

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

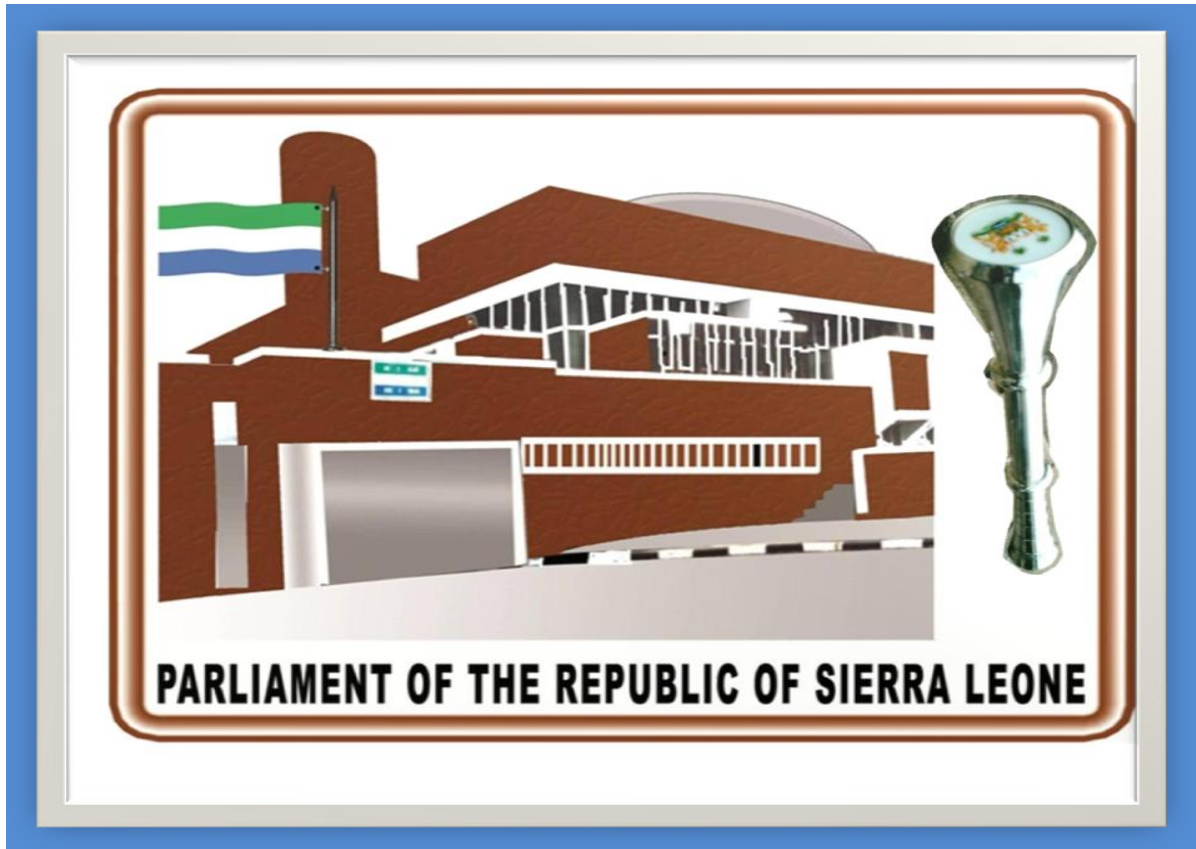
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION – FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 28TH JANUARY, 2025

SESSION – 2024/2025



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held on Tuesday, 28th January, 2025

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THE MINISTER OF TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

TUESDAY 28TH JANUARY, 2025

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Mr Alimamy Lincoln Bangura, read the Prayers]

[The House met at 10:30 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]

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

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S.O. 5[2]

II. CORRECTION OF VOTE AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING, HELD ON THURSDAY, 23RD JANUARY, 2025.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Thursday, 23rd January, 2025. As usual, we shall skip pages 1-4 and start with Page 5. Do you have any comments or correction to make on Page 5?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Mr Speaker, Page 5, Paragraph 4, which is Amendment of the Order Paper. The Motion was seconded by Abdul S. Marray-Conteh. The "A" was omitted and I want the Clerks to take note.

THE SPEAKER: Yes Mr Clerk, take note. Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Can a Member please move?

