

*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

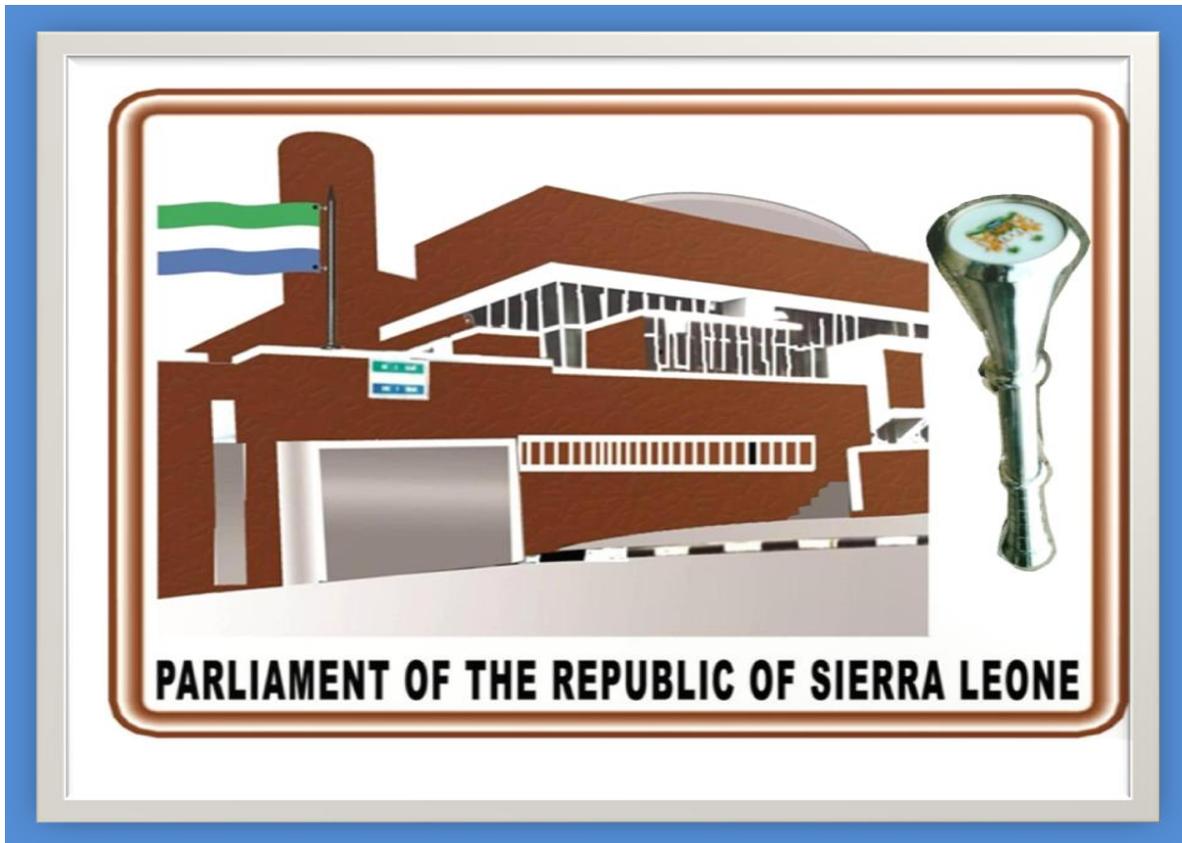
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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**FOURTH SESSION –FIRST MEETING**

**THURSDAY, 21<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER, 2021**

*SESSION – 2020/2021*



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMETARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**VOLUME: I**

**NUMBER: 19**

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First Meeting of the Fourth Session of the Fifth Parliament  
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House  
held Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2021.

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*THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE*

## **Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House**

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### **FOURTH SESSION – FIRST MEETING OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC**

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**Thursday, 21<sup>ST</sup> October, 2021.**

#### **VI. PRAYERS**

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

*[The House met at 10:00 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]*

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

The House was called to Order

*Suspension of S.O 5[2]*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, I admired your zealousness but we have started it already, and I made sure that I entered this Chamber right on time; maybe you were not here then. Let proceed please. Honourable Members, welcome to all of you and especially to my favourite, a special welcome to Honourable Lahai Marah, who is the newest Member of the list of my favourite Members.

Honourable Members, we shall skip Pages 1 to Page 4 and start our consideration of the Votes and Proceedings on Page 5. Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? Page 10? Page 11? Page 12? Page 13? Page 14 and page 15. Thank you.

Can someone please move for the adoption of Votes and Proceedings for Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup>, July, 2021?

**HON. NENNEH LEBBIE:** Mr Speaker, I so move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any Seconder?

**HON. TENNYSON H. SANDI:** Mr Speaker, I so second.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[Correction of Votes and Proceedings for parliamentary sitting held on Friday, 23rd July, 2021 has been adopted]*

**VII. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER**

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, let me take this opportunity to welcome all of us back to this Chamber, I sincerely hope that we were all well rested and now well prepared to undertake and execute the task at hand. Let me draw your attention to the task that we have before us, I referred to Paragraph 10 in that paragraph the Leader of Government Business drew the attention of the House to the Internal Notice Paper and you can see for yourselves the list of items contained therein. In addition to that, I also wish to draw your attention to Page 7 of the Votes and Proceedings where we resolved that all Oversight Report that were tabled in the House will be debated after the resumption of Parliament following our recess and a quite good number of those

Reports are available. So you can well imagine the volume of work that is awaiting the attention of this House, and that is why I am appealing for those who spent the recess doing other things to come and resume work well rested and well energised and over and above that; as you know the budget session is not far away between now and the end of December there is quite a lot to be accomplished and we therefore need every single Member to be fully equipped, fully energised and ready, from what I have observed from those who have occupied their seats I can see a lots of energy been exuded I hope we would continue in that spirit. Thank you again and welcome. Let get to business.

#### **IV. PAPER LAID**

CHAIRMAN, PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

HON. SEGEPOH S. THOMAS

**HON. SEGEPOH S. THOMAS** [*Deputy Speaker*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the NACOVERC Report by the PAC is finally here and it is our hope that this Report be thoroughly debated by this House when once it is laid. The 2019 Report will be here in couple of weeks.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the circumstances please permit me to lay on the Table of the House the Public Accounts Committee Report on the Auditor General's Report on the Audit of funds managed by the National COVID-19 Emergency Responds Centre and other MDAs.

**HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE:** Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O [25].

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the document entitled the Public Account Committee Report on the Auditor General's Report on the Audit of funds managed by the National COVID-19 Emergency Responds Centre and other MDAs be debated.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any Seconder to that Motion?

**HON. SEGEPOH S. THOMAS:** Mr Speaker, I so second.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, before you put the question I want to say few words here.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe the relevant S.O. being mentioned by the Deputy Leader of Government Business is in respect of Notice so no need to have a Secunder and once he has given Notice let him do the needful now and then the Secunder can come later.

**HON. SEGEPOH S. THOMAS:** Yes, I totally agree.

**THE SPEAKER:** So, we are increasing our work load?

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, further to that...

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Even though the Secunder has been annulled under some circumstances, I think the Report laid by the Deputy Speaker which he is the Chairman for the PAC was not supposed to second that Motion even if that would have been the case. Just for correction Sir.

**HON. SEGEPOH S. THOMAS:** Mr Speaker, I totally disagreed except he can show us the relevant S.Os to that effect.

**HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE:** Mr Speaker, I don't think this debate is called for; I stood on S.O [25]. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Shall we proceed on what we have on the Order Paper?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA [*Leader of Government Business*]:** Mr Speaker, I told my Deputy to make an amendment on the Order Paper, I think he forgot and the Minister of Trade is unavoidably absent based on circumstances beyond his control. So, I want to amend the Order Paper to lay his document, I don't know if you can permit me to do so Sir? Item [ii] now becomes item [iii].

An Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone represented by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Finance and Gold Brewery Sierra Leone Limited dated March, 2021 to become an item. I so move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Will you repeat that again please?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** I will now bring item [iii] forward to become [ii] and I read; Honourable Mathew S. Nyuma Leader of Government Business, An Agreement between the Government Of Sierra Leone [GOSL] represented by the Ministry of Trade and Industry [MTI], the Ministry of Finance [MOF] and Gold Brewery Sierra Leone Limited dated March, 2021, that is item [ii] now. Item 4[iii] announcement to lay a paper; under item [iv] you pronounced my name for item [iv]. I am now doing the amendment under item 4[i] and I brought item [iii] to item [ii], you pronounced item [4] for me to lay the paper, so do you want me to announce item [4] again? It is just about numbering.

**THE SPEAKER:** So, you are suggesting that we change item [3] to [2]?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** I am well charged Mr Speaker, I am not part of the Speakership sorry about that Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** You said you are well charged?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Well, I am just charged by coming to Parliament after a long recess together with my Colleagues. Mr Speaker, have you not seen your darling over there she is well attractive; this love is so tight today. We have beautiful ladies in the House, we need to compliment them and I was expecting it to be part of your announcement. Mr Speaker, your eyes need to catch those faces.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, as you hardly heard some clarifications I am equally a little bit confused on the numbering, originally there was item 4[2] to be done by the Leader of Government Business, and then 4[4] to be done by the Minister. So, the numbering is still not clear, meaning you will have to do two now which will not permit you but the way you directed us in the numbering, I am still confused, you are to do the two now.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Okay, let me come you are right it is not item [3] but item [4] in fact we need to change the numbering to alphabetical numbering for better clarification, let us all do that because we have the numerical numbering, 4 is going for sub 4[1] 4[2] so the numerical numbering now be alphabetical [A] let us change it.

**THE SPEAKER:** Let us not confuse the House.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, it is not confusion just look at it.

**THE SPEAKER:** Leader of Government Business.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Do you want me to say the numerical numbering?

**THE SPEAKER:** Stay with it and all that you need please tell the House what you are bringing forward.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** 4[2].

**THE SPEAKER:** Which one?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** I don't want to stand so many times and I want to stand to do everything together.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Daniel Koroma little 4 will become little 3 under your name.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Fine, and then you will do 2 and 3 together. You will do now 2 and 3 together.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** That is what I said.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** No, you didn't say so.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Are you sure?

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** And then the 3 has become 4 the Foreign Affairs Minister will do the last.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Item 4 laying of papers 4[1] under Honourable Nyuma 4[2] which I said I want to bring item 3 to 4[2] that is what I said, 4[1] is under dispute you have another person coming the Minister of Foreign Affairs for item 2, so now I

come to item 2, item II becomes item III. I am coming to II, I am bringing item [III] to [II], item [II] will go to item [III]. No, I want to do before the Minister, the Minister is item [II] on the Order Paper you have, I am making the amendment, you have Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, item [II]...

**HON. DANIEL B KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, this thing is simple.

**THE SPEAKER:** Hold on, you see we are wasting time.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, I have two Order Papers.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Any way I will have to deal with my Clerks. Sorry Mr Speaker, trust me this has been caused by the Clerk not by me, I have two Order Papers. So I would have to take certain decisions. Well, I have the actual Order Paper with me now.

**THE SPEAKER:** Well in that case I might as well ask which is the correct Order Paper?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** The one that you have.

**THE SPEAKER:** How sure are you?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** I am sure that has been announced and that is what you have started with.

**THE SPEAKER:** So, which one is the corrected one?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Yes Sir, for two papers. So, now I will come to item [III] it now becomes item [IV].

**THE SPEAKER:** Are you saying the Order Paper you have just been given?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Yes, the corrected one.

**THE SPEAKER:** Are you now listed for the laying of two papers?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Yes Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** Then I have the wrong one.

**HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS:** Mr Speaker, I think the one you are having is correct; he is laying on behalf of the Minister of Trade because he is absent.

**THE SPEAKER:** On this same issue? No, no, I want to dispense with this one first if you don't mind Honourable Member, let me dispense this one first and very quickly.

Honourable Member, please take your seat otherwise we are going to spend unnecessary time and energy debating something that ought not to be debated. Under item [II], Honourable Mathew S. Nyuma, Leader of Government Business, you will have two sub-items now, [a] and [b]. Item [A] would be: the Anti-Corruption Commission Sierra Leone Annual Report and [B] would be what was listed under the Minister of Trade and Industry. Shall we proceed on that basis?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Yes Mr Speaker, I move that item 2[a] be read the Anti-Corruption Report.

**THE SPEAKER:** As it is and then...

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Item [b] An Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone [GOSL] represented by the Ministry of Trade and Industry [MTI], the Ministry of Finance [MOF] and Gold Brewery Sierra Leone Limited dated March 2021.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, any Seconder? Let proceed with some expectation please.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[Motion moved to amend the order paper by Honourable Mathew S. Nyuma has been carried]*

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** You want to say something Sir?

**HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** Information available to us suggests that Leader of Government Business and the Leader of Opposition who is not present at the moment had a meeting and came to a common understanding. Since it is not very clear as to what they deliberated upon, I am asking briefly for a meeting at the Speaker's Bar so

we can trash these things out because we seem to have some different opinions than what is now being suggested because like I just said, that our Leader said that he had a meeting with the Leader of Government Business yesterday on certain issues, could we just clarify these issues at your Bar Mr Speaker?

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, in consonant to that let me continue Sir. I think what the Acting Leader here is saying that these issues have to deal with what we have on the Order Paper and because we don't want to wash our linens here that is why the Leader is asking that we go to your Bar and thrash these things out before we come back to the open and then move on with the business of the day.

**THE SPEAKER:** We shall do so after we have adopted the Motion that is presently before the House.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[Motion to amend the Order Paper has been carried]*

**THE SPEAKER:** Which means, therefore, and please correct the Order Paper accordingly. Under the Leader of Government Business we have [A] The Anti-Corruption Commission Report and [B] The Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone etc., and we delete item 4 on page 2 of the Order Paper. So, let go ahead with that and then, Leader please proceed. Lay those two papers and then I will invite the Leaders.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Okay, no problem Sir. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay the document so read in the Well of this House;

Item 2[a]. THE ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION SIERRA LEONE ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Item [b]. AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE [GOSL] REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY [MTI] AND THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE [MOF] AND GOLD BREWERY SIERRA LEONE LIMITED DATED MARCH 2021.

**iii. THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL  
COOPERATION**

**PROF. DAVID J. FRANCIS** [*The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your leave, I beg to lay on the Table of this Honourable House the following paper:

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ON VISA-FREE TRAVELS FOR HOLDERS OF DIPLOMATIC OR SERVICE PASSPORT

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, Order! I know that Ministers are very busy officious, now that the Minister of Foreign Affairs has done the needful, you may kindly take leave of us to attend to other State matters. I would now invite the Leadership to come forward. Honourable Members, please take your seat and let proceed with the business of the day.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, before we proceed I want to draw your attention to certain things that have been gazetted which I think in my opinion are not right. I am referring to gazette of Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2021. In that gazette...

**THE SPEAKER:** I don't mind taking that one up after we have concluded what is contained in the Order Paper for today, if you don't mind Honourable Member.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Okay, I respectfully agree with you Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. So, let us focus our attention on what is before the House presently as contained in the Order Paper. Let us proceed please.

**VIII. MOTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

PROPOSAL: HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA

SECONDER: HON. HASSAN A. SESAY

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that the Second Report of the Fourth Session of the Fifth Parliament of the Second Republic of

Sierra Leone, the second report of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service on Parliamentary vetting of Presidential nominations.

## **1. Introduction**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service in tandem with its Constitutional obligations met on Wednesday, 8th and Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2021 and interviewed eleven Presidential nominees for the following appointments;

[i] Nine members of the Board of Directors of the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion, [ii] Deputy Director General, National Disaster Management Agency and [iii] Deputy Commissioner, National Commission for Small Arms.

## **2. Procedure**

The Committee maintained strict consistency with its established procedure and interviewed the nominees on issues pertaining to their educational background to ensure that they have the relevant education and necessary backup experience to hold such important offices of State. Several probing questions put to the nominees of the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion covered wide ranging issues relating to their track records in pertinent local conflict resolution situations, declared assets, tax obligations and their vision for National cohesion. Issues of unsuitability or otherwise were strictly looked into by the Committee.

First sitting of the Committee met on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, Fourth Session of the Fifth Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion, a prime asset of our current history was borne out of series of national engagements at the Bintumani III Conference held a year ago as an initiative of the current Government to foster a nationally cohesive society through prevention, management and resolution of conflicts with an overarching aim of building a durable peace after a decade of conflict. The Independent Commission for Peace and National

Cohesion Act, 2020 enacted by the current Parliament, Section [3] sub Section [1 and 2] of the said Act made provision for the governing board consisting of the Chairman and representatives from each of the five regions and three others representing interest groups. To complement the process through our Constitutional role in making this Commission functional, the Committee interviewed the following nominees on oath:

**Mr Sheka Mansaray, Proposed Chairman Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion**

Mr Sheka Mansaray is an academic of no mean standing with triple advanced Degrees to his credit – Master in Economics [1983, Berbeck College, University of London, Master of Science in International Studies] [1984, Southampton University, UK ] and Master in Public Policy, MPP [2001, Princeton University ,USA]. He is a seasoned Civil Servant and Diplomat with a plethora of rich national service records amongst others thus:

2002- 2008 – Secretary to President and Head of Civil Service

1996-1998- Special adviser to the Late President Tejan Ahmad Kabba on the Peace process that provided a structured approach in collaboration with the International and Local actors to achieve peace with then Revolutionary United Front [RUF] rebels.

1998-2000- National Security Adviser and Head of Office of National Security [ONS] that provided amongst others strategic supports to the Government negotiating team in the Lome Peace Negotiations. On his vision to build an independent and impartial Peace Commission to a level that will address the current inadequacies in society,

Mr Mansaray explained; “whilst I accept this task with honour and commitment, I am aware of the challenges ahead; but with consultations with all facets of society, the wider Community; and in collaboration with other Members on the Board, we will move on the path to win public integrity, independence and impartiality. Personally, my vision in interpreting the Act, 2020 that establishes the Peace Commission will be a transitional one that will redirect resources to address potent threats to peace such as economic inequalities leading to abject poverty, conflicts of varying dimensions especially relating to our politics, youth unemployment, female under representations and the like.”

Mr Mansaray said; to help the Commission meets its objectives, political leaders must be seen to work together to accomplish national interest.

**Ms Valnora Anita Christiana Edwin, Proposed Member, Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion**

Ms Valnora A.C Edwin is an acclaimed Civil Society Activist with a solid experience in Policy Development, Leadership Skills, Lobbying and Strategic Management and Implementation. She served the Campaign for Good Governance extensively advocating for governance reforms in Sierra Leone and now serves as Chairperson for the African Women Leaders Network.

Responding to questions on her vision for success of the Commission and how as a Board Member, would help adapt compromise and accommodation in the overall achievement of peace and good governance, the seasoned and eloquent Civil Society Activist said; “the whole focus of the Commission amongst other things will be looking at how we listened to aggrieved groups of Society; how we create space for dialogue and building public trust that will make the Commission independent. “As Civil Society Activist being in the advocacy space for about two decades working with Governments, I will bring to the table existing network of Members of Parliament, Civil Society Organizations [CSOs] including the Women Network and other formal and informal groups to complement the role of the Commission.”

Ms Valnora Edwin concluded that to achieve good governance and serenity, peace must be packaged to all, equal distribution of resources, and the enactment of good laws and their implementations.

Committee Members across the party line commended this nominee for her fearless advocacy over the years to promote the ideals of good governance in the Country.

**Alhaji Sulaiman Bah, Proposed Member, Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion**

Mr Alhaji Sulaiman Bah is a renowned Telecommunication specialist in both installation and management of Telecom Institutions spanning over two decades of cabling and wireless networking at both home and abroad. He holds several credentials from

notable Telecom Colleges in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands and has served in a number of managerial positions at then Sierra Leone National Communication Company [1972-1995] and the Sierra Leone Telecommunication Company [1995-2021]. Reacting to questions on experience, skills of negotiations and arbitrations used in real life situation that would be helpful to the Commission, Alhaji Bah recounted thus” In Kambia I resolved a feud between the Cattle herders and crop growers that would have led to high cost of lives, during this arbitration, I learnt one thing and which I will hopefully take to the Commission and that is peace building itself is not an exact science where for instance 2 by 2 equals 4 but a special science by itself based on situations” He concluded on this philosophical tone that most contending issues of the Commission would not solely rely on theoretical approach for solutions but broad based approach involving dialogue, negotiations and total inclusivity.

**Hon. PC Sheku Amadu Tejan Fasuluku Sonsiama III, Proposed Member Board of Directors Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion**

Honourable Paramount Chief Sheku Amadu Tejan Fasuluku Sonsiama III of Sandor Chiefdom is the Head of Traditional Authorities in Sierra Leone from 2017 to date and served as the Paramount Chiefs representative Member of Parliament for the Kono District [2012-2017]. Honourable P.C Fasuluku is an Agricultural Extension Specialist with a strong background in wildlife conservation and management.

Responding to the Committee, he promised to use his long years of accumulated traditional leadership experience to advise the Commission on issues relating to local governance. He was praised for being an extrovert that continually lends traditional skills and prowess in diverse local conflict resolutions in other sister Chiefdoms across the Country.

**Reverend Mrs Olivia Helen Iye satta Fonnies, Proposed Member, Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion**

Reverend Mrs Olivia Hellen Iyesata Fonnies is an educational administrator with several years of experience in managing personnel and funds for education programmes. She is

currently, serving as the Director, Child Reintegration Centre at the United Methodist Annual Conference in Sierra Leone.

Responding to questions on level of religious tolerance and heightened tribal invectives that trigger violence etc.

Reverend Mrs Fonnies remarked; "for me, I am satisfied with the religious tolerance as Christians go to Mosques whether for worship or visits and Muslims do likewise without crisis. For those bent on fomenting intolerance, we will continue praying for and advocating for them to always think and put Sierra Leone first, I trust that with the fear of God, the Commission will interpret the 2020 Act that establishes the Commission to the fullest and that we the representatives will lead our regions in building and maintaining a durable and peaceful coexistence."

The Committee was assured that such educational and religious pedigree exhibited by the nominee was desirable for the Board.

**Ambassador Haja Alari Cole, Proposed Member, Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion.**

Ambassador Haja Alari Cole is an accomplished Diplomat and Educationist with a proven track record in promoting World peace and mitigation of conflicts. From 1996 -2008 she served as the Resident Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran with Accreditation to Iraq, Turkey, Lebanon, Bangladesh, Malaysia, India, Brunei, and Pakistan. With such rich background of International Diplomacy, the Committee adjudged the nominee as very useful in liaising with similar established Commission for best bench marking to achieve required standard results.

Ambassador Alari Cole promised to work collaboratively with her colleagues Board members to win the credibility and public trust of the Commission.

**Mr John Rogers, Proposed Deputy Director General, National Disaster Management Agency.**

Mr John Vandii Rogers is a security expert with proven and practical leadership skills in mitigating large scale disasters and advising Government on early warning signs of imminent or potential National disasters. From 2015-2020, he served as the National

Focal Point for Disaster Risk Management in Sierra Leone, he has spent quite some time working at the Office of National Security [ONS] and has co-managed and coordinated imminent National disaster crisis on records.

In his reactions to the overview of the current National disaster risk assessment and possible foreseeing mitigations strategy, Mr Rogers catalogued that "Sierra Leone is rated by the Global Facility Index seven years ago to be one third hazards prone and hence categorized into the following:

Climatic hazard that largely covers rains, flooding, lightening, windstorm disaster that affect the population in mass.

Epidemic hazards as recently experienced the 2014-2015 Ebola outbreaks, the current COVID-2019 pandemic, the high levels of HIV-AIDS, etc.

Social hazards, conflicts from all levels:

Geographical hazards-landslides and mudslides emanating from excessive land degradation and erosion notable still on our data is the August, 2014 Motomeh Regent Mudslides that destroyed untold lives and properties."

The nominee concluded on the hopeful note that the 2020 National Legislation on Disaster Management had a clear coordinating strategies and policies that would mobilize relevant stakeholders to respond to early warnings and unforeseen imminent disasters. He promised to review in consultation with his Boss, [the Director] the Country wide data on all Disaster prone areas including the Ribbi and Samu Chiefdoms in the Moyamba and Kambia Districts respectively as requested by the Committee.

**Colonel [Rtd] Binneh Kondeh Conteh, Proposed Deputy Commissioner National Commission on Small Arms.**

Colonel Rtd Binneh Kondeh Conteh [OOR] is a diligent and highly decorated retired Military Officer with a strong background in leadership skills, Human Resource Management and Military Intelligence. Colonel Rtd Binneh Conteh recently served as the District Monitoring Officer, DICOVERC in the Western Area District.

Answering to barrage of questions on small and light weapons proliferations especially landing in wrong hands of terrorists, cumbersome registration processes to acquire

small arms and the slow pace of issuance of licenses to locals in rural communities had multiplier upsurge in the number of wild animals, increased crop destructions and general threats to lives, the decorated Colonel explained that small arms proliferation dated back to the end of the Cold War in the 90s in Africa that created grounds for the sale of weapons by rebel groups in the sub region. He consented that small arms were indeed in the wrong hands terrorizing peaceful citizens but raised hopes that strict Legislations on arms control and maintaining updated data linkages with other data institutions would help reinforce strategy and identify desired citizens to own weapons. To maintain sanity in areas of gun threats and wild animals' rampage, Colonel Binneh said "I will work with the Police, the Army, the locals and Paramount Chiefs for information flow and necessary responses to issues. The Commission anticipates that current registration process will be expedited by mass public education system at all levels reduce to redefine procedures and reduce bureaucracy," he concluded.

Rtd Colonel Binneh was adjudged by Members as one of the finest Military Men the Country had produced and was hailed for the part he played in the 2001 Peace Process.

**Mr Joseph Ahmed Turay, Proposed Member, Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion**

Mr Joseph Ahmed Turay is an acclaimed humanitarian and development professional with over 20 years spanning experience in Development Practice and resource management. He holds a plethora of academic qualifications to his credit including Peace Building Paradigms, facilitated dialogue, Mediation and Youths in Peace and theological credentials. He has held managerial positions in notable Catholic institutions both Nationally and Internationally.

Responding to Members' inquiries on the levels of fairness he would take to the institution as a devout Christian in addressing incidences of violence, Mr Turay said "when I got the appointment ,I tried to look at key word independence and the entities that holds independence and the processes that would lead to the outcomes. I know

key players will have diverse approaches but with consultations and coordination at all levels; we will achieve the desired result with God being our helper.”

Mr Joseph Amed Turay, was praised for his entrepreneurial skills in the private sector enabling him to provide jobs for his fellow Sierra Leoneans at home.

**Mr Musa Salam Conteh, Proposed Member, Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion**

Mr Musa Salam Conteh is a seasoned educationist and Civil Servant with a spanning experience of eighteen years of dedicated services in the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Local Government.

Responding to the Committee questions on what values he would be taking to the Commission, he explained that to achieve Peace all stakeholders –Paramount Chiefs, Teachers; Civil Society Organizations etc. must be involved to solve conflicts. Addressing the Commission’s take on the celebration on remembering national conflict periods in our history, drawing example from Rwanda, the nominee said he would recommend to the Board for the issuance of memorial certificates to those who suffered or participated in our conflicts so that moral lessons could be learnt for both perpetrators and victims to help prevent future reoccurrences. “By consultations at all levels we will work together as a Board and take decisions in consonance with the Act to gain the optimal independence and obligations reposed in us”

**Reverend Dr Shodanke Johnson, Proposed Member, Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion**

Reverend Dr Shudankeh Johnson is a household name in Sierra Leone due to his reputable services to humanity and God. He is an outstanding Clergy with multifarious linkages to hosts of Christian Missions where he has rendered proficient Christian leadership as a mentor and development experts especially as Regional Director, Alliance of Anglophone Evangelicals in Africa [2021-date], Regional Coordinator Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone [1998-2004], Acting Project Coordinator, TEAR

FUND-UK, Sierra Leone [1996-1998]. He currently oversees the New Harvest Church Ministries in Sierra Leone with over 300 churches, 83 schools including primary and secondary, one Technical Vocational Institution, four Primary Health Care Centres, one College and broadcasting outlets; employing over 160 Sierra Leoneans through his anointed initiatives.

Reverend Johnson holds an Honorary Doctorate Degree for his achievement and proficient Christian Leadership from the Theological Seminary of Aba State, Nigeria.

Responding to questions on religious and political tolerance and consolidation of peace in relation to the national mantra of unity, freedom and justice to promote the dispensation of justice by the Commission, the eloquent man of God explained thus” the messiah in Christendom is himself a Prince of Peace and so peace requires persuasion, listening, analysis of reports or events and timely responses to conflicts. I am aware that some factors militate against peace such as corruption, injustices, poor mechanisms to address conflicts etc. My conviction on real peace consolidation is to build good relationship with each other that is going ahead of conflicts before peace building.”

He ended on the strong note that peace was good for Nation building and that political differences could not be seen as a dividing force to make us enemies but rather be accompanying to lead us to sustainable unity.

### ***Recommendations***

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

- i. Mr Sheka Mansaray, Chairman, Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion
- ii. Mrs Valnora Anita Christiana Edwin, Member Board of Directors- Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion
- iii. Alhaji Sulaiman Bah, Member, Board of Directors, ,Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion

- iv. Hon PC Sheku Amadu Tejan Fasuluku Sonsiama III, Proposed Member Board of Directors Independent Commission for Peace and National
- v. Rev. Mrs Olivia Helle Iyesatta Fonnie, Member, Board of Directors Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion
- vi. Ambassador Haja Alari Cole, Member, Board of Directors, ,Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion
- vii. Mr John Rogers, Deputy Director General ,National Disaster Management Agency
- viii. Col. (Rtd) Binneh Kondeh Conteh, Deputy Commissioner National Commission on Small Arms
- ix. Mr Joseph Ahmed.Turay, Member, Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion
- x. Mr Musa Salam Conteh, Member, Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion
- xi. Rev. Dr Shodanke Johnson, Member, Board of Directors, ,Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion

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

Read faithfully and submitted by this humble servant representing the people of Gbokakajama Gbolambayama of Constituency 019. Thank you very much for your attention.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Leader of Government Business, I take it that the Motion that you have just moved is with the exception of the absentee.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** I move with the exception of the absentee. Thank you Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Do I have a Seconder?

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** I so second Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank you. Honourable Members, before I put the question I would like to recognise the following personalities in our midst.

The Honourable Dr Sheku M. Sesay, former Member of Parliament and a former Minister from the great District of Koinadugu, is he here?

Mrs Nabeela Tunis, Regional Minister for the Western Area. Mrs Laura Taylor-Pearce, Auditor General, Mr Sheik Alhaji Yayah Sesay, Deputy Governor Financial Stability Bank of Sierra Leone, is he here? Thank you. Dr Ibrahim Stevens, Deputy Governor Monetary Stability, is he here? Thank you. Dr Alhassan Mansaray, Director Fiscal Risk Management Division, Ministry of Finance, is he here? Where is he? I am sorry, before I put the question my attention has just been drawn to additional personalities to be recognised by the House, Ambassador Alieu Kanu, is he here? Yasmin Jusu Sheriff, Sub Regional Executive Board Member, Mano River Union. Thank you very much.

*[Question Proposed]*

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, and today again we are performing the normal function that we normally do in this House after vetting members nominated by the President to serve in various capacities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, so much has been said about the individuals, the fine lady and gentlemen that were nominated to serve in the Peace and National Cohesion Commission. The name indeed is one, but the Institution is one that we actually needs in this Country because we know that more than ever before there is reason for us to go beyond the ordinary to try to bring together the divisions in this Country that is why it is utmost important that we have such an Institution. The people that have been nominated to serve are people that have good standing in the society and that was why we raised issues and addressed them when we were vetting them. The like of Valnora Edwin, Mr Shiaka Mansaray, Ambassador Alari Cole are household names; they have been long in the game. Of course, our former Colleague, the Honourable Paramount Chief, was once a Colleague and once a Member of Parliament

will always remain to be Honourable Member, we agreed with him and we doff our hats to them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, however, during the vetting process I did bring to the notice of all the people that were nominated that they are coming to a job which I will not envy them, why? Because they already have so much on their plates to deal with, that when they come they must hit the ground running. There are issues which up to date have not been addressed because the issue of National cohesion is not only about rhetoric, is not only about names, is not about pronouncement, but is about action. We start from the time Members of Parliament were removed from this House nothing has been done to try to stop that. We have seen issues whereby people were removed, there have been no statement officially to address those issues and when you leave scars without being attending to them definitely those scars will not go away and the people are grieved and they will always remain to be aggrieved. So, the issue here is that people have been nominated to serve in those Institutions must make conscious effort to try to address those grievances which are logged in the minds of people across the Country so that Sierra Leone will be a Country in harmony. Unfortunately, you have my Colleagues on the other side always shouting the idea of one Country one people that is what they normally say, we agreed, one Country, one people fine but are those pronouncement restricted to just rhetorics?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will tell you that even as we speak there are certain issues which need to be addressed if only we are talking about National Peace and Cohesion. I will point out one area like I said during the vetting process we looked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which is showcasing our Country to the outside World where ten people were promoted to the ranks of Permanent Secretaries all from one Region, one ethnic group, they are Sierra Leoneans, we agreed but are there no other Sierra Leoneans qualified also? Those are the areas we should start to talk about National Cohesion and Peace because when people think they are marginalised and are being left out of the frame then they start to build tension within the mind set and we don't want that, if it is going to be peace let it be a lasting peace, let us sustain it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like I pointed out the nominated Chairman, Mr Shiaka Mansaray who worked in the Civil Service for the longest time with his colleagues Civil Servants, they used to travel from Districts to Districts, from Regions to Regions etc. but now if all of the people in the Civil Service want to visit themselves probably they will just go one area and those are not what we called National Cohesion and Peace. When we talk about National inclusion let us try to be more inclusive, the issue of inclusivity has been shouted here by the President several times when he delivered speeches in this Well of Parliament and we were expecting much but if that is what is going on this is another question.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the personalities that have been nominated to serve in those capacities I want to ask them that now they have a job in their hands, they have their plates full to start their work and I believe as Nationals of Sierra Leone they will go hit the ground running in those Institutions because when I talked about National Peace and Cohesion you must address the issues that might generate conflict and misunderstanding between people and amongst people. So, if that is the case this is not the time because we have said so much good things about them, we know they are good people, they are fine gentlemen, wonderful ladies, good mothers, but they have a herculean task because to bring this Country together at this point in time is paramount to all of us as Sierra Leoneans and let everybody believe that we are going to serve Sierra Leone not a political party because when you got to a certain level in public life you are above sectional interest, you are above partisan interest, you think about the Nation and your tomorrow because that is what you work for, at the end of the day we serve human beings but our loyalty must be to God and our consciences. Having said that with no iota of doubt we respect the nominees, of course the Honourable P.C will definitely understand that we agreed with him, he is our Colleague; he was our Colleague and will always remain to be a friend of him.

Mr Shiaka Mansaray, has served as a capable Civil Servants, Miss Edwin, Madam Alari Cole etc. all of them are fine people but let them commit themselves to addressing the

issues that are dividing this Country rather than helping to propel those issues will divide this Country, I think we need that more than ever before.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me also point out that it is not about waiting but there has to be more proactive on certain issues you advised because you will not be held accountable for having the people refusing to take your advice that is you will not be blamed for trying and failing. You will be blamed for not trying and that is what we are expecting of you that on certain issues give advice before the actions are taken so that you will say I warned them but they did not listen to me that is what I meant when I said you have to be proactive on certain areas. Let us take a honest look at the composition of the National Electoral Commission [NEC] to conduct National Election, let us look at all of those areas, those are sources of conflict, if we don't manage then properly they will boil and in the end they will lead to something that you and I will not want to deal with in this Country. Those are the issues that we must address where we know there is a possibility of a National tension let us diffuse them before they get to level where we cannot do anything.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to wish all the nominees well; I hope they go out to serve Sierra Leone and not the person that nominated them because the President might mean good. It is about your character, it is about your personality, it is about what you believed in, and that is what we think they must do.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I wish all the nominees well and I hope they serve this Country and make Sierra Leone proud and don't let this House down because now we are approving you and I hope you are going to serve Sierra Leone and not your political party or sectional interest. I thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member, for his contribution to the debate. Let me recognise the Honourable Dr Kandeh Yumkella.

**HON. DR KANDEH K. YUMKELLA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, S.O [2] "salaamawalaikum" after a long vacation for some of us it was not a vacation we were actually working and I know most of our Colleagues were working as well. I took the

Floor because I was a Member of the Committee that interviewed the nominees so I stand by the Report presented by the Leader of Government Business and also the contribution provided by Honourable Hassan A. Sesay.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take this opportunity just to remind our Commissioners about the huge responsibility they have been given by His Excellency, the President. I want to remind them all so that if they look at the sustainable development goal 17 of the United Nations we deliberately put Peace, Justice and strong Institutions and goal 16 emphasizes that it is the bed rock of development. We used to say in the UN there can be no development without peace, peace itself cannot be sustained or guaranteed if you don't have justice and the protection of human rights it is key. This is the group of Men and Women who have been given this responsibility to create a new Institution, as Professor David Francis likes to say in the peace architecture of this Country they sit at the pinnacle of it, some of us are encouraged that the Chair of the Commission, Honourable Shiaka Mansaray has seen how peace was forced in this Country by a committed President to peace, His Excellency Ahmad Tejan Kabbah who inherited a Country that was highly divided, half of its population displaced across borders and internally, a Country that was recovering from an 11 year Civil War. He had to superintend a fragmented Nation and I have always recognised him because I know he delivered what the UN taught him to go out of his way to foster peace and we were very encouraged. But the key word here is that the Chair of this Commission was with late Pa Kabbah we heard some of what they have to do to go out of the way to bring a divided Nation together, to reach across the aisle, to even reach with the Opposition, the religious leaders and to build Nation together. So, we are relying on his experience to shepherd this new Institution forward.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was one of those at Bintumani III when some of these ideas were put forward and he did genuinely in the Committee when we were with Honourable Daniel Koroma and others in the Pre-Legislative we went through the documents and made sure that it was good enough for you to be able to function. What will determine your key success will be your impartiality and your integrity and you

cannot bite, you cannot fix it, respect and integrity depends on what people believe you have. It is not you trying to market it, the people will judge if you have integrity, if you have impartiality people will come to you to resolve conflict, political, social and economic if they believe your honesty and are apolitical as well. So, you have a big responsibility, all of you in that Commission we went through your credentials, most of us know you, we respect all of you and we pray that you live up to your reputation before you were appointed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the second issue is impartiality, integrity and neutrality matters and you have to make sure that the operatives who will run that Institution are apolitical. They also have integrity, if they are all political appointees with an agenda the Institution would have already before it begins. So, we will begin to judge you who you choose for which position, what message you give them and whether they will be accountable and will be sanctioned if they start playing politics.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my final comment to you is that I endorsed what Honourable Hassan Sesay has said and you have many of us convinced in you including the Chairman for the Appointments Committee, Honourable Nyuma, we gave you a menu of what you are inheriting, getting long problems, part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report that has not been implemented, issue related to electoral governance, and electoral management systems. We have another one coming up, the amendment to the Political Party Registration Commission [PPRC] Act all of these will impact political cohesion in this Country and what happens after 2023, you have a big responsibility I will not be enumerating.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the last one is ethnic audit, we included it in that Act, I was part of the team that we made sure we drafted that. We know our Country is divided, we have seeing the dangers elsewhere of regionalism, ethnicity, identity politics which permeate into sectorial governance, and in our Institutions. We include in the Act that there will be periodic ethnic audit of Institutions; some of us have proposed that in fact we have a law in this Country that no one tribe occupies more than 30% of positions in our public Institutions. Why because we want to bring people together. So,

please remember the legacy of Ahmad Tejan Kabba, it takes time and patience to build Institutions. You now have a new mandate giving to you by the current President, His Excellency Julius Maada Bio, maybe he is also thinking of the future. He wants a new Country, a citadel of hope and opportunities sitting on the mountain and you have the key now to ensure we come together and build a real Sierra Leone that we are all proud of. Good luck.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution to the debate. At this point I think I would want to hear ladies please. Let me pay due deference to another Political Leader, the Honourable Member from Kono, Leader of C4C you have the Floor and you will be followed by the Honourable Paramount Chief from Tonkolili, who in turn will be followed by a Lady, the Honourable Member from Bo District. Yes you have the Floor.

**HON. SAA E. LAMINA:** Thank you very much Honourable Speaker for giving me a bite on this important debate that has to do with the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today again His Excellency, the President has demonstrated his Constitutional role as embedded in Section [61] of our Constitution which talks about the creation of new offices and to hire and fire. Whiles I will congratulate the nominees in advance I also want to thank His Excellency, the President for their nominations. We are aware that as a Country 60 years old we have gone through phases and we have had Board of Directors. We have perused through and stirred the ship of where Sierra Leone will land in the mere future. Sixty years old we were saddled by coups and counter-coups, Sixty years old we have faced diseases like Ebola, COVID-19, and we have tested a bitter piece of Civil War. Sixty years on we have been meandering with fragmented democracy gradually we are becoming stronger. Sixty years old this is the picture we are going to face for us to see peace not only relative peace in this Country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have listened with rapt attention from my two Colleagues submission that we need to endorse all of their recommendations as

embedded in this Constitution. It is the Constitution until you overhaul it, but as a clause has stated you cannot jump into them in any case. Somebody defended peace as everything as Constitution expects.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Johan Galtung a Norwegian citizen described peace as not necessarily the absence of war but pin pointing on the underlining factors and this Commission and its Board of Directors are charged with the underlining issues that have been threatening our peace. Johan Galtung stated until the underlining issues are resolved peace will be a far cry. We were told in the year 2000 by Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, Algeria Foreign Minister presented 57 implicit recommendations to the Security Council of UN. I went to the UN in 2018 I saw them, 57 implicit recommendations to the UN and among all those 57 recommendations only two he highlighted. He emphasised that all of the conflict we have today are embedded in these two. What are they? Political and Economic. All of the conflicts that were ensued are just conjoined to Political and Economic, and if that be the case, the Board of Directors have a role to play. They are all adequately qualified, based on the sanctioning of their curriculum vitae on that day and because they are all qualified I will charge them with few things.

1. We charge you to understand the underlining factor of all the conflicts in this Country.
2. We would charge you to ensure justice and fairness for all.
3. We would charge you to identify the common needs of all parties; I am talking of conflicting parties. You will be given conflict resolution and management and identify the common needs of all parties.
4. Allow yourself to be accepted as a credible and trustworthy third party that will manage the conflict.
5. Setting or realistic time table for monitoring of this process.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the name Valnora Edwin rings bell and in the annals of Sierra Leone history. The name Alari Cole and Honourable Shaika Mansaray ring bells

and to work with one of the President that had the most cohesive Government, I can attest.

Mr Speaker, permit me to glance on P.C. Sheku Amadu Tejan Fasuluku Sonsiama III, he is a fine gentleman from the East. He happens to be the youngest amongst the 14 Paramount Chiefs but with the biggest Chiefdoms with 9 sections and two Constituencies that is the man. When I had about his appointment I begin to imagine who else His Excellency, the President could have nominated amongst the Chieftaincy to represent in that particular Board? P.C Fasuluku is an acclaimed industrious son of Kono, with strong academic background. He would be recommended to be consultant in the Forest Section of Agriculture, P.C. Fasuluku is elected as youngest Paramount Chief of Kono District. He served as Chairman Council of Paramount Chiefs, he did not only stop there he went to the Regional Chairman Council of Paramount Chiefs including Kono, Kailahun, Kenema and today he is here as the National Chairman for all Traditional Authorities in this Country. With his barrage of experiences I believe he would serve as an asset, a fine asset, he has demonstrated as years past in settling several conflicts at this National and at International level.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe this Board will do well with an asset in the person of Sheku Amadu Tejan Fasuluku because he has demonstrated quality Leadership over the years, he will definitely do well. All I will say to these Board Members is to be aware of few things;

1. Let them be careful with basic need theory in this Country.
2. Relative deprivation theory that are ingrained.
3. Psychoanalytic perspective no doubt, my Colleague Honourable Dr Kandeh K. Yumkullah did emphasize that the Country is divided according to him and because of this theory Psychoanalytic perspective is required because somebody is born today in the East, mentored, and somebody is born today in the North you are also mentored. Sierra Leoneans have to accept that at a time is only one President we have, accept that fact. In any five years is only one President we have, who has a Constitutional

mandate to be implemented, a Fountain of Honour and until and unless all of us as Sierra Leoneans accept the fact that there is only one President we have and continue to denying this will not solve the problem. The moment we continue to identify ourselves that we are on this side and unfortunately it is most times we the few elite that brain washed without prejudice or hate to the rural people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I summarise I will recommend the evaluation of the winners take all as a factor undermining our democratic consolidation, little by little I want to believe these Board of Directors will design a way forward that we lead us where every Sierra Leonean will feel that this is home and we must continue defending our home. Thank you Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Leader of C4C for his contribution. I now reorganize the Honourable Paramount Chief Bai Kurr.

**HON. P.C. BAI KURR KANAGBRAO SANKA III:** Thank you Mr Speaker. I am sure we missed each other in this noble House. Mr Speaker, it is a great privilege for me to stand before this noble House and contribute again to the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, whether we are the first developing Nation in the World or we are the last of the least poor of the Countries of the World, peace is paramount, I can be poor, but if we are peaceful I am happy. This is a very important Commission set up by His Excellency, the President defended here by the then Chief Minister and this Parliament took time to contribute to see that the real word cohesion works. I am very happy for the Commission Members, all of them are household names in certain sectors of our Country, key people the leaders, the Chairman I know him for long period of time, they wrote briefly about him in this report but I know much more than what is written here.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the chaotic days of the 1991 to 1992 up to where we are today he can write books, great books that will lead us to stability. I worked

with him, I know the role he played, and he knows the roles some of us played in meeting the United Nation Security Council, in bringing cease fire to this Country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to the proposed Chairman, I know I will appeal to my Honourable Members of Parliament that you will be approved unanimously because the proposal is from the Government and the Seconder is from the Opposition which is the main political party that worked with you in the peace process, you have nothing again to loss but your character. You have seen wealth, you have seen beautiful homes, beautiful places, beautiful hotels and I am sure you can survive and live amicably without anything you get in terms of financial benefits. All what we are asking from all of you is honesty, sincerity, integrity and loyalty to the Nation we called the land we love Sierra Leone. Are you going to be men and women of integrity to stand up to political uprising? Are you going to do the right thing at the right time and at the right place at all times? Martin Luther King said; ***"it is always right to do the right thing at all time,"*** don't say; S.O [2] 'dis e coret but leh wi nor do am so', it is always right to do the right thing, and don't be afraid. Fear the Country, fear God and be sure that your decisions you bring in there will be peace and stability to the Nation and to future generations yet unborn. I am the happiest man to see my colleague whom we sat together in Parliament, whom I know for so many years before he became a Paramount Chief, whose father I know so well and who is the Chairman of the National Council of Paramount Chiefs of which I was the first Chairman but today you are my Boss. I salute you Sir. I was so happy when your name was called and the applause in this House was great, that means a lot, you have to be fearless but decent, fearless but honest, fearless but loyal to the rules of governance to do the right things, we wish you all the best.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, since 1996 we have been always saying these people are great, very few people I could remember that we were not approved by this Parliament. We talked of Dennis Sankoh, Mr Bangura, and Mr Gbapi I could remember from 1996 we always say great things about them but where are we today?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you have been here and you have seen Members showering praises on nominees by saying these are great people, these are honest people, these are highly qualified people, these are highly exposed and over qualified but over corrupt because corruption does not mean smuggling of money putting in your pockets but failing to do the right thing is corruption and that is the worst corruption. The type of calibre of people sitting there and anyone of them is qualified to be a President of this Country. If you contest to be President, nobody will say bad things about you but we have only one President and he has trusted you. You are part of the governance system, you are part of building the peace in this County, don't be afraid when somebody is trying to bring war, or to bring instability. I don't want to run again and go to Guinea. I had a daughter in Guinea that my wife gave birth to now she is in China studying, so she is a Guinean. I called her you Guinean woman cam na yah S.O [2], I don't want to go there again. I have a son in Bafodia he is also in China studying. I am a Kailahun boy I used to go there to Pa Moses Conteh my uncle, my father's younger brother, I know Segbwema.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is very emotional to see these great people to take over the reign of peace in this Country and these are all household names in this country so please as a local Paramount Chief we are with the grass root. If I am to speak to this noble House of highly educated people like Dr Shaika Mansaray who is quiet, but firm and hardworking but can write effectively. I have some of the expositions you have sent to the United Nations and I have some read of them. Are you going to take that greatness to this Commission? The Speaker took very active part to see that the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion gets all the attention it needs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are setting good Commissions but I wish the Leader of the House is here, please take note Mr Speaker. I need the attention of the Speaker please, you are number three gentleman in this Country, if things go wrong you are to be blamed, if it goes right you will be applauded, we brought peace and stability and development into this Nation, you are a capable person.

**THE SPEAKER:** The only problem I have with that the Honourable Paramount Chief if things go wrong I will be blamed but if it goes right nobody cares.

**HON. P.C. BAI KURR KANAGBRARO SANKA III:** No, we care but Mr Speaker, you are an intellectual and you are a philosopher. Mr Speaker is like you are a goal keeper; if you save 20 goals and miss one then they will remember you for the goal that they scored.

**THE SPEAKER:** Precisely.

**HON. P.C BAI KURR KANAGBRARO SANKA III:** But it is all over the World, you are the goal keeper, if you save 25 goals during the game but in the last minute you allow one to pass and the game ended one zero against you, then people will blame you, you are a goal keeper.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are approving people by putting in key positions; they don't even have money to buy pens and papers to do the work. So, please as you took part in Legislating this Commission to an Act, see that it works in terms of giving them enough funds and we will be looking at them for transparency and accountability.

**THE SPEAKER:** That responsibility is for all of us and we shall discharge during the debate on the budget.

**HON. P.C. BAI KURR KANAGBORO SANKA III:** Well we don't know if they have already being included.

**THE SPEAKER:** I am sure they will be included.

**HON. P.C. BAI KURR KANAGBORO SANKA III:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let them give them the subvention when the Budget comes and that is why I am appealing to you Sir. This is not a matter of Finance Committee but the Ministry of Finance to take note; I know we have capable people in the Finance Committee. We are appealing to see that these great men and women appointed to be Commissioners of the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion be supported fully for

them to do the right thing at the right time and at the right places at all the time. I thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to move on to the person nominated for the Office of Disaster Management. If you drive across Freetown you will see people deliberately building at water ways and nobody stops them until when there is flooding. They bank the river during the dry season, you look at Congo Cross nobody stops them. I saw the Director of Ministry of Lands here, he sees people blocking roads, he sees people building at high ways, people building in hills and valleys that are dangerous nobody stops them, what our Government is doing and we need that money to address all the disasters being created by the people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Office of Disaster Management needs to work together with the Ministry of Environment to see how the climate change is affecting Sierra Leone and to address it, but we are not taking it seriously. So, I stop here because Colleagues are saying time. I thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Paramount Chief for his contribution to the debate. It is always a great pleasure to listen to him. I now recognise the Honourable Member from Bo District, the lady but before you proceed do I assume that you will all agree that we draw the line once the Honourable Member has spoken and conclude the debate, I am sure you will agree with me.

*Suspension of S.O 5[2]*

**HON. NENNEH LEBBIE:** Okay, thank you very much Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to applaud His Excellency, the President in the first instance for committing himself so much to bringing peace in Sierra Leone because the formation of the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion is one commitment he is adhering to and I am very pleased with that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I admire His Excellency, the President for one thing and that if he was somebody who is vindictive believe you me he would not have come up with this Commission because I can remember years back when he faced some

serious embarrassment because his people right down in his village were all put in a house and burnt down, and if he was one of those that are so vindictive they would have decided to revenge instead of bringing peace but he stayed committed to the voice or many voices of the people of Sierra Leone yearning for peace, I must commend him for that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to the nominees I must say as somebody has said it already but let me just add my voice by saying they have a very serious task. This Country is overwhelmed with partisan issues, we now have weddings they referred to as APC wedding or SLPP wedding, we now have funerals they called SLPP funeral or APC funeral. I am saying this because of the division and political colours that have divided us, for some of us we are not happy because we are children of yester years wherein we inherited peace and love for one another, perhaps that is the reason why Leaders of our political party decided to have a slogan; **"one Country, one people"** because we all believe that we are from Sierra Leone be you Limba, Loko, Themne, or Kuranko, you name it, we all belong to Sierra Leone but partisan issues have divided us over the years and with the Independent Commission you have that task of bringing us together. It is a serious task but it hinges on development of our Country because where there is peace and unity amongst us we would live as one Country, one people, believe you me we must achieve development.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a Country where even if His Excellency, the President is doing so much amidst the COVID-19, amidst all the other problems that would want to suppress him, but this is a Country of partisan issues you will find people saying; S.O [2] "boo wae tin de Pa don do." You know these questions sometimes are not called for, but because we want to satisfy our party people we ask these questions and I want to believe that these eminent people and distinguished personalities will help to unify this Country that is one very great exercise you have, try to unify us. Like for some of us I am not praising myself anyway but you see us mingling with all political parties because we want to see ourselves as peaceful citizens. I mingling myself because I know where I am coming from, because in 1977 we knew the disunity

brought to this Country by the youth and that is the other assignment for the Peace Commission. The youth of this Country are being used by us because I don't want to dissociate myself, are being used by us politicians to divide this Country, if only you can help us to bring these youth together to understand that their future will be blink if they decide to be too partisan it would be better for us. We want to see the independence of this Commission; we want to see that happen, we are all political animals. Of course, all of you fine distinguished personalities over there belong to political parties no matter what we may say you belong to political parties but don't put the political party issues right in front of your duties, your duties must be done judiciously, it must be done serving your consciences.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there were times in this Country when you see us together, we did things together, every activity was really very interesting but now if you continue perhaps to have a friend like on the other side another name will be given to you, if they too have friends over here they will be classed differently. We have other political parties like Dr Yumkella's party NGC and other political parties like the C4C but they are not too prominent, the two senior political parties are the problems of this Country. You need to see how you can synergise, how you can bring us together, how you can bring unity to unify us, let us don't shy away from that. You see the things that triggered the war the last time were injustice, greed and of course regionalism and favourism and so on, these are the things that triggered the war. For some of us like my Paramount Chief said we are not prepared to go to the bushes anymore, we really want to stay in town and make Sierra Leone a happy place. We really want to tell somebody right in his or her face if that person does wrong because sometimes even if somebody does wrong you try to present it in a way as if the person is correct and that is not good. If you are my sister and you have not done the best for this Country I will tell you right in your face that what you have done is not good, then perhaps you will try to see how you can show remorse or whatever that is what good relationship is.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to admonish this House that this Commission is good for Sierra Leoneans, this Commission is good for development of this Country

and of course I cannot end up whatever I want to say if I don't make mention of one of the nominees particularly from Bo District and I am sure they will love to hear this name that is a household name in the entire Southern Province of Sierra Leone but so prominent in Bo and that is Rev. Dr Shodanke Batalo Bajalla Egujiama Johnson. I met that man for decades now and I know who he is, he is a great man, he is a unifier, it is no mistake having him in this Commission. One thing I am happy is the combination of the Commission, we have both religions to show how tolerant we are. We already have religious tolerance, let us have political tolerance, and let us have regional tolerance and so on.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having said that; I will now come to the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] which has to do with disaster management because disaster does not only occur in Freetown but it occurs everywhere in this Country. Of course, we are neglecting climate change and it is real, it is causing so much damage and if we don't control it, if we don't take note of it and work assiduously ameliorate for our climate change issues definitely this Country and other places but I am concerned about Sierra Leone will face a lot of disasters. In Bo for instance we have a lot of inland valley swamps, you cannot imagine that people buy land including swamps to build on it and they backfilled those swamps and at the end of the day when it rains the volume of the water may not be able to go through the passages that they leave and we experience flooding. Flooding had occurred in Bo several times and we need to take note of that to see how we can mitigate some of these issues. Please let us don't just concentrate in Freetown, when it happens in our Constituencies they call on us, you know we are everything, we are ONS, we are health workers, we are everything you name it. So, that is an assignment at least to make sure that we help people who experience disasters everywhere in this Country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will add my voice to approve these fine distinguished nominees. I thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Lady for her contribution. We are now on the verge of concluding this debate and in that regard I will give the Floor to the

Honourable Member from Koinadugu, the Honourable Daniel Koroma and I will plead with him, I would like to plead with you Honourable to be as brief as you possibly can before we wind up the debate.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** I thank you very much Mr Speaker. Based on your magnanimity I will definitely try to be brief and maybe shelve the other points for another day.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today is a historic day for the full establishment of the Independent Commission for National Cohesion. One thing I mentioned earlier when we were enacting the Parent Act under which you now operate I made it very clear here. I frowned at the word 'MINISTER' being included in this Bill because in my opinion it kills the independent, and on that day I also said that the definition of MINISTER cannot be Chief Minister. We spent over thirty minutes on that point but it did not work it stays the definition of MINISTER in your Parent Act governing you is Chief Minister and in my opinion the Chief Minister is a super Minister, he does not fall under that ambit of Minister to supervise you because it permeates all other Ministries for performance management but now who supervises the Minister in this Act when that Minister is Chief Minister, that is one.

Then secondly, how independent are you when you are answerable to the Chief Minister? I noted that one but unfortunately it did not work but anyway let us help the process. In the first place I lend my support to all these nominees and I join the others that they be speedily approved, let that be cleared in the first place.

Then thirdly, is that how do you work because you have a lot to do but for now I skip item 7 and 8 because of management of time but for all the rest let me address you as one to save time. Your first assignment please take off that political lens, listen and try to get a hard copy on the position statement of the Consortium of Progressive for Political Parties their latest press statement. Take off your political lens and have a hard copy of that one and you engage them, it will be very good in the interest of Peace and National Cohesion don't ignore them, it is dated 14<sup>th</sup> October and that is one big problem now that we have the present supervisory Minister of your governing Act is the

Chief Minister and that Chief Minister also doubles as Chairman of the steering committee of NEC, if you are the Chairman of the steering committee of NEC you have the power to reverse that one tell him to hands off our NEC which is your formula. In the interest of Peace and National Cohesion, Mr Chief Minister please hands off our NEC and allow NEC to carry on its own affair, there is a provision under their governing rule which says in the discharge of their functions as National Electoral Commission they are not subject to the direction or control of anybody and you will agree with me that Chief Minister is not a member of NEC, nor a staff, nor a Commissioner, so how can he Chair a steering committee, hands off our NEC.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me be true to myself the head of NEC, Mr Konneh since he took over he has best performed so far. He has conducted elections at Parliamentary levels, Paramount Chief levels, Ward Council levels, Chairmen, he has conducted series of elections including Consistency 110 and generally the election he has conducted so far it came out acceptable but now on the contrary the Koinadugu elections to be specific Ward 155 the facts are cleared. The document of NEC, the document of SLPP, the document of APC all speaks one number which is 49 but the computer says 149, Mr Konneh says, he will address the issue but some time I feel sorry for him because in as much as he is trying to address the issue there is a power who is not a member of National Electoral Commission serving as Chairman. So, how can you be independent and address the issue independently, allow him to address that issue, the document of NEC, the RRF of NEC, the RRF of APC party agent, the RRF of SLPP all three speak one figure which is 49 but the computer says 149, why? Allow Mr Konneh, to do his work.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, point of order. We know NEC as an Institution is very credible, so if he wants to discredit NEC he should tender his evidence here; I ask that he refrain from mentioning the name of NEC. He should tender his evidence here and what we are discussing at the moment is Peace and Cohesion, please you are putting NEC under serious incredibility. So, as Honourable Member, I urge you to tender the evidence now if you don't have it please desist from

talking about it, if you don't have it now let him stop talking about it, let him tender his evidence here now, let us debate it. Thank you. If you table it I will put a Motion to debate it, if you do not have the figure right now we cannot allow you to bash NEC when you don't have the evidence, you must produce that evidence before you talk about NEC. I rest my case.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member from Koinadugu, you very rightly drew the attention of this House to the fact that there was an alleged malpractice and the Chairman of the Electoral Commission has decided that he will look into that matter, I don't know whether he has and has reached a conclusion because you made no reference to any conclusion that he has made. Please I need your attention Honourable Member until now let us give him the opportunity to arrive at his own, let him investigate and arrive at his own conclusion on that matter. For the time being, let us reframe from commenting.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I take the queue that let us allow the head of NEC to investigate that matter. We are patiently waiting members of this Commission; I had wanted to address the Chairman as head directly by addressing him by extension but Mr Speaker, please permit me to do so through the man of God who is also a member under you, Reverend Johnson. I know you since I was in school in the early 90s in Makeni, I know you personally, and you have been on the pulpit while I was a member of the congregation for years. I was happy to have a man of God as part of this Peace Commission because I know your master is the Prince of Peace and you are his Ambassador and he is expecting you to do the needful. I don't doubt you, I know you and you were working with one Mr Mansaray, now he is another Boss for you and then later you changed your Ministry's name from New Life Ministry to Harvest Ministry and now you have been harvesting well but now with this Harvest Ministry you will harvest and harvest, I know the labourers are few but the harvest is plenty. So, harvest Sierra Leoneans for peace because you and I know that you told me as my Pastor that you have to give an account to your Master and as an Ambassador of Peace please be the salt of this Commission. You cannot associate names with

characters and that I know but this one is based on your profile I read here and for the fact that you were Special Adviser to His Excellency, the Former President, Dr Ahmad Tejan Kabba who takes 90% of the credit because he was Head of State for Sierra Leone to have peace, you have been Special Adviser to him and as Speaker said; when things go good you are not seen, all goes to your Boss President Kabba but don't worry for posterity today you are here and we can reference you. So, I believe as Special Adviser to him you were advising him to bring peace and we had peace in 2002 and today we are enjoying it, so that peace is your baby, do you want your baby to die? Will you allow that? I am sure no. So, that is one point for you not to allow that one.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is one important document undergoing processing which is the Constitutional Review Committee, they are doing the present Constitution for us to have a new Constitution all together, please push that one to ensure we conclude before the end of this term and if that happens it will do us good, posterity will clap for you and your master will say well done, ***"thy good thy faithful servant."***

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Act doesn't guarantee but your integrity can guarantee you and even your name, your name says you are independent, Members of Parliament are humans, sometimes we ignore those areas and shift to you but thankfully your name shows that you are independent which implies that in the discharge of your functions you are not subject to the direction and control of anybody, they are not SLPP, they are independent. So, please ignore that area...

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, I thought we had a path? I thought we had a path.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Okay, for the timing? Yes just one second. On that note, based on the direction of my Boss I will wrap up on that note, I encourage all of you together with my most Honourable Paramount Chief whom I have worked with for 5 years to please follow the rules and follow your conscience, your conscience is God and if you satisfy that conscience for posterity and at the end of the day it will be good for

this Country, it will be good for even yourself and your children. Thank you very much and may God bless you.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member from Koinadugu for his contribution. We will now wind up the debate starting with the Acting Leader of the Opposition. This young people were saying you were sleeping and I am trying to correct them.

**HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** We even debated on this issue to create this Commission, I did ask my Members to walk out and we walked out principally because at that time we were worried about the honesty surrounding this Legislation but now we are satisfied from very nature of the appointment, we are satisfied that the right things are being done.

**THE SPEAKER:** I am sure you have also come to conclusion that walkout do not bring in anything for you.

**HON IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** I believe sometimes they do win something. Mr Speaker, you did ask us to walk out here during the days of William Conteh, you encourage us to walk out and some of our friends said you were rebellious but I did not subscribe to that. Thank you. So Mr Speaker, I want to remind ourselves that...

**THE SPEAKER:** Is a history. Your history is very faulty but carry on.

**HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what is very clear here is that this Institution created by the President and his Government is supposed to be independent. The word independent is very key, to us it is important that it is independent, it has to maintain its respectability, the moment it strives away from independent of course we will ask questions but I am satisfied that we have Shaika Mansaray, the great friend of mine as Chairman of this Institution. I have known him over the years and he has demonstrated a sense of responsibility. I was very close to President Ahmad Tejan Kabba, in fact he was my friend, some of you never saw him in SLPP but he was my friend and he had a lot of faith and confidence in Shaika Mansaray. So, if Shaika Mansaray is seated here today and some of us are taking part in the debate of this Nation it is with the hope that Shaika Mansaray will use his knowledge,

his background to make sure that he comes with a new thinking that has to do with the creation of this Commission.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are other listed people whom we interviewed because we thought we believe in them and a good number of them are highly respected members of our society. We have started mentioning their names already but now the *raison-d'être* for my participation this morning is for us to have a structured approach to this new Commission. It is not enough to say that we have a new Commission. It is going to bring peace and it cannot bring peace if we are not structured in our approach. I saw the Nigerians version in which the Government set up a whole structured system to ask people to come out with their angers that made it impossible for them to feel Nigerian, they went to the public and they said I was arrested unfairly, my wife was beaten up by a soldier etc. and that was the beginning of addressing the issues.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a lot of Sierra Leoneans has been executed just because they hold separate and different political views and that itself has brought anger in this Country. When I was facing trial for treason to be executed the following day my Lawyer who is also a cousin of mine, Serry Karmal said to Judge Cowan we have used this Court system too many times to kill our very good citizens, let us spare some of them and I think that Ibrahim B. Kargbo be spared but I was not spared in the end. Two days later I was supposed to be executed. I already have my black on, my children were whipping at home until something happened that caused the destruction of the Pa Demba Road Prison and I came out but this is not the kind of Sierra Leone we want to develop. We don't want to develop a Country of anger and bitterness. From that day I kept on telling my son not to take that matter too seriously because he is still very angry.

Mr Speaker, it is important that we begin to address these issues, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission [TRC] Report attempted to come out with some good facts, they did not do a good job, people must know why they are angry, why they are bitter, why is Sierra Leone in this present state, why are we always worried and afraid of Wars

because as we stand here everybody is saying; SO.[2] "aa boo war go cam again," War should not come again if this Commission performs its duties very well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want us to be the citizens that ought to make this Country develop. Sometimes I stand here I looked at all the people from that other side they are from the South East of the Country except of the two and look at this side the North West, is this the kind of Sierra Leone we want to develop? Mr Speaker, answer to my question, is this the kind of Sierra Leone we want to develop?

**THE SPEAKER:** Answer it yourself and I will agree with you.

**HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we will try our very best to make sure that this division doesn't exist persistently to be part of the structures of the State. Dr Shiaka Mansaray, perhaps you should stand up when you start to work that this is not the best way to bring peace and reconciliation where the Country is divided politically according to tribes, it is not fair.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, also importantly poverty can create anger, too many of our MPs complain to us that they have not been treated fairly because even their remuneration do not come on time, is that the kind of man that you expect to be happy? He cannot be happy. These are some of the problems we want to address.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, again the Chieftaincy system in this Country has to be looked into, the Chieftaincy system we are applauding the Chiefs bringing them in Parliament but you must also look into it. A good number of our people have been punished because they were not the friends of the Chiefs and the Chiefs must also be the people who are in charge of peace and reconciliation in their communities. We will ask the rhetorical question, it is important for us to ask that question so these are some of the things we want us to begin to ask what is the Chiefs role? Our educated Chief there spoke very eloquently as usual but now I keep on asking the question what roles will the Chiefs play to make sure that peace and reconciliation persist in this country?

Mr Speaker, when you meet people in the rural areas and without any doubt you are a very rural area man, you are from the rural area...

**THE SPEAKER:** A very proud one.

**HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am from the rural area as well, you are from Gbinti, a very rural community but too many of your people are poor. They don't have the resources to survive on day to day bases, why do you think that even my own house which I built in my community is threatened? If anything goes wrong in my community the possibility that somebody will go and destroy it. So, we should begin to ask those questions, how can we, I. B Kargbo standing there pretending to be representative of the people by the same time our people who are part and parcel of us in our local communities continue to remain poor.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we discussed this yesterday, we did say the only reason why the Germans will want to chase our citizens out of Germany is because of poverty, if we were not poor we would have taken another position but we cannot take that position because we are poor, if we refuse they will blacklist us and if they blacklist us the Government will be in jeopardy that is the kind of thing that will happen.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have said that this whole idea about the appointment of these nominees by His Excellency, the President is a good idea. We also agree that the Peace and National Cohesion Commission is a good concept but you can only ask that if it has been put to good use. If it is put to good use all of us will benefit from it but the fact of the matter is that we want to be very certain that when we come with Legislation, we need to be certain that these Legislations are of the interest of the people. I had a view and Mr Speaker you held that view at one time that we have too many Commissions in Sierra Leone and because of these too many Commissions, we are not doing well at all in the area of day to day administration of the State. You will agree with me and I will agree with you but today we have still more and more Commissions and these Commissions are they in the interest of the public and the reason why we are taking part is only because this Commission is useful. This particular Peace Commission is useful and this is why we will continue to admonish and ask the people who are going to administer it, and who are going to be in charge of it to make

sure that they handle it with great caution otherwise we will blow the whistle. Mr Speaker, I thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Acting Leader of the Opposition for his very eloquent contribution. The baton now goes to the Leader of Government Business.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker, thank you very much Colleagues who contributed to the debate. I am happy we have acknowledged some of the challenges we have within our society in terms of consolidating the peace and we even went ahead to highlight and pin points certain factors that are bringing us down in terms of consolidating our peace. Today, President Bio, the man who is commonly known as the Father of democracy, the man who initiated the Lome Peace Accord, the man who brought in Foday Sankoh from the jungle to a negotiation table, the man who took Military Government and handed power to a Civilian Government, a man who called Bintumani III when he took over Government. He has nominated these fine gentle, descent Sierra Leoneans to serve as Commissioners because he has passion for peace, he has passion for democracy and to consolidate our fragile peace for the past years, he is a reasoning President and thank you Mr President for making us proud.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, too much of rhetoric, my Colleagues on the other side today the Ambassadors of peace are telling us what to do. I admire them; the angels of peace are telling us what to do, in this very House for the nomenclature who should be in charge of the very Act. They refused for us to discuss and then what we have is dialogue, the bigger picture is very essential to us with all the innuendos and aspersions against President Bio. He has repealed part [v] of the Public Order Act; they used the National television against him. He looked at the bigger picture; they did not look at the bigger picture. They went for the sitting and they matched out and today they are talking about peace. We are peace loving people that is why our mantra is "one country one people," your mantra is "Osia Owei" is very unaccommodating, its looks violence, very intimidating that is our mantra and I borrowed the word from one of the nominees, so for our mantra as a Nation is Unity, Freedom and Justice. These are fine gentle ladies and gentlemen no matter what you do their CVs speak for

themselves. They have done their bits in the society, there is no way they are going to compromise their integrity for which they have earned over ten to twenty years for funny things of politicians, President Bio is not that type; he is a peace loving man. We called again Bintumani II and III, Honourable Yumkella thank you very much, you were there, we heard you and that was a Statesmanship, you behaved like a State man. I wish you all the best, on the other side APC refused to attend, today they are talking about peace, bashing people, consolidate peace. The fear of accident is not going to stop us from driving, we are committed and that is why we said we have a chapter where we write political chapters. We said the New Direction, we have to change the face of things in this Country, is about sincerity and trust which these people have exhibited when interviewed, all of them spoke about sincerity and trust in collaboration, no need for us to question them. Let me ask you Mr Speaker, where do you put your question now? Let put the question to we politicians, let us ask the politicians, we are causing the issues in this Country, that is why President Bio has called for this Commission because when we fail to serve the people, when politics is done we forget about our manifestos, we start to talk about tribal issues, about violence, the contract between President Bio and the people is the manifesto, we have done 60% of our manifesto, we are committed to it and this is what we have done.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am on record, I presented the last Presidential debate with incontrovertible evidences, what President Bio has done cited areas with evidences I tabled them here and I challenged you. I said President Bio had done A, B, C even things that are not in the manifesto, this is part of it let them judge us that is what we are doing. We are sincere to this Nation, peace is not just to speak because we want to talk about peace, and you have to be clean in mind and soul on how you treat peace. It is a biblical and religious word, it is quranic talking about peace and you can talk about Peace and Cohesion but let us change our mind set, too much of hypocrite is amongst us politicians. Let us say thanks to President Bio for establishing such a wonderful and a unify entity to bring us together, all what we are saying is the

consequence of what you have done that is why we are talking about Peace and Cohesion.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in America there is a political divide but let me read a quotation from Reverend Dr Shodanke Johnson, Mr Speaker, with your leave from page 10 he said; ***"peace was good for Nation building and that political differences could not be seen as a dividing force to make us enemies but rather be accompanying to lead us to sustainable unity."*** That is what he told us you know why is because he has seeing the divide among us but President Bio because of what is happening between we politicians, he is a sincere Leader and an upright man. He said; the only way we can change our mind set is to have this Commission that is why we have the mixture of all in this Nation, they have served this Country, they have exhibited a lot of Statesmanship in their duties.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, gone are those days when we just stand to speak and lie for our people, we are now talking about the courage to change the lives of our people, with evidence President Bio has done it. He said I will repeal part [v] of the Public Order Act and he has done it. President Bio said I am going to set the Peace Commission so you will have your say and that is why they are here, don't judge them on their independent. They are sincere to Sierra Leoneans, but you are now saying why their sincerity is very limited, who told you that? It is enshrined in the Act which this very House enacted and you are questioning the credibility of this House, when we said sincerity and independent is clear in the Act. So, this is not about politics, it is about how do you build Sierra Leone. We are talking about democracy, we can only be proud of our democracy when we have the fundamental building blocks of democracy. There is political divide in America but they believe in their strong Institution in supporting democracy and that is what we should do but we should not be seeing using this platform to disgrace our Institutions, humans can come and go but Institutions remain by the force of law and the laws we enact in this House support those Institutions, the National Electoral Commission is a creature of Parliament and this one too is creature of Parliament. The late Dr Ahmad Tejan Kabbah did so much for us to consolidate peace,

he created the Commission for Democracy, he talked about Truth and Reconciliation Commission because he realised that the consequence of peace are yet to be addressed and let us read the Truth and Reconciliation Commission volume [1] and volume [2], these are the recommendations. A very good Leader will listen and bring out things that are good for his people, that is what President Bio is doing and before we praise President Bio we start to talk about things that are not necessary, he is a good man whether you like it or not, I am a Catholic Christian and a Knight I don't make hypocrite when I talk about peace, I have to be judged alone that nobody can take from me. So, President Bio is a Catholic, so I am, he has exhibited limit interference into governance structure, you go to the Court they can prove it. So we are talking about having people together, the way you display as a State man, the way you live as a President will unite people but today people cling on nomenclature by means of their colours. When you put on red shirt they will say you are an APC, when you put on green shirt they will say you are an SLPP and apart from that when you talk about Vandi is SLPP, when you talk about Pa Kanu is APC, we have to change our mind set, we are going to do it, and we the politicians have given us the nomenclature. Mr Speaker, it is crystal clear that we the politicians have done all of these nomenclatures, these people we have here today are not politicians, they can be voters but they are not politicians, these are credible Sierra Leoneans, they are coming to change the mind set of filthy politicians.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have to be proud of these nominees because they have served Sierra Leone and beyond Sierra Leone so for us to set a Commission we should give them the support. During elections we go around the rural communities telling people to vote for you because you are Temne, vote for me because I am Loko, they never talk about issues, and these people are going to change the mind set of our people, the electorates must be educated so that we can consolidate our peace, so that we can deal with peace in entirety. Napoleon once said; **"when there is time for peace we should look for War,"** when we have War we consolidate peace, we have the hope of peace, at the time of interregnum we went for peace. Today, we have the peace and President Bio has created this Commission for us to consolidate our peace

and we are going to do it. These are decent Sierra Leoneans; I will keep on saying it and let us be sincere with ourselves. You were invited to Bintumani III you did not go there which was the initiative of this President and he called for Bintumani I and II.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is good for us to look ourselves as not people in the jungle but decent Sierra Leoneans living in the society where there is rule of law. It is these very people under their administration they looked at the 1991 Constitution and they bastardised it and removed the Vice President. They did not go through the normal process that is why we have these people coming to resolve the issues that we have, the bad politics of administration we need to stop. The Vice President was removed illegally, they did not go through the process, go through Section [50 and 51] of the Constitution it will tell you that they bastardised the Constitution and nobody challenged it here in this Parliament. They took out the power from the Constitution no body challenged their administration and when President Bio is trying to put the record straight, trying to consolidate peace you are there questioning his integrity , it is over our dead body, he is a good man.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the only thing I said I will talk to them is that we have to look for ways and means to give them some amount of powers that can give them the enforcement, they can implement but level of enforcement...

**THE SPEAKER:** Give them the wherewithal.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Exactly So Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what we are talking about as Parliament is to do the Oversight function, to ensure that we give them all the facilities that they need by creating the enable environment to function in their different localities, if we don't give them we have undermined the process, but if we give them what they deserve to function as a Commission we have done well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, they are talking about abject poverty; these people are decent Sierra Leoneans. They talked about abject poverty in their interviews, they talked about corruption, under the implementation they also talked about inadequate distribution of resources, and it is in this report. So why are you questioning their

independent? In the interview they also brought all of these things but we still come here to question their level of independency. I see that one as a slap on our faces but for us it is not easy to bring a good man down, we are good people, and Parliament is a good place.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank you all for what you have done, thank you for cooperating even when you ran away they are still here to contribute because their contributions are very relevant to our success, so we make use of them irrespective of how they feel about issues but we take the good out of the bad and we focus on the bigger picture.

Mr Speaker, thank you very much for presiding and may God bless us all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Second Report of the First Session of the Committee on Appointment and the Public Service as debated and amended be approved by the House.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[Motion of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service has been approved as amended]*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, it is now my pleasant duty to have the last saying on this important Commission and let me start by acknowledging the fact that the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion is good and is necessary for this Country, its creation is well over due. The task of the Commission cannot be underestimated as you are all acknowledging your contributions that the task before the members of the Commission is a herculean one, the Members who have just been approved by this Honourable House unanimously I am sure we leave with the confidence and trust that you have placed in them and I share with you the expectations that this House expects from them, the highest standard of probity and the highest standard of performance, we have no doubt from the names that we have all heard in the course of this debate as constituting the Membership of the Committee that indeed will live up to our expectations. At this juncture of the creation of the

Commission, the Nation will now pause and rightly so and await the performance of all of you ladies and gentlemen as members of this important Commission and all of us in this House stand ready to lend our support to you whenever you consider it necessary to call us whether individually or collectively. On behalf of Parliament, I wish you the best of luck and you have our best wishes and for God's richest blessings in the discharge of this onerous task that you have agreed to perform for your Country. Good luck and God bless.

With that Honourable Members, we shall now take an adjournment of one hour to have lunch and to also consult. I have already informed the Leader of Government Business and the Acting Leader of the Opposition that I will like to see them.

**HON. P.C BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III:** Mr Speaker...

**THE SPEAKER:** Hold on Chief. I will like to have them in my Chamber in the course of the lunch hour. Members of the Commission you may kindly take leave of us. Thank you and good luck. So, we stand adjourned for one hour we shall resume the House at 2:30 p.m.

*The House resumed at 2:30 P.M.*

## **BILL**

### A. THE NATIONAL PAYMENT SYSTEM ACT 2021

#### INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

#### THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are fully aware of the trend and the transformation we want to take to bring in for better governance and the cooperation to fight for Women Empowerment. We are yet to do more consultations and to make sure even that has to do with the Payment System Act under the Finance Bills that we have in front of us today. I would rather register to my Colleagues that we cannot jeopardise the integrity of this House and that we would start the process today but we suspend the debate on the Second Reading but the

process would just start so that we can have more consultations and we have more deliberations around the issues we have at hand. So, as Leader of Government Business I want to move that we allow the First Reading of the Bill we have in front us and we suspend the debate when we have final discussion with my Colleagues on the other sides of the aisle. I move that Motion.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker...

**THE SPEAKER:** Are you seconding the Motion?

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** No, Mr Speaker I have...

**THE SPEAKER:** Well, I have a Motion, any Seconder to the Motion?

**HON SAA E. LAMINA:** Mr Speaker, I so second.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, I have a counter Motion.

**THE SPEAKER:** What is it?

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O 47 [1] in tandem with Section [108] of the Constitution of 1991, with your leave I read; ***"save as otherwise provided in Standing Order 61 [Bills affecting private rights] every Bill shall before its introduction into Parliament be first published in an issue of the gazette, and in a subsequent issue of the gazette there shall be inserted a notice of the Bill having been so published of the issue of the gazette in which it was published and of its proposed introduction into Parliament provided that not less than 9 days shall elapse between the first publication of a Bill in the gazette and its introduction into Parliament for First Reading. Such notice period is intended to inform the general public about the Legislative proposal in the pipe line, so as to elicit any necessary popular reaction in time"***

Mr Speaker, Section 108 [2] of the 1991 Constitution also says; ***"a Bill for an Act of Parliament under this Section shall not be passed by Parliament unless;***

***[A] Before the first reading of the Bill in Parliament the text of the Bill is published in at least two issues of the gazette: provided that not less than 9 days shall elapse between the first publication of the Bill in the gazette and the second publication and [B] the Bill is supported on the second and third reading by the votes of not less than two thirds of Members of Parliament.”***

Mr speaker, Honourable Members, we are talking about Bills that are coming to this House for the very first time because this is not an amendment of an existing Bill but they are coming for the very first time and if that is the case there is a need for us all to have a better understanding of the details, now this Bill is just coming from a long recess and now we have this Bill to deal with.

Mr Speaker, I think it will but prudent for us to actually have time to understand all of these details and let us go to the procedure so that we would have a better understanding and try to cross the t's and do's before we come to pass this Bill for a First Reading.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, Point of Order. There is a very serious issue based on your Orders that once Parliament is sitting no Committee sitting is allowed and that is why even the Chamber is empty because there is a Committee meeting at Room One. Mr Speaker, I move that we hold on for now.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, can you elaborate further? I want to know which Committee is meeting; no, I want to know the Committee that is meeting. Honourable Daniel Koroma, with the greatest deference to you having drawn my attention to the fact that a meeting is taking place I want to know the nature of that meeting now?

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, you can send the Director of Legislative services he can do that one as he has confirmed to us. For me, I cannot tell the Committee now, I have been reliably informed even by the Director of the Legislative services that there is a meeting, it is for the good of this House, so it is your duty to send your Clerk and confirm to terminate that Committee sitting not for me to prove

which Committee is sitting. Even the Director of Legislative services Kemoh Conteh has confirmed that there is a meeting and we cannot be here against your Orders.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you for the information but as a Good Samaritan you are expected to elaborate further.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** If I cannot elaborate further let proceed.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, I want to deal with that issue first.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, no, he is right, there is a Committee meeting going on but we are going to stop it and take necessary action.

**THE SPEAKER:** I hope the necessary actions will be taken because that is contrary to the Orders that I have given.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, of course the Supervisory Committee will take charge and you know I am in charge of that Committee so don't worry. Thank you very much for the edification. I heard a counter Motion and I want to make some clarifications.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, wait a minute, take your seat. Who is the Chairperson of that Committee? I want him to stand here and give me the good reasons why they violated my Orders?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, you know we represent people of this Nation and Bills have their stages that we can go through before its enactment and we have done such for the Sexual Offences Bill which is now enacted, the Cyber and that of the Abolition of the Death Penalty. We need to listen to non-state actors and also people we serve here, as people's representatives you should be selfless and what we are doing here today is a selfless service. So, I know but I read out the Internal Notice Paper and it was distributed, I said it and I am on record go to the Hansard, I said we are going for recess, I am going to instruct my Deputy to read the Internal Notice Paper so I cannot take you unawares when we come back from recess and that Notice Paper was given to you within my own jurisdiction I did it. If you are against it so be it but

don't ridicule me, I can't allow that. We read it out, it is in the Votes and Proceedings, let me calm down; I said I have moved a Motion for the First Reading only. We are not going to deliberate or going into the nitty gritty of the Bills but I want to tell the Nation that we are concerned because it is under the purview of Parliament for us to look at the Bills and when we are going to look at them, it's going to be nationwide consultations. We are going to involve non state actors, we are going to involve members of the Fourth Estate, we are going to involve even the Executive and Colleagues Members of Parliament too because this brings out a lot of issues like women's empowerment, the review of Lands Right Act and others.

Mr Speaker, we are not saying we are enacting the Bill today, we are not saying that, we are just saying let us introduce and the process will follow that has to do with the funds from Finance and introduction for every Bill.

**THE SPEAKER:** May I stop you right there for the time being please?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** I think the House is perfectly aware of the importance of what you are saying indeed the content of the Votes and Proceeding but nevertheless we cannot ignore the provisions of S.O [47], there are certain pre-conditions that must be met before this House can proceed to consider a Bill.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, just a minute. I want to challenge what they said about gazetting before you take the document for Internal Notice Paper to be distributed it must go through the Legislative scrutiny, the first publication, second publication we have it. I am challenging my Colleagues on the other side...

**THE SPEAKER:** So therefore, he has raised a preliminary point; namely he is saying S.O [47] has not been fulfilled and has not been complied with. Are you in the position now to tell the House that S.O [47] was in compliance?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** It was in compliance, it was gazetted twice we have it and it is in the minute paper.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I perfectly understand what the Leader of Government Business is saying and I want us all to be understood properly that we are not saying we are against the passage of these Bills, that is not what we are saying here categorically, but what we are saying here is that the procedures and what the Constitution is saying must have been done following S.O 47[1] and we also have S.O 47[2]. So, all I am saying is before we come for the First Reading as long as we have the First Reading already the process of passage has already started, and now before we get to that level why not have a Pre-Legislative for all of these brown new Bills? That is what I am moving for, what I am saying here is we are not in opposition and I am on record to let the Leader of Government Business know that I have been fighting Women's issues for the longest time in this Parliament and it is on record. I have been the Chairman of Social welfare Committee, I have been involved in Women's issue and also let me make it clear that I was the first man decorated in New York as Parliamentarian representing "He for She." So, I cannot be against women's issues but what we are saying here is let the needful be done...

**THE SPEAKER:** You have made your point. I don't think you need further elaboration on it, let now take them one after the other, so please wait. Let me now deal with the side issue first that has no bearing on this one.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, with your leave, you asked me a question.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, please wait I have another issue that has been brought to my attention.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, you asked a question if I am pleased with the provision cited and if they are gazetted that is what I want to clarify?

**THE SPEAKER:** I am coming to you.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Okay, thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** I said there is another issue that has no bearing on the substantive matter that is before us now but my attention was drawn by the Honourable Member from Koinadugu that there was a Committee meeting taking place in Committee Room

One concurrently as we were meeting here in Plenary, I understand it was a Committee on Tourism and Cultural Affairs. Is Kemoh Conteh around? He went to verify that matter where is he? Who is the Chairman of Committee on Tourism? The Honourable Daniel Koroma, have you heard? Does it mean that you misinformed this House? Somebody has to apologise. Did you misinform this House or not?

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, posterity will determine who misinformed this House, if I misinformed this House I must have misinformed together with the Leader of Government Business because even what I said was collaborated by the Leader but posterity will tell who misinformed this House. That is not the issue now let proceed but what I said was collaborated by the Leader. So, if I misinformed then the Leader also misinformed but posterity will tell who misinformed us.

**THE SPEAKER:** I am not inclined to proceed. There was an Order made by me that whilst we are in Plenary no Committee should meet, that Order has been violated and I want to know who? So either you misinformed or somebody is covering up.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** In fact unfortunately this one demotivates me completely from ensuring that your Orders are followed, it demotivates me completely, if you are alleging that I may have misinformed you, it is demotivating...

**THE SPEAKER:** I am inclined not to believe because you are a man of integrity.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Well, you made that representation now and you are in public that I may have misinformed you and what I am saying now was collaborated by the Director of the Legislative Service Mr Kemoh Conteh and also by the Leader of Government Business. So, if you still incline that we I misinformed you, let proceed.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, I am not saying that.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** But it came not only from me but from the Director of Legislative Services and the Leader of Government Business. He even suggested the Committee...

**THE SPEAKER:** Take your seat. Honourable Tom Tucker, is he here? Sorry the Honourable Member, in red is he the one? Okay what about the Deputy Chairman? Honourable Emmanuel Saidu Conteh, information has reached me that whiles Plenary was on here simultaneously a meeting of the Committee on Tourism and Culture was taking place in Committee Room One.

**HON. EMMANUEL S. CONTEH:** Mr Speaker, there was one hour recess for us to come back.

**THE SPEAKER:** Correct.

**HON. EMMANUEL S. CONTEH:** And we were supposed to hold a meeting after today's sitting, we took advantage of the one hour, we sat and ensured that we finished even before you came into the Well, you can confirm that with the Committee Clerk.

*Suspension of S.O 5[2]*

**THE SPEAKER:** The Honourable Daniel Koroma is an Honourable man and I trust his judgement, I trust him, he is a man of integrity, I don't think he will deliberately set about to misinform this House or me.

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** Mr Speaker, can we proceed?

**THE SPEAKER:** I do not take kindly when Order is violated.

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** But we have programs outstanding.

**THE SPEAKER:** We have a lot of matters outstanding, Leader of Government Business but a rule is a rule and we must learn to obey rules. We will deal with that matter later on but we are not going to sweep it under the carpet. A rule is a rule and it has to be obeyed. Let now come back to the matter before the House. My attention has now been drawn to Section [108] in tandem with S.O [47].

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** Mr Speaker...

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes...

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** I said is with the Gazette, I have the Gazette here which is the second Gazette; let them check their records because the Gazette is here.

**THE SPEAKER:** Good!

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** Mr Speaker, let me read the last volume so you can understand, I will never put the procedure under carpet of this House. Thursday the 7<sup>th</sup> of October, 2021 number 61, volume cxxix and the Sierra Leone Gazette published by authority volume cxxix Thursday the 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2021 number 61.

**THE SPEAKER:** So, you are saying the House is in compliance?

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** Yes it is in compliance and S.O 42[7] Sub-Clause [2] is not mandating, it is a conditional Clause and I can read it.

**THE SPEAKER:** I have read it so let us not waste time...

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** So, we are not in violation of any procedure Sir. So, I rest my case. Mr Speaker, let me say this, I am still on my legs, as I said I am committed because when you read the provision the S.O 47[2] is limited, I said after the first reading just as we did with the Cyber which you gave your instructions, we were on it for over four months.

**THE SPEAKER:** Correct!

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** The integrity of this House is very paramount than any Political Party or individual so after the First Reading, I am going to widen the space for more collaborations. I rest my case and I stand by my Motion.

**THE SPEAKER:** What do you have to say Honourable Member, are you withdrawing your counter Motion?

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, no I am not and in fact I did not say 47[2] is mandatory, 47[1] is mandatory indeed but 47[2] is not mandatory, it is a "may" not a "shall" that I understand perfectly but I am saying...

**THE SPEAKER:** You rested your submission on 47[1]?

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Yes 47[1]...

**THE SPEAKER:** You now heard the information?

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Yes.

**THE SPEAKER:** Are you satisfied with it?

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** The publication the Honourable Leader cited is for October 6<sup>th</sup> and is that the first publication or the second publication? We do not know.

**THE SPEAKER:** My attention has been drawn to two publications.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Two publications but we only heard about one and there is a time frame between the first and the second.

**THE SPEAKER:** I really want us to make progress here.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, we must make progress but also we believe that what...

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** Mr Speaker, point of Order Sir. I don't want my Colleagues on the other side to doubt my integrity, S.O [2] ar don read dis to u, u nor satisfy...

**THE SPEAKER:** For my own information Leader of Government Business can you give me date of the first publication and the date of the second publication?

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** Mr Speaker, Thursday the 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2021 and Thursday the 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2021.

**THE SPEAKER:** On bases of that I am satisfied. The House is in compliance with the provision of S.O [47] and Section [108] of the Constitution, we may proceed.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O 47 [2], I quite agree with the Leader of Government Business that it is not mandatory; it says "***we can do it when necessary.***"

**THE SPEAKER:** Good.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** That is exactly my point.

**THE SPEAKER:** Fine!

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** On that note, I hereby submit that going through all Pre-Legislative hearings and all consultative processes are necessary for the following reasons...

**THE SPEAKER:** Are you moving a Motion or not?

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Yes, I am moving a Motion...

**THE SPEAKER:** No, but you prefacing your Motion with an elaborate explanation, go straight to the point.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** I am going to the point now to prove it is necessary and then I peg it with the Motion, I have to convince you that it is necessary; I have spoken with Deputy Leader this morning, I have to convince you that it is necessary.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, number one reason why it is necessary is that all 6 Bills before us have nothing to do with amendment or repeal. They are neither repealing any existing law nor amending any existing law. They are coming for the first time since Adam and Eve and as a result; a Bill coming for the first time might have political implication, financial implications, social implications and so many others. The implications are unforeseeable because they are coming for the first time, I can prove one to you exactly....

**THE SPEAKER:** And you are filibustering.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Well just listen to me, yesterday we had one, we had Pre-legislative session on Student Loan Scheme Bill and I can tell you that the principal reason why that Bill is not included in this Order Paper is because of the issues raised yesterday. The issues raised yesterday open the eyes of the Minister of Higher and Technical Education as a result he cannot come today that is the principal reason why it is not even included because he needs at least three, four days to sort them out.

**THE SPEAKER:** There may be other reasons.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** There may be other reasons but this is why I said principal reasons, there may be other reasons because I was suspecting that the one that have gone through Pre-Legislative should be the first now. There are other reasons I believe but that is the principal reason, the issues raised are enormous and as Chief Whip said; we are supposed to call these Bills, we do not want you to misinterpret us. No, in fact I am the male champion so I am a supporter of this gender empowerment but I cannot support breach of procedure, I cannot support that.

**THE SPEAKER:** But there has been no breach here.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, on that note I move that in as much as we may go through First Reading today that this House resolves that thereafter no Second Reading will take place here until we do the Pre-Legislative hearings and other consultative processes, let it be a ruling in this House. That is my Motion.

**THE SPEAKER:** Hold on! Hold on! Take your seat. Leader please I have listened to both of you. Honourable Daniel Koroma will you please take your seat? Honourable Daniel Koroma, from Koinadugu will you please take your seat? I have listened to you. There is no difference whatsoever between what you are saying and what the Leader of Government Business said in his Motion, no substantive difference. He started by telling the House and assuring the House about what he intends to do, what you have said is the same thing.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** There is a difference...

**THE SPEAKER:** No, please continue.

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** Are you withdrawing your Motion?

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** I am not withdrawing my Motion.

