

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

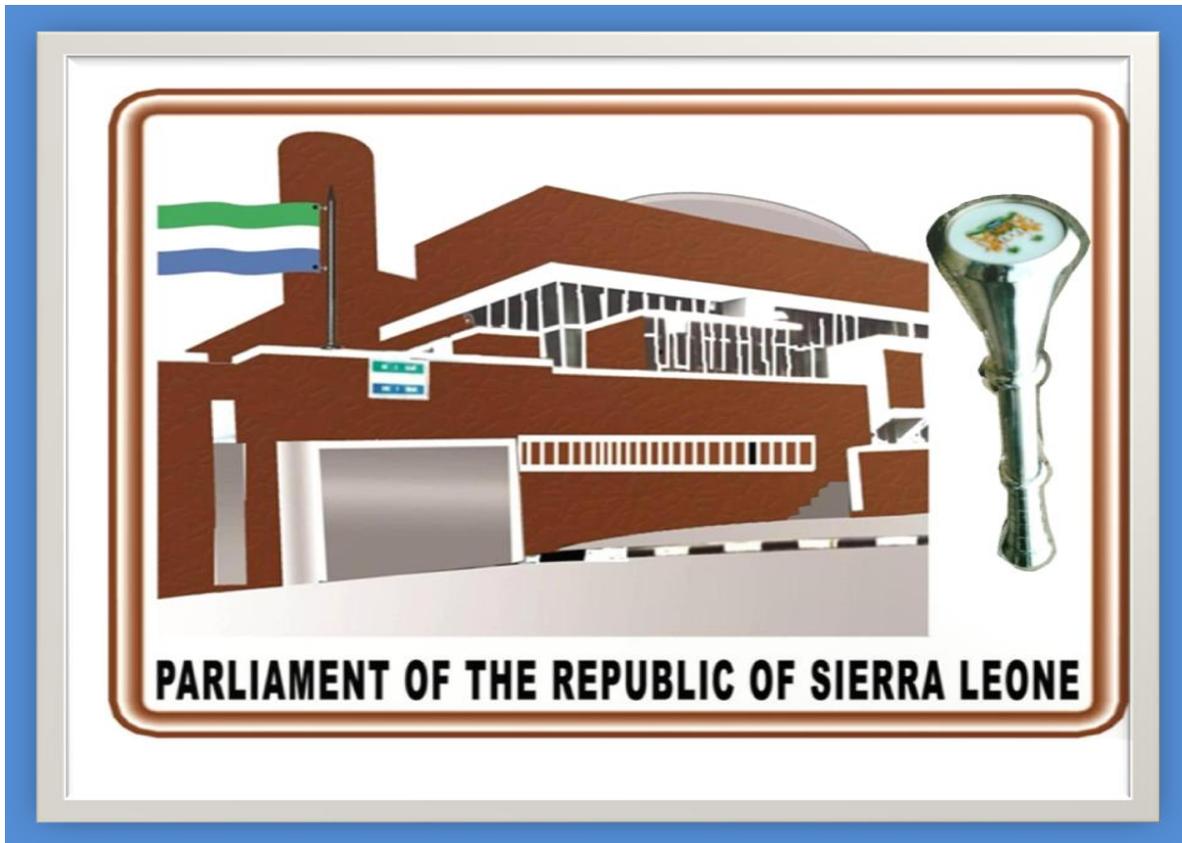
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FOURTH SESSION –FIRST MEETING

FRIDAY, 23RD JULY, 2021

SESSION – 2020/2021



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMETARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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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 on Friday, 23rd July, 2021.

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THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Friday, 23rd July, 2021.

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Francis Farmer, Read the Prayers]

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

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

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S. Os. 5[2]

II CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 21ST JULY, 2021.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Wednesday, 21st July, 2021. As usual, we shall skip the first four pages and start with Page 5. Do you have correction or amendment to make on Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? If there is no correction or amendment, can someone move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Wednesday, 21st July, 2021 as presented?

HON. NENNEH LEBBIE: I so move, Mr Speaker

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. ALICE J. KUMABEH: I so second, Mr Speaker

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Wednesday, 21st July, 2021 has been adopted as presented]

III ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I have two announcements to make. First, I would like to meet with the caucus leaders in my Chamber to deal with a very important matter about which I need guidance from them. The meeting will take place in my Chambers; second, immediately we adjourn this sitting, I would like to have a consultative meeting with the chairperson of the Legislative Committee and the Honourable Daniel B. Koroma with regard to finalising the Cyber Security and Crime Bill that was passed here.

IV. PAPERS LAID

[A] HONOURABLE BOSTON MUNDA, CHAIRMAN, PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table of this noble House the Report on 'the Investigation into the Allegation of Non-compliance of Mobile Operators and Internet Service Providers to Pay Statutory Obligations of **0.75%** to the Universal Access Development Fund.' Mr Speaker, this report contains information relating to complaints from Orange Money Agents nationwide, expressing dissatisfactions about the current state of their commission and other related issues with Orange Money Sierra Leone. I thank you *[Applause]*.

[B] HONOURABLE AMBROSE MAADA LEBBY, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND AVIATION

HON. AMBROSE M. LEBBY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table of this Honourable House 'the Report on the Termination of the Contract Between the Sierra Leone Roads Safety Authority [SLRSA] and the three Indigenous Companies on the Production and Sale of Vehicle Number Plates *[Applause]*.'

[C] HONOURABLE MOSES BAIMBA JORKIE, CHAIRMAN, PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND SANITATION

HON. MOSES B. JORKIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have very important papers here to lay on the Table of this House. One has to do with broadening access and quality, which is citizens' feedback on the state of health and education services in Sierra Leone. The Civil Society Organisation was assisted by OXFARM in 2020 and undertook a survey in our constituencies and also the Councils. The survey revealed burning issues in our constituencies pertaining to health and education. The research targeted the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education. Thus, the parliamentary oversight Committees on Education and Health were financed and supported to go and find out about that report. On that note, I now beg to lay this document on the Table of this House:

A Joint Committee Report of the Parliamentary Oversight Committees on Basic and Senior Secondary Education and the Committee on Health and Sanitation on their Facts Finding Tour on the State of Education and Health Services in the Western Area, Port Loko and Moyamba *[Applause]*.

HON HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Speaker, I rise on S.Os. 25 to serve a notice of Motion to debate the Paper that has just been laid by the Chairman of the Committee on Health and Sanitation.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, that is just a notice and therefore we do not need a seconder.

THE SPEAKER: I know it is a notice of Motion, but he would do the needful, following the approval of his notice of Motion.

HON MATHEW S. NYUMA: Okay, thank you.

HON DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, a Motion has been moved by Leader of Opposition and was supported by the Deputy Speaker to debate all Committee reports this time round. I am sure a special date will be allotted maybe three or four Committee reports per day. The rule is that once those recommendations are adopted, they become law. You would agree with me that laying these reports and forget about them is not good for this nation.

THE SPEAKER: So, are you saying there is a Motion to that effect?

HON DANIEL B. KOROMA: Yes, Mr Speaker. The Motion was moved by the Leader of Opposition and was adopted here.

THE SPEAKER: In that case, it is not a Motion any more, but a resolution of the House.

HON DANIEL B. KOROMA: It is a resolution of the House that all Committee reports be debated.

THE SPEAKER: I would like that to be reflected in our Votes and Proceedings. Thus, there is no need for another Motion on Papers that are laid on the Table of the House. When we resume from recess, we would allocate a time when that debate will commence on each and every report that has been laid on the Table of the House. I am sure that is the spirit of that resolution.

[D] HONOURABLE SALIEU OSMAN SESAY, CHAIRMAN, PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

HON. SALIEU OSMAN SESAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, please permit me to lay on the Table of this noble House the document entitled:

Oversight Visit Assessment of the Performance Status of both Government Supported Programmes and Private Sector Investment in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Across the Country, from the 13th to 19th September, 2020 *[Applause]*.

V. ANNOUNCEMENT OF SESSIONAL SELECT COMMITTEES

THE SPEAKER: We shall deal with this particular item after the Bill.

HON. ABDUL T. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, I rise on S.Os. 70 [1a&b] and S.Os. 70[13]. I am asking your humble self to make a formal ruling on why the NGC Leader cannot serve in the Selection Committee and the Supervisory Committee. We want an interpretation on the leader of a political party and a parliamentary leader as you have done in the case of the title Honourable *[Applause]*.

HON. CHERNOR R.M BAH: Mr Speaker, I want to agree with him. You promised to respond to a letter you received some time back. The earlier you respond to that letter, the better for this House *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank both the Member from Kambia District and Leader of the Opposition. I am certain that both of them are talking about the same subject matter. As rightly indicated by the Leader of the Opposition, I had actually received communication from the Chairman and Leader of the NGC Party on this very issue. It has now been buttressed by the representation that you have made. I reserve my opinion on this issue, but in due course, I will respond as requested by the Leader of the Opposition to the letter I received from the Chairman and Leader of the NGC.

Honourable Members, before we proceed further, I would like us to recognise the presence, in our midst, of the following personalities whose contributions to the work of Parliament has been tremendous:

1. Mr Andrew Thomas Lavalie, Executive Director, Institute of Governance Reforms;

2. Mr Hassan Kallon, Programme Specialist, Institute of Governance Reforms;
3. Madam Lucy Emernette Alieu, Information and Media Officer, Institute of Governance Reforms Thank you for the good work.

VI. BILL

THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY ACT, 2021

COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRRD READING

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE

THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY ACT, 2021

COMMITTEE STAGE

Part 1, Clauses 1 to 3 and the Schedule Proposed.

MR ANTHONY Y. BREWAH [*Attorney General and Minister of Justice*]: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Part 1, Clauses 1 to 3 and the Schedule stand part of the Bill.

HON. CHERNOR RM BAH: Mr Speaker, considering the fact that you have acknowledged the presence of the members of the public who have shown interest and in addition to the discussions we had with the Attorney General that since the Bill is not bulky, we move slowly, so that we capture the relevant changes we want to make.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is okay, Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. CHERNOR R.M BAH: Thank you sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sure you want us to ensure that we do a good job and that was why you brought up that suggestion. It is all part of the game called Good governance, which this institution stands to be an exemplar of.

[Question Proposed]

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I just want to build a case for judicial discretion in line with the amendment I am going to propose. It is in line with Part 1, under the preliminaries, where we have: "A person who murders another commits an offence and is liable on conviction to life imprisonment."

HON. AJIBOLA MANLEY SPAIN: Sorry, Mr Leader of Government Business I do not think we have reached that part of the Bill. We are dealing with Clauses 1 to 3.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, considering the nature of this Bill and the subject matter that it addresses, I think there is no harm in dealing with this Bill clause by clause. Our normal practice here is page by page, but this particular Bill is clause by clause. This Bill may look short and brief, but it has substantive content of great moment for this country and the international Community at large. So, we should not rush it at all. We should take our time. This is not law making, but law unmaking. In other words, we are unmaking the law because we are not making a new law. The law is already in existence and we are getting rid of it. Clause 1 says: "A person is not liable to the punishment of death for an offence committed in Sierra Leone."

HON. AJIBOLA MANLEY SPAIN: Mr Speaker, I want that clause to read thus: "A person shall not liable.... -" instead of 'a person is not liable.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Shall not be liable? Where is the Draftsman?

HON. CHERNOR R.M BAH: Mr Speaker, I am sure that the Draftsmen took it verbatim from the existing Act we are about to amend. We also had a suggestion from the Institute for Legal Research and Advocacy [ILRAJ]. They are suggesting that it reads: "No person shall be sentenced to a punishment of death for any crime or offence committed in Sierra Leone." That is the suggestion they made.

THE CHAIRMAN: The difference is pure drafting, not substantive.

HON. CHERNOR R.M BAH: That is what I am saying. It is pure drafting.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let us get the rendition made by the Honourable Member from the Western Area.

HON. AJIBOLA MANLEY SPAIN: Mr Speaker, my submission is quite simple. We should remove the word 'is' and replace it with the word 'shall.'

THE CHAIRMAN: So it should 'shall not be liable?'

HON. AJIBOLA MANLEY SPAIN: This is how you draft legislations. You do not have to say 'or' crime 'or' offence, but 'an' offence or 'a' crime.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sure your Leader will agree with that since it is in consonance with established drafting procedure.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: I am not an expert in drafting.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am not also, but that is what we normally see.

HON. AJIBOLA MANLEY SPAIN: I have the experience, Mr Chairman. I have been Chairman of the Legislative Committee for many years.

THE CHAIRMAN: Your proposal reads: "A person shall not be liable to the punishment of death for an offence committed in Sierra Leone." I think the 'the' is okay.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: It is okay because it is a definite article.

THE CHAIRMAN: We can say 'any' offence, instead of 'an offence.'

HON. AJIBOLA MANLEY SPAIN: It can be 'any' offence.

HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH: Mr Chairman, the word 'any' is ambiguous and more dangerous. Let us be specific here. We should not use the word 'any.'

HON. MUSTAPHA SELLU: Mr Chairman, if we are amending the Act that is before us, then the word should be 'any' because death penalty is death penalty. If we want to use a caveat, then we are undermining the very Bill itself.

HON. ABU B. FOFANA: Mr Chairman, I think we should use the word 'any.' The aim is to meet with international standards and our own standards. I am sure any offence relating to death penalty should be removed from the laws.

HON. ALPHA A. BAH: Mr Chairman, the use of the word 'any' makes it more emphatic. I am sure the intent and purpose is to abolish the death penalty. If that is the case, I suggest the word 'any.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member.

HON. DAINEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, In fact the word '**any**' even captures non-existing offences that may even come due to technology or whatsoever. I am saying that whether the offence exists now or later, the word '**any**' will capture future offences. Therefore, '**any**' is more appropriate.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Sometimes our learned lawyer, Honourable Manley Spain is very careful when trying to introduce an adjective to define death penalty. Mr Chairman, in interpreting words such as '**shall**', '**may**' and '**any,**' we need to be very careful because we are not interpreting the law. I have consulted and came to find out that the words, '**any**' and '**an**' could mean the same, but according to the Draftsman, the appropriate word we should use '**an.**' I listened to all the opinions they have put forward.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, the Draftsman has to defend his handiwork.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: No, '**an**' is not there.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you surprised? The word '**an**' is there.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I have seen it.

THE CHAIRMAN: So he has to defend what he has written? Honourable Member, are you surprised?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: We have consulted them and they yielded. I am saying this because we have to look at the intent. Honourable Alpha Amadu Bah also said we have to look at the intent. I am sure '**an**' and '**any**' can be the same.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member from Koinadugu said the word '**any**' could connote either an existing or future offence.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: That is his interpretation, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Fortunately, the Attorney General and Minister of Justice is here.

MR ANTHONY Y. BREWAH: Mr Chairman, I believe Section 1 of this Act is an omnibus provision. You can use any of them and it will still be left with the

interpretation which will later come in the Court. However, any of these words, 'a,' 'an' or 'any' is appropriate. This House can insert any one of them.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Chairman, I agree with the Attorney General, but my position here is slightly different from what he is saying. Since we are amending the Act, I am sure the intention of the Drafters must be made very clear because of the nature and importance of this Bill we are discussing. We should not leave it at the discretion of the Judiciary to decide. We want to establish the intention of the drafters. We are the drafters of the law, but we do not have the expertise.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thought you were going to follow the queue.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: No, Mr Speaker. I want us to consult sir. We should not bulldoze at all because we are making laws that affect the lives of Sierra Leoneans.

HON. MATHEW S. NUYMA: I propose that we go through this document clause by clause. We should not also forget that we have Section 16 in the Constitution we were arguing about this morning.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is a dangerous path you want to introduce.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I know it is an entrenched clause and I am not going there. We are saying that this is a creature of Parliament and the Constitution is supreme. If we want to ensure the abolition of death penalty, we should have specific words to be inserted. I am sure 'an' is specific, while 'any' is general. I want the word 'an' to be inserted. As the AG said, it is an omnibus provision and therefore we should use the word 'an' in the spirit of the drafter.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you have confused me further. I thought the word 'an' was specific.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: The word 'any' is omnibus.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I only re-echoed what the Minister said. The word 'an' is specific while 'any' is omnibus or general.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Minister is happy with the use of the word '**any**' and that is what he said.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I am sure the word '**an**' is appropriate.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Chairman, we are looking at what they have drafted. What we are doing is based on the spirit of the law. I think what we will agree on is should be captured. I am sure if the Bill was okay, we would not have had reason for it to come to this House for us to look at it and make the necessary corrections or amendments. I think the word '**any**' is omnibus. The Attorney General said any of these '**a**,' '**an**' and '**any**' words could be used, but some of us believe that the word '**any**' is more acceptable.

HON. DR ABDULAI SESAY: Mr Chairman, I have a little problem with the word '**shall**.' I am not an English student, but I think it will help us also to understand things better. Mr Chairman, nearly every jurisdiction has said that the word '**shall**' is confusing because it can also mean '**may**,' '**will**' or '**must**'. If you look at the Federal Laws of Civil Procedures, they no longer use the word '**Shall**.' Mr Chairman, you would agree with me that even the Supreme Court had ruled that when the word '**Shall**' appears in a Statute, it means '**may**.' So, I just wanted you to help me understand this better.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I listened to the learned Attorney General when he spoke about omnibus and I was trying to emphasise that point and I think we have clarified it. Maybe Honourable Ajibola Manley Spain will help us define the words '**May**' and '**Shall**.' I want to believe that the word '**Shall**' is more emphatic. We need clarification on that, Mr Chairman. Maybe he has used it in Court because he is dealing directly with the Court System. So, this is why we need serious consultations on these issues. I think we need to look at them carefully and come up with something that is acceptable. We are trying to ensure that death penalty is abolished and that is what is on the side notes.