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

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. AMBROSE M. LEBBY: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Thursday, 23rd January, 2025 has been adopted as amended]

III. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I have been informed by the Sergeant-At-Arms division that some Members of Parliament are used to the habit of parking their vehicles just after Mr Speaker's vehicle. There is a tradition here that where Mr Speaker parks his vehicle no other vehicles are allowed to park there, at the entrance of the building. So, you can park at the back, but do not park in the front. I am pleading with you Members of Parliament to avoid that particular area.

IV. BILLS

B. THE COUNTER TERRORISM ACT, 2024

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH, CHAIRMAN, LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

THE COUNTER TERRORISM ACT, 2024,
COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE
THE HOUSE RESOLVES INTO COMMITTEE

THE THIRD REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE, SECOND SESSION OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE ON THE BILL ENTITLED "THE COUNTER TERRORISM ACT, 2024" THAT WAS PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT ON THURSDAY, 16TH JANUARY, 2025.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I rise to present the Third Report of the Legislative Committee, Second Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone, on the Bill entitled: 'The Counter Terrorism Act, 2024.'

[i] INTRODUCTION

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Bill having gone through the Second Reading and was committed to the Legislative Committee for scrutiny pursuant to the Standing Orders 51[1]. Subsequently, the Committee met on Monday 20th January, and Tuesday, 21st January, 2025 in Committee Room 1, Parliament Building, with the following objectives:

- ❖ to scrutinise in detail the principles and provisions of the Bill and to make amendments if necessary;
- ❖ to ascertain the constitutional and legal implications contained therein; and
- ❖ to report to Plenary for consideration by the Committee of the Whole House in line with S.O[53].

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, in attendance were, Representatives from the Office of National Security [ONS], Legal representative, from the ministry of Defence /RSLAF, Legal Representative from the Financial Intelligence Agency, Representative from the Law Officers Department/Ministry of Justice, the Chairman Legislative Committee, Members of the Legislative Committee and other Members of Parliament

[ii] RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Legislative Committee, having scrutinised the Bill line by line and Clause by Clause recommends the following amendments to the House for approval:

The Short Title be amended to read "**The Counter Terrorism Act, 2025.**

The Long Title of the Bill- approved

PART I – PRELIMINARY:

1. **CLAUSE [1]**- Interpretation- be amended by inserting the following new definitions;

"Aircraft": Any machine that can derive support in the atmosphere from the reactions of the air other than the reactions of the air against the earth's surface.

"Designated Persons or entity": means a person or entity, designated as terrorist or linked to terrorism or the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or the financing thereof or related activities in a list issued by

- a. The Government of Sierra Leone
- b. The United Nations Security Council
- c. The Economic Community of West African States

2. Clause 1: Interpretation - the definition of the phrase "**Financial Intelligence Unit**" be amended by replacing the word "**Unit**" with "**Agency**", replacing the figure "**2**" with figure "**3**", replacing the year "**2012**" with "**2024**" and inserting the phrase "**and Financing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction**" after the word "**Terrorism**" to now read, "Financial Intelligence Agency- means the Financial Intelligence Agency established under sub-section [1] of Section 3 of the Anti-Money Laundering and Combating of Financing of Terrorism and Financing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction Act, 2024 [Act No.4 of 2024]."

3. **Clause [1] Interpretations** - the definition of the phrase "**Sierra Leone Police**" be amended by inserting the phrase "**Act No. 6 of**" before the year "**1991**" to now read "Sierra Leone Police" means the Sierra Leone Police Force established under Section 155 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991, that is primarily responsible for law enforcement and crime investigation throughout Sierra Leone.

4. **Clause [1] Interpretation** - the definition of the phrase "**Terrorist Act**" be amended to read "Terrorist Act" means an act or omission whether committed in or outside Sierra Leone, which constitutes an offence within the scope of a Counter Terrorism Convention to which Sierra Leone is a signatory and includes an act or threat of action in or outside Sierra Leone which –

- (a) Is used –
 - [i] in furtherance of a political, ideological, economic or religious cause;
 - [ii] for the benefit of a proscribed person, group or organization; or
 - [iii] to put the public or a section of the public in fear; and
- (b) cause serious bodily harm to a person;
- (c) causes serious damage to property;
- (d) endangers a person's life;
- (e) creates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public;
- (f) involves the use of firearms or explosives;
- (g) releases into the environment or exposes the public to –
 - (i) dangerous, hazardous, radioactive or harmful substance;
 - (ii) toxic chemicals; or
 - (iii) microbial or other biological agents or toxins; and
- (h) is prejudicial to national security or public safety or designed or intended to disrupt –
 - (i) a computer system or the provision of services directly related to transportation or communications;
 - (ii) banking or financial services;
 - (iii) utilities;
 - (iv) other essential services; or
 - (v) is designed or intended to cause damage to essential infrastructure;”

5. **Clause [1] Interpretations** - the definition of the phrase **“Terrorist Property”** be amended by spacing the word **“are”** from **“intended”** on the second to last line of the sentence.

6. **Clause [1] Interpretations** - the definition of the phrase **“The Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces”** be amended by inserting the phrase **“established under Section 165 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991,”** before the word **“responsible”** to now read **“The Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces”** means the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces established under Section 165 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991, that is primarily responsible for law enforcement and crime investigation throughout Sierra Leone.”

PART II- THE NATIONAL COUNTER-TERRORISM COMMITTEE

7. **CLAUSE 2- National Counter Terrorism Committee-** be amended by inserting a new **[n]** to read **“The Director-General, Financial Intelligence Agency”** and the previous **[n]** becomes **[o]**

8. **CLAUSE 2 sub clause [o]- National Counter Terrorism Committee-** be amended by spacing the word **“Of”** from **“National”** in **line one** and inserting the phrase **“with no voting right”** after the word **“Committee”** to now read **“The Chief of Staff, Office of National Security who shall serve as Secretary to the Committee with no voting right.”**

9. **CLAUSE 3-** Functions of Committee- be approved.
10. **CLAUSE 4-** Powers of Committee- be approved.

PART III - THE NATIONAL COUNTER-TERRORISM COORDINATION COMMITTEE

11. **CLAUSE 5, Sub-clause [J]- National Counter Terrorism Coordination Committee** be amended by replacing the Phrase "**The Commander Joint Force, Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces,**" with the phrase "**The Chief of Army Staff.**"
12. **CLAUSE 5, Sub-clause [I]- National Counter Terrorism Coordination Committee-** be amended by replacing the phrase "**The Director of Financial Intelligence Unit;**" with the phrase "**The Manager of Intelligence and Analysis, Financial Intelligence Agency.**"
13. **CLAUSE 5- National Counter Terrorism Coordination Committee-** be amended by inserting a new "**r**" to read "**The National Cyber Security Coordinator;**" and the previous "**r**" becomes "**s.**"
14. **CLAUSE 5 sub clause [s] (previous clause [r]) - National Counter Terrorism Coordination Committee-** be amended by closing the space between the word "**Secretary**" and "**to**", and **inserting the phrase "with no voting right"** after the word "**Committee**" to now read "The Director, Serious Organised Crime and Counterterrorism Directorate, Office of National Security who shall serve as Secretary to the Committee with no voting right."
15. **CLAUSE 6 sub clause [1] - Functions of National Counter- Terrorism Coordination Committee-** be amended by replacing the lettering of the first sub-paragraph [**e**] with the letter '**c.**'
16. **CLAUSE 6 sub-clause [c]- Functions of National Counter- Terrorism Coordination Committee-** be amended by inserting the word "**The**" before the word "**Coordination.**"
17. **CLAUSE 6 sub clause [d]- Functions of National Counter- Terrorism Coordination Committee-** be amended by replacing the word "**counteract**" with "**counteracting.**"
18. **CLAUSE 6 sub clause [e] Functions of National Counter- Terrorism Coordination Committee-** be amended by replacing the word "**promote**" with "**promoting.**"
19. **CLAUSE 6 sub clause [f]-Functions of National Counter- Terrorism Coordination Committee-** be amended by replacing the word "**enforce**" with "**enforcing.**"
20. **CLAUSE 6 sub clause [g]- Functions of National Counter- Terrorism Coordination Committee-** be amended by replacing the words "**promote and**

protect” with the words “promoting and protecting”

21. **CLAUSE 7- Powers of National Counter Terrorism Coordination Committee-** be approved.

PART IV- THE COUNTER- TERRORISM FUSION CENTRE

22. **CCLAUSE 8-**side note be amended to now read “Counter Terrorism Fusion Centre”
23. **CLAUSE 9 sub clause [2a] (ii) - Counter Terrorism Intelligence Division-** be amended by spacing the words “**Forces**” and “**and**” **on the second to last line.**
24. **C24. CLAUSE 9 sub-clause [2b]- Counter Terrorism Intelligence Division-** be amended by replacing the word “**unit**” with the word “**Agency.**”
25. **CLAUSE 10- Counter Terrorism Operations Division-** be amended by replacing the letter “**b**” with the letter “**a**” after the word “**Paragraph**” and before the word “**of**” to now read “The Counter-Terrorism Operations Division under subparagraph [ii] of paragraph [a] of sub-section [2] of section 8 shall be headed by the Director of Operations, Sierra Leone Police and shall be responsible to”
26. **CLAUSE 10 sub clause [1c] and [1d]- Counter Terrorism Operations Division-** be amended by **exchanging their punctuation marks at the of each phrase**
27. **CLAUSE 10 sub clause 2- Counter Terrorism Operations Division-** be amended by removing the word “**to**” after the word “**support**” and before the word “**the.**”
28. **CLAUSE 10 sub-clause 2c- Counter Terrorism Operations Division-** be amended by closing the spaces on line one and spacing the words “**Transnational**” and “**Organised**” on line two.
29. **CLAUSE 11 sub-clause 1[i] - Counter Terrorism Liaison Officers-** be amended by inserting the phrase “**and sanitation**” after the word “**Health**” to now read “Ministry of Health and Sanitation.”
30. **CLAUSE 11 sub-clause 1[m] - Counter Terrorism Liaison Officers-** be amended by inserting the phrase “**Sierra Leone Commission on Arms**” with the phrase “**the Sierra Leone Commission on Arms and Ammunitions.**”
31. **CLAUSE 11 - Counter Terrorism Liaison Officers-** be amended by inserting a new [n] to read “**Nuclear Safety and Radiation Authority**” and the previous ‘n’ becomes ‘o.’
32. **CLAUSE 12 – Terrorist Act-** be approved.
33. **CLAUSE 13 sub clause 3 – Recruitment into Terrorism or Terrorist Group-** be amended by inserting the phrase “**commits an offence and**” after the phrase “**subsection [1]**” and inserting the word “**of**” after the word “**imprisonment**”

and before the word **"not"** to now read, "to commit an offence under subsection [1] commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years."

34. **CLAUSE 1 sub-clause 2- Directing-** be amended by replacing the phrase **"imprisonment for life"** with the phrase **"a term of imprisonment of not less than 40 years"** to now read, "A person who contravenes subsection [1] commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment of not less than 40 years."
35. **CLAUSE 15 sub clause 1[g]- Violence against safety of Civil Aviation-** be amended by inserting the word **"or"** immediately after the punctuation mark on the last line
36. **CLAUSE 16- Violence against safety at Airport-** be amended by replacing the second letter **"a"** to the letter **"b"**
37. **CLAUSE 16 sub clause 1[a]- Violence against safety at Airport-** be amended by spacing the words **"is"** and **"likely"** on the last line
38. **CLAUSE 16 sub clause 2- Violence against safety at Airport-** be amended by replacing the figure **"30"** with the figure **"40"** to now read "to contravene subsection [1] commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of not less than 40 years."
39. **CLAUSE 17 sub-clause [1c]- Violence against safety of Ship and Fixed Platform** - be amended by spacing the word **"damage"** and the letter **"a"** on line one
40. **CLAUSE 17 sub-clause 1[i]- Violence against safety of Ship and Fixed Platform** - be amended by spacing the words **"or"** and **"participate"** on line three
41. **CLAUSE 17 sub-clause 2- Violence against safety of Ship and Fixed Platform** - be amended by replacing the phrase **"imprisonment for life"** with the phrase **"a term of imprisonment of not less than 40 years"** to now read "to contravene sub-section [1] commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment of not less than 40 years."
42. **CLAUSE 18- Harboursing** - be approved.
43. **CLAUSE 19- Preventing, Hindering, etc.** - be approved.
44. **CLAUSE 20 sub clause [1]- Hostage taking-** be amended by replacing the word **"the"** with the letter **"a"** before the word **"government"** to now read "A person shall not seize, detain or threaten to kill, injure or continue the detention of another person, in order to compel a government, an international organisation, a natural or juristic person, or a group of persons, to do or abstain from doing an act as an explicit or implicit condition for the release of the person seized, detained or threatened."

45. **CLAUSE [21] and [22]**- Expunged.
46. **CLAUSE 23** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 21**
47. **CLAUSE 21- Side note** be amended to read "Use and discharge of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons from an aircraft, ship or fixed platform."
48. **CLAUSE 21 sub-clause [3]- Use and discharge of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons from an aircraft, ship or fixed platform-** be amended by the phrase "of a" before the word "ship" and inserting the phrase "an aircraft or" to now read "A person shall not transport on board an aircraft or ship."
- 49. CLAUSE 21 sub-clause 4- Use and discharge of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons from an aircraft, ship or fixed platform-** be amended by replacing the phrase "imprisonment for life" with the phrase "a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years" to now read "A person who contravenes sub-section [3] commits an offence and is liable on conviction, to a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years."
- 50. CLAUSE 21 sub clause 5[a]- Use and discharge of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons from an aircraft, ship or fixed platform-** be amended by deleting the "s" at the end of the word "Subsections" and replacing the word "and" with the word "or", after the figure [1] and before the figure [3] to now read "threatens a physical or juristic person to do an act under subsection [1] or [3]."
- 51. CLAUSE 21, sub-clause 5[b]- Use and discharge of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons from an aircraft, ship or fixed platform-** be amended by deleting the "s" at the end of the word "Sub-sections" and replacing the word "and" with the word "or", after the figure [1] and before the figure [3] to now read "organises or directs others, attempts, conspires or participates as an accomplice to commit an act under subsection [1] or [3]."
49. **CLAUSE 24** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 22.**
50. **CLAUSE 22 sub-clause 3- Transportation of Offender-** be amended by inserting the phrase "under subsection [3]" after the word "Offence" and before the word "Commits" and inserting the word "of" after the word "imprisonment" and before the word "not" to now read "an offence under sub-section [3] commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years."
51. **CLAUSE [25]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 23**
52. **CLAUSE 23, sub-clause 2- Violence against internationally protected persons-** be amended by replacing the phrase "imprisonment for life" with the phrase "a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years" to now

read "A person who contravenes subsection [1] commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years."

56 CLAUSE 23 sub clause 3[b]- Violence against internationally protected persons- be amended by removing the phrase "**an offence commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to imprisonment for life.**" to form a paragraph beneath the sub-clause and be amended to now read "an offence under sub-section [3] commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years."

57. CLAUSE [26] be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [24]**

58. CLAUSE [24] sub clause [3]- Explosives or other Lethal Devices- be amended by removing the word "**commits**" before the word "**an**" and inserting the phrase "**under subsection [3]**" after the word "**offence**" and before the word "**commits**" to now read "an offence under subsection [3] commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years."

59. CLAUSE 27 be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 25**

60. CLAUSE 25, sub-clause 1d- Handling of Radioactive Materials without Authority- be amended by inserting the word "**or**" immediately after the punctuation mark on the last line

61. CLAUSE 25 sub clause 3- Handling of Radioactive Materials without Authority- - be amended by inserting the phrase "**an offence under subsection [3]**" before the word "**Commits**" and inserting the word "**of**" after the word "**imprisonment**" and before the word "**not**" to now read "an offence under sub-section [3] commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years."

62. CLAUSE 28 be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 26**

63. CLAUSE 26 sub-clause 1- Use of Radioactive Material with intent- be amended by inserting the word "**material**" before the word "**or**" and after the word "**nuclear**" to now read "A person shall not make, use or disperse a radioactive or nuclear material or device, with intent to cause death, serious bodily harm or substantial material damage to property or to the environment."

64. CLAUSE 26 sub-clause 3- Use of Radioactive Material with intent- is amended by inserting the phrase "**under subsection [3]**" after the word "**offence**" and before the word "**commits**" and inserting the word "**of**" after the word "**imprisonment**" and before the word "**not**" to now read "an offence under sub-section [3] commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years."

65. CLAUSE 29 be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 27**

66. **CLAUSE 27, sub-clause 2- Causing explosion, making or possessing explosive substance-** be amended by replacing the phrase "imprisonment for life" with the phrase "a term of imprisonment of not less than 40 years" to now read "A person who contravenes subsection [1] commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment of not less than 40 years."
67. **CLAUSE 30** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 28**
68. **CLAUSE 28 sub-clause [2]- Use of noxious substances-** be amended by closing the space between the figure "15" and the word "Years" on the last line
69. **CLAUSE [31]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [29]**
71. **CLAUSE [32]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [30]**
72. **CLAUSE 30 sub-clause [2]- Obstruction of inspection of search-** be amended by closing the space between the figure "15" and the word "Years" on the last line.
73. **CLAUSE 33** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 31**
74. **CLAUSE 31 sub-clause 3- Supply of weapons to terrorist, terrorist group or entity-** be amended by inserting the phrase "commits an offence and" before the phrase "is liable" and inserting the word "of" after the word "imprisonment" and before the word "not" to now read "to commit an offence under subsection [1] commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years."
75. **CLAUSE 34** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 32**
76. **CLAUSE 32 sub-clause 3- Planning and preparing terrorist act-** be amended by inserting the phrase "commits an offence and" after the phrase "sub-section [1]" and inserting the word "of" after the word "imprisonment" and before the word "not" to now read "to commit an offence under sub-section [1], commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years."
77. **CLAUSE 35** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 33.**
78. **CLAUSE 33, sub-clause 1c- Incitement of terrorist act prohibited-** be amended by inserting the word "or" immediately after the punctuation mark on the last line.
79. **CLAUSE 33, sub-clause 1d- Incitement of terrorist act prohibited-** be amended by spacing the words "of" and "terrorism" on line two.
80. **CLAUSE 36** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 34.**
81. **CLAUSE 34- Encouragement inducement of commission, etc., of terrorism prohibited-** be approved.
82. **CLAUSE 37** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 35.**
83. **CLAUSE 35, sub-clause 1- Incitement of terrorism-** be amended by closing the space between the word "intent" and the word "to" on the last line.

84. **CLAUSE 35 sub-clause 3- Incitement of terrorism-** be amended by inserting the phrase **"commits an offence and"** after the phrase **"sub-section [1]"** and inserting the word **"of"** after the word **"imprisonment"** and before the word **"not"** to now read "to commit an offence under subsection [1], commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years."
85. **CLAUSE [38]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [36]**
86. **CLAUSE 36 sub-clause 3- Incitement of terrorism-** be amended by inserting the word **"of"** after the word **"imprisonment"** and before the word **"not"** to now read "A person who contravenes subsection [1], commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment of not less than 30 years."

PART VI- PROHIBITION OF SUPPORT OF PROSCRIBED ORGANISATIONS

87. **CLAUSE [39]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [37]**
88. **CLAUSE 37- Membership to a proscribed organisation prohibited-** be amended by replacing the word **"of"** with the word **"to"** to now read **"A person shall not belong or profess to belong to a proscribed organisation."**
89. **CLAUSE 40** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 38.**
90. **CLAUSE 38- Support of proscribed organization prohibited -** be approved.
91. **CLAUSE 41** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 39**
92. **CLAUSE 39 sub-clause 1- Duty to disclose information to police-** be amended by inserting the word **"information"** after the word **"relevant"** inserting the word **"it"** after the word **"as"**, deleting the word **"disclose"** before the word **"in"** and deleting the word **"information"** before the word **"questioned"** to now read "A person is under a duty to disclose to the police all relevant information in his possession, as soon as it is reasonably practicable, if questioned by the police in relation to a terrorism related investigation."
93. **CLAUSE 39 sub clause 2- Duty to disclose information to police-** be amended by inserting the phrase **"disclose to"** after the word **"to"** to now read **"A person who fails, refuses or neglects to disclose to the police, information required by subsection [1] commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment of not less than 5 years."**
94. **CLAUSE [42]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [40].**
95. **CLAUSE 40 sub-clause 2- Possession of arms and ammunitions for purpose of terrorism prohibited-** be amended by replacing the phrase **"imprisonment for life"** with the phrase "a term of imprisonment of not less than 40 years" to now read "A person who contravenes sub-section [1] commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a term of imprisonment of not less than 40 years."
96. **CLAUSE [43]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [41].**

- 97. CLAUSE 41 – Entry into Sierra Leone for the purpose of terrorism prohibited-** be approved.
- 98. Part VII – PROHIBITION OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO TERRORISM-** be expunged
- 99. Part VIII be amended to become New Part VII**
PART VII- PREVENTIVE AND ANCILLARY MEASURES
- 100. CLAUSE [50]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [42]**
- 101. CLAUSE 42 sub-clause b - Prevention of terrorism-** be amended by inserting the phrase “**and out of**” before the word Sierra Leone and the word “**or**” immediately after the punctuation mark to now read “the movement of foreign terrorist fighters into and out of Sierra Leone; or”
- 102. CLAUSE 42 sub-clause c - Prevention of terrorism-** be amended by closing the space between the word “**or**” and the word “**conduct.**”
- 103. CLAUSE [51]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [43]**
- 104. CLAUSE 43 sub-clause 4 - Designation of terrorist-** be amended by deleting the word “**the**” on the first line and closing the space between the words “**the**” and “**order**” to now read “The Attorney- General shall, within 6 months of granting of an order under subsection [1], proffer a charge of terrorism or terrorism-related offence against a designated person, group or entity named in the order or indicate an intention to do so.”
- 105. CLAUSE [52]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [44]**
- 106. CLAUSE 44 sub-clause 1- Freezing of assets of designated person, group or entity-** be amended by inserting the word “as” before the letter ‘a’ and replacing the figure “**50**” with the figure “**43**” to now read “The head of the centre shall, upon receipt of a list of designated person, group or entity designated as a terrorist or terrorist group or entity under section 43.”
- 107. CLAUSE 44 sub-clause 5a- Freezing of assets of designated person, group or entity-** be amended by inserting the word “**and**” immediately after the punctuation mark on the last line.
- 108. CLAUSE 44 sub-clause 6- Freezing of assets of designated person, group or entity-** be amended by spacing the word “**or**” and the word “**entity.**”
- 109. CLAUSE [53]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [45]**
- 110. CLAUSE 45 - Freezing of international terrorist funds-** be approved.
- 111. CLAUSE [54]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [46]**
- 112. CLAUSE 46- SIDE NOTE-** be amended to read “**Seizure and restraint of vessel.**”
- 113. CLAUSE 46- Seizure and restraint of vessel-** be amended by deleting the word “**or**” at the end of 46[1] and inserting the said word after in punctuation mark at the end of 46[2] to now read “belonging to a terrorist, terrorist group or entity; or.”
- 114. CLAUSE [55]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [47].**
- 115. CLAUSE 47- Interception of communications-** be approved.

- 116. CLAUSE [56]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [48]**.
- 117. CLAUSE 48- Prevention of entry and order of removal of persons-** be approved.
- 118. CLAUSE 57** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 49**
- 119. CLAUSE 49 sub clause 2a- Information relating to passengers on aircraft or vessel-** be amended by inserting the word **"or"** immediately after the punctuation mark on the last line.
- 120. CLAUSE 49 sub-clause 3- Information relating to passengers on aircraft or vessel-** be amended by inserting the word **"general"** after the word **"director"**, spacing the words **"of"** and **"the"**, replacing the word **"unit"** with the word **"agency"** and deleting the word **"the"** on the last line to now read "for the purpose of subsection [2], competent authority include the Attorney-General, the Director General of the central Intelligence and Security Agency, the National Security Co-ordinator, the Chairman, Management Board, Transnational Organised Crime Unit, the Inspector General of Police, the Director General of the Financial Intelligence Agency, a law enforcement agency and a person exercising powers on behalf of these authority."
- 121. CLAUSE 49 sub clause 4- Information relating to passengers on aircraft or vessel-** be expunged from this section and transferred to part eight.
- 122. Part IX be amended to become New Part VIII**
PART VIII- MUTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE AND EXTRADITION
- 123. CLAUSE [58]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [50]**
- 124. CLAUSE 50- Request from foreign state-** be amended by inserting a **new sub clause 2** to read "A request by a competent authority in foreign state under sub-section [49[2b] shall:
- [a] confirm that the gathering of intelligence is in relation to the investigation or prosecution of suspected terrorism, terrorism-related activity or the conviction of a person or entity of terrorism or terrorism-related activity;
 - [b] state the grounds on which a person or entity is being investigated or prosecuted for terrorism-related activity;
 - [c] