part of our scorecard as a party and as a government. If they failed, they would not just fail themselves, they would have failed His Excellency the President who has bestowed confidence in them. They would have also failed us, as Members of Parliament, because we approved their appointments and by extension, they would have failed the people of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my advice to them is for them to treat these offices as if they are working for the people of Sierra Leone. You should treat these offices with the utmost respect they deserve; you should treat these offices as if you are treating them for Members of Parliament. I have always said that at the end of the day, the faces of Members of Parliament and the presidency will be on the ballot papers. It is based on what you do they will ask us questions. When we go for elections, the first question they will ask us is that S.O.2, *'waetin you done do for you people dem?* This is because our people are of the strongest conviction that we Members of Parliament are still responsible for primary developments. The appointees we usually approve here are part of the Executive Arm of government. It clearly means that the function of developing the country rests with the Executive. What we do, as Members of Parliament, is to represent our people, make laws and provide oversight. Our people judge us on the developments we have undertaken. So, when nominees come here, we remind them of what they should do. You are not just doing it for yourself, you are doing it for us because our faces will be on the ballot papers. We are the ones that will face the people at the end of the day.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you looked at the gallery, our friends and brothers came to support the nominees. I have always told these nominees that when they face us before their interviews, they call our phones as Members of Parliament; they visit us; they talk to us. Most of the times when they occupy their offices, even to pick our calls become difficult task for them. When we visit their offices, they will see us on their CCTV cameras, but they keep us waiting. That is the same way they treat the ordinary Sierra Leoneans. I want to remind the appointees that before you assume your respective offices, there were people in those offices and after you, other people will be seated in those offices. So, treat these offices as if you are passersby; do not treat them as if they are your permanent offices. This is because at the end of the day, if you treat people nicely while in those offices, it will be the same way the people will treat you when you leave these offices. I have always said that when press releases relating to appointments come from the Office of the President, we will now have a job to

interview and approve. As soon as press releases are out, you would want to see if you would be safe or not. Please treat these offices with the utmost seriousness and humility. This is because these are not your permanent offices; you are just traversing through these offices. Thankfully, we have nominees here who have occupied very sensitive offices. At some points in time, they were relieved of their jobs; but today, they have been brought back. This tells you that these offices are not your permanent offices.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will start with the man who came to this Parliament some few years ago as Commissioner of NaCSA. Today, he is here in a different capacity, Mr Abu Bockarie Kokofele. He is a fine gentleman and he comes from Kenema District. I could still remember, in 2018, Mr Kokofele and I were all part of the struggle for us to become Members of Parliament. One thing I always say is that where God wants you is the place God will put you. He wanted to be a Member of Parliament so badly, but after the elections, he was given a very lucrative position. Mr Speaker, even when he lost the party symbol, he continued to work assiduously for the Sierra Leone Peoples Party [SLPP]. You would agree with me that some people will come forward and aspire for positions in the executive or to become MPs, but when they lost those positions, they go back to their houses and sit comfortably. Some of them even sabotage the party. Mr Kokofele is not that man. When he was relieved of his job, he did not just go and start sabotaging the SLPP and the government, he sat quietly supporting the SLPP. It has also pleases His Excellency to recall him and this should be the spirit because when His Excellency appoints you, he does not consult anybody.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is also a blessing for him to be chosen among many Sierra Leoneans to serve this nation. So, when you are relieved from these offices, you should keep quiet and support the process; so that at the end of the day, His Excellency will reconsider you. Mr Speaker, you notice when some people are relieved of their jobs, the manner in which they carry themselves is very difficult to understand or accept, but Mr Kokofele, I doff my hat to you. You carried yourself very well when you were relieved from NaCSA. You kept quiet and you never sabotaged the SLPP and government. Today, you have been recalled to serve. That was a very serious position and you learnt a lot. You know the things you did right and you also know the mistakes you did. Please, make sure when you go to this new office, learn from those mistakes you made. Today, you know who human beings are. There were people who were close to you; you had people who used to call you or visit your house; people who walked around with you; but when you were relieved of your job, you did not see some of them anymore. They were not even calling your phones and some of them were speaking badly about you. You should learn from those mistakes. Make sure when you go to this new office, you go with the good things you did in that office and correct all

the mistakes you did. I have confidence in you that you will perform. Thank you very much His Excellency for bringing Mr Kokofele back. I wish you well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would love to talk about Mr Brima Baluwa Koroma. Coincidentally, he is from Bo. I want to thank His Excellency the President profusely on behalf of the people of Bo District. I want to thank the President for considering Mr Baluwa. Mr Speaker, for some of us that are from Bo, I can say here without fear or favour that Mr Baluwa has been extremely instrumental for the success of the SLPP. There had been no activities of the SLPP that you would not see Mr Baluwa in the forefront. He supports the SLPP and the ordinary people of Bo. There is no mistake when His Excellency chose people like Mr Baluwa. His track record is extremely good at the Petroleum Agency.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you notice that there has not been a time in this country during holidays that people were not queueing for petrol or diesel. Today, for the last two years, we have enough petrol and diesel during holiday periods. We have noticed that we now have more petrol stations in the country. He has liberalised the petroleum market. In those days, the business of opening gas stations was just reserved for few people; but today, if you have resources and fulfill the criteria, you can be given a license to operate. Today, the law says you should get approval from Sierra Leone Roads Authority [SLRA] and the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA]. The rate at which petrol stations are being constructed is unimaginable and sometimes the environment is not even conducive. If you go to the streets of Freetown, you would see petrol stations being built on a town lot and are very close to dwelling houses.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in as much as we want more petrol stations, we also want to be protected. As we speak, people build gas stations when they do not even have access to them because they have no approval from SLRA; and at the end of the day, you see them running after SLRA to give them access. Mr Speaker, we cannot run a state like that. Thankfully, you have the Director General and the Chairman of the Board. I raised that up with the Chairman of the Board yesterday to make sure you do due diligence for the people. Make sure you look at the land space and ensure the safety of the people before you issue out licenses. You should also request the license from SLRA because if you do not do due diligence, you will be given license to people who do not even have the land. You have done well over the years and we are proud of you, even though you have now changed from PRA to NPRA. You are now a regulator and please regulate properly. We want to thank you very much for what you have done for us. We want to thank the President as well. We are very proud of you from Bo. You have never been part of a district executive, nor have a constituency, but you always give us full support. I believe all Members of Parliament from Bo are proud of you and

all of us are proud of you. I thank His Excellency the President for this re-appointment. These are the types of appointments we want to see in Bo because when we have more of this appointment, we are sure that 2028 will be a done game. This is because these are the people that will support us when we need them most.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, of course, my younger brother is there, Mr Kemokai from Pujehun. He is a tar ground man in Pujehun. If you go to Pujehun District, you would like to befriend with Mr Kemokai. He is a man of the youth. Mr Speaker, I spent the shortest time with him in the interview. Fortunately, I did his interview and I said that I would not put him under a pressure because he had just lost the Young Generation position in Bo. When you talk about SLPP in Pujehun District and in the South in general, there is no way you cannot mention Mr Kemokai. He has been extremely pivotal for every SLPP activities. If you go to the Southern Province or Pujehun, you will see Mr Kemokai taking the lead role. Thank you very much sir. We have others who have not been considered, but we should keep the spirit. His Excellency said one thing that he wanted to give everybody job, but he would not and those who are fortunate to get job under his regime, they should make sure the job filters down to those who do not have. If you make sure those who do not have to enjoy, it will be a good idea because all of us suffered. You would agree with me that not all of us will have jobs at the same time. It is only when those without jobs to be comfortable and that is the only way out. If you have job and you believe this job is just for you, your family or your colleagues whom you are all part of the system, then that is a disservice to the President and the SLPP.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for those going to Statistics Sierra Leone, these are reappointed positions and they have done well. They were there before and it has also pleased His Excellency to give them a second term. I want to wish them well and to also congratulate them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to say a few words about Mr Josiah Murphy Kargobai, proposed Member, Sierra Leone Water Company, SALWACO. I will not conclude without saying anything about someone from Bo. I have not met him before, but when I heard his name, I knew it speaks volumes. I am passionate about Bo and Mr Kargobai is from Dambala. His name suggests that they are the owners of that Chiefdom and that is where the Honourable Pyne hails from. Mr Kargobai, I wish you well. From CV you presented, you have a wealth of experience in human resource management. I hope you would use experiences to ensure that other members of the Board deliver for SALWACO. Our people need water in the provinces. I am sure if you go to some parts of the provinces, you would find out that we are still struggling to get good drinking water. Please work with other members of the Board, so that your

experience is shared with them. I want you to work as a family and as a team. This is because if you succeed, the President and the people of Sierra Leone will be happy. I thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, except otherwise or except they disappoint themselves, but we were extremely convinced during their interviews that they were fit for purpose and we believed they would perform for the President and for the people of this country; and by extension, MPs whose faces will be on the ballot papers at the end of the day. I thank you very much and may God bless you all. I wish you success in your various offices.

THE SPEAKER: I will take the following in the sequence I am going to mention their names: Honourable Williams-Lamin, Honourable Emilia L. Tongi, Honourable Boston Munda, Honourable Mustapha Sellu, Honourable Tengbeh and Honourable Mariam Zombo. Five minutes for every speaker.

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. Honourable Speaker, colleagues Honourable Members of Parliament, we have a very tough responsibility this morning. The fact that we have distinguished personalities in our midst, being appointed by His Excellency the President, among millions of Sierra Leoneans, they have been given the opportunity to be in our midst for possible approval. I want to say thank you to His Excellency the President, for considering these fine gentlemen. The nominees are fortunate to be here because their resumes or curriculum vitae are very rich. In Sierra Leone, we can never doubt nominees' qualifications because presidential appointees are well qualified for their various positions. However, what we need to stress here is their performances. When you take up these offices, performance is paramount because the mindset in Sierra Leone is that when you are appointed to a particular position, of course, your status automatically changed. You are no longer going to use Auto Rickshaw or Keke; you are expected to be in your own vehicle, have your own office and accommodation. This means the status quo has changed. However, I am humbly pleading that you should not forget the people you are serving; and be friendly when you take your offices.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to admonish the nominees not to forget themselves. I did that in the Fifth Parliament, when I expended a whooping sum of money on my constituents just to meet their expectations. I have never disclosed this to you, but some people even asked me; 'Honourable, are you broke? Do you still have the money you used to have? This question was not about having money; it is just the spirit of sharing. I left the United Kingdom and USA to come to Sierra Leone and serve my people; I did not come for fat salary. Also, these nominees are here because they are ready to serve Sierra Leoneans. Please join the queue and do your job humbly;

support your people where necessary. Please, do not forget your home because at the end of the day, we do not want you to be seated in Keke to move around Freetown. This is very important because they will ask you the obvious question, are you still the man who used to be in a special vehicle or you are broke now? Those questions will come to you the same way they asked me. My undergraduate degree is planning. So, when I plan, I do not plan to fail; I plan to succeed. I do not plan to exclude myself; I include myself. I believe that you too are equipped to do so.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to zoom in two people who are very close to me. The one is from my fatherland while the other is from my motherland. Mr Brima Baluwa Koroma is from my fatherland. This gentleman would call and say *S.O.[2], Honourable, are get petrol for wuna na ya oh. Kam take am*. The truth is that I do not usually ask people for something. Whenever I received a call from him, I would run to him. Secondly, we came to the realisation that a group of people refused to listen to us because of their demands. They wanted a generator, a DVD and a TV set. I called this man and I asked him to come to my aid. He came to my aid and I was able to purchase the items. I sent the receipts to him and I delivered the items to the requesters. So, I thank you so much and I want you to continue your good work.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, equally, the gentleman from my motherland is Mr Kargobai. When we talk about the Kargobai and the Gokuwai family, these people are very unique and respectful, especially the Paramount Chief who is seated there. My great grandmother received and hosted them in our land about 90 years ago. Since then, we have an outstanding relationship in our family. They have tremendous respect for us, wherever we meet. It was through that respect they got the Paramount Chieftaincy because I come from a ruling house, which is the Ngokowua family. The District Officer called and told them that their father, the father of the Paramount Chief who is seated there, was very respectful, rich and hardworking. Therefore, you were going to be the next Paramount Chief. My grandfather should have been the one to be crowned as Paramount Chief, but he was very poor. So, they eventually got the Paramount Chieftaincy. Since that time, we became very close. These are the only two ruling families in Selenga Chieftdom: Ngokowa family and the Kargobai family. When this young man graduated from University, he had no job, but one thing I admired him most in Bo is *S.O.2, 'na fry fry e dae hold na plate dae sell na dem office dem]*. He came from the University, but he was selling items from one office to other. I saw him one day and I said if all Sierra Leoneans could convert their knowledge to this kind of enterprise, it will be a wonderful thing. For those nominees that I did not mention their names, I want to say you are all qualified and I would like to encourage each and every one of us here to endorse their nominations. They have to go and prepare themselves for the tasks ahead. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honourable Joseph Williams-Lamin. .

HON. EMILIA L. TONGI: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to thank His Excellency the President once again for giving us these beautiful nominees. As my colleagues have already said, when His Excellency the President nominates you to serve this nation, he is not nominating you because you are handsome or because you are friends. He did that for you to help him develop the country or take Sierra Leone to another step. All of us know that Sierra Leone is growing internationally because the President is working very hard as Chairman of ECOWAS. This is the first time in the history of this country that this is happening. It is happening to us because we are working and our policies are known internationally. When I went to Switzerland sometimes back, a lady told me that she would like to visit Sierra Leone because our policies are very good. I looked at her and I smiled. Indeed, we have beautiful policies and we want to make sure that these policies are fully implemented. Policies are not just meant to be put in our drawers; they should be implemented.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to start with the nominees going to the petroleum industry. I am happy that a lot of petrol stations are being built up around the country. However, the Agency has not been visiting these petroleum companies and it is going to be more dangerous if they continue to sit down and keep giving them licences to construct stations. We cannot continue building dwelling houses around petrol stations because it is risky and dangerous. In this country, we do not respect rules and regulations. There rules around those petrol stations, such as prohibition of the use of mobile phones and smoking. We do not respect these rules. So, to keep people's lives safe, let us make sure these petrol stations are built far away from the dwelling houses.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the government's pump price of petroleum products is distributed all over the country, but when you go to the hard to reach areas, they will sell a litre of petrol above government's pump price. The reason they will tell you is that the roads are bad. Yes, the roads are bad, but fuel Tankers will manage to go there and supply fuel to the fuel stations. The Tankers are delivering the fuel, but they are not selling the same price like in Freetown. I would like to tell the nominees of the petroleum industry to provide effective oversight to those fuel stations. Make sure you tell your staff to be visiting the hard to reach areas, in order to ensure that the fuel prices are uniformed across the country. This is wickedness and we must not condone such attitude. The distance from Freetown to Kenema is more than **200km**, but people pay less than **NLe200**. The question is that why are we paying **NLe80** for 8km or 10km distance? This is how wicked these people are. I am asking the two nominees not to just go there and sit down. You have to do everything within your powers to leave a

positive legacy. One of the two nominees is a brother to me and the other is a very good compatriot of mine. Please leave a legacy or positive changes that people will remember you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to look at the nominee for the Disability Commission. I was touched when I saw the nominee for NaCSA at the interview; but I could not ask him questions. Mr Speaker, NaCSA is giving money yearly to people with disabilities. However, it will interest you to note that some of these moneys are going to people who are normal and are not disabled at all. We have a lot of disabled people around us, especially in the hard to reach areas. Whenever NaCSA staff go to those hard to reach areas, they only stop at the constituency/district headquarters and asked for names from the chiefs. These moneys are not given to the disabled people in hard to reach areas. Some of the chiefs are very hostile to their subjects. It is wrong and I would like to ask our nominee for the Disability Commission, Mr Brima Abdulai Sheriff, to make sure he contacts NaCSA, so that NaCSA staff perform their jobs. This is because they sometimes feel lazy when they get to those places to even ask some of us. They should contact the Members of Parliament because we know our people and the difficulties they are going through.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these moneys are given to normal people and the disabled ones would continue to languish. They are grumbling for these moneys. I want people to know that disability is not inability. These people can do better, but it is only when we give them supports; they can make their lives better than we can imagine if we support them. When I saw the nominee yesterday, I grew to like him immediately because he does not care about his status; he wants others to be like him. Please motivate those people; they are human beings like you and please do everything possible to make them happy. They did not buy their present conditions; God gave that to them. I want to wish each and every one of you well. You are qualified and I know that you are ready to work and to make Sierra Leone a better place for all of us.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honourable Member. I give the Floor to Honourable Emmerson S. Lamina.

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Section 61 of the 1991 Constitution gives President Julius Maada Bio the authority to create offices, and to hire and fire. He has just demonstrated that today and I want to thank him for fulfilling that mandate. We thank him for considering these fine Sierra Leoneans who are in this Well. I will not waste your time to look at the nominees one by one, but rather I will provide general admonishments. They have been appointed and in the next few minutes, they will be approved by this House and we are expecting them to do well. Members of Parliament in the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments have never disappointed the government.

We give the government all the supports by ratifying Instruments, Policies, Agreements, enacting legislations into Acts Parliament and approving presidential nominees. We are doing all these things to make their work very easy. We want you to deliver for us, so that we can continue to consolidate our power. You have to perform your duties very well, so that the SLPP will continue to win elections.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about leadership. Today, you are leaders wherever any of you go, your followers will look up to you to show the way. When it appears that things and times are difficult, you are encouraged to show the way. How do you show the way? You can show the way through your effectiveness, your efficiency and your excellent attendance records. You can show the way through what I have just said. When you show the way, definitely the SLPP will continue to consolidate power at ease. I have seen a mantra that has made Leaders not to fail and if you apply that mantra, you will never fail in your various offices. What is the mantra? The SQRR is a model. I have seen many leaders exercising the Survey, which is the 'S.' They asked themselves critical questions. Upon assuming office, you have to ask yourself questions, even before the public will judge you; whether during electioneering period or whatever time you ask yourself the critical questions. This is my contract between this year and this year. What should be my performance? Ask yourself those critical questions. After you have surveyed, ask yourself how many departments do I have in this particular office? PRA, how many departments do I have and what is expected of them at the end of the year, whether quarterly or half yearly basis. Ask them very critical questions. Do you want us to succeed as a team?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will tell anybody that readers are just readers. If you are not ready to read, then do not read. If you want to read, then read. It has no option and no alternative. Readers are just Readers. You read and you recite by heart those things you think by day and you recite them by heart. You then you review. There comes in measurement and evaluation. You have to evaluate yourself whether you are doing well or not. I am memorising this for those going to Statistics Sierra Leone. That is a very critical office. I am also doing this for those going to SALWACO, for those going to the National Commission for Disability, for those going to Social Protection Authority and those going to the NPRA. That is a general admonishment for all of us who want to be great leaders. If you survey your office, you ask yourself critical questions, you will succeed. Those that give presidential and vice presidential candidates take the hardest bullet for us. However, for you to make our work easy, do these assignments and you will know if we are in line with the Big Five Game Changers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a general admonishment for Mr Prince Terenah Quee, Mr Alie Badara Yillah, Mr Kalie Samura and Mr Mohammed Kemokai who

are going to Statistics Sierra Leone. You know that cynics and naysayers will only consider your work as being political. You cannot evaluate better the socio-economic and the geopolitics of this country without better or credible statistical data. You are there as Board Members to give some thorough advice. It is my view that government has already envisioned Bandajuma and Panguma to be new districts in Sierra Leone. Are you thinking of the facilities they would require, especially their administrative structures? I am sure development is in the hand of Statistics Sierra Leone, not only the politicians. Those running the day to day administration of Statistics Sierra Leone have a role to play. This is an important office for the development of any country. I have seen people demonstrating in other countries like America due to wrong statistics.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure SALWACO is another important office. I can tell you authoritatively that the 2025 Budget talks about at least 100 Solar Powered Boreholes. How would you advise them? Will you take the population and geographical proximity into account during the distribution process, so that there is fair sharing ratio? It is there in the 2025 budget that 100 Solar Powered Boreholes would be provided. You should ensure a fair sharing ratio in the country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me go to the National Commission for People with Disabilities. The nominee, Mr Brima Abdulai Sheriff, is a researcher and a writer. I have seen countries where they will shout and yell for the rights of the disabled. It was like a mirage. When President Ahmed Tejan Kabba took Cabinet Conclusion that women should have **30%** quota, it was like a mirage, but it only stocked at the TRC recommendation; it was not actually actualised until under the Presidency of Julius Maada Bio. Today, the women have been acknowledged by giving them the **30%** quota. In our Parliament today, we have over **30%** of women's representation. You can do likewise for the disabled population of this country. The Kenyan Parliament raised concern regarding disability; and today, they have representation in their Parliament. I am also telling you to begin the campaign for the representation of people with disabilities. I wish it would not be your portion, but you are just a candidate to disabilities. They shouted in Kenya; and today, they have representation in the Kenyan Parliament. The women shouted two decades ago; today, they have representation in the Sierra Leone Parliament. Also, the disabled can shout, so that they can be considered and represented in Parliament and that should be your assignment now.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Abu Bockarie Kokofele is a guru in social protection. I am sure all his Kenyan and Asian experiences he has got would be brought here because he has provided a landmark testimony. I sure many of his successors would take a page from the book he left at NaCSA. I have no iota of doubt in his ability to perform. He would make us proud.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the NPRA. Even as I summarise, it is important for me to end with the NPRA. Mr Speaker, both the Board Chairman, Mr Michael H. Kendoh and the Director General [DG], Mr Baluwa Koroma, are performers. I can tell you that since my adulthood, I have never seen the price of a commodity being increased and decreased at the same time. This has happened with the petroleum industry and I think he deserved a round of applause... - *[Applause]*. I have never seen a situation where the price of a commodity was increased and later decreased. I have never seen it. It takes magic key this man has to do so. This man has the magic key and he should be applauded for that. He has the magic key; the magic key of communication; the magic key of participation; and that brings development. I am sure many of his compatriots who are working in the oil industry are not happy with him. This is because they want to make more profits and suffer Sierra Leoneans. He is refusing them and that is the magic key he has. He should be applauded and congratulated for being a blessed Regulator among oil barons. This man should be congratulated for being an African Regulator and for fighting against these giants from Kenyan, Ghana and Nigeria. He fought them all and he came out victorious. He became Africa's best Regulator with the help of the National Petroleum [NP]. How did he do it? He came with decades of experience from the Public Private Sector, whether from an international bank or from the petroleum industry.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the 2023 Audit Report confirmed that the NPRA contributes **11%** to our domestic revenue and this is why this man deserves another round of applause. He did due diligence by introducing reforms to promote that institution. Today, he has ensured that the Agency graduates to Authority. Many Sierra Leoneans stand to benefit, including some of us. They stand to benefit from the jobs that will be provided, whether in Freetown or in the provinces. Mr Baluwa Koroma has been demonstrating that with ease. I think he also deserves a round of applause. He has ensured increase in security and storage facility of the petroleum products. There were wicked Sierra Leoneans who were playing cheap politics with the lives of the people, whether on rice, fuel, cement or iron rod. These are political commodities that were in the hands of wicked and unpatriotic Sierra Leoneans. Today, this man has ensured that we put this behind our backs. Under him, Sierra Leone became a reservoir that even exported fuel to Guinea and Liberia during their fuel crisis.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Baluwa Koroma has done well for President Maada Bio's government and he deserves commendation. We only encourage him to work in line with the Income Tax Act of 2000. The Act is saying that if companies or individuals owed the government, but they have failed to pay their debts or arrears within the timeframe, their names should be published. We want to see that happening now. Sections 107 and 108 of the Income Tax Act, 2000 are very clear. If the oilers

failed to pay the government, their names should be published as a way of naming and shaming them. Another area we want to encourage you to pay attention to is ensuring the implementation of Section 13 of the Petroleum Act. This Section is saying that when the pricing formula is out for public consumption, there are unpatriotic citizens who undermine the government. We should penalise those individuals. Today, we are very confused because if you go to some places, you would see varying prices of fuel. Some fuel stations would say **NLe26**, while others would say **NLe27** or **NLe24**. We want to see penalties against those undermining Government decisions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Baluwa Koroma should be commended. We should commend this man because his administrative acumen transcends politics. I come to the conclusion that his lens of politics or style of leadership transcends regions, districts, tribe or religion. If this was an issue relating to the Opposition MPs, they would have showered lots of praises upon him. They would have said that this man has the trait of a real Sierra Leonean that shows love for his fellow Sierra Leoneans. I am sure such a man should be celebrated for taking this award from the Ghanaians and the Guineans. He should be highly commended and this should motivate other Sierra Leoneans to follow his footsteps.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to urge colleagues MPs to speedily approve this great man called Mr Baluwa Koroma. I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

THE SPESKER: Thank you very much, Mr Leader. Honourable Members, before I call on the next speaker, let me, at this stage, recognise the presence of eminent personalities that we have this morning. We have Madam Melrose Karminty, the Minister of Social Welfare; Honourable Sama Sandy; Deputy Director General, E.W.R.A; Honourable Habib Munda, former MP; Mr Alfonso Manley, Chairman, CSO Consortium; Madam Wuyatta Deen Swaray, Director of Policy; Mr Kemson Brima Moriba, District Chairman, SLPP; Mr Andrew B. Pesima, Director, NRA Board; Mr Alfred M. Kobba, Deputy Director General, NPRA; Madam June Alicia Conteh; Madam Lillian Wilberforce; Mr Samura Ansumana Tontie; Mr Ahmed Jalloh; Madam Hannah T. Stevens; Mr Daniel B. Kaitibi, Executive Director, Sierra Leone Maritime Administration; Mr David G. Lansana; and Mr Michael Jack Mouana. You are all welcome to this House. I now give the Floor to Honourable Boston Munda.

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank His Excellency the President for giving us these nominees. I have gone through the report and I realised that all these nominees are fit for the positions they have been nominated to serve.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to start with the proposed Director General for the National Social Protection Authority, Mr Abu Kokofele. As a family, we are very grateful to His Excellency the President for bringing Mr Abu Kokofele to this particular Institution. Mr Kokofele, you are going to National Social Protection Authority, because of your experience in this particular area. You have been the Commissioner for NaCSA and I want you to draw on your past experience and bring it to this particular Authority. When Mr Kokofele was relieved from his office as Commissioner General of NaCSA at that time, he remained humble and still active in the POAPA government, which is the SLPP government. He still displayed commitments and supported every project undertaken by the government. I am sure bringing him to the fore is very important to us. I am very confident that he is going to perform in that particular position as Director General. His experience in this field is massive because he spent over 20 years as development practitioner. He has been a true patriot in this capacity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I could remember when Mr Kokofele and I contested for Constituency 21 party symbol, he lost, but he remained to be my elder brother and in-law. He has never crossed paths with me. On my part, I also remained humble and respectful. When he was Commissioner of NaCSA, he created the platform for many young people. He championed the social safety net programme for the vulnerable and less privileged. We want to see a similar programme being brought to the Authority. He has been doing a great job for the less privileged and the physically challenged people. I think it will enhance your capacity as Director General in giving support to the less privileged. I want to see how you can mediate and harmonise that particular component in the Authority.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about Mr Prince Quee. I have no doubt in your ability to perform; and above all, you have been there for five or six years at Statistics Sierra Leone. I am confident that you will continue to perform because His Excellency the President thought it wise that you have the experience and the expertise to be in that institution; hence the reason for your reappointment. We have confidence in you and we believe that you will perform. You are the father figure for those of us from Kenema District. We know the role you have played for us as Members from Kenema District. Mr Prince Quee, you are wished well. We believe in your leadership; we believe that you will perform in that particular position.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Mr Baluwa Koroma. The various speakers before me have praised you a lot. Mr Baluwa Koroma, we are also confident that you will continue the good work. Even though the nomenclature has changed from Agency to Authority, we know that you are going to improve, considering the fact that we have a lot of gas stations as mentioned by the Deputy Leader of Government Business. There

are areas that are not appropriate to construct gas stations. If you go to Aberdeen, you will see dwelling houses very close to gas stations. You can see night clubs very close to gas stations. I am sure one of the criteria for you to be allowed to enter a gas station is that you should not smoke or use cell phone. If people are constructing gas stations very close to dwelling houses, it means they are going against the rules. People are smoking and making phone calls around those gas stations. Mr Baluwa, you have to consider that and those safety precautions are very important for everybody. You have to take that into cognizance for the safety of the people of this country.

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

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. As I was saying, Mr Baluwa Koroma has done well for this country. He championed the Bill and it has been enacted into law. The one time Agency is now the Authority, which gives you enough powers to do your work. You only have to exercise your powers within the ambits of the law. Please look at those issues that have to do with security. It is very important to liberalise the market, but we still have to protect our people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me zoom in Mr Kemokai. Mr Kemokai is going there as a young man to represent the young people. I believe he will perform because he has the energy and everything it takes to support the institution. Please go there and make us proud. Mr Speaker, to the rest of the nominees, I want to wish them well in their various appointments. I implore my colleagues to speedily approve these nominees.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honourable Member.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, in as much as you want colleagues to speak, we also want to limit the time, so that we can take the other item.