THE CHAIRMAN: But it has to be in a very peremptory language.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Exactly, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, 'shall' is appropriate.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Yes, 'shall' is appropriate and we should use it.

HON. AJIBOLA MANLEY SPAIN: Mr Chairman, I think in our jurisdiction, 'shall' will never mean 'may' and the Attorney General can defend that. I am sure 'shall' is mandatory.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is peremptory.

HON. AJIBOLA MANLEY SPAIN: 'Shall' is peremptory and mandatory.

THE CHAIRMAN: Absolutely, Honourable Member.

HON. AJIBOLA MANLEY SPAIN: Mr Chairman, Section 90 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, for example, says: "The business of Parliament 'shall' be conducted in the English Language." That will never mean "The business of Parliament 'may' be conducted in any other language apart from English Language."

THE CHAIRMAN: Not under my watch, Honourable Member ... - *[Laughter]*. I know that Sheik wants to say something for the second time, but I would want the Honourable Ajibola Manley Spain to move a Motion on the amendment he would like to introduce to Clause 1.

HON. AJIBOLA MANLEY SPAIN: Mr Chairman, may I move that Clause 1 be amended to read: 'A person shall not be liable to the punishment of death for any offence committed in Sierra Lone.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Any seconder?

HON. DAINEL B. KOROMA: I so second.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

THE CHAIRMAN: We move to Clause 2.

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: Mr Chairman, with your permission, Clause 2 reads: "Where an act, before coming into force, of this Act provides that a person is liable to the punishment of death, the reference to the punishment of death shall be read,

construed and applied as penalty of imprisonment for life.” Mr Chairman, it is unfortunate that the Director of Prisons is not here, but my research tells me that the actual calculation of imprisonment for life is very light; it is twenty years, less than 1/3 of 20 years. So, if we replace the word ‘death’ with ‘life imprisonment,’ in this very important Clause, it means ‘life imprisonment’ will mean twenty years. Mr Chairman, when I was doing the research, Correctional Service has a terminology known as ‘Remission.’ The ordinary remission refers to the traditional 1/3 remission granted to all convicted inmates on the basis of industry and exemplary behaviour. So, remission is calling for 1/3 of the sentence term given to you to reduce the imprisonment period. So, if life imprisonment means twenty years, and 1/3 is normally knocked off, it is my submission that life imprisonment will be too light for offences of murder, treason, robbery with aggravation and larceny *[Applause]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, you have stated your position. I just want to draw the attention of the House to Clause 2. Let me state here that Clause 2, as drafted, does not give the Court any discretion.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: That is correct, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is that what you were looking for?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: No Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Or you are looking for a graduated scale of punishment?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Exactly, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: The maximum of which will be life imprisonment.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: And the interpretation as he has cited.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Hindolo Gevao is a Lawyer of high standing but in the first place, let me draw your attention to the issue of penalty. The Latin word for penalty is ‘poena.’ Under poena, there is what is known as poenology, which deals with the study, the theory and practice of prisons management and criminal rehabilitation.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thought you claimed to be a scientist.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Well, I am a science student. I am building a case, so that my colleagues can understand. This is a very sensitive issue. For me, we are a progressive nation. I have defined Poenology and I have also spoken about the origin of the word 'penalty.' I said we are talking about normal temperature and pressure where people can say anything, but abnormal temperature and pressure is where someone's relative is killed in front of him/her and the first thing that will come to mind is revenge. The question is how to kill that individual. I am against that form of death penalty because I believe in the Ten Commandment.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, we have heard situations where people have been convicted and killed, but later evidence showed that the Judge at that time did not have enough to kill that particular person. So, as a progressive nation, that is why we are here to abolish the death penalty which we have been talking about for a very long time now. The bottom line here is that we do not want anyone to use this law as a political tool to victimise his or her political opponent. So, we also need to understand the principle of Separation of Powers which we have observed for a very long time. We however need to understand the human errors. I think we need to give some latitude to the Judges.

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

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I just want us to have some understanding. We should give our Judges discretion and that is enshrined on Page 3. We can say 'conviction to a maximum term of life imprisonment.' That is what I am pushing for, Mr Chairman. We have said instead of life imprisonment, we should ensure judicial discretion. I propose that we use 'maximum term of life imprisonment' instead 'life imprisonment.'

THE CHAIRMAN: So, what will you introduce?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I will introduce 'to a maximum term of life imprisonment.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Shall we put maximum before penalty?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Okay Sir. It now reads as 'maximum penalty of imprisonment for life.' I thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, we now have 'construed and applied as a maximum penalty of imprisonment for life.'

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Exactly, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is just a matter of inserting the word 'maximum.'

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, majority of Members of Parliament are lay people and we do not want many legal minds. You should allow the lay people to make the laws and the legal minds will argue later. This is not the place to argue the law, but the Law Court. I do not understand what they meant by the word 'maximum.' So, I want to suggest that we have a time limit. We should have a specific time limit for murder and other heinous crimes committed, instead of leaving it open. If you commit a crime and you are below the age of twenty years, we give you a time limit of fifty years, but if you are above the age of forty years, we give you a time limit of thirty or forty years.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, let me remind this House that we can take great pride for having introduced a new offence in this country relating to sexual offences recently. In that Act, we left it to the Court to prepare a scale for determining the imprisonment according to the gravity of the offence committed. We left that to the Judges. My understanding is that the Leader of Government Business was suggesting something similar; that the maximum should be life imprisonment. Whatever that means in the parlance of the Correctional Officers as Honourable Hindolo Gevao was trying to tell us, we leave it to the Court.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, as Member of Parliament, we make laws and we do not leave the decisions of law making to the Court. We make laws and we allow the Court to interpret them.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you cannot make one law for one thing and another law for another thing. We have to be consistent.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Chairman, I think the submission of the Leader of Government Business is good and you are in agreement with him. However, my understanding of 'maximum' before 'penalty' is that we are going to bring the Judges to determine and take decision. In view of honouring the spirit of Separation of Powers, the judges should determine grievous offences relating to murder or the offences that we want to amend that warrant death, life imprisonment or a term as prescribed by the a judge. From experience, I am sorry to state here that we cannot leave everything in the hands of the judges.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, do not say that here.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: This is because we have seen a judge in this country sentenced somebody for sexual offences for twenty-four hours.

THE CHAIRMAN: They are your Courts, Honourable Member.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: This hinges on the life. The human rights activists usually say that life is an inalienable right. If a person is on trial, we expect that the Court to display fairness in terms of the punishment to be meted on the individual who is standing trials. So, I would want to agree with the Deputy Leader of Government Business that we prescribe a punishment outside the judicial discretion.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, as stated by my colleague from Lumley and Juba, that we cannot leave this issue at the discretion of the Judges. The discretion of the Judges should be guided and that is why we are here. I want to support the Deputy Leader of Government Business that we have a definite term. If we use the word 'maximum,' we should also think of the word minimum. We should have something like not below thirty years and maximum of life imprisonment. This is because we have different offences. Normally, the Judge will decide whether a particular offence should go for life imprisonment or this other particular offence should go for a death penalty. Therefore, let us decide on a minimum term and a maximum term.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, if they had read this document, they would realised that there is a provision in the Larceny Act, 1916 and it reads: "A person who robs another person commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a prison term not exceeding fifteen years." I am certain that they have taken their time to address some of these issues under the previous headings. If you go to the military, there is an addendum. Mr Chairman, Page 5, Clause B "... shall by conviction by Court Martial be liable to life imprisonment or any other punishment provided by this Act." That is under the Sierra Leone Military Armed Forces Act of 1961. So, it is different for every sector. If you look at what we are debating now, you are trying to establish a maximum term of imprisonment, instead of imposing a death penalty. We want to accept the fact that we abolish the death penalty. We have argued about the safeguards. So, if you want to ensure the safeguards, you have to include judicial discretion and there must be Separation of Powers. We must trust the other Arm of government.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, inserting sixty or seventy will depend on the type of offence. We also have to give discretion to the Judges. We can include 'maximum' and leave the rest to the Judge to deliver the sentence, instead of saying fifty or sixty years. For me, the use of the statement 'maximum term of imprisonment' makes provision for safeguards and gives us the latitude to look at the Separation of Powers.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have made a very powerful case.

HON. EMELLIA L. TONGI: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. I am happy that the gentleman that drafted this Bill is around. According to Honourable Hindolo Gevao's explanation from a research he conducted, if somebody rapes a seven year old girl to death and he is sentenced to life imprisonment, I am sure that will be okay. We should not allow any presidential pardon and the perpetrator should be subjected to hard labour. I am saying this as a mother because we feel the pain better than the men. So, let the Legislative Committee steps in once again, so that we can abolish this death penalty law with satisfaction. The way it is now is very simple and that is why it has to be made a bit draconian. I thank you.

HON. REBECCA Y. KAMARA: Mr Chairman, sometimes when we want to trash out certain things from this House, we always bring in sentiments. This particular issue we are discussing now should not be sentimentalised because we talking about people who kill others and what to do with them. We have lots of laws and sometimes when things get to the Court, you started seeing laws contradicting themselves. When you go to Court, you will see lawyers citing different laws relating to the same issue.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, if we are talking about maximum sentence, I want to know the meaning of life imprisonment. The Honourable Hindolo Gevao spoke about discretion of the Judges. If, for instance, I have killed someone when I was eighteen years and later sentenced to twenty years of imprisonment through the use of discretion by the Judge, instead of life imprisonment, I am sure by the time I serve my jail term, I would have been thirty-eight years old. I will be out of prison very active and I would again start saying, S.O. 2 are go kill you and are go to jail.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, let us be very careful in what we insert in our law books. I know that Clause 1 has established that we are going to abolish the death penalty, but let us focus on Clause 2, so that when we talk about life imprisonment, by the time the person comes out, he/she will be thinking of something better to do with his/her life. He/She will not think about killing others anymore. We have Tramadol amongst us and a lot of the young people, both men and women, are using Tramadol. If in the course of taking Tramadol an argument ensued, they will start using knives against themselves. They will start butchering themselves and when they are sentenced, they will be happy because they know that they will be granted Presidential Pardon. When they come out of prison, they will be proud to say, S.O. 2, 'are go kill you en are go jail.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, let us look at this particular Clause and unanimously come out with something serious. We have to ensure that when a prisoner is released, he or she should be able to know that the crime he/she committed was wrong he/she would not think of committing same.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, due to the fact what we are considering is so important, I want to allow everybody to contribute.

HON. DR KANDEH K. YUMKELLA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, listening to the debate so far, I think we find ourselves in a dilemma of the chicken and pig commitment. The chicken told the pig that they should show full commitment; therefore the pig should donate bacon, while the chicken should donate egg. To produce egg, the chicken did not have to die, but to produce bacon, the pig has to die. We have agreed that there should be no more death penalty, but death penalty is final punishment and you are gone. We are now saying that instead of death, it should be life imprisonment. Honourable Hindolo Gevao said that there are lots of flexibilities in the life sentence. I think we should be specific with timeframe as proposed by Honourable Bashiru Silikie. I am suggesting minimum of twenty-five years.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, please stick a pin in it. If you do not mind, please look at the schedule. I think what you have said is already captured in the first part of the schedule; and for murder is life imprisonment and for manslaughter is twenty-five years.

HON. KANDEH K. YUMKELLA: Mr Chairman Honourable Rebecca Y. Kamara from Kono is concerned about the definition and the flexibility Honourable Hindolo Gevao spoke about. If the clause is too flexible, someone could easily work out of prison after serving ten years for killing somebody wilfully or knowingly. Some of these concerns are legitimate and you have to accommodate them. Again, looking at the schedule, I thought a minimum of twenty-five years is reasonable. We have to look at the concerns raised by the Honourable Leader of Government Business and the Honourable Lahai Marah that we leave it to the Judge to decide. We now have a range, but the range should not be so light for somebody to be imprisoned for ten years after killing somebody deliberately. I do not know if that is a workable compromise, but the lawyers in the House will help us.

HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA: Mr Chairman, while I still sail from the ship of the learned Honourable Hindolo Gevao, we are going to recommend that we insert

something in Section 2. I am sure two speakers spoke about Separation of Powers and I also learnt many ago from Baron de Montesquieu, a French Political Jurist, who contested the issue of Separation of Powers, that there can be no definite or absolute Separation of Powers because Section 73 of the 1991 Constitution clearly states that the President is a Member of Parliament. The learned Attorney General and Minister of Justice is hardly separated from the Executive or the Judiciary. So, one would hardly notice complete Separation of Powers. In the interest of most Sierra Leoneans I have engaged, while I would agree wholeheartedly with Clause 2 of this particular Bill, I would also recommend that we insert a caveat that is devoid of a Presidential Pardon. For life imprisonment, I cannot calculate the maximum or the minimum years because that should be decided by the Judges. We should exclude Presidential Pardon for somebody that kills, especially first degree murder. Let us have a caveat that will serve as a safeguard for some of us that are so vulnerable. We speak our minds, but there is no security. I live because 'the Lord is my shepherd' and that is my security; and because I live, the Lord is my Shepherd, let there be a caveat that will protect and send fear to potential murderers. I thank you very much, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution.

HON. VERONICA K. SESAY: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the sentiments the Honourable Rebecca Y. Kamara was talking about. The Laws that we are making here are not only for ourselves, but for the people we represent. They are Sierra Leoneans.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I am totally confused. I have been listening to the learned lawyer. I am not a lawyer; I do not have law background, but sometimes I admire the lawyers. I am totally confused with the words 'life imprisonment.' In connection with the prison scenario my learned lawyer cited and the need for Director of Prisons to be here, I do not know whether prison was involved during the drafting of this particular section. We are confused and the layman would want to know the definition of 'life imprisonment.'

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, we are trying to abolish the death penalty and we do not have any qualms about that. In line with what the Honourable Member said, sometimes we sentence people to life imprisonment and after some time, they are seen back in our communities. Then the layman will begin to say S.O. 2, na di parliamentary dem way bin dae.' So, we do not want that problem at all, Mr Draftsman. We want a special definition for 'life imprisonment' because we do not want to hear Presidential Pardon or Amnesty, etc. We want a clear definition because when you are sentenced to life imprisonment, you should be there forever and that goes with hard labour. These prisoners should be engaged in farming and produce enough rice for our people who have been crying for rice. Those people should be seen working in the farms like in South Africa in those days. You should go there and work and that will serve as a lesson to others. If we just say 'life imprisonment,' it is not enough. So, we want clarification. I thank you very much.

HON. AJIBOLA MANLY-SPAIN: Mr Chairman, people have been saying that we should include Presidential Pardon. We do not have that right to do that at all. It will not be in line with the provision of the 1991 Constitution of this country. The President has the powers to grant pardon. For example, if you are convicted for using bad words, the President can give you a pardon. We cannot say the President cannot grant pardon to somebody that has been convicted for treason or murder. So, let us just forget about that; let us see how we can insert minimum and maximum if that is what we want.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Point or Order, Mr Chairman. I want to state something different. Mr Chairman, I want to remind this House that Sierra Leone has ratified the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights [ICCPR]. So, even if we enact the Abolition of the Death Penalty Bill into law, we would have to resentence those who are on death roll; and that is what Article 51 of the ICCPR talks about. So, you are going to look at Article 51 to resentence those on death roll. They can be given lighter sentence because they should benefit from it. I am sure that is also in line with Section 63[c] of the 1991 Constitution. So, this is why I said in my opening statement that we have a schedule. For some provisions, there are durations given for the sentences and for

others, it is life imprisonment. So, let us be careful and be mindful of the Conventions we have ratified here. This is why I am reminding Members about the ICCPR.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I think that happened under your Leadership as Foreign Minister in the 90s. I am certain that after this, we are yet to ratify the other protocols under the same umbrella. We are bringing these issues because we want to make progressive laws and we should make laws in conformity with international standards. This is why in the spirit of this Bill, they have categorised various sections where we can insert sentences or give maximum life imprisonment. We should respect the judicial discretion and we should also respect the principle of Separation of Powers. Let us have confidence in our Judges and that is my humble submission.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, in relation to the concerns raised by the Leader of Government Business, there is no problem according to this drafting and any drafting that excludes the phrase 'not exceeding' is not a good law. In every sentence, there must be 'not exceeding.' That gives clear discretion to the Judges to take decision based on the gravity of the offence. So, that discretion is not an issue here because every sentence is preceded by the phrase 'not exceeding.'

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, it is unfortunate that Honourable Hindolo Gevao is not here, but raised a very important issue.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Point of Order, Mr Chairman. I now challenge Honourable Hindolo Gevao to provide the reference to this House because the Honourable Daniel B. Koroma is now referencing him. Let him reference the document that talks about imprisonment terms he was talking about. This is because you are now referencing him. I have just spoken to the Director of Prisons and he was not able to establish to me whether that law exists. Probably they are doing it on their own.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, let me read out something that I hope will guide the debate and put certain issues into context. This is the Sierra Leone Correctional Service Act of 2014. I need the attention of the House because this is very important. Section 59, Sub-section 6 of the 2014 Correction Service Act reads: 'For the

purpose of calculating remission of sentence, imprisonment for life shall be deemed to be twenty years imprisonment." Let me draw your attention to the schedule in front of us. It says: "For murder, the sentence is life imprisonment; for manslaughter, the sentence is for a term not exceeding twenty-five years." We have an existing law that tells us that life imprisonment is twenty years. I want the Attorney General to take that into account as we continue the debate. I will stand the House down for one hour because we need further consultations, involving the Leadership and the Attorney General *[Applause]*.