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** Well let me go ahead. I have been very consultative with my Colleagues especially those on the other side on several occasions and this is not the first time we have had consultation in front of you and bilaterally.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** No question for the second Motion Sir?

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** Can you allow me please? But questioning my integrity is one I cannot take, I presented the Gazette and you questioned me. I know they are not in favour of what we want to do but I have proven them wrong that we have gone through the normal procedures, that is one and I repeat my words exactly after the First Reading as we did for the Cyber Crime Act, for the Abolition of Death Penalty Act and for the Sexual Offenses Act and we are also going to do for these Bills we have in front of us today, this is just an introduction. So, I move again that this Honourable House only allow the First Reading of the following Bills in front of us and I will read the First Reading only. A. The National Payment System Act 2021 for the First Reading only.

B. The Deposit Protection Fund Act 2021, First Reading.

C. The Customary Land Act 2021, First Reading, the Minister of Land Housing and Country Planning.

D. The National Land Commission Act 2021.

E. The Gender Empowerment Act 2021.

I move for only the First Reading for all of these Bills and we suspend the Second Reading until after consultations.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any Secunder to that Motion?

**HON. SAA E. LAMINA:** Mr Speaker, I so second.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[Motion moved by Honourable Mathew S. Nyuma to do the First Reading of all the Bills presented to the House has been carried]*

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, there was a counter Motion which you did not even ask for a Secunder.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, your counter Motion was based on S.O 47 [1] and I have established that the House is in compliance of S.O 47[1] in tandem with Section [108] of the 1991 Constitution. Please let us proceed.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, I respect your position as the Speaker of this House and a very erudite Constitutional Lawyer.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. So, let us proceed.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, in the same vein I think what I quoted here that we need as long as the First Reading has been done the process of enactment has started and I was saying that the contemporary phrase "SHALL" not "MAY" and that is what you are neglecting now because the Honourable Leader of Government Business has produced the Gazettes and I was not doubting his integrity, let us be very clear. I was trying to create a technical situation but having said that, I still stand on the Motion that we must go to the Pre-Legislative hearing before the process starts here but you are saying let us go to the First Reading and then go to the Pre-Legislative hearing that is what we are saying, I am not objecting to the Pre-Legislative but let it come first, that is what I am saying.

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** Mr Speaker, point of correction. You cannot talk about Pre-Legislative after we have done the First Reading and that is why I said in my opening statement that we will do as we did for the Cyber Crime Act and for the Sexual Offences Act.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, now you see what he is saying?

**THE SPEAKER:** I have not giving you the Floor.

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** You did English please.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** You are now saying we cannot talk about Pre-Legislative after the First Reading and that should not be the spirit.

**HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA:** It should be Pre; it is a language I am addressing, it is a Pre-Legislation...

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** The reason why I said let us get a Pre-Legislative because it is part of the procedure.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, let me listen to the Deputy Speaker.

**HON. SEGEPOH S. THOMAS:** Mr Speaker, for the comfort of the House S.O [41] has given you enough authority to prevail circumstances like this, you have ruled, you have ordered for this House to proceed so we cannot go into other matters. Let us proceed.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, filibustering is a very dangerous weapon, it can land you in uncharted waters and this is what we are trying to avoid. I do not think frankly in present circumstances I will want us to proceed on the path of filibustering. We have been given the assurance that after the First Reading of all of these Bills nothing further will be done without proper consultation has been carried out. We have also been told that Section [108] of the 1991 Constitution in tandem with S.O 47 [1] was fulfilled. We have been able to establish otherwise and the evidence is overwhelmed that indeed the relevant publication in the gazette has been done in the circumstances. It is but proper that we proceed with the first Bill.

**HON. MARK M. KALOKOH:** Mr Speaker, if I may ask a question?

**THE SPEAKER:** No, before your question let me recognize the Honourable Dr Kandeh Yumkella. On this same issue?

**HON. KANDEH K. YUMKELLA:** Mr Speaker, on this same issue.

**THE SPEAKER:** I have made a ruling that we are going forward but I will listen to you out of courtesy.

**HON. KANDEH K. YUMKELLA:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much, I appreciate it.

Honourable Members, it is just a caution for all of us because some issues are highly sensitive, land issues for example in any Country are super sensitive and for those of us who also know something about parliamentary procedure asking me for example; on very sensitive matters that is why the processes are now on Pre-Legislative before even First Reading. For the Paramount Chiefs in the House, I know I have been called by some asking me if I have seen what is in that Bill on Customary Land Right because some of us have not understood that Bill yet. So, when I heard people cautioning that indeed we give time for sensitive Bills like the Finance Payment System, there are people who owe **LE40Bln** to banks here, we saw it before, we know of cases where debts were written off some illegally, so there are sensitive issues here.

Mr Speaker, this is why I agreed with Colleagues who are saying we are going to be cautious, let us set a process in this Parliament that for very sensitive issues like Land Right we do Pre-Legislative before even First Reading and again this is not even about the Gender Bill alone, Land Right is even bigger and a controversial issue in this Country. So, I want to agree with my Colleagues just for the records that for such sensitive matters we should have done Pre-Legislative hearing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the second issue is that, Honourable Chernor Maju Bah and I spoke this afternoon because when he asked me how many Bills were on the Paper, I was surprised that even for him he didn't realize all of these Bills. This is the highest number of Bills in one day sitting I have never seen, he is very concerned. I have to convey in public his conversation with me and he said his understanding was because I wasn't in any business meeting where this agenda was agreed and I agreed with him that we will deal with only two Bills today, the other sensitive ones is that we give adequate time for the passing of these Bills. So, I felt that under moral obligation, I express my opinion on the sensitivity of these Bills but also on his behalf to say when we conferred this afternoon because I need his opinion when I saw the package, the swift of Bills that he is also very concerned, consultations are important for all of these Bills here, Money, Land, Women and there are many views about the current Gender Bill. Honourable Catherine and I were in the workshops two weeks ago with all the Women's groups, we have seen submissions made by Women's groups that also will make even that Bill get better and the intention here is not to filibuster.

Mr Speaker, you saw what some of us did on Cyber Crime, we are not in the Legislative Committee but for two days seven hours each day we were there helping to improve on it. So, I think the spirit here is not one of delaying or fighting, it is just to say let us be careful because this is precedent and I remember you and I agreed on something three years ago that we didn't like the tradition of rushing Bills. This is a case where we have six Bills, I would have admonished you Sir specially for some of the sensitive ones at least begin to set a precedent that you do Pre-Legislative before even First Reading. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Honourable Member from Samu Chiefdom, Kambia District for his very eloquent presentation and for reminding me of indeed the position I had expressed here before. I stand by that position even on this issue and I take due note of the sensitivity of the Bills before this House and let me assure this House that I as Speaker, will not allow the substantive debate on the content of those Bills without adequate consultations, I will not. I want to emphasize that point over and over again, I am consistent with that position I have taken earlier on that important and sensitive Bills required adequate consultations. The only thing which I am yielding to on this particular occasion is the First Reading which as you know doesn't delve into the substance of the Bills at all and before we will ever delve into the substance of those Bills adequate consultations will have to take place that is the assurance I am giving from this Chair as Speaker, we will not move one inch on those issues. I hope on that understanding we can now proceed? Mr Minister, you may proceed.

**SHEKU AHMED F. BANGURA [Deputy Minister of Finance]:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled the National Payment Systems Act 2021 be read the first time.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[The Bill entitled The National Payment Systems Act 2021 has been read the first time]*

## **B. THE DEPOSIT PROTECTION FUNDS ACT 2021**

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

**SHEKU AHMED F. BANGURA [Deputy Minister of Finance]:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled the Deposit Protection Fund Act 2021 be read the first time.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[The Bill entitled the Deposit Protection Fund Act 2021 has been read the first time]*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you Mr Minister.

### **C. THE CUSTOMARY LANDS RIGHT ACT 2021**

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

THE MINISTER OF LAND, HOUSING AND COUNTRY PLANNING

**DR TURAD SENESIE** *[The Minister of Land, Housing and Country Planning]:*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled the Customary Lands Right Act 2021 be read the first time.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[The Bill entitled the Customary Lands Right Act 2021 has been read the first time]*

### **D. THE NATIONAL LAND COMMISSION ACT 2021**

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

THE MINISTER OF LANDS, HOUSING AND COUNTRY PLANNING

**DR TURAD SENESIE** *[The Minister of Lands, Housing and Country Planning]:*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled the National Lands Commission Act 2021 be read the first time.

*[Question Proposed Put and agreed to]*

*[The Bill entitled the National Land Commission Act 2021 has been read the first time]*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you Mr Minister you may retire.

### **E. THE GENDER EMPOWERMENT ACT 2021**

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

THE MINISTER OF GENDER AND CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS

**MADAM BAINDU DASSAMA** [*The Minister of Gender and Children's Affairs*]:

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled the Gender Empowerment Act 2021 be read the first time.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[The Bill entitled the Gender Empowerment Act 2021 has been read the first time]*

**HON. MARK M. KALOKOH:** Mr Speaker, I called to your attention several times but you always ignore me and I don't like that and I am an Honourable Member of Parliament.

**THE SPEAKER:** I do not ignore any Honourable Member; I will catch your eye just wait.

**HON. MARK M. KALOKOH:** Mr Speaker, I extended my courtesy to you but you never acknowledged it.

**HON. KANDEH K. YUMKELLA:** Mr Speaker, point of order. Please, I didn't hear the notice of the Parliamentary Affairs Committee and we have submitted a notice for a meeting tomorrow morning at 10: a.m.

**THE SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member, from Bombali you still want to catch my eye?

**HON. KANDEH K. YUMKELLA:** Mr Speaker, I raised a Point of Order with you indulgence Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, what happened?

**HON. KANDEH K. YUMKELLA:** Thank you so much Mr Speaker. Members of the Public and Members of Political Affairs Committee will meet in Parliament at 10: a.m.

we will assemble here and proceed to Committee Room 1 that is assigned to us. Thank you Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I see your Leader wanted to catch my eye. Acting Leader yes....

**HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, I want to look at Section [39] of the Constitution of Sierra Leone.

**THE SPEAKER:** Section 39?

**HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** Yes Sir. It reads: **'when the seat of any Member of Parliament becomes vacant, the vacancy shall be filled by election not later than six months after the vacancy occurs, in accordance with the provision of law relating to such election. Provided that if Parliament is dissolved before such election is due to be held, the vacancy shall be filled at the general election.'**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I remember that a by-election was conducted in Tonkolili District and a Member of Parliament here was elected as Paramount Chief, our worry from this side is that the gentleman continues to hold the position of Member of Parliament and continues to hold the position of Paramount Chief of that Chiefdom and for purposes of consistency and democratic practice, we want to be very certain that this gentleman is replaced. This is the information which I want to bring to us in a very eloquent manner so that we know the status of this gentleman and as my fear is that it may be the violation of the Constitution of the State. Thank you Mr Speaker.

**HON. SEGEPOH S. THOMAS:** Mr Speaker, I don't know whether that matter is before the Court of law. If that is the case then we cannot run commentary on that. Honourable Ibrahim B. Kargbo is it before the Court of law?

**HON. ALPHA A. BAH:** Mr Speaker, in addition to the point raised by our Leader, I also wish to most humbly invite your attention to Section 77 [f1]. With your leave may I read?

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes go ahead.

**HON. ALPH A. BAH:** *"A Member of Parliament shall vacate his seat in Parliament if in the case of such a Member as it is referred to in Paragraph B..."*

**HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS:** Mr Speaker, Point of Order. The Honourable Member is standing on S.O [23] which is personal explanation. I stood on S.O [23] before Honourable Member started talking.

**THE SPEAKER:** I am addressing a matter that was raised by the Acting Leader of the Opposition can we finish with that first? I asked him whether it is related to what the Honourable Ibrahim B. Kargbo has mentioned and he said yes.

**HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS:** Mr Speaker, I agreed with you that let them change the S.O because if he is supporting the Honourable Leader on that side, the Honourable Leader stood on S.O 23...

**THE SPEAKER:** I did not hear him citing any S.Os. Go on Honourable Member.

**HON. ALPH A. BAH:** Mr Speaker, S.O 77[d] says; *"any Member who without good cause during any session is absent from the sittings of Parliament on a number of days amounting to an aggregate period or thirty days shall vacate his seat is prevented from attending a sitting of Parliament shall acquainted the Speaker in writing as early as possible of his inability to attend and the cause thereof."*

Section 77 [e] says; *"If he is absent from sittings of Parliament for the period specified in sub paragraph [A] without good cause. The Speaker shall declare his seat vacant, and this disciplinary measure capturing the import and spirit of sub Section [1] and 20 of Section [94] and Section [97] of the Constitution shall be A; privilege of Parliament."*

Mr Speaker, on the basis of this provision I submit that given the circumstance that the seat has been vacant from the day the Honourable Member was pronounced to be the Paramount Chief of that Chiefdom. So, from then to now it is more than 6 months.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. This is a matter of opinion that you have expressed which I am afraid will not guide me in this particular instance, what will guide me is official notification from the Chairperson of NEC until I receive that official communication I will not take note of that.

**HON. SEGEPOH S. THOMAS:** Mr Speaker, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, 2021 when we were on recess we lost the mother of the Chief Whip of this Parliament, she has been buried already but in the circumstances, I crave your kind indulgence for you to cause us to rise briefly and observe a moment of silence.

**THE SPEAKER:** I hereby do, shall we rise?

**HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE:** Mr Speaker, we also lost the mother of Honourable Peter Moigua.

**THE SPEAKER:** So, we rise for both, a minute silence please in honour of the departed and may the gentle souls of the faithful departed rest in perfect peace, Amen.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

*[The House rose at 3:30 p.m. and was adjourned to 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. ]*