THE SPEAKER: Indeed, Honourable Member.

HON. MATHE S. NYUMA: We have another item on the Order Paper.

THE SPEAKER: They are all on five minutes.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Tengbeh, because some Members are saying the Speaker does not allow us to talk, that is why I am getting many of you to talk today.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, I beg to differ. I am sure there is always debate in this House. If you think Mr Speaker is not allowing you to speak, move a Motion. You are now putting the Speaker in a bad light.

THE SPEAKER: I have ruled on that.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I do not want them to give you a bad name.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, they said the Speaker is not allowing us to talk. So, I want them to talk today.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: The contributions are different, Mr Speaker based on the circumstance. You will not get more than ten speakers for the next item.

HON. FALLAH KENEWAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise today with a deep sense of pride and national duty to extend my warmest congratulations to our presidential appointees. This honour is not just a milestone, but rather it is a national recognition by virtue of your commitments, your competence and above all, your dedication to the service of our nation called Sierra Leone. As we congratulate our presidential nominees, I want to remind them that the offices they will be going to are not private or personal offices. These are offices that others have served before, but they are no longer there. This is a clarion call that when you go to those offices, you make them accessible to the public. The people at the galleries gave us power; but when you go to those offices, you pretend as if you do not know them or if they are longer important. I want to encourage you not to make those offices private. They are not your personal possessions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me zoom in our fine brother who is going to the National Petroleum Regulatory Authority. These are enviable positions because every other Sierra Leonean who has the acumen or qualifications would like to serve in those capacities. However, due to your dedication, you have attracted the President's attention and you have been appointed to serve this nation. You have been proposed to take those offices. You are proposed appointees until Parliament approves. I am sure you will be assuming those offices pretty soon. I want you to know that petroleum is at the heart of our economy. Petroleum products are very strategic and important. Fuel prices are very critical in determining the success of our nation. When fuel prices increase, all other commodities will exponentially increase. You will see prices of food items skyrocketing and transportation will be difficult. Please, when you go to those offices, make sure you maintain the fuel prices where they are or you bring them down if possible. It is my view that these appointments should not be seen as ceremonial; but rather, they should be seen as a call for action.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to talk about Mr Kokofele. He is a man that is very popular. When you go to Kenema District, the name Kokofele is a household name and the position or the office he is going to assume is very strategic. You will be looking at social protection issues. This means you have to do your best. I want to encourage all of you to add to President Bio's summative successes as a government and as a party. Since we came to power in 2018, we have always been

adding value to what we do as a party and as a government. So, I want to encourage you to make sure that value addition becomes your target. Do not say this is how we used to do; we expect you to take those offices and create a positive difference.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, by virtue of their qualifications submitted to us or the CVs of our brothers, they are all qualified to serve this nation; they are all fit to take up the various offices they are here for approval. I briskly ask that this House approves them, so that they can start work on President Bio's agenda for this nation. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member. I now call on Honourable Mariama M. Zombo.

HON. MARIAMA M. ZOMBO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to His Excellency the President, Dr Julius Maada Bio for choosing the fittest among the fittest for these positions of trust. As a country, we need people who have compassion for others. I can see that among the nominees here this morning. We have those who have humans at heart. I also want to thank the Committee on Appointments for vetting our presidential nominees and to congratulate all of them in advance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will start with my Kenema and Pujehun brothers, who are here this morning. I would start with Mr Mohamed Kpana-Gboto Kemokai of Pujehun District; *S.O.2, 'are mu kpa gie.'* Even though he lost the regional Young Generation elections, he is still with them without any grievance. You are a great leader. He has been a District Coordinator for COVID 19 and he was very active in that role. He is a smart leader, very young, but a mobiliser. He has worked tirelessly for the SLPP. He even campaigned for me for the **30%** quota of women's representation. He used to mobilise women in various communities and informed the people that it is not only about electing women to Parliament, but it is about the value that the women bring to Parliament. I thank you very much, Mr Kemokai. You have worked for Statistics Sierra Leone and I am sure there are many young people who can attest to the fact that you have given them opportunities. He has given them opportunities to serve Statistics Sierra Leone and he does not just look for his family members; he looks out for everyone and he is accessible to many young people. Whenever there is a survey to conduct, he would share that information. These are the leaders we want His Excellency to be appointing to positions of trust, not those who would keep the information to themselves and for their family members. Mr Kemokai has helped many young people in that district and other districts in Sierra Leone. Thank you for what you are doing and congratulations. Please, do not forget Barri Chiefdom, Peje, Soro Gbema and Makpele. Those are places I have worked, even though I represent Pujehun

District, but remember that those places are deprived and there are many young people who need support. They should be engaged in activities that can keep them busy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will go to my Kenema brother, Mr Kokofele. Let us applaud this man. Kokofele is a household name. He is my Kenema brother because I grew up in Kenema, even though my parents came from Pujehun. When you talk about the Kokofele family in Kenema, you think about Gbokakajama, which is the place where my Leader comes from. Mr Kokofele's mother was a mother for all. I know he took after his mother and he has been working assiduously to help families, especially the children. He has been in the child protection scheme and some of us who were in child protection know that he was a guru in that area, both locally and internationally. In child protection, your work was social protection. So, he is the right person for the right job. He is not a square peg in a round hole at all. Mr Kokofele, I would like to bring to your attention that as we have enacted the Social Protection Act, 2025, your role is to coordinate all social protection activities in this country. This is because a lot of things are going on in the private sector or in the NGOs. Everybody is doing his/her own bit. This is one recipe for poverty because you are doing your own bit and you are repeatedly doing it for the same category of people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are some communities, since the war ended, they have not benefited from any social protection activities. They have not benefitted from those opportunities. The responsibility of your office is to ensure that everyone tastes part of the bread. So, having an assessment to know who has received and who has never received is very important. There are people who would tell you, *S.O.2 [wan day, are nor receive money from government]*. Sometimes it is true and they need the money. These are vulnerable and we have vulnerable communities where people have never received a dime from the Government. This is causing serious disgruntlements. People need to be part of the national cake. I think your role is to coordinate and ensure that everyone gets something. There should be a unified approach to the social protection activities, so that everyone benefits from the national cake.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like Mr Kokofele to also focus on the child poverty because he is an expert in child protection. So, addressing child poverty through those institutions that are funding families must ensure that children benefit through healthcare and education. I would like to bring to the attention of this nominee that we have a lot of social protection activities or social protection programmes that are very important, such as the Life Cycle Programme. All of us will be old by God's grace and when you are old, you will not be able to earn anymore and that is why you need to be provided for. If you are not working or not in a formal sector, it means you

are not going to be part of NASSIT. What are we going to do about the aged, who were not working formally?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have one minute.

HON. MARIAMA M. ZOMBO: What are we going to do about disability issues? You are abled today, but you could be a disabled tomorrow. I had an accident a month and half ago and since that day, I have been giving money to those who have difficulties using their hands. This is because I have an issue with my hand and it is very difficult to even take my bath. We have to focus on that area. I have a lot to say, but let me go to disability. I would like this House to note that I am pleased to say that we have a new boss in charge of disability issues. The good news is that we have won Miss Albinism Africa recently. Our young girl, Miss Garrick from Sierra Leone won Zimbabwe. She won Miss Albinism Africa. I think we should give Sierra Leone a big round of applause because disability issues are now on the map. We are happy that Sierra Leone is no longer searched for on the map because of what is happening. Our young people are making headlines all over the world.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to urge this House to approve these nominees as quickly as possible. I want to congratulate them again. However, there is no woman among the nominees. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Member. I call on Honourable Mustapha M. Sellu to his own contributions.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to take this opportunity to thank His Excellency the President for appointing these wonderful Sierra Leoneans to appear before us for approval. I want to draw the attention of these nominees to Section 58[1b] of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone. It states that we can also revoke these appointments as a Parliament. That is something the nominees need to know. We want you to take note of Section 58[1b] which gives Parliament the power to revoke their approval. So, I want the nominees to know that Parliament is not just approving nominees, but we have enormous powers to do otherwise as enshrined in the 1991 Constitution. I am saying this because most of the nominees we have approved here are not friendly to the ordinary MPs. After they would have assumed offices, it became very difficult to even attend to Members of Parliament when they visited their offices. Except the Leadership, but when an ordinary Member visits their offices, he/she will sit there for more than thirty minutes and sometimes one hour. You are unable to see them. For me, that is very insulting to this House. I will start disclosing this to the public. The leadership is exempted, but the ordinary MPs are not usually treated well, except your personal relationship with these people, otherwise you will be treated like an ordinary Sierra Leonean. This is something we should stop

immediately. That is why I cited Section 58[1b] of the 1991 Constitution that gives Parliament the power to revoke the approval of presidential nominees.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to zoom in a very fine gentleman, Mr Abu Kokofele. He is a very senior member of the SLPP. I came to know Mr Kokofele when I started working at Oxfam. At that time, he was working for Save the Children. I later went to Plan International, where I met Honourable Mariama M. Zombo. She was my immediate boss and Mr Kokofele was working for Save the Children as child protection expert. We used to meet during our Inter-secretarial meetings. He was a very hardworking person. We both met in Kenya to do some work. Mr Kokofele has been somebody who was very professional in his duties. When he came to NaCSA, I was the Chairman of that Committee and he exhibited some kind of leadership I admired so much. However, that did not work for him well. He delegated his powers to his subordinate; and at the end of the day, those powers he delegated hunted him to a point that he is no longer in that office. I think he has learnt a lesson from that experience. It was a bitter experience for him and this tells you that government institutions are quite different from the NGOs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when Mr Kokofele was Commissioner at NaCSA, he helped a lot of people. He is a calm gentleman and he always responds to calls. He was always willing to help people by directing them to the appropriate authority within his office at that time. That shows good leadership and he encouraged his subordinates to feel belong in his administration. When I saw the notice from State House that he had been reappointed, I was very happy for him. Today, he is here for approval for the second time. I hope and pray that you will maintain that office until the end of 2028. I am sure you will continue in that office or you will be elevated to a higher height. Mr Kokofele, you are going to the Authority as Director General of the National Social Protection. In your previous office, you had a component under NaCSA, known as Social Safety Net [SSN], under social protection. You are going to work directly with that particular department, but now in a different capacity as Director General.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about the first ever Director General of the National Petroleum Regulatory Authority, Mr Baluwa Koroma. You have performed extremely well in that industry and we thank you very much for your good work. He is a fine gentleman who has liberalised the petroleum industry. Presently, we are seeing lots of gas stations across the country and the petroleum price is decreasing gradually. I saw a press release this morning which states that the cost of fuel from NP is **Le24,000** per litre and the cost of diesel is **Le25,000** per litre. That is a very good progress, but people are saying that the pump price should be uniform. If you go to different states in the United States of America, the pump price is not uniform. So, for

me, I think that is something we should inform the public about. I think the pump price in Freetown should be lesser than the pump price in the provincial areas. This is because they are paying transport to convey this product. Mr Baluwa knows that very well. I picked him from his hotel and we drove around, and we saw different prices of fuel across the city. Some gas stations were selling at 3.4 cents while others were selling at 3.140 cent. That is not uniform at all. In Sierra Leone, people are saying that the price should be uniform or it should be **NLe27**. It should not be a flat rate. I think this is something you have to work on as Director General of the Authority. If Freetown is selling at **NLe27**, Kailahun sells at **NLe27** and all other districts sell at the same price, I do not think whether it is fair. Freetown, for example, should not sell at the same price with the provincial towns because the costs of transportation are not the same. The provincial towns should sell more than Freetown. If all of them sell at the same price, it is not fair for those in the provinces. This is something we have to look into and I am very happy that we are liberalising the industry.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today, we have more gas stations and more importers in the country. The only problem I have with that is the sustainability of these new players who are coming on board. We have NP, Leonco, Conex, etc. I only hope that these new players are here to stay. Sustainability is very key because if there is no sustainability, the moment they leave the industry, it is going to be catastrophic for the government. These petroleum dealers have enormous control over the industry and you are allowing more players into the industry. I am sure government will not be happy the moment those new players leave the market and it will be catastrophic for the government. They will not be friendly with you and that is why you have to look at the aspect of sustainability critically.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before I round up, I want to talk about Mr Kemokai, a young man I have admired a lot. He is very respectful. I could remember in the hall where his elder brother held his shoulder and told him to declare for Honourable Moijueh. He was so passionate and I shared that moment when he was declaring for the Honourable Moijueh. He threw his support for him. That shows respect for his elder brother, Alhaji Kemokai who is seated here. I think from that moment, I know this family is a family that is united and they have respect for each other.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, as I round up, I want to implore all the nominees seated here to know that Parliament has the power to approve or revoke presidential nominations. Therefore, whenever you see parliamentarians in your office, they are not there to beg, they are there on official purpose. It could be something that brings development in this country the MP wanted to bring to your attention. You are there to provide services for our people. MPs are not in that capacity because we are here as

per Section 105 to make laws. We are not here to bring developments to our people, but through your offices, we can channel development programmes. We can lobby you to take developments to our people. Thank you, Mr Speaker and God bless you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much Honourable Member, We take Honourable Kemokai.

HON. ABU KEMOKAI: Thank you, Mr Speaker for this opportunity. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank His Excellency the President for giving us nominees that will support or help this government to succeed. I want to inform the nominees that the rationale for their appointments is to ensure that this government succeeds. This is because if you succeed, it means we have succeeded collectively; but if you fail, it also means we have failed collectively. I urge you to be very effective and efficient in your respective offices.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me start with Mr Mohamed Kpana-Gboto Kemokai. He is a passionate young man with a strong sense of purpose when it comes to delivery programmatic outcomes and outputs that geared towards changing communities and livelihoods. He has demonstrated that in the respective offices he has worked. The very last one that I could remember is that he served in our district as the Coordinator of COVID-19 and he led our district to a zero infection district, where he was given the best Coordinator of Sierra Leone Award. I think that is commendable and I have no doubt that he can perform in this other role he has been nominated by His Excellency to serve.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, for other nominees, they are equally qualified and we believe that they will also contribute to the developments of the country. You have no option, but to succeed because when you succeed, you succeed collectively. Mr Kemokai has been showered with lots of praises, especially when it comes to helping the young people. I urge you to continue in that direction. The reward for hard work is more work. The more you work, the more you will be rewarded. I want the other nominees to equally do the same, so that you will be able to build a foundation for yourselves for subsequent opportunities.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to urge my colleagues to join us to speedily approve our nominees, so that they can go to their various offices and perform their various roles. They have to contribute to the developments of this country in terms of helping His Excellency to succeed. I thank you so much, Mr Speaker.

HON. MOHAMED T. FOFATAH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to join colleagues to thank His Excellency the President for giving us another set of incredible and qualified Sierra Leoneans to serve in various capacities on

behalf of the people of this country. From time to time, we do have nominees here for approval to hold public offices. Out of seven to eight million people of this country, the President has reposed his confidence in you to serve this nation. So, as the people's representatives, we are here to admonish you to serve the people and represent this country well. As previous speakers said, these offices are public offices; they are not your personal offices. Please open your doors to members of the public and encourage people who need your assistance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about Mr Baluwa Koroma, proposed Director General of NPRA. Of course, it is evident that Mr Baluwa Koroma has worked assiduously for this country. He is one of the few men His Excellency has trusted to serve since 2018 to date. He has served in that office for quite a while now and he has transformed that institution. Today, we have seen a lot of gas stations all over the country since he took over in 2018. There were only few gas stations in the country before 2018. Today, we have about 300 gas stations around the country. If you go around the Peninsular, you will see people competing to open gas stations because of the transformation Mr Baluwa Koroma has made in that sector. He has also succeeded in renewing the interest of investors to invest in the petroleum sector due to the transformations he has done.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when we consider revenue generation in this country, NPRA generates about **12%** of our GDP. When he took over in 2018, I think it was around **Le4.76bln**; today, NPRA revenue generation is in trillion. That shows how much Mr Baluwa Koroma has worked for that institution. I thank you very much, Mr Baluwa Koroma. Under his leadership, Sierra Leone can boast of two jetties in this country. When our sister country, Guinea, experienced fuel shortage, they came here to collect fuel. Some of us from Kambia District saw huge fuel tankers in Sierra Leone to collect fuel. This is because the capacity we have in this country has increased intensely under the leadership of Mr Baluwa Koroma. I want to say thank you for your hard work. However, I also want to draw your attention to few things. I am sure colleagues have already said mentioned it. There are a lot of gas stations around the Peninsular that are constructed very close to the street, such as the Aminata Gas Station around Banga Farm.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I witnessed an accident that took place around the Aminata Gas Station. It was a fatal accident. The Keke that was coming from the gas station collided with an approaching vehicle from Emergency Hospital. This resulted in the death of two people who were in the Keke because of the proximity of petrol station. Again, there is a petrol station at Hamilton Junction; and if you had visited the station, you would have realised that even the entrance is always flooding. The

manager of that fuel station could not even pave the place. I have reported that from time to time and I have even confronted the Manager. I said you are doing business here, but look at how this place is flooded. Some staff of the Station said, *S.O.2. we don tell am oh, but dis man e nor dae yeari*. In fact, at one point we fought and I had to call his deputy. We had a bitter argument. I came to this Parliament and reported the matter to the Chairperson of the Committee on Trade. Therefore, in as much as we want to give account of the good job you have done, there are also challenges in the sector. Please, make sure you go around from time to time and implement some of those regulations. I know you have good regulations already, but you have to take some of these things into serious consideration. So, on behalf of the great JMB and Associates, I bring you congratulations, Mr Baluwa Koroma and thank you for what you are doing. We the JMB we are proud of you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about Mr Alhaji Alie Badara Yillah from Kambia. He is my uncle and my Alma mater from Kolenten Secondary School. On behalf of the people of Kambia District, I want to say congratulations and we know that you are going to Statistics Sierra Leone to do what you are capable of doing. We have confidence in you; the same confidence His Excellency has for you. We are not going to waste more time. We only want to continue to assure you that we are here as the people's representatives. Please go to those offices and serve on behalf of the people of this country. You are lucky to be nominated; and today, you are here for approved. I want you to know that the people are counting on you, especially those going to the Statistics Sierra Leone. We have this boundary delimitation coming up and the Census is around the corner. We are banking on your experience and expertise to ensure that the census process is credible. There is lot of work to do because some people will say, *S.O.2 'wuna nor dae go mek dem go cunt wuna, wuna nr gree mek wuna go.'* You have a role to play in making sure that the people of this country understand the necessity of being counted as part of the population of this country. I want to join colleagues for us to speedily confirm these fine nominees, so that they can start doing what they are appointed to do. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I thank you very much for making our job easy. I want to thank the Committee Members for giving me the support in scrutinising these presidential nominees. When I was presenting you as my nominee for the speakership position, I mentioned few words. I said he is a criminal lawyer; he talks when necessary, but he believes in people. That is why you have this huge number of lawyers in his Chamber who are trying to practice law. He has practiced very well, but what matters most is when you know the issues. When I presented the minutes, you just said proceed. As the President said during the weekend, it is not what we are looking for as individuals, but how posterity will judge us as leaders. This is why we have a

President who handed over power to a civilian government and from that point, he tried to establish himself. When he came, he met many challenges. Today, he has received a lot of accolades from around the world. That is why we are getting these positions and such descriptions fall within certain parameters.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, Mr Brima Abdulai Sheriff has been nominated to serve as Chairman of the National Commission for Persons with Disability. Sometimes I do not like to use the word disability because I am dealing with two set of groups in my constituency. I can safely use the words physically challenged or physically impaired. When I read Mr Brima Abdulai Sheriff's CV, I was impressed. He said: **"I have dealt with the physically challenged or visually impaired people for over fifty years of my life."** I met with the person who sent the petition letter and I schooled him properly. It is not my place to give him the understanding, but I can school him. It is your business to understand or not. So, when we went to the Committee, there was some amount of fear for the approval of Mr Sheriff, but I looked at the situation because we needed to examine certain things in terms of explaining to the petitioners for them to understand better. Today, I will not read the minutes again, but for the understanding of the public, I would like to tell Mr Sheriff to serve serve better. You have done a lot of pro bono services for that institution. There are times in life when human beings fail to give you the accolades you are looking for, but as a Catholic Christian, I am only trying to satisfy my conscience and God. I am sure that is what matters to me because we are dealing with people who are the most complex creatures on Earth. If someone has read your CV, it will be difficult for them to challenge you on this appointment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, when talking about disabilities, we must take into consideration the issue of human rights because they are not as **100%** as we do. A lot of human rights activities or human rights issues surround people with disabilities. They are disadvantaged; but in the other sense, they are not disabled. They can actually perform certain jobs, but just because they are not in the same shape like normal human beings and that is why they are always active. I found it absurd to see people questioning the legitimacy of the presidency. Even though I advised him to go to the Secretary to the President, so that he can get another appointment and stop the petition, he did not listen. I am happy that we did not reply by writing; we did it through the Committee. I hope you will embrace everybody.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to assure this House that Mr Sheriff will do things that will change the face of that particular institution. That is how his CV tells me and that is what he has been doing. He said, I am not only physically challenged, but I have contributed immensely in terms of structure and policies for the institution. We

should not treat anybody with malice; we should not be malicious in dealing with people. We have over seven million people in this country and if you have the opportunity to serve, I think the first thing to do is to lobby Mr President, instead of challenging his authority. This is why I said I was surprised to receive the petition. I want to state here that it is not when you are given the opportunity to occupy the office; it is about transformation. It is about bringing positive change to the office.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about Mr Baluwa Koroma. Mr Speaker, you cannot face criticism in your life. Mr Koroma is popularly known as Baluwa. He has tried to disabuse our minds by depoliticising petroleum products. The petroleum products are known as the downstream and not the upstream. The downstream is what we usually call petrol and diesel, and the upstream is the exploration. In fact, when we wanted to discuss and pass into law a Bill he was championing, we called those who are directly involved in the downstream process. We said you have to compare news that has to do with the petroleum products. Mr Baluwa said: **"I am open up; let them come and discuss."** You should not fear your colleagues when you are doing your work. You are merely establishing the facts and doing what you are supposed to do. That is what he has been doing and he has put in place the pricing formula.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that Mr Baluwa Koroma is not responsible to impose prices. Honourable Mustapha Sellu said that the pump price varies from one fuel station to the other, as some sell at **NLe24** per liter, while others are selling at **NLe25**. It is not Mr Baluwa Koroma who imposes prices; it is the pricing formula that determines the price. There is a formula he has introduced and that is why I said he has disabused our minds. You cannot make essential commodity like petroleum products as political tools. It will be a disaster for this nation. So, he is here because of his CV. He is moving all over the country to ensure that things work the way they should work. He is doing a good job for the state and he is a man with very good character. So, when he came to the petroleum industry, he decided to work for Sierra Leoneans. He was attracted by so many lucrative things, but he ignored them. I told him that there are constant variables you cannot control. I am not talking about the ones you can control in Sierra Leone. There are variables abroad that are very difficult to control. How do you control them? For the understanding of people, S.O.2, *'are be go register dis agency abroad, so any tin wae den do, me go be part of am.'* In essence, he registered this institution and he is a member of certain organisations. He added that whenever those organisations are making decisions, he is better informed, not only the Oil Marketing Companies [OMC], but other organisations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I asked Mr Baluwa Koroma about the domestic calculations and he said that for the domestic issues, he would deal with them using all

legal Instruments. Today, if the pricing formula is taking effect on those variables, it means he has been able to handle that aspect effectively; not because he is a financial expert, but because he has the courage or the tenacity to discharge his duties as the head of that institution. I thank you very much and I know you are very serious character. He is not the first, second or third person to occupy that office, but because of his hard work, he is able to transform this institution to something commendable; thereby disabusing our minds from seeing petroleum products as political commodities to essential products that all Sierra Leoneans have the right to. That is why we are able to pass with ease in this Chamber from being an Agency to Authority.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during our school and college days, he met me in various institutions. He knows that I dealt with him on several occasions, but not the way you are thinking now. I hope you understand what I am talking about. During our days at Fourah Bay College, I dealt with him positively and that is why he is performing positively. I have said times without number that the pricing formula is simple. We used to buy fuel at **NLe30, NLe28, NLe 26**; but today, the pump price is **NLe24 or NLe25** per litre and that is why we call it downstream effect on petroleum products. He is not going to change the price as he pleases because he is not going to the fuel stations to do so. I will continue to talk about him because he has done well for this country. Again, communication is a key. He is a responsive character in terms of disseminating information to the people, especially when the price changes. He is doing this to combat fake news. He always ensures that the right information is given to the public. I decided to pick on you because this is touching the lives of so many people. This is what is known as transformative trial and that is what we need as a country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about Mr Michael Hallie Kendoh, proposed Chairman, National Petroleum Regulatory Authority [NPRA]. He has served on the Board many times and he has the administrative capacity to make positive changes. He has been there and he was very assertive. He has made positive inputs to change the trajectory of that institution and that is what life is all about. Today, you are in office and what makes you a dignified and respectable figure is when you serve with your conscience.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now go to Mr Kokofele. When I was in college, I was very close to Mr Kokofele. He knows me to be a very queer character. He was my speaker at the SRC. I was a member of the Student Representative Council. We went to Saku Village to make sure we have our own candidate, but he knew I was a very troublesome man. He was my elder brother and we created some difficulties for him. We were however defeated because they had the number. I would be in my veranda every morning and if he was outside, he would send a threatening remark, *S.O.2, very*

soon we dae kam burn all dis place. I would say, S.O.2 'are bo, you nor go do dan dae.' However, we never argued to a point of disrespecting ourselves. They issued out a notice that they were going to impeach us from the SRC because we were not attending meetings. I said, Mr Kokofele, *S.O.2, 'na we all komot Kenema, wae dem pull me na SRC, you nor dae kam na we team.'* When I said those words, he smiled. Therefore, I was never impeached and he gave me a certificate of membership. I still have that certificate, Mr Speaker. This is to underscore the point that we have been in the business of politics since our school and college days. We groomed Mr Baluwa Koroma when we were attending Bo school and later Fourah Bay College. These are our handmade. Mr Kokofele was on your side and he contested. I did not support him, but I admired his courage. I wanted to learn at that point. When he was sacked from NaCSA, as it pleases the President, he continues to show respect and love for his party. I have never seen him making comments or making innuendos. I have met him in so many government functions and many other places that have to do with the betterment of this nation. These are the role models we should follow.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if I am not in governance and all what I am anticipating for is bad, there will be no progress. I was part of the pricing formula for the rice. I was invited at State House to do the pricing formula for rice. When we went there, I took the aspect of those who are not with us as ordinary members. I was the one that tried to convince through the importers. So, I brought the issues on the table and we argued. I read Mr Baluwa Koroma's formula in respect of the petroleum products. I told them to look at the variables. I asked for the variable that is unstable and they said that the unstable variable is from India. I said how is it unstable? They said they are not in charge because you are importing most of the rice from India. We are looking at the premium rice, which is the 'Pa Boil Rice.' We said you have to be in touch with the manufacturer. So, we asked one of the importers if they were going to do changes. Unfortunately for them and fortunately for me, I captured one explanation from them. He said sometimes it goes up and sometimes comes down. I asked how and they said it depends on the Dollar.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I mentioned the fiscal stability of the economy. They said as long as there is fiscal stability, the price will not easily change. I said if there is fiscal instability, what do we do? They said go to the Bank of Sierra Leone and negotiate for us. We capture it in the formula. After series of discussions, I said they have just done the pricing formula for petroleum products. I also said that when serious people occupy offices of state, you have to copy from them, so that you can get the required results. We were able to make projection for price and started with **NLe700** for a bag of rice. We are not talking about the low grade rice; we are not talking about high grade, premium Pa Boiled Rice and long grain rice. Today, we are buying rice

below **NLe700**. I am sure a bag of rice is now **NLe650** for the high grade, and other grades. Now, if you want to change the price of rice, it is not the issue of transportation because there is already a formula that can deal with it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague was saying that the pricing formula changes in different areas. This is because you do not have control over that anymore. The pricing formula is now in charge. So, if you notice a decrease in the price of rice, it is not the work of anybody; it is the work of the pricing formula. Let me assure you that when we will be making the pricing formula for cement and iron rod, it will be on a positive note. We have to run the state at the behest of those who think they can make profit every day; we run the state not at the behest of people who represent those who are suffering. Those are the people we should be praying for. Mr Speaker, somebody said that you do not need to like us; you do not need to know my name; but appreciate what we are doing for the good of this nation. That is what politics is all about. So, when we talk about appointing people like Mr Kokofele is a very good idea. I have followed him very closely. *S.O.2, 'if u pull me komot, are go make u komot Kenema.* He took that into consideration; and when he was removed from his position, he continued to be humble and respectful. He chose not to be malicious. We should not treat people with malice; we do not treat positions and policies with malice.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you have heard me in this Chamber arguing with my colleagues without using abusive language or threats. I do not have to be malicious; I deal with facts. Mr Kokofele is going to his right domain. For over twenty years, he has been dealing with social issues. Mr Speaker, let me tell you what we are now facing; we are facing a lot of social issues in Sierra Leone; whether you accept it or not, be it on policies, administration or parental homes. We are dealing with these issues in Sierra Leone. Morality is gone and the things that protect people in our society are no longer there. I was on transit at Kenya airport when I saw Mr Kokofele. I came close to him and I told *S.O.2, 'are get some shilling.* I said, *S.O2[send am no more, are get de shilling dem wae are go collect am with.* I was trying to say that I wanted to get in touch with him. What amazed me most is the fact that he served in Somalia, now known as Somaliland. Think about the areas in Sierra Leone. In Sierra Leone, he started with 'Save the Children' and he transcended to higher levels because of the way he has worked and continued to work very hard.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I read about Paul Pogba and I came to realise that his wife has abandoned him because he was banned from football for four years. His own friends abandoned him because the things he did. Today, Mr Kokofele is with friends; people around him. I have been observing him for the past few years. I do not go around him, but I am a politician and I have been moving with very few people

around. The difference between Paul Pogba and Mr Kokofele is that his wife stayed with him throughout the struggle. That is how it should be, but Paul Pogba's wife abandoned him, relatives and good friends also abandoned him. Some of us have gone through some of these challenges. I am saying this because when you are in office, behave like you are serving people; forget about what people are talking about you. These are friends who come and go. Please ensure an open door policy for everybody.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Kemokai contested the election and I heard that people never voted for him, but they are praising you. They said keep up the spirit; they did it without malice. Yes, that is politics and you are here to serve in another capacity. I wish all of you well. These are the things I like to admire about life. I was a very young person when I entered politics. I was 32 years old, Mr Speaker. I joined politics based on radical moves. *S.O.2, 'look dis wan dae laf, dis Minister dae laf.'* Mr Speaker, I am a positive radical with a very strong faith. As a Catholic Christian, that makes me a different character. I do not take earthly things to supersede my friends or human beings. In 2005, my office was very close to the SLPP office.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was a Lecturer at the Eastern Polytechnic and students were always around me. They came from Makeni in 2005 to see me. When they came, I was in my veranda one early morning. I saw them outside the veranda. I was in the other apartment and when I came to meet them, Mr Quee was there. I stood downstairs and I looked at them and said ***S.O.2, 'wuna all done go sell game.*** I said you voted against Maada Bio. I was the one giving out President Bio's T-shirts. I lambasted them properly, but Mr Quee did not look me as a very bad person. When the late Solomon Berewa went to Kenema, we had some difficulties due to poor road network. We were at Capitol, watching game. He was passing by, but the boys came out and started booing at Solomon Berewa. Nevertheless, the sign I got from that action is that it would be difficult for us to win elections if we continue to behave this way to the SLPP. So, we took up the challenge to campaign for the SLPP and when the time came to award party symbols, the young people took me to the party office. They were shouting all over the place for my sake.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Quee was the Chairman at that time. The statement he made was that ***S.O.2, wuna don see, wuna wae kin go en talk. Wuna don see dis yong man, wuna see the crowd wae time reach for symbol make wuna nr gee am.*** He supported me because of the way he was looking and thinking about at me. He fought very hard to promote the SLPP. I caused too much trouble, lambasting them left, right and centers. You should not treat politics with malice. You treat politics with conscience; and you treat politics with sincerity of purpose. So, he looked at me and made a pronouncement during the declarations

process. He said that many young men are coming out for the symbol. He said, *S.O.2, wuda member me, leh God member am*. That is the way we used to call it. So, he supported me throughout and he only served one term and he left. These are the types of role models we are now emulating, thinking that we are powerful. We should stop the threat against our opponents or whosoever is around us. We should embrace intraparty democracy. It should not be a do or die affairs. You do not have to die; it is a matter of policy; it is a matter of changing hands from left, right and center. Mr Quee has demonstrated intraparty democracy without malice. Thank you very much for that. Even though I heard that people envy you at that particular moment, I made no apologies for him. Mr Speaker, to be honest, I am happy and I want to thank you very much for training us very well. I believe that we can continue with it this time. I always told people that when you are hired, you should bear in mind that you can be fired. So, the issue of challenging the President is useless. Secondly, those who are about to be approved today should not blind themselves, they have to be realistic.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would now talk about those going to Statistics Sierra Leone. I want to inform that there is what we call data management. In fact, the next item on the Order Paper we shall discuss later is the Road Safety Charter. I am sure Article 1 of that Charter is talking about data management. You would agree with me that proper data management makes better planning for the youth; it paves the way for credible research information and future planning. When you read their CVs, you would realise that they have enormous past memories of that institution. That is why I said that those who are going to the new offices should read the last minutes. Most of them we are about to approve were once approved by this House. So, we are just reaffirming our job as MPs. The political chemistry of this House includes the APC, SLPP and the Paramount Chiefs. What matters most is the policy; the policy is a driving force of what we have been doing. We call it the product; the product of getting a very good system that will improve Sierra Leone. This country can only be better off when the policies that we formulate give us better results. For example, the policy for the Petroleum Regulatory Authority [PRA] is yielding positive results. So, these are the things we are talking about. What we have failed to do is that we have failed to enforce Agreements. When they talk about enforcement, you are not going to fight; you use the rule of law to enforce whatever the policy says.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I congratulate the nominees and I wish them well. I however advised that you read the minutes of the last meeting. I thank you and may the Lord bless us all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the 13th report reflect the unanimous view of the Committee. I therefore move that the 13th report of the Second Session of the Sixth

Parliament of the Committee on Appointments and Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations contained therein be approved. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

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

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

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

THE SPEAKER: Congratulations to you all and you may now leave.

V. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND AVIATION

MR REX BHONAPHA *[Deputy 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 the House on Tuesday, 10th June 2025:

African Road Safety Charter

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Africa bears a disproportionate burden of road traffic crashes and fatalities, despite having the lowest motorisation rate globally. Road safety, injury and death rates are highest in Africa, accounting for **4%** of global vehicles, but **24%** world road fatalities according to the WHO Global Status Report on Road Safety, 2023. This is not just a road transport menace; it is also a public health socio-economic crisis with considerable ramifications for other social and economic developments. Considering the fact that roads are currently the main physical opportunity for regional integration, one of the key pillars of the AU Agenda 2063, road safety in Africa is evidently critical, not only for saving lives, but also in economic growth, social development and regional integration. In their quest to address world safety challenges, Africa Heads of States and Governments at the Africa Union enacted the first ever African Road Safety Charter in 2016 adopted by the 26th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of heads of States in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. There are 22 signatories to the Charter. However, 11 of those signatories have not ratified the Charter and those countries include Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Comoros, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Mauritania, Mauritius, Rwanda and Sierra Leone. Thirteen [13] states have ratified the Charter, Benin, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Mali, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Uganda and Zambia.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a country has to ratify the Charter to become a member state, ratification and depositing of Instrument of ratification by Fifteen [15]

AU Member States is required for the Charter to come into force. Once the Charter had entered into full force, it would trigger the establishment and operationalisation of the African road safety. The overreaching goal is the reduction of road fatalities and serious injuries in Africa, achieved through the implementation of targeted policies and system wide interventions, such as improved road safety infrastructure, safer vehicle standards, enhanced road user safety practices and effective post-crash responses. The key benefits of the Africa road safety charter. Ratifying and domesticating the African Road Safety Charter offer numerous benefits for the African Union member states, including Sierra Leone. Addressing the continent high road traffic fatality rate, approximately 19 per 100 people, the highest road deaths in the world, despite low vehicle ownership is affecting mostly children, pedestrians and cyclists. Overall, the Charter provides comprehensive continental and national framework for improved road safety management, safer roads and mobility. Last but not least; it provides and enhances former basis for financing, monitoring and evaluating road safety at continental and national levels. The key benefits include:

- a. Policy Framework for Road Safety. The Charter provides a comprehensive policy framework to improve road safety, enabling countries to develop and implement tailored safety policies. It addresses Africa's specific challenges like urbanisation and inadequate infrastructure, facilitating coordinated national and regional strategies.
- b. Reduction in Road Crashes and Fatalities. By enforcing measures such as safer road designs, minimum vehicle safety standards and stricter regulations on speed limit, drink driving and safety gears e.g. seat belt and helmet, the Charter aims to significantly reduce road traffic crashes, which claim over 300,000 lives annually in Africa. Ratification accelerates the implementation of strategies to meet the UN and AU decades of action for road safety goal of reducing road deaths by 2030.
- c. Establishment of National Rapid Road Safety Agencies. The Charter mandates the creation of National Road Safety Agencies. Sierra Leone has one already, which is the Sierra Leone Roads Safety Authority [SLRSA] that was established in 1996, geared towards fostering inter-sectorial coordination, policy advice and strategy implementation. These agencies enhance accountability and streamline efforts across transport, health and law enforcement sectors.
- d. Improved Data Management and Monitoring. Ratification of the Charter supports the establishment of the African Road Safety Observatory, which enhances data collection, analysis and sharing. This enables evidence based policy making, addressing the underreporting of road crashes and improving crash data based systems to inform targeted interventions, economic and social benefits.

- e. Reduction in Road Crashes. This mitigates the significant socio-economic costs estimated at billions annually. That is **1% to 3%** of GDP that hinder developments, fewer crashes result in lower health care costs, reduced productivity, cost losses and less psychological trauma, particularly for vulnerable groups like pedestrians and cyclists which account for **44%** of all fatalities.
- f. Advocacy and Accountability Tool. The Charter functions as an advocacy tool for government, private sector, NGOs, Civil Society and Parliamentarians to promote road safety reforms. It provides the basis for alignment with national development plans in Sustainable Development Goals [SDG] and the AU Agenda 2063, thereby raising awareness among policy makers and fostering political commitments. On a specific note, Article 20 of the Charter stipulates that state party shall prepare annual reports, a progress report on road safety, which is the basis for good governance, accountability and public awareness and engagement.
- g. Regional and Continental Coordination. Ratification promotes synergy among AU member states, sharing harmonised standards and collaborating initiatives like the Africa observatory. This unified approach strengthens road safety management across borders, critical for continental transport corridors.
- h. Support for Vulnerable Road Users. The Charter prioritises the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists who are disproportionately affected by road crashes. Measures like better road planning and enforcement of safety gears usage address those vulnerabilities by enhancing equitable mobility.
- i. Alignment with Global Regional Standards. By aligning with UN Conventions, AU legal Instrument and global road safety target, ratification ensures Sierra Leone adopts international and regional best practices, such as safe road designs and vehicle safety standards, enhancing competitiveness and safety.
- j. Catalysing Legislative Reforms. Domesticating the Charter in core AU member states to update outdated laws and Road Traffic Act and enforces regulations on key risk factors, like speeding, seatbelts use, use of helmets in pair driving and road safety enforcements, thereby reducing fatalities on the road.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the African Road Safety Charter is a Pan-African initiative, aimed at attacking an endemic socio-economic challenges on our continent, fatalities and injuries on our roads that are often times avoidable. The Charter will enter into force, forming the 15th Ratification, depositing of instruments of ratification. Ratifying the Charter will further boost the image and reputation of Sierra Leone as a compliant country in regional road safety governance and administration framework and mechanism. In addition, ratifying it would accord the President, His Excellency Brigadier

Rtd Dr Julius Maada Bio, Chairperson of the African Union of 10 Heads of States and Governments, to reform the United Nations Security Council and Chairman ECOWAS, a pride of place among his colleagues on the continent and the sub-region. On this note, I specifically call on this House to support ratify the Charter, recognising the enormous benefits it will bring to our beloved nation and our people.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratify the African Road Safety Charter, which was laid on the Table of this Honourable House on Tuesday, 10th June 2025.

[Question Proposed]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, how many Members want to debate at this point? I promised Honourable Musa Fofanah. I will give preference to those who have not debated yet. I now have on my list Honourable Quintin Salia Konneh, Honourable Mustapha M. Sellu, Honourable Joseph Williams-Lamin and Honourable Fallah Tengbeh.

HON. MUSA FOFANAH: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to appreciate the Minister and the Deputy Minister of Transport and Aviation for bringing this document to this Honourable House. This is a clear manifestation that this country has been lagging behind for over 60 years. This document started its lifetime in 2000 or 2001. It was ratified by other countries in Africa. Our country is a very small country and we believe that if attention was paid to the roads 20 to 30 years ago, we should have had the best roads in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will challenge you that in 2012 and 2013, I toured the entire Sierra Leone with a motorbike in less than two days. I can show you the routes I used. In 2013, I also travelled from Sierra Leone to Mali by motorbike through Kono, Gaegaedu Kissidugu, Kankan, Madiana and then Mali. I am citing this example because if you take the Makeni Road from Masiaka, you would notice that even the footpaths were not tarred. It is one of the worst roads in this country. When you have trailers and small cars using that road, the small vehicle has to slow down and that is a very big risk. I want to thank the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during our campaign, we said that a Toll Road Agreement was not good; but because the government is a forward looking government, we said we should complete the toll road quickly, so that we can start to benefit from this road. Today, you can agree with me that the accident rate has reduced between Allentown and Masiaka. If you look at the Moyamba Junction or the Moyamba Town Toad, you can see the uniqueness of that particular road because of the provision for Okada riders and the pedestrians. I do not see anything controversial about this document. We need the ratification and domestication of this document. It

will help us to look at our roads. Mr Speaker, the size of the Makeni/Kabala Road is a death trap. I can now see the reason why this government was pushing for the Sierra Leone Roads Authority [SLRA] to resurvey our roads. I can confirm that in 2019 and 2020, SLRA reported that they had done 11,300km roads. This means we are in a better position to invest in those roads.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the ratification of this particular Charter is timely. We have seen the Lagos International Road linking the rest of West Africa. Before the war, we saw the Babangida Highway in Liberia. I am sure now that we have done the Bo Gendema Highway, it means connectivity is the language of this country or this government. If you looked at the current construction work that is going on between Pendembu, Kailahun and Koidu, you would see the connectivity plan of this country. That was why I became interested to take part in this debate, but I did not catch the Speaker's eye. I wanted to say something about the Director General of the NPRA. In 2022, government received approximately **\$91.5m** from the petroleum sector. That is enough to construct my road from Koidu to Kamayandor. With all these developments, people keep saying that nothing is happening. Government secured **\$125m** to assist the fuel dealers to create foreign currency. We need this money for our roads to address our roads problems. Government is strategic in doing what is right and let the government use those moneys to do some of these roads.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, due to the fact that this document aligns with the SDGs and the AU Agenda 2063, I think this Parliament is in the better position to ratify this document. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I call on Honourable Quintin Salia Konneh to make his submission.

HON. QUINTIN SALIA-KONNEH: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. There can be no other day to ratify this particular Agreement than now. As the previous speaker said, we are far behind time in terms of ratifying this particular Charter. This is because for some of us who have travelled to other countries, you can see that most of these countries that have ratified this particular Charter are well-organised in terms of road safety. However, it is a tough situation for Sierra Leone. Of recent, I realised that we have started installing traffic lights. However, there are days those traffic lights are not working and there are days when they are not working effectively. Some drivers are not observing the streetlights; they just force their way even if the red lights are on. There was a time around the Lumley area when I had to wait because the red light was on. I waited for the green light for over 10 minutes. It was only when I saw other vehicles moving, I realise that the traffic light was faulty.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, ratifying this document is not my problem because the provisions enshrined in it are in place. The provisions are good for the development

of this country; but the question is, can we ensure compliance and enforcement? This is what we lack in this country. As a Parliament, we enact very good laws, but the enforcement aspect of these laws is the problem. How committed are we? The mistake these institutions do is that they develop documents without involving the institutions that help to enforce these provisions. I have just realised that the police are very important in the implementation of this particular document. Without the police, there is no way the Minister seated here is going to move around the streets to ensure that everything is in place. So, we need the police to enforce the provisions in this document. Again, how do we ensure integrity in the process? This is because we have seen situations where people go against the laws of this land, but the enforcement aspect of the laws have been compromised. Are we sure that when once this Charter is ratified, the enforcement aspect is going to be seriously considered?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go to Kenya, you would realise that even though that country is in Africa, you would think that you are in Europe. This is because they seem to be well organised and respecters of their laws. Even if the red light is on at midnight, people will wait for the green light. Do we have those mechanisms here? The answer is no. So, this is where we have to change the mindsets of Sierra Leoneans; we need to check our mindsets. It is good to ratify this document, but are we ready as a people or as a country to implement the full details enshrined in this particular Charter? I will say no; we are not ready. The President of this country has ensured the installation of streetlights along major streets, but if you go along those streets, you would realise that only few streetlights are working. If you use the Regent/Jui Grafton Road, the streetlights were fantastic; but today, some are no longer working.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also went to Ghana on a workshop some time ago. As we were going to attend the workshop in the morning, one of commercial vehicles hit one of the streetlights. We met the accident on our way from the workshop in the evening, another streetlight was already erected. I was impressed with the swift response. That is a strategy for sustainability. How do we sustain what we have? It is not about bringing new ideas, how we can sustain them to stand the test of time. What we are doing is something I call 'in the pond and out of the pond.' The issue of streetlights should not be something of novelty to Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Agreement is good, but I am skeptical about our ability to implement the provisions in this particular Charter. We need to check how this is done. We visited the office and we were amazed to know that the streetlight section was under the Ministry of Transport. There was a special place where all the streetlights were stored. So, if for any reason, you hit any of the streetlights, it would be replaced immediately, but the driver would have to pay damages. That is why they have officers

who are assigned to different zones, patrolling to see if there is any streetlight that is not working. These officers report to the office any streetlight that is not working and the following day, the streetlight is fixed. I am sure **90%** of our roads are without proper provisions for pedestrians movement, as the Honourable Member was saying. If this is the case, how can we be safe? If you look at the statistics given in this particular document, it says about **1.5%** to **2%** of our GDP is lost through fatal road accidents and that is huge to negatively affect our GDP. I believe if we implement the provisions in this Charter, we will be in position to minimise road accidents.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to briskly talk about the road users, especially the bike riders. I will say **99.99%** of these bike riders are not fit to ply the routes or to use the roads. In fact, they are not properly dressed; they are without helmets; they are unregistered. Do we have a system to ensure that no unregistered bike rider uses the road? This is to ensure that defaulters are apprehended immediately. Most of the bikes we use are not registered or they are without number plates. So, how do you identify abusers of the road? This is something we need to address as a country. How do we stop the unregistered bikes from plying the roads? This is predominant in the cities. For the communities we come from, almost **100%** of those bikes are not registered. If someone buys a bike today, he/she would start using it today without registering the bike. If the person is caught, he/she will bribe and is released. These are the challenges we need to address. It is not about ratifying the Charter; it is about implementing the provisions in the Charter.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I went to Nairobi, I noticed that every bike rider has a helmet. There is no bike rider without a helmet. There is a strong reason for people to wear helmets. In Kenya, if a bike rider abuses the road or forces his/her way without observing the traffic light, there is a device that will capture the image of the defaulter. In fact, all the streets have video cameras being installed on all streetlights. If you abuse the road by driving without waiting for the green light signal, the helmet you are putting on will communicate to the system and they will know exactly which bike and your photo will pop up on their system. They will trace you and before you arrive at the next stop, you are tracked and apprehended. That is why most of them are in total compliance with their laws. So, if we want to reduce road crashes or reduce fatalities, we must do the right thing. This is very good, but how prepared are we, as a country to ensure the digitalisation of the road. We have to make sure that the bike riders are well sensitised, so that if they abuse the road, by the time they arrive at the next stop, they are apprehended.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is so disheartening to note that a Year Two female student of Institute of Public Administration and Management [IPAM] lost her life along

the Lumley Road. I think everybody heard about that accident. She hails from my constituency. She was on a motorbike from the British High Commission to Bottom Mango when she lost her life. Sadly, the motorbike was unregistered. These are the things we are talking about. The next day again, another girl who was from a Church Service lost her life by a motorbike. If these bike riders behave themselves properly, they will be able to benefit the country. We need to properly checkmate them in terms of what they do. We cannot be ratifying Charters or Agreements without proper implementation; otherwise they will just be on the shelves as ornaments of decoration. We have to ensure total enforcement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to ask Honourable Members to join me in ratifying this Charter, so that the Minister, who is a friend of this House, will go and commence the implementation process. He has been a friend of this House since he was a Deputy Minister of Lands and later Deputy Minister of Transport. He is always here whenever he is championing Bills. I want to thank Mr Rex Bhonapha for his explicit presentation. Please take this message to the Minister that in as much as we appreciate your coming here, but he is the substantive Minister; and being the substantive Minister means he attends Cabinet meetings. He should be the one to come here. As humans, we are liable to distort information whenever we are reporting to others. We either add or subtract words or statements. It will be good for him to be here. Even if he is not going to do the presentation, it will be good for him to sit here and listen to some of the comments from MPs; otherwise I will recommend to His Excellency for you to be made the substantive Minister, so that you continue to come up with legal issues. I thank you.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this document is before us, so that we give it credence. I have looked at the preamble up to Article 1, which talks about the definition. I want to look at the area which talks about roadworthiness of vehicles. This means the technical process involve in checking vehicles that ply the roads. I think this particular aspect is very good because we have to ensure that the vehicles are roadworthy. Most of the accidents that are happening, especially along the provincial roads, are because those vehicles are not roadworthy. We are coming to domesticate this particular Charter in Sierra Leone, but can we have a State Inspection Body across the country? In some countries, you have state inspection bodies responsible to inspect your vehicle; and if it is roadworthy, you are given a certificate before the vehicle is licensed. If your vehicle is not roadworthy, you will not be allowed to license it. That is why this particular test is not handled by the license office; it is done by a separate body.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am happy to note that this document talks about the inclusion of the private sector and that is very important. If we have this state

inspection body across the districts, they will be able to examine every part of your vehicle. Even your wiper blade will be checked. Whenever you go for your license, the certificate is the first thing they will ask for. It has a box and they will tick all of those areas that are properly functioning. They will check your tyres, rims, windshield, seatbelts, wiper blades, headlights, etc. If anyone is faulty, you would be asked to come again. We have to put those infrastructures in place, so that this function is performed by credible institution. After the inspection process, you can take your certificate to the license office; and in less than 10 minutes, your vehicle is licensed. I think that is where we have to start. If the vehicles are not roadworthy and are allowed to ply the roads, you always have crashes. I think that is something we have to look at very carefully. It should not be the responsibility of the Road Safety Authority.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member has raised a very good point, but I want him to take his time to look at Article 11, the first two paragraphs. I want you to read them because we want the Minister to take note. I do not want us to waste time or repeat ourselves. He was talking about inspections and I am supporting him because it is very important. It will be good for you to read the document, so that we remind him continuously about it. I want to encourage you to read the document.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Thank you, Mr Leader. I think I have a couple of Articles like Article 2,4,6,11 and 12. I have marked all of them in respect of road safety. We cannot talk about road safety regarding vehicles and leave out the people

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I am sure Articles 15 and 16 can support the argument. You have just raised a very sensitive issue, but the document he has presented to us is very clear about the roadworthiness of vehicles. If you can read those Articles, I think that will help us to understand and to keep reminding him. However, if you do not want to read them, it is fine, but I am just trying to enrich the debate.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Well, Article 15 states: **"Parties shall adopt and enforce minimum standards of vehicles to ensure their roadworthiness."** I think this is the area I was trying to explain. I thank you very much, Mr Leader, for taking us to speed by highlighting the key Articles that have bearing to my presentation. Article 16 states: **"Party shall strengthen the rules and regulations for training of drivers and issuing of drivers' licenses."** However, my only worry about this is the implementation process. We can ratify this Charter today, but the practicality of it is the problem. That is my fear, Mr Speaker. Putting money in road safety is an investment because it has to do with human capital development as well. On that note, I would like to take you to Article 2, which talks about specific objectives.

One specific objective says: **"Facilitates information of comprehensive road safety policies at country level."** We have no clear policy on road safety.

[The House stood down for five minutes]

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was talking about the roadworthiness of vehicles and the relevant Articles that speak to that. I want to take you to Article 2 again, which talks about the private sector, such as civil society organisations and non-governmental organisations to participate in road safety issues. I think this is something we have to grapple with; it is an opportunity we should grapple with; we have to bring institutions that will support the government in this area. We should have at least four to five emergency boots erected between Freetown and Bo with basic first aid kits or equipment and some medical personnel, including two or three ambulances. You would agree with me that most accident victims die due to the lack of these facilities along the highways. Whenever an accident occurs, by the time they call for an ambulance to take the victims to the nearest hospital, they could have bled to death. However, if we have those facilities along the Freetown/Masiaka Road or Freetown/Makeni Road, we will be able to save lives. When these accidents are happening, some people bleed for more than 30 minutes or one hour before they can get a vehicle to take them to the nearest hospital; and by the time they arrive there, there are no medications or doctor[s]. I think this is where the private sector would have to come and support us. So, it not just about government intervention, it is about encouraging private sector investments. Also, Article 2[f] talks about promoting the harmonisation of the certification, treatments and dissemination of safety data.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to take you to Article 12[2]. It talks about the road design to ensure that the rest areas are properly planned and incorporated in the national trunk road system. There is what is known as the rest areas. We do not have rest areas in Sierra Leone. Rest areas are areas where you see vehicles, such as trucks or busses, park. They will park and wait for thirty or forty minutes. You will have bathrooms and water to refresh yourself. I am sure two rest areas will be enough from Freetown to Bo. This will give the driver ample time to rest. It will energise the driver to drive well. Driving from Freetown direct to Bo without a resting area is risky. There should be designated rest areas. I think this is a very good Charter. I do not have enough time, but the Leader will do the rest. We have to ensure that we implement the provisions to the fullest, so that the lives of Sierra Leoneans will not be wasted just because of reckless driving and road unworthiness of our vehicles.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to urge the Ministry of Transport to ensure that what is written in this document are not just mere words on paper, but we have to put them into practice; we have to establish rest areas with the

basic facilities that make people comfortable. Mr Speaker, I want to thank you and to also thank all of us for participating in this debate.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much Honourable Member. I now call on Honourable Joseph Williams-Lamin.

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. Honourable Speaker, colleagues Honourable Members, I am pleased to be part of this debate regarding the Africa Road Safety Charter. On Thursday, we are having a very big town hall meeting at Koribondo in respect of boundary delimitation for the creation of two new districts. I will be one of the speakers and I want to formally ask for excuse if there will be sitting on Thursday. Today, I am representing the people of that part of the country, which happens to be the West African highway. We are very grateful to the Ministry of Transport and Aviation and all other parties, such as the Sierra Leone Roads Authority [SLRA] and by extension the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone. We are happy that the Bo/Bandajuma Highway has been constructed and we are benefiting from it. However, we have lost twenty-six [26] of our precious brothers and sisters on that road.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your leave, Article ten [10] states: **"State parties shall develop road safety management policies and principles to guide consultant contractors during the process of road constructions in order to ensure road safety."** I want to believe that this was not well taken into consideration when constructing the Bo/Bandajuma Highway. The entry into Koribondo Highway has no precautionary measure for road users. They ply that route with the highest speed. In that township alone, sixteen of my constituents have been brutally killed on that road and we have made several appeals, but to no avail. Bike riders are always at high speed. Today, if we have a Charter that Sierra Leone has appended her signature, it is a welcome idea. The content of this document is taken into full consideration and this is something we have to be proud of as a nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like my other colleagues have stated, this has to do with over speeding, and drinking and driving. There are no road signs or precautionary measures, like speed bumps on the roads. In fact, the manner in which our roads are constructed is a cause for concern. Can we consider value for money? That road has just been constructed, but there is already a big pothole in the middle of the road. The question is, are these roads constructed with value for money? Look at what happened at Wilkinson Road in Freetown. Our precious and beautiful buildings were demolished in the name of constructing a very good road; but today, there are lots of potholes on that road. There are lots of challenges on these roads. Like some of my colleagues said, we have to put in place other precautionary measures, like highway patrol vehicles and

installation of CCTV cameras at strategic places. In other jurisdictions, people use satellite facilities to snap all those who are misusing the road. I would like to ask the Ministry of Transport and Aviation if they have looked at their public transport. Even in Freetown, there are no indicators on these vehicles. If you look at them, there is no indicator to show that this vehicle is going left or right. Sometimes the police would just ask you to park over there. They would say you are an Honourable Member, but why did you fail to display your MP number plate? I am sure not all police officers wear uniform, but some of them are underground because they are CID. We do not have everything and the state does not have money to provide us everything. We cannot just put number plate on our vehicles to go everywhere. We are happy to be where we are.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to quickly look at Article 15[2], on Page 7. With your Leave, Honourable Speaker, it says: **"State party shall formulate and enforce regulations on the age limit of imported vehicles."** I have visited Europe many times and whenever I wanted to import a second hand vehicle, I always consider the age of the vehicle. A lot of old vehicles are being imported to Sierra Leone. I do not just bring vehicles to Sierra Leone. If you go to Hamburg or Rotterdam, you would see a lot of people who are bringing all sorts of vehicles to our country. Are we safe with these vehicles? With your leave, Article 15[4] says: **"... - person shall provide incentive, for acquiring new vehicles that are environmentally and operationally safe."** Today, we are talking about vehicles that are environmentally clean. If these things are taken into consideration, it will be good for us to achieve. If I attend our meeting on Thursday, I will inform my people that I have informed Parliament about what is happening along the Bo/Bandajuma Highway. This is because we cannot continue with this. We appreciate the road that was constructed for us, but we cannot afford to lose the lives of our citizens in that part of our land. There should be self-discipline. We cannot afford to have police officers everywhere, but we have to put in place certain precautionary measures.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have to go and attend the meeting tomorrow at the Bo District Council and on Thursday, at Koribondo. I hope that the Lord will guide us all. We have to look at the age of these imported vehicles. Mr Minister, please convey our concerns to your colleagues in that Ministry. In 2011, I went to Ghana and I discovered that what I am saying now has been enforced. You cannot just bring any type of vehicle to Ghana. I travelled on road from Accra to Kumasi and you cannot just use any type of vehicle there. There are police officers on the road to enforce the law. We cannot continue to put the lives of Sierra Leoneans at risk. We have to consider the safety of our people. Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker.

HON. FALLAH K. TENGBEH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Charter before us is not contentious. It has all the elements required of us, as a nation. Ratifying this Charter will bring significant benefits, as stated earlier by the Minister. The Charter offers a tested policy for managing our roads. As an engineer, anything that has to do with engineering is relevant to me. Today, we have the chance to take a bold step, a step that can save hundreds of lives in Sierra Leoneans.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to support the ratification of the African Road Safety Charter because it is a matter that has to do with life and death. That being said let me enumerate few points I would use as my submissions to the House. First, I would start with the concept of saving lives and money. We were losing lives and millions of Leones as a result of road crashes. Ratifying this Charter will give us a clear path and enable us to save lives. This is what we need as a nation. Like what other MPs have been saying time without number that we have good laws, but they are not implemented as required. It is high time Parliament started monitoring the implementation of these laws. This is because if we continue to make these laws without enforcing them or monitoring their enforcement, then we are wasting our time. As a nation, we need to move forward.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my second submission would be from safer roads, vehicles and drivers. With the ratification of this Charter, there will be no more business as usual; i.e., speeding, reckless driving and unsafe vehicles will be something of the past. I think this is a brilliant idea and this Honourable House must ratify this Charter. There is reckless driving all over the country and people are not adhering to road signs. This takes us aback because we will be losing lives and money. In the process of repairing our roads, we are losing money and the country will experience financial crisis. This is why the Honourable Minister and team have decided to sign up to this Charter. It is a step in the right direction.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my next submission has to do with stronger national roads safety system. For the first time, Sierra Leone aligns with continental best practice for saving lives on our roads. This is good and it is an achievement for us. If Sierra Leone is to align with international best practice or continental best practice, it means we are progressing as a nation. I thank the Minister and team for bringing this fine document for ratification. I would also want to draw the attention of the House that ratifying this Charter would lead to swift response to accidents on the highways. You would agree with me that every life matters in this country. If someone gets injured on the road, he/she deserves quick and quality care. I think this document has provisions to address our challenges on the road.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my last submission has to do with reliable road accident data. This is enshrined in Article Seven [7] of the Charter. We cannot fix what we do not measure with real data. We will target the real problems and there will be no more guesswork. With credible data, you will be able to interpret your problems easily; but without factual data, you will be guessing and whenever you guess, we know what will happen; it leads to negativities. I want to thank the Minister and team for this document. This is about protecting our mothers, fathers and children. Against that backdrop, I call on Honourable Members to ratify this Charter. Thank you for listening.

THE SPEAKER: I now call on the Leader of Government Business.

HON MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the Floor. Honourable Mustapha Sellu wanted to read the Clauses and the Articles, so that he can explain better. This has to do with the lives of people in Africa. This is an Agreement that touches the lives of people who are using the road and the safety of all Africans. What they have done in this African Road Safety Charter is that they took into consideration the treaties, resolutions and the declarations. If you looked at the preamble of this Charter, you would understand the angle they are coming from. One of them they looked at the African Economic Community, which was adopted in Abuja, Nigeria in 1991. They have also taken into consideration the United Nations programme in 2003, which has to do with cooperation in transit transport for landlocked developing countries. When they are talking about landlocked developing countries, we are still talking about Africa. The first one was a treaty that was discussed in Abuja, but this one is about declaration.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the last paragraph is talking about the commitments to improve transport infrastructure and health service in Africa, so as to prevent road crashes and fatalities. I want you to take note of that, Mr Minister. I am only referencing what the Honourable Mustapha Sellu said about emergencies. Article 17 is very clear and I will come to that, Mr Minister. My colleague did talk about the infrastructure. We can take care of that in one of the Articles, but what is more important is Article 25, which we have to answer. It has to be signed by fifteen countries before we can implement this Charter. So, it is very important for us as a country. So, if we are going to ratify it today, it has to take 30 days. Mr Minister, there is another definition which I am a bit baffled about and we need your explanation. If you an expert, he/she should tell us. The definition in Article 1 is something I have tried to conduct a research on, so that I can understand. I am not able to get the actual definition. During the ACP/EU Special Session, we discussed issues relating to road crashes and the huge number of deaths in Africa. That discussion was purely on Africa.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if I heard the Minister well, he said over three hundred thousand fatalities on road crashes alone. We have to take note of this figure. Articles 7, 11 and 12 are talking about audits. We are also trying to create a database to enhance our research skills. The question is, how do we plan ourselves in terms of future things that we are talking about? In my earlier debate, I spoke about it; but in this case, we are talking about a database we can trust or rely on. Data management is also stated here. Let us look at this definition. They said 'road traffics fatality means a death occurring within 30 days of the road traffic crash.' I do not really understand. Does this mean that after thirty days, we consider it to be no fatality? That is my own literal understanding. Perhaps, when the Minister is responding to what we have said, he can make clarifications.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Chapter 2 has to do with the objectives and principles. There are two objectives and two paragraphs. The second paragraph is on specific actions. I would take my time to read most of the provisions because we have spoken about the issues affecting us as a nation. This Charter has makes abundant provisions to address those challenges. It also talks about the things we should do regarding emergencies. I think Articles 15 and 16 talk about what to do or how we can prepare ourselves to minimise road crashes. I will make reference to two Articles because the Honourable Mustapha Sellu spoke about the main objective of this particular Charter in his presentation. One of the specific objectives the Minister highlighted says: **"Facilitate the formulation of comprehensive road safety policies at country level."** My colleagues were asking about the policies. First, you formulate the policies. Mr Minister, you have been within the Ministry for a while now and perhaps you can tell us the main objectives of this Ministry. I want to know if they are in line with the Charter we are about to ratify. We must give validity to what we are doing. We want to be certain as to why we need to ratify this Charter. Article 2 states: **"...receive and contribute to the coordination of road safety in the country."**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is a provision in the Charter which state that the third Sunday of every November should be considered or celebrated as road safety day to bring out the issues relating to road crashes. I want the Minister to take note of it because it is very interesting and important. Like what the Honourable Fallah Tengbeh said that it is not about politics, it is about saving our lives. That is why he is even talking about the financing model. When they were talking about the financing model, they said it is the total expenditure; and in terms of road safety data, they said it is an investment. I will also read the Article that expressly states this particular provision, Mr Speaker. The Charter also talks about incorporating the private sector, civil society organisations and non-governmental organisations to participate in road safety activities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister said over three hundred thousand road crashes every year. We are saying that this is a very serious issue we are dealing with. Every year, SLRSA publishes their data in terms of road accidents/causalities. They always make the analysis from one area to another; and most times when they calculate the number of deaths, it is so huge. Three hundred thousand is too much for Africa, nearly accounting to half of the deaths occurring in Africa. Article 4 also mentions the creation of Lead Agency, which is the SLRSA. Mr Speaker, there is something happening at the SLRSA and SLRA. I think they need to bring the Instrument for amendment or they establish an MoU, so that he can have proper functions for road markings and road signs. In 2009 or 2010, there was a Statutory Instrument regarding road signs or taking care of traffic congestions. What do you do? What notice can you give? Where do you mark? However, we came to understand that even to mark the roads is not the responsibility of the lead agency, but a responsibility for another agency, which is SLRA. People will tell you that SLRA have engineers who are constructing roads, but they deal with traffic because in this document, they are talking about road signs and traffic lights. This is what the Honourable Joseph Williams-Lamin was talking about. He said they had 16 fatalities in Koribondo. So, if we do not have road signs, Zebra crossing areas, especially in areas where you have businesses, it is a disaster. If you construct roads without speed tracks and no road signs to indicate that you have to slow down, trust me there must be fatalities. These are some of the problems we are facing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this document is speaking to the fact that we should do domestic legislations to support this Charter. I am trying to endorse what my colleague had said earlier regarding bringing these issues to the fore. Mr Minister, you should not go and sit down without doing anything. *S.O.2, 'bo we don ratify dis document oh, na for go sidom.'* We have to make this document a reality. I wondered why we are ratifying it now, Mr Minister. Under the creation of road safety and lead agencies, the Charter says: **"State parties shall establish legally mandated National Road Safety Lead Agency, with cross sectional coordination, response and responsibilities within three years, after the ratification or accession to this Charter."** I want you to note that you cannot afford to wait because we have some of these structures in place. Honourable Quintin Salia-Konneh spoke about enforcement. He said that repeatedly, which means these are serious matters we need to handle with care. You have to take your time to make sure that if you have to do the road signs; if you have to do road marks; if you have to talk about traffic lights, then you have to talk about human protection and prevention of road crashes; you have to take into consideration Article 5. Article 5 talks about institutional strengthening of road safety lead agencies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would love the SLRA to do the road signs. What SLRSA should focus on is road safety. In this Charter, there is a provision that talks about norms and standards. How do you design roads? How do you construct bridges? How do you create footpaths for pedestrians? You have to address these issues; but the question is who takes the lead? Mr Minister, you have to take this issue to Cabinet for appropriate action. Cabinet has to take a decision on this matter. If you are going to give the SLRSA the authority to lead, that is fine. If you are looking at the MoU to solve this problem, that is also fine. I think we have delayed a lot in handling this matter. Under Strengthening Road Safety, the Charter states: **"State parties shall provide institutional support to the lead agencies through financial and human resources.** We should also give them political support and recognition, so that they can perform their coordination functions effectively. I spoke about taking the matter to Cabinet and that is why I mentioned the political aspect. There is also the human resource aspect of it, but who should lead or who should take care of what?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are also talking about the road safety data management system. I have spoken about it earlier. In fact, SLRA and SLRSA have the best data management system for our standards because anytime you go there to register, they would not ask for your details because they are in their database. So, when NCRA was struggling to get certain data, I said SLRSA has a structured data because every vehicle or person is taken care of. How are we managing data? This is the big question all of us should answer. Do we monitor the data we collect? How do we validate it? How do we make it useful? I am saying this because we have to make use of the data that we collect and that is why we have to manage it properly. It helps us in planning and research. You can only be informed by the data you collect.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the road safety data management system shall include national database on vehicles. That is why I was making reference to vehicles. That is the first thing because when you are doing licences, you have to take note of the drivers. We renew our licences every year. In most cases, they only take note of fatal accidents and forget about the minor crashes. This is dangerous for us as a people. A comprehensive data informs you what has caused the accident and the place it happened. Mr Minister, please take note of these issues. He talked about injuries and deaths. The Minister also mentioned seatbelts and my colleague spoke about helmets for the motorcycle riders. It is in this Charter, Mr Minister and that is why I said I would take my time, with the leave of Mr Speaker, to read the Article because it mentions certain things that are meaningful to us. This is no longer a child's play. We are under serious pressure in respect of the road accidents that are happening in the country. Seatbelts are also called lifebelts because they perform an important function in our lives. Again, we have spoken about wearing helmets and that has an economic impact

on road users. If the road is dangerous and there are no road signs, you know what will happen. People who know will just avoid and that will create an economic impact.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you looked at the preamble, the African Economic Community was adopted in Abuja, Nigeria in 1991 and that tells you that this is creating an impact on the economy. Let us talk about standard collaboration. We have Guinea and Liberia as our neighbouring countries. Are we actually collaborating? Are we collecting data? What is happening on the other side? What is causing these accidents? Let me draw your attention to the Charter. It states: **"State party shall promote collaborative effort at national level."** This is something we have already put in place because we have the traffic wardens from the SLRSA and the traffic police from the Sierra Leone Police. They are in charge when incidents of such nature occur. When we have crashes along the way, whether minor or major, whether fatal or ghastly, they would go there and take statements, and sometimes charge the matter to court. So, they take note of the data very properly. It is a matter of collaboration and that is why I am drawing your attention to regions and continental levels, aiming at improving effectiveness of road safety initiatives, knowledge sharing and monitoring, and evaluation. So, we are saying that when you collaborate, everything will work perfectly.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Fofanah was talking about the Masiaka/Bombali Road. What President Bio has done is to open up the bridge to appreciable standard using the European Union funds. I remembered the incident that had to do with the caterpillar. I am sure that will not happen again because there is now a parking area. There is an Article that talks about standards. You would realise that the bridge was constructed based on international standards. If you have travelled from Kambia to the border, you would have seen how horrible those bridges are. If standards are not followed and there is no form of collaboration, it means you have nothing to show. How do you analyse? How do you evaluate? What has caused the accident? What has caused the fatality to occur? I just draw your attention to this aspect. Again, under collaboration, we said we should involve the private sector in what we are doing because they are very important. I have talked about it in my open statement and they have reiterated it here. The Charter says: **"State parties should create the enabling environment for private sector, civil society."** Why are we talking about sensitisation, awareness raising or educating the people? *S.O.2, 'bo dis road ya bad oh, dis road nor good.'*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I hope all of us could remember that somebody raised the alarm about Aberdeen Bridge. It was all over social media. This has to do with the private sector, but you also have to involve the public because it has to do with public safety. The Charter also mentions academic and research institutions'