[The House stood down at 12:45 p.m. and resumed at 1:45 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: Honorable Members, you would agree with me that we reached a very critical point where consultations became necessary and that is why we adjourned for a short while. The short adjournment has produced an agreed position for us to be able to move forward. We have agreed on the way forward and I hope that once we are able to agree on the way forward, the rest will be very productive and that will bring us to a close of today's sitting. So, I will invite the Leader of Government Business to do the needful.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. We have reached a compromise taking into consideration importance of ensuring the sanctity of life. So, I am going to move two Motions that have to do with the said Clause under discussion. In Clause 2, Side Note says 'Substitution of imprisonment for life.' Clause 2 reads: **"Where an Act before coming into force of this Act provides that a person is liable to the punishment of death, the reference to the punishment of death shall be read, construed and applied as maximum penalty of imprisonment for life."** This is now Clause 2[a]. Clause 2[b] will now read as: **"For the purposes of this Act, life imprisonment shall mean an imprisonment for a term not less than thirty years."** From our consultations, we discovered from various Articles that the best practice has been between twenty-five to thirty years. However, looking at the need for the preservation of life, we decided to take the minimum. I thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thank the Leader of Government Business. Any seconder to that Motion?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I so second, Mr Chairman.

HON. HINDOLO M. GEAVO: I have a counter Motion, Mr Chairman. I know he is my Leader, but I have two counter Motions. The first counter Motion is that I would read the same Clause. **“Where an Act before the Act coming into force of the Act provides that a person is liable to the punishment of death, the reference to the punishment of death shall be read, construed and applied as a punishment of imprisonment for the entire span of the convict’s life in prison’.** This is one, Mr Chairman. I want us to insert ‘...for the entire span of the convict’s life in prison.’

THE CHAIRMAN: Is that your Motion, Honourable Member?

HON. HINDOLO M. GEAVO: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any seconder to that Motion?

HON. SAHR CHARLES: I so second, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would put the counter Motion.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: I was in the meeting, but can we just get the advantages and disadvantages of his own position, so that we are properly guided.

HON. HINDOLO M. GEAVO: Mr Chairman, speaking from an informed position being a Barrister and Solicitor of 18 years standing, I will inform this House that even the draft Crime Produce Law that is about to come before this House has spelt life imprisonment to mean the convict spending his entire life span in prison for murder and twenty-five years for manslaughter. So, if we define life imprisonment as a period of thirty years for murder and ‘manslaughter,’ which is killing without malice for a period of twenty-five, I do not see any logic on that. Mr Chairman, you would agree with me that punishment for murder, treason, robbery with aggravation and mutiny will be so light and I find it very difficult to convince my constituents on that *[Applause]*.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, my learned colleague made reference to a document that can be described as a proposed Bill. In fact it is not even a Bill and we know that all Bills are proposals for the consideration of this House. So, what is contained in a proposed Bill cannot dictate to this House because it is subject to our approval. Secondly, he made reference to manslaughter in this Bill. In this Bill, the word preceding the twenty-five years is 'not exceeding' and that is the difference. This Motion is proposing 'not below thirty years.' I want to make reference to our eleven years rebel war. The perpetrators who bear the greatest responsibility were tried by the Special Court of Sierra Leone. You know what they did? They did exactly what we have done right now. The intention was to imprison them for life. I am sure based on Honourable Hindolo M. Gevao's definition, which I am in agreement with; ICC used fugues, instead of 'life imprisonment.' They sentenced those people based on fugues and not 'life imprisonment.' That is exactly what we have done now. So, since we have stated the minimum, we can also state the maximum. In my opinion, it should be a minimum of thirty years.

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: Mr Chairman, I want all of us to have a solemn moment. If, for instance, may the Lord forbid, someone comes to this House and shot at Members of Parliament which will result in fifty deaths, would you imprison that murderer for twenty years? Again, if someone is driving a vehicle and all of the sudden he/she kills a pedestrian and is charged for manslaughter, it is killing without malice. The sentence can be twenty-five years or below; and for the one dealing with 'minimum of thirty years, the Judge can decide.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want the Honourable Daniel B. Koroma to tell me if it is fair for someone who commits manslaughter to be sentenced for twenty-five years and while one who commits murder is sentenced for thirty years. You should not forget about the principle of remission. Remission means deducting 1/3 of a convict's prison term. So, if you are talking about thirty years, then we are practically talking about twenty-three years. So, if an eighteen year old man kills me and is given twenty-three years imprisonment, by the time he is fifty-four, he is out of prison and I am gone

for ever [*Applause*]. If an eighteen year old man kills my daughter, who is just four years old and the man is given twenty-eight years, my daughter would have gone forever. Therefore, I insist that 'life imprisonment' should mean 'the convict spends the remaining span of his/her life in prison.

HON. AJIBOLA MANLEY SPAIN: Mr Chairman, I do not believe that the proposer of the counter Motion is interpreting what has been said or purposed in the main Motion. In jurisprudence, we are removing the death sentence and you should not give a sentence that is tantamount to death sentence. If you say the man is to spend the rest of his natural life in prison that is death sentence. I am speaking with authority, Mr Chairman. If we are removing death penalty, but you want a twenty-five old man who has committed murder to spend the rest of his life in prison, then we are being counterproductive. I am sure when you are imprisoned, you should be rehabilitated. If you are going to spend the rest of your life there, what is the point of rehabilitating you? That is the point, Mr Chairman. We should not be counterproductive. We now have the Correctional Service which ensures that the convict is rehabilitated. If we tell a murderer that we are not going to kill him/her, but he/she will spend the rest of his/her life in prison, then it is a death sentence. You have no hope of coming out of prison. So, it will be counterproductive of what we are doing now. We might as well leave it as death penalty. It is better for you to die next year than you spend forty years or more in prison before you die.

HON. MATTHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, when this debate started, I first of all started by defining the words 'penalty' and 'poenology.' Mr Chairman, looking at the provision in the schedule, it is very clear to all of us, including those practicing law, that for you to start talking about death penalty, it is very difficult. We are not trying to make crime lucrative. We should stop being very sceptical about the Judges or the Courts we have. There is no way we are going to achieve this without the Judiciary and there is no way we would progress as a nation without incorporating international best practice. When we went out for consultations, we asked our colleagues on the other side and he brought Articles. We discovered that the best practice for life imprisonment

is between twenty-five to thirty years. As a progressive nation, we need to be on a par with other States. I am sure over hundred nations have removed the death penalty from their law books. I am also certain that more than twenty countries in Africa have done same. Today, we want to toe the line as a progressive nation to remove this law which I refer to as not fit for this 21st Century. People have used it to eliminate their political opponents. If we have faith in the Judiciary, which I do, I do not know for others, but I believe that we should not look at them differently because there is no way we can make the laws if the Judiciary is not involved.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, even if you remove the death penalty and put what they want, but if you look at Section 63 [c], Article 51[1] of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights [ICCPR], they will also tell you to reduce the level of sentence for those on death roll when this Bill is enacted into law. So we have to do it in conformity with the existing laws and international best practice. I respect the concerns raised by Honourable Hindolo M. Gavao, but we are not saying minimum is thirty years; we are saying not less than thirty years for murder and not exceeding twenty-five years for manslaughter. We started with maximum term of imprisonment for life, but we saw the need to include the number of years and we have done that also. However, others are still saying that an individual who has been convicted of certain offences must spend his or her entire life in prison. So, what is the essence for the abolition of the death penalty? It is in this very House that we are talking about safeguards. Let us ask ourselves where are the latitudes for safeguards? You can only have safeguards when you talk about giving the judicial system a directional decision. You cannot compel or coerce them to take certain decisions.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the whole idea of this Bill is to remove the death penalty from our law books. Whatever thing that relates to death penalty is the punishment that you are going to undertake and that is why every section has been modified. We have gone further to say ‘...other punishment as provided by this Act.’ For manslaughter and robbery, they have given a time limit; but for murder, we are now saying not less than thirty years. The question we should now ask ourselves is,

why are we here wasting time if we do not want to abolish the death penalty? We are here because we want to abolish the death penalty law in order to be in line with the international best practice. We want to follow the Protocols that we have ratified here. We need to give a limitation and to also give the Judiciary the latitude to take decision. We need to have respect for Separation of Powers. I rest my case, Mr Chairman.

HON. LAHAI MARRAH: Mr Chairman, we are here today to abolish the death penalty; we are not here to change the definition. If we are here to abolish the death penalty law, let us do that and if we are here to give another definition, let us do it. I therefore support the Leader of Government Business.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, a minimum of thirty years is very serious. If you go to other countries, their life imprisonment sentences have time limit, such as fifteen, twenty or thirty years and that is why we are abolishing it. We do not want to give a definition that allows the convict to spend his/her entire life in Prison because that could also mean death penalty. We are here to abolish death penalty. If we are abolishing it, let us do that, instead of giving it a new meaning, Mr Chairman. My point is that the thirty years minimum should stay. The leaders that represent us have taken a decision and we should support him. I therefore call on all my colleagues to do justice to this particular document. I support the position of the Leadership.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, when the Honourable Member was making his presentation, I saw the Attorney General shaking his head in disagreement. I do believe he has something to say contrary to the Honourable Member's submission. I thank you very much.

HON. DR UMPHA S. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, based on the argument before us, we find ourselves at a crossroad. The crossroad we find ourselves is that some colleagues are equating death penalty or the removal of it as a retributive justice issue. Like the Honourable Member from Falaba just stated, we need to have a definite removal of the death penalty and the removal of this death penalty means to give a life sentence. Of course when he stated that some jurisdictions have time limits of fifteen, twenty or thirty years, the United States which a lot of us envy as one of the best nations in the

world, has more than one life sentence. So, somebody, as in this case may run thirty years sentence minimum based on the level of offence. The Judge can decide to give that same person two or three life sentences.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Honourable Member from Kailahun mentioned treason, mutiny and murder. Of course if we only confine ourselves to treason, I believe a lot of us would be less constrained because the other issues like murder, aggravated assault and larceny are offences that touch on the lives of people in this country. If we are going to take it as a blanket, I believe we should also consider the life. With your permission, Thomas Jefferson once said: "We hold this true to be self-evident that all men are created equal, and that all of us have that inalienable right given to us by our creator that we should have life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." So, the issue here is life and we are not going to debate liberty or the pursuit of happiness. If we want to protect life, it does not mean that we should give life to protect life. My senior colleague from the Western Area talked about sentencing someone for the rest of his/her life, which is equal to death penalty.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, granting life imprisonment is like keeping the death penalty in another form. However, based on the gravity of the offence, for example, mass murder or crimes against humanity are understandable situations. You cannot say if a terrorist comes and set this whole building ablaze should only be given thirty years imprisonment. The individual may probably be given multiple life sentences. If the law says thirty years, it is the minimum and the Judge may decide to give that person multiple life sentences. So, we should not take the spirit out of this, which in essence is to reform our laws to be in consonance with international best practice. We should not water this down at all. I thank you, Mr Chairman.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, the essence of imprisonment is to rehabilitate or transform the individual from his bad act, so that when he comes back to society, he can live a decent life. You would agree with me that twenty-five or thirty years imprisonment are not ten days. The aim is to ensure that the offender is properly guided and transformed and that is why the name of the institution was changed from

Prisons to Correctional Service. We have enacted the Sexual Offences Act and its attendant sentences and there was no further debate on that. So, I want to support the Leader of Government Business because we want to be on par with other countries.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Member, we should not make laws with emotions. What we want to do is to catch up with the times, taking into cognisance the whole world is pushing for the abolition of death penalty. The Honourable Hindolo M. Gavao said that there are definitions and there are time limits for life imprisonment and that other countries tagged death penalty to twenty or thirty years. I am sure taking that into cognisance, we should not make laws with our emotions attached. We should compare our laws to those in other countries. We should not make laws just to serve us here; we should make laws that are in line with other laws in other countries. Therefore, I support the Leader of Government Business when he said we should include time limit to life imprisonment. Let the decision be made by the Court. In other words, the Judge can decide otherwise, but the Judge cannot take a decision for less than thirty years. You would agree with me that thirty years is not small period for someone to serve a jail sentence.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I believe we should rely on the judgement of our Leaders as they have consulted with the Attorney General. If we fail to listen to the AG's advice, then it means we are making the law for ourselves. The laws should stand the test of time. The Leaders have consulted amongst themselves with the AG and we should believe their judgement. The principal adviser to the Government is the AG. The Leaders have consulted and they are here to explain to us their decision, and I think we should have trust in them. If people are saying we are going to vote on this matter, it means we do not trust the Leadership. Honourable Members, I believe we should rely on the judgement of our Leaders and the AG is here to guide us as the Principal Adviser to the Government. He will not mislead us or advise otherwise. What he is advising us is the best practice. So, I believe we should listen to what the Leaders have said. I thank you very much.

HON. ISHMAIL S. SANDY: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I will not attempt to sound legal, but from a very social and moral grounds, if you look at the memorandum of object, there is a phrase that says: "To make alternative provisions for the punishment of persons so convicted and to provide for other related matters." The key phrase is 'to make alternative provisions.' I want to disclose the opinion of the people we are representing here. Mr Chairman, if you go to PZ area now and do a random interview, people will definitely tell you that they are against the abolition of the death penalty. However, we want to be in line with international best practice and we are compelled to abolish the death penalty.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, looking at this present generation that is characterised by gangsters and cliques who always resort to violence and other social ills, we should be careful. We should look for ways of mitigating those social ills by introducing something that will deter them. Here is a society where people will say, S.O 2, ar go kill you en go biya na jail. We are here trying to reduce the death penalty to thirty years imprisonment. Honourable Hindolo M, Gevao was saying that somebody can go for thirty years imprisonment as long as he/she has achieved his/her aims.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Point of Order, Mr Chairman. I do not want my colleague to misconstrue my position. I want to remind him that this is a Government Bill.

HON. ISHMAIL S. SANDY: Mr Leader, I do agree with your position, but we are here representing the views of our people and we are making this law to protect our people. I support the position of the government, but I want us to move the ceiling a little bit. I am neither criticising him nor supporting Honourable Hindolo M. Gevao, but I want to look for a common ground to graduate a little from minimum of thirty years to at least not less than fifty years and not more than eighty years. So, it should be between fifty and eighty years, so that we have something that can deter people from killing others.

HON. ALPHA A. BAH: Mr Chairman, as I stated earlier, we must underscore the importance of this Bill. It has one essential purpose, and that is to abolish the death penalty. I subscribe to the views of the Honourable Member from Constituency 114, but sentencing someone to life imprisonment means death penalty. We must be able to

balance between mitigating circumstances and aggravating circumstances. Those who are calling for life imprisonment are looking at the aggravating circumstances. What about the mitigating circumstances; i.e., convicting someone for the rest of his life as a result of circumstances that could have mitigated the punishment?

On that note, Mr Chairman, given the references he has drawn that there are certain jurisdictions that go for two term life time imprisonment, we are here to make laws. Of course, we must ensure that we deter people from killing others.

HON. ABU KEMOKAI: Point of Order, Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, before the Honourable Member offer suggestion, I want him to give us an example of a mitigating circumstance?

HON. ALPHA A. BAH: Mr Chairman, we know that there are two elements to an offence, 'the mens rea and the actus reus.' So, there are times in determining the mens rea, given the evidence adduced before the Court and you would know whether there are mitigating circumstances. So, as rightly stated by the Honourable Member from Constituency 114, we can make provision for multiple sentences if the circumstances are aggravating. However, if the circumstances are mitigating, we go for the minimum. This is a midway situation and that is my humble suggestion, Mr Chairman. I rest my case.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have allowed the debate to proceed because I know we are discussing a crucial issue. The AG was part of the consultation that took place during the short adjournment. I would like to invite him at this point as the principal Legal Adviser of the Government to give us some guidance on this issue.

MR ANTHONY Y. BREWAH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I believe the purpose of our meeting today is to abolish the death penalty that has been in our laws books. We held a meeting in the Speaker's Chambers, and all the Leaders of the various political parties represented here were present; and after some debates, we came to a conclusion that because the expression, 'life imprisonment' was too involving, we should

attach a figure to it. We therefore concluded that 'life imprisonment,' in this context, will mean a minimum of thirty years and there was no dissension in that meeting.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I have heard some others suggesting that we should say 'anybody committing any of the offenses listed in this memorandum must be given imprisonment for his entire life.' Other Honourable Members have suggested that that it does not amount to abolishing the death penalty because if you punish a man for his natural life, and you say you do not want to kill him, then in essence, it means you are killing him slowly. Mr Chairman, I want to remind you that international best practice all over the world is to get rid of the death penalty. We know there are exceptions, but even from the first day I presented this Bill to this House, for those of us who were listening, there were accolades all over the world for Sierra Leone to have dared to introduce such a Bill in this Parliament. I want to urge Members not to allow this glorious time to pass by. We know the history of the death penalty law in this country and I do not need to go over that anymore. Some of us here know how some people have been erroneously subjected to the death penalty, only for people to come out later and said there was no evidence or this was fabricated. As someone said, we should not attach our emotions to this because we are doing this for the progress of this country. I will urge all Members of Parliament to support this Bill. Some of us may oppose this law now, but you may not know that maybe after a few moments, either you or close relative may become a victim of the old law. So, I want to urge you to pass this Bill into law. I thank you.

HON. CHERNOR R.M BAH: Mr Chairman, I have been convinced by the AG and I think we should consider all that he has said. It is very important.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thank the Leader of the Opposition. In fact, before you spoke, what I wanted to advise here is for us to be careful. I think we have agreed to get rid of the death penalty and we have done that through the front door, but somehow through the back door, we want to reinstate something that is tantamount to what we are getting rid of, which is a contradiction in itself. As legislators, we have to be very careful. We must be driven by objectivity and by international best practice, and not

entirely by our own personal emotions. I know that it is very difficult to decide, but quite frankly, like it or not, we are confronted with difficult choices here. However, that is the role of all of us as Lawmakers.

HON. PC BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Mr Chairman, I just want to ask the Minister whether there is any clause for parole. In the United States, you can be sentenced to death or life imprisonment, but because of good behaviour or good conduct, you become educated. I have seen prisoners going to universities in the United States and got their degrees. Some even get Masters and PhDs and they were released on parole to become good citizens. Some of them became millionaires or social workers to change the character of students or young people. So, like you said, Mr Chairman, this is a very important. The death penalty has been in the books for a long time. Interestingly, some of the most advanced countries, including the United States, have not changed their laws. They are still carrying out executions. In Sierra Leone, we have seen our presidents using mercy to free prisoners during the country's Independence Day celebrations.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, we have to look into this and see if a provision is made for parole, so that prisoners could become educated and be good citizens. There are some prisoners at the Pademba Road Prisons we need to incorporate them back into society. We have changed the name from Prison to Correctional Service. If it is a Correctional Service, what are we doing as a nation to correct those that are in the correctional centres? Are they being allowed to go to secondary schools and universities to learn or to become carpenters? Some of them are being used to build houses for wealthy and influential people. They take them to do construction at their building sites for free. They are not paid and it is not done under the government of Sierra Leone. They are used by those who have connections with the correctional service officers.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, as you correctly said, this is a critical issue when it comes to dealing with instance like mass murder. So, if we say not less than thirty years, it means we give discretion to the judge to be reasonable enough to look at the gravity of the offence. There are instances where the families will never forgive the

perpetrator and there are other instances where the families forgive the person that commits the crime. In such instances, we have to consider, as a people and as a nation, not to encourage anarchy, knowing that when you go to jail, you will be given ten or fifteen years jail term; and after serving the term, you go back home. There are so many people who usually say, S.O. 2, 'ar dae go jail for you.' Therefore, we have to maintain the balance and this is something that is very important because it touches everybody. The question is, should we make it lenient or hard? I think we just have to look at the middle aspect and legislate because the law has been in the books for all these years and it is not easy for us to just change the death penalty; otherwise hooliganism and anarchy will become the order of the day.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to know if there is a provision for parole, especially for good behaviour or good character? Do we have people who are given parole because of good behaviour? Mr Chairman, we the chiefs are looking for the intellectuals or the educated people and that is why we have to be very careful. If we take out the death penalty, let there be a kind of punishment that scare away others from committing same. We have to look at that, otherwise we will be giving a free ride to criminals and they will rejoice because the threat is no longer there. If we are revoking the death penalty, we have to also take into consideration the political aspect. The coup makers, knowing fully well that they cannot be killed, will embark on plotting coups in the country. So, we have to look at a balance. We the Paramount Chiefs are saying that if you are going to remove the death penalty, let there be proper mechanism to uphold the correctional aspect, so that by the time the person spends thirty or forty years, he or she may have been thoroughly reformed. I rest my case.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thank the Honourable Paramount Chief for his contribution.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, if you look at Section 62, Sub-section 1 of the Correctional Service Act of 2014 makes provision for parole. It is clearly dealt with in that provision. We want to be on a par with the international best practice. We have taken your views or concerns in good faith. I believe we all want to be part of history making. One hundred and nineteen [119] countries have abolished the death penalty

and twenty-one of them are from the Africa Continent. If this Bill is enacted into law today, we are going to be part of the history makers in this country.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I believe we are all doing this with one spirit. I can understand our emotions or passions, but there are sacrifices we have to make in a democracy. If the President thinks about himself alone, he would not have thought of expunging the death penalty or removing Part five [5] of the Public Order Act from our law books. He is a President that thinks about the people and the circumstances we find ourselves. So, I stand with my colleague on the other side and others. I have spoken to Honourable Hindolo M. Gevao to accept the proposal. We have agreed at Leadership level during our consultations and I have just read out our resolutions to the House. The Attorney General has also reiterated on that. With humility, faith and confidence reposed in the Leadership of this House, please accept our resolutions in the interest of progress. This is my position and I think that is where I want us to go; that is what I have registered; and that is my appeal to all Members of Parliament. We are not trying to muzzle your views or concerns, but we want you to understand our position in the international scene. This is something we have sacrificed to do and that is why we should ensure that this country moves forward as a progressive state. I thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thank the Leader of Government Business. Honourable Members, before we go further, let me do a few recognitions of men and women of great eminence amongst us. We have the following in our midst:

- Ibrahim Tommy, Executive Director, Centre for Accountability and the Rule of Law;
- Mr Rashid Dumbuya, Executive Director, Legal Link;
- Emmanuel Salia Gaima, Research Officer, Legal Link;
- Farouk S.T. Adeduyin, Legal Researcher, Institute for Legal Research and Advocacy for Justice;
- Mr Mohamed Wurie Bah, Legal Researcher of the same Institute;
- Mr Amma Sarra Jalloh, Political and Project Officer, Health Secretary Political, the British High Commission in Freetown; and

- Mr Abdul Fatorma, Chief Executive, Campaign for Human Rights and Development.

Honourable Hindolo M. Gevao, having heard all the arguments or statements made, would you now want to tell us whether you have had a rethink on your counter Motion?

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, from day one of this debate, I have supported the repeal of the death penalty and I still stand by that support to remove the death penalty from our law books. I am somebody that always stands for stiffer punishment and I have heard what the Leaders have said. I would beseech you to put the Motion of the Leader on the Floor before I take final decision.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thank the Honourable Member. I will now put the Motion to the House. It is one Motion, but is divided into two: first, to introduce the word 'maximum' to qualify 'penalty' in Clause 2; and second, to have a new Paragraph 2[a] to read: 'for the purposes of this Act, the term life imprisonment has been defined to mean imprisonment for not less than 30 years.'

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we now go to Clause 3 and I hope it is not going to take too much time, if any at all. That is non-controversial.

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

THE CHAIRMAN: There is nothing controversial about Clause 3.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Chairman, on the Motion that we have just agreed, 1[a] should now read: "A person who murders another commits an offence and is liable on conviction to 'life imprisonment.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, maybe you were out of the Well, we have done two things and we have progressed beyond what you are saying. We introduced the word 'maximum' to qualify Clause 2, and Clause 2 now becomes Clause 2 [a] and Clause 2 [b] is the Clause where the term 'life imprisonment' has been defined.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: It's okay, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let us proceed with Clause 1 of the Schedule on Page 2.

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: I just want to see if we can do it in line with what we did on Clause 1 of the Schedule. It says: "A person who murders another commits an offence and is liable on conviction to 'Life imprisonment.'" My concern is on the word 'is.' I was wondering if we can also say 'shall be' because on Clause 1, we have already used 'shall be.' So, the clause now reads: "A person who murders another commits an offence and shall be liable on conviction to life imprisonment."

THE CHAIRMAN: I want to hear from the Attorney General.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Chairman, I want to refer you to Page 3, the top half, after 'a' and 'b.' It says: '...is liable on conviction to imprisonment for life.' So, wherever these words appear in the Bill, they must be corrected accordingly, so that they correspond with what we have agreed on.

THE CHAIRMAN: So we have to replace 'is' with 'shall be'?

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is fine. Let us move to Page 4?

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Chairman, Page 4, Paragraph 'b.' I was thinking whether the name of the Act can be substituted because the Sierra Leone Military is now called the Republic of the Sierra Leone Armed Forces.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: We have to do amendment to the Act if we want to change it. So, it should be like this.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members Page 5?

HON. DAINEL B. KOROMA: Page 4, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you still on Page 4?

HON. DAINEL B. KOROMA: Yes, Mr Chairman. Page 4, Paragraph above 'b' says: "...and he shall on conviction by Court Martial be liable to suffer life imprisonment or any other punishment provided by this Act." In my opinion, I am a little bit scared. If you say '...any other punishment,' it is too open.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Chairman, the Act that is being referred to goes beyond this provision. There are other offences within the Act. It goes beyond what this is referring to. The only thing that attracts death penalty is what we are changing now, but there are other offences in the military and that is what this one is saying.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. We go to Page 5.

MR ANTHONY Y. BREWAH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Part 1 Clauses 1 to 3 and the Schedule stand part of the Bill as amended.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[Part 1, Clauses 1 to 3 and the Schedule stand part of the Bill as amended]

[THE HOUSE RESUMES]

MR ANTHONY Y. BREWAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I report that the Bill entitled, 'The Abolition of the Death Penalty Act, 2021,' having gone through the Committee of the whole House with amendments be read the third time and passed into Law.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

The Bill entitled, 'The Abolition of the Death Penalty Act, 2021,' being an Act to abolish the death penalty in the cases of persons convicted in Sierra Leone of murder under the offences against the persons Act, 1861; Robbery with Aggravation under the Larceny Act, 1916; mutiny under the Sierra Leone Military Forces Act, 1961; Treason and related offences under the Treason and State offences Act, 1963, to make alternative provisions for the punishment of persons so convicted and to provide for other related matters has been read the third time and passed into Law.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Learned Attorney General and Minister of Justice for his patience.

V. ANNOUNCEMENT OF SESSIONAL SELECT COMMITTEES

THE SPEAKER: I want you to just call the Chairpersons and Deputies.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I think the last time we read the Committee on Selections, Supervising Committee, Standing Orders Committee, Public Petition Committee, House Committee and Business Committee.

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNANCE:

Honourable Sidie M. Tunis- **Chairman**

Honourable Chernor R.M Bah- **Deputy**

1. COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENT AND PUBLIC SERVICE:

Honourable Mathew S. Nyuma- **Chairman**

Honourable Bashiru Silikie- **Deputy**

2. COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNT COMMITTEE:

Honourable Segepoh S. Thomas- **Chairman**

Honourable Titus Abu Kamara- **Deputy**

3. LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:

Honourable Abdul S. Marray Conteh- **Chairman**

Honourable Sama I. Sandy - **Deputy**

4. COMMITTEE ON FINANCE:

Honourable Francis Amara Kaisamba –**Chairman**

Honourable Moses Andrew - **Deputy**

5. COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHT:

Honourable Daniel B. Koroma- **Chairman**

Honourable Cecilia M. Bangura - **Deputy**

6. COMMITTEE ON MINES AND MINERAL RESOURCES:

Honourable Saa Emerson Lamina- **Chairman**

Honourable Rebecca Yei Kamara - **Deputy**

7. COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND SANITATION:

Honourable Moses B. Jorkie- **Chairman**

Honourable Mustapha Sellu - **Deputy**

8. COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT PLANNING:

Honourable Musa Fofanah- **Chairman**

Honourable Edward George - **Deputy**

9. COMMITTEE ON TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION:

Honourable Festus Mohamed Lansana- Chairman

Honourable Sarty Banya - Deputy.

10. COMMITTEE ON PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION:

Honourable Mohamed Billoh Shaw- **Chairman**

Honourable Alpha Foday M. Jabbie - **Deputy**

11. COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY:

Honourable Salieu O. Sesay - **Chairman**

Honourable Foday Lamin Kabbah - **Deputy**

12. COMMITTEE ON MARINE RESOURCES:

Honourable Neneh Lebbie- **Chairman**

Honourable Alice Jebbeh Kumabeh - **Deputy**

13. COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY:

Honourable Veronica Kadie Sesay- **Chairman**

Honourable Charles O. Abdulai - **Deputy**

14. COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE:

Honourable Shar Junana- **Chairman**

Honourable Allieu Ibrahim Conteh - **Deputy**

15. COMMITTEE ON INTERNAL AFFAIRS:

Honourable Alusine Kanneh- **Chairman**

Honourable Musa Lahai - **Deputy**

16. COMMITTEE ON ENERGY:

Honourable Keikura C. Vandy- **Chairman**

Honourable Alex M. Rogers - **Deputy**

17. COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Honourable Boston Munda- **Chairman**

Honourable Joseph Williams Lamin - **Deputy**

18. COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND AVIATION:

Honourable Ambrose Maada Lebbie- **Chairman**

Honourable Mohamed S. Coker – **Deputy**

19. COMMITTEE ON TOURISM AND CULTURE:

Honourable Isaac Tom Tucker- **Chairman**

Honourable Emmanuel Saidu Conteh – **Deputy.**

20. COMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES:

Honourable Lahai Marrah- **Chairman**

Honourable [Dr] Mark Mahmoud Kalokoh –**Deputy.**

21. COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:

Honourable Aaron Aruna Koroma **Chairman**

Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara 59 – **Deputy**

22. COMMITTEE ON LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY:

Honourable Hassan Sesay - **Chairman**

Honourable Saidu Barbar Kamara – **Deputy**

23. COMMITTEE ON LANDS AND HOUSING:

Honourable Quinty Salia-Konneh- **Chairman**

Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh –**Deputy**

24. COMMITTEE ON TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

Honourable Dickson M. Rogers- **Chairman**

Honourable Emilia L. Tongi – **Deputy**

25. COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL WELFARE:

Honourable Rose Marie Bangura- **Chairman**

Honourable Hajaratu Faith Samura – **Deputy**

26. COMMITTEE ON WORKS AND PUBLIC ASSETS:

Honourable Silikie - **Chairman**

Honourable Sheku M. Turay – **Deputy**

27. COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AFFAIRS:

Honourable Abdul Kargbo- **Chairman**

Honourable Abdul Latif Sesay – **Deputy**

28. COMMITTEE ON GENDER AND CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS:

Honourable Catharine Tawaraly- **Chairman**

Honourable Rugiatu Rose Kanu – **Deputy**

29. COMMITTEE ON NACSA AND NGOS:

Honourable [Dr] Roland F Kargbo- **Chairman**

Honourable Amandu Kanu – **Deputy**

30. COMMITTEE ON PRIVILEGES AND ETHICS:

Honourable Paramount Chief Allie Badara Sherriff - **Chairman**

Honourable PC Matilda yayu Lansana Mina – **Deputy**

31. COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS:

Honourable [Dr] Kandeh Kolleh Yumkella- **Chairman**

Honourable Bai Sama Kamara – **Deputy**

32. COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT:

Honourable Yusuf Mackery - **Chairman**

Honourable Joseph Bash Kamara – **Deputy**

33. COMMITTEE ON SPORT:

Honourable Alusine Kandeh Alu-Conteh – **Chairman**

Honourable Alpha Amandu Bah –**Deputy**

34. COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Honourable Rebecca Yei Kamara, **Chairman**

Honourable Keikura C. Vandy, **Deputy**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Third Report of the Committee of Selection be adopted by the House.

[Question Proposed Put and Agreed To]

[The Third Report of the Committee of Selection has been adopted by the House]

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have an Internal Notice Paper which I will not read, but I will circulate same to Honourable Members, so that by the time we come back from recess, they will have been fully informed about what is going to be on the Order Paper. So, I will tell the Clerk of the Legislative Committee to circulate the Paper and Honourable Members will get it from their pigeon holes. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, let me repeat my earlier announcement that I am inviting the Honourable Member from Koinadugu, Honourable Daniel B. Koroma and the Honourable Marray Conteh, Chairman of the Legislative Committee, to please meet with me in my Chambers immediately we adjourn this sitting.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, you called for a Caucus meeting.

THE SPEAKER: The meeting of Caucus Leaders will be held in my Chambers.

HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA: Mr Speaker, I rise on S.Os, 23 to bring to the notice of Mr Speaker that a month ago, a Motion was raised by no less a person but a Member from the Committee on Mines and Mineral Resources and was seconded by the Honourable Deputy Leader of Government Business. Mr Speaker, this House will agree with me that the Committee did a very thorough job in our sessional report, coupled with a report on water pollution. The Motion was moved and we are looking forward to debate that particular report and forward the recommendations to the Executive Arm.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Point of Order, Mr Speaker. We are still in this session, but when we come back, the session continues. It is part of our Notice Paper and because of time, the Leader was not able to read the Notice Paper. This House takes that report so important and I seconded the Motion. I am sure when we come back, the session

continues until May, 2022. We will definitely debate that report and it is part of the Notice Paper. So, I crave your indulgence to bear with us until we return. I thank you very much.

HON. DR KANDEH K. YUMKELLA: Point of Order, Mr Speaker. Some of us have recommended for elaborate discussions on the mining sector.

THE SPEAKER: Well, I thought we had agreed earlier on an omnibus resolution that all reports tabled before the House would be debated one after the other after the resumption of Parliament. I was reminded by the Whip of the Opposition this morning that there is an extant resolution on that.

HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA: Mr Speaker, I would have loved to at least get a definitive time from Mr Speaker rather than the Deputy Leader of Government Business. In any case, at least you have heard my submission. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: With that, Honourable Members, it is time for us to go and attend to our other sacred duty which is to be in close touch with our constituents.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, you are asking for a debate. How can we go and talk to our constituents with empty hands.

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at 3:30 p.m. and was adjourned Thursday, 30th September, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.]