participation in road safety study. As I said earlier, the third Saturday of every November will be a day of road safety celebration. The celebration does not mean we are going to match or beat bands and dance, but rather you are going to create the platform where everybody is going to pay attention to road safety presentations. This is the platform where the Minister would have to tell us that out of the 300,000 road crashes that occurred in Africa, Sierra Leone has 200 or 300 fatalities. I want the Minister to note that the numbers are increasing exponentially. There is no reduction in the number of fatalities. We need to check what is causing these accidents or the road crashes at Spur Road. Are we examining the vehicles? If you read Articles 11 to 17, you would understand what this Charter is talking about; it helps us to put measures in place that can minimise these fatalities. Spur Road is one in this Freetown. This year, we have just checked that fatalities are more than ten. I have crosschecked that information. I always use that route to walk on a daily basis. Even my Women's Leader had an accident, but there was no fatality. She only sustained some injuries and the vehicle was beyond repaired.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to draw the attention of Minister that in other countries, when they are constructing roads, they bring institutions together, like the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Works and other related agencies responsible for road safety. They take into consideration the safety of the road, the Standards and even communication. *S.O.2, 'wae we wan construct road, we jus dae go nor more.'* It is disastrous for us. Article 4 is about safer and mobility. Let me just read the first paragraph. It says: **"State parties shall technically classify roads according to the function they serve."** *S.O.2, 'if u dae go make road for people dem wae na for go cross, nor more for go take small tin na under dem.'* It has to be constructed with that one. In this Charter, you have rest and weigh stations. If vehicles are going to ply on a bridge, they have to weigh them. This is because they have to make sure that the weight of the vehicle does not affect the bridge. That is why they mentioned weigh stations in the Charter. If you go to abroad countries, you have weigh stations. You cannot continue if you fail to weigh your vehicle. In fact, a fine will be imposed for non-compliance. You will not even try to do otherwise.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Charter states that the road designs must reflect the design norms and standards of their respective classifications. *S.O.2, 'na en make are be tell u say, if u dae make road for Honda, u get for state am watin u make for.'* You cannot make roads for sedans/cars and you expect trucks to ply the road. These bridges are constructed without reference to those 14 or 10 tyres vehicles. This is one of the reasons these bridges are collapsing. If you implement the whole policy, it is going to help greatly and I hope you know why you are going to implement it. It is in the toll road Agreement, but we have decided to stop it because it will be too much;

although the benefit is greater than the ones we have seen. Please, just observe the bridges and the roads. If you are moving towards Magbosie, there is a bridge there. When you enter that bridge, it is as if you are going down a hole. We have not examined those bridges properly. Mr Minister, please take note of that. We should be doing road safety inspection.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I refer you to Article 11. As my deputy was saying, you would have to take all the players along. If we are talking about fatalities of this magnitude, *S.O.2, 'we want nor mor we kam en we pass document den we say wae we ratify.* This is causing us so much harm. Inspections should be part of all maintenance processes. If you do not inspect, how do we do maintenance. We do maintenance blindly. Mr Minister, you are always going to Kailahun and I want you to check the road between Bo and Taiama. There are so many potholes along that road. During the raining season, that road becomes very dangerous for us. So, what are we saying? With the leave of Mr Speaker, let me read Article 11. It says: **"The inspection shall take the form of safety analysis and we involve as minimum on all roads assets, including, but not limited to roadways pavement."** Mr Minister, please take note of the words 'roadways pavement.' *S.O.2, 'den road dem dae so wae dae insie town wae u dae see wae den say pavment den. Den pavement den na in dae prevent.....'* We are not taking this serious at all. People will go and remove the pavements on the pretext that they are going to clean the gutters. The pavement must be inspected, Mr Minister, so that people walk with ease. We should have gutters where there is water movement, so that the streets are not flooded.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these motorbikes are also responsible for the many fatalities and injuries. I have talked about road signs, traffic signal or control, road marking, crash ply areas and street lights. Mr Minister, these traffic lights you are seeing helps us a lot, but we do not know who is controlling them. Which one is the lead agency? Is it World Bank or SLRSA that is controlling it? I think you have to take ownership. The one at King Harman Road Junction is blinking. Who is taking care of that one? As I said, if you have been spending money on road safety, it is an investment and not expenditure. It is clearly stated there, Mr Speaker. When you go for inspection, you come to audit. That is why I said the whole thing is systematic and they are trying to arrive at something. When we collaborate, we then do the inspection. What steps are we going to take?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Article 12 says: "State parties shall introduce legislation. Please take note because they are now moving from inspection. I earlier told you about domestic legislation. Legislations are key to protect and give life to the document we are ratifying. They said legislation and policies requiring road safety audit

in all phases of design. So, the one is talking about roads *S.O.2, 'wae den dae construct den bridge den.'* In fact, the Committee on Works has gone on oversight to inspect the construction of those bridges and they came out with the report. It would interest you to know what is happening. Regarding construction, you have to take into cognizance the design and the construction, and the operation of road infrastructure.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Article 13 caters for the safety of the road, while Article 14 caters for the vulnerable users. If we are serious, this is where we pay attention. If you design, you have to look at the standards. As mentioned earlier, Article 13 caters for things like road signs, while Article 14 specifically talks about the vulnerable users. All of us are vulnerable users. In fact, some people do not even walk on the streets because they are afraid. In some areas, people do not even use the Zebra crossing or observe traffic lights. They do not care at all, Mr Speaker. We are vulnerable in terms of how we use our roads. So, take into consideration Article 14 because it is very important.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Article 15 is talking about safer vehicles. Mr Speaker, with your leave, I will read one by one. For safer vehicle, Mr Minister, we have to be very firm. If we ratify this document and fail to enforce it, it means we are not ready. Vehicles that are more than ten or fifteen years old are risky and dangerous to be on the road. They are death traps. We agree that we are poor, but let us put some standards in the vehicles we procure. *S.O.2, 'nor to because of poverty go make we kill people den.'* Let us check the roads and the mini busses that are moving from Hastings to Lumley to be properly checked. Therefore, 'state parties shall adopt and enforce minimum standards of vehicles to ensure their roadworthiness.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, under the same rubric, state party shall reformulate and enforce regulations on a limit of imported vehicles. That is what my colleague was talking about. This is why we said that if you want to get things done, domestic legislation is critical. The Charter says: **"State parties shall strengthen and enforce the mandatory periodic inspection of vehicle."** We are contributing to the deaths of our people in this country. If we ratify this Agreement, it is mandatory for us to take these steps under Article 15 to minimise the death rate caused by roads crashes.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Charter further says: **"State parties shall provide incentives for acquiring new vehicles that are environmentally and operationally safe."** This intends to also apply to mass transit of vehicles and goods, especially those from Sierra Leone to Guinea. Under this same rubric, it says: **"State parties shall put in place legislations, regulating the transportation of dangerous and hazardous goods."** These are all safety measures because if they are not safe, there is a problem with the people who are transporting them. This has to

do with Article 16. Article 16 mentions 'safer road users.' I will read it for you to understand. It says: **"State parties shall strengthen the rules and regulations for training of drivers and issuing of drivers' licences."** I am sure we have misused this aspect. They should be trained and tested, but we are not doing it at all. In fact, this part is talking about education. You have to check the risks of these crashes, especially those taking alcohol and driving.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, they are now suggesting that we should introduce road safety in our school curriculum. This is because what we are discussing now is an existential threat to us. The death rate caused by road crashes is alarming. What do we do? Under Article 17, we have asked for emergencies, which Honourable Mustapha Sellu was talking about. I will read one or two and the rest will be followed upon during the implementation stage. The road between Masiaka and Mile 91 is very dangerous due to the many curves and less road signs. The road itself is too narrow and this is why they said that 'state parties shall design, strengthen pre-hospital and post-crash care services in order to provide timely and appropriate care to road traffic injured patients, so as to minimise the effects and long term disability. I am sure if we take care of this situation on time, we will be able to minimise disabilities and other dangerous happenings.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, under post-crash, the Charter says: **"State parties shall establish Emergency Medical Services Coordinating Center."** This was what Honourable Mustapha Sellu was talking about. We also have the issue of third party motor vehicle insurance and that is why they said 'state parties shall implement third party motor vehicle insurance law to ensure...' Mr Speaker, even when we are approving presidential nominees, we have to reveal the third party insurance scheme. So, if I involve in an accident, I will be the third party, especially for the public vehicles. **S.O.2**, *'well, if vehicle den dae then u don go pay insurance at least we for able take care of the victims dem.'* you should be able to take care of them; it is not only talking about premium unless you have to take care of the victims by the insurance company. Mr Minister, they are just collecting those moneys from us, but they are not doing anything. That is why they are talking about third party. They made special reference to third party because you should be able to take care of your victims.

[Suspension of S.O.5 [2] being 3:00 p.m.]

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, as I said earlier, we are talking about financing. Sometimes we think we are spending more moneys. Article 18 talks about financing. I have said it times without number and I am not going to repeat myself. They are saying that expenditure on road safety should not be considered as expenditure, but an investment. Mr Minister, they are talking about conference of state

parties, which is the highest body that takes political decisions. Article 19 talks about conference of state. If there is no political will to mitigate road crashes, it would be difficult to put it under control or to reduce the death rate. If you check the death rate on road crashes last year is huge. They said the conference shall be held in every three years, which I considered to be too much. We can have our own internal mechanisms towards it. This is because accidents are happening every day. It should be in every two [2] years to hold the conference. We have to prepare ourselves while we have our own mini conference, considering the number of deaths or injuries on the road. A lot of other things are happening and I have suggested ways of taking care of them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Article 20 is very important. It has to do with monitoring and evaluation at national level. Article 20 says: **"State party shall establish and evaluation process to review the progress and draw lessons from the implementation of road safety programmes."** That is what we are talking about Mr Speaker. Mr Minister, if you have got two thousand or two hundred fatalities on road crashes in Six [6] months, it is huge. We have to monitor what is happening. Maybe after we could have checked, we will now say oh, *S.O.2, 'some tem na dis brige ya, na dis curv ya get the problem.'* We will now suggest ways to mitigate that crisis. That is why they are asking for this evaluation. I deliberately read this particular paragraph for us to consider what to do and what we cannot do.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Charter has a lot to offer to this country. It even talks about disputes resolution. We can negotiate or reconcile, so as to determine what to do in terms of disputes. We have to sit down and determine how we can resolve our problems, not necessarily going to the court. So, they are talking about encouraging all other people who have disputes with this Charter to take into consideration the fact that they should discuss the issues that are affecting them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleagues have highlighted all of the issues, but I have just managed to pinpoint various Articles in the Charter that can address some of those concerns. However, we are all on the same page in respect of the African Charter on Road Safety. What we need to do is to find out how other countries have domesticated this Charter. How are we going about domesticating legislations is very important. We should not just ratify Agreements or Charters and clap our hands, and say *S.O.2, 'we don ratify am,'* we put it in our shelves. It means you are not doing well; or you have not been sincere. You should also ensure proper data management, data analysis and design. You have to give us what we want for the future because it is not only about the present. What do we do to mitigate some of these issues? I thank you very much for giving me the time to wrap up this debate. After ratification, Mr Minister,

you need to ensure domestic legislations and identification of the lead agency to take care of these issues. Thank you very much and may the Lord bless us all.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Mr Minister; please summarise.

MR REX BHONAPHA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is nothing much to say, but I want to thank you for your immense contributions. You are indeed insightful and a wakeup call for us as a Ministry and government by extension. Honourable Members raised a lot of tantalising and sensational issues. My response cannot be exhaustive, but I will rather take whatever has been said here in good faith and to see how we can improve. I will leave you with this following few remarks:

As we speak, we have developed, through the Sierra Leone Roads Safety Authority, age limit of vehicles importation in this country and that document would be going to Cabinet on Wednesday for approval and we will also be meeting here for ratification. This means we are taking some measures to address these problems. I would like to inform this Honourable House that we have already started the highway management and we have already secured land at Mile 91. The Ministry, through the Sierra Leone Resilient Integrated Urban Mobility Project, has secured few highways management vehicles and motorbikes that have been distributed to both the Sierra Leone Roads Safety Authority and the Traffic Division of the Sierra Leone Police. I am sure three cars for the same purpose have been given to the SLRSA. We are in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Works and Public Assets address some of these issues. It is rather unfortunate that in our country, the infrastructure is separate from that of the Ministry of Transport. In other jurisdictions, the Ministry is called the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure. This is because transport and infrastructure go together, but that is not the same here. So, the only way is to inspect these roads, engage in redesigning and collaborate with the Ministry of Works and Public Assets.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have done so much and we are regularly called upon when it comes to the approval of road designs. They usually write to us for concurrence and we do send our technical team there. This is the good news and all of us have experienced the menace in road fatalities. What this document aims to achieve is to make it better; and by ratifying this document today, I can assure you that we have a lot of issues we are going to address. We spoke about having weigh bridges on the road to determine the weight of vehicles. That came up and I was part of that meeting with the Ministry of Works. This came up before the elections in 2023 and for very good reasons, we briefly abandoned that project. We will spare no effort in ensuring that we make our roads better and safer.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was in Marrakesh last year, together with our Company Secretary with regard the same Road Safety Charter and I was almost

provoked to anger when we were not even listed among the countries that were considered the best practice in road safety. Tanzania won the prize and I told my colleagues that if we put hands together, we can make it work in Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable Mustapha Sellu spoke about the identity of motor cyclists, getting involved in road crashes and ran away. This is what we have done as a Ministry. We are in collaboration with the private sector to bring vests or coats with QR Codes and numbering for motor cyclists. We are collaborating with the Office of the First Lady on this issue. You may want to know why the Office of the First Lady is involved. Well, just this year, we had the opportunity to host the UN Secretary General Special Representative on road safety in Sierra Leone, Mr Jean Todt. During the meeting chaired by the First Lady of the Republic of Sierra Leone. So, we are working with her in that regard and once we get that done, we will see our cyclists with their coats, numbers and QR Codes at the back. Therefore, we are making effort in that direction.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with regard testing the vehicles, we called it MOT. As we speak, we are in collaboration with a private company called Auto Spec. They have built two facilities; one at Six Mile and the other at Kissy Road. In the Agreement with Auto Spec, they were to bring about six mobile fitness testing facilities and they are expected to be here before the end of this year. Once we have them, we can intercept you at any place and anywhere in this country, starting in Freetown and then we subject your vehicle to inspection or test. Mr Speaker, it may interest you to know that when we went to inspect the facility at Six Mile, I subjected my vehicle and most of other vehicles. Unfortunately, only my vehicle passed the test at that time. So, we are making it mandatory, Mr Speaker. We know we have got other qualities around; but looking at the colossal number of fatalities, it is fitting that we implement whatever in this Charter to the letter.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Leader of Government Business spoke about collaborating with neighboring countries to look at best practice. It will interest you to know that Liberia has not even got the Road Safety Authority. This means Sierra Leone is one step ahead of them; and by domesticating this Charter, we will be two steps ahead of them. We are not actually using them as a benchmark; I am just bringing them out for you to know that we are making effort as a Ministry and as a country to ensure that we mitigate some of these problems that cause road crashes.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of this Honourable House on Tuesday, 10th June, 2025:

The African Road Safety Charter.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

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

ADJOURNMENT

*[The House rose at 3:45 p.m., and was adjourned to Thursday, 3^d July, 2025 at 10:00
a.m.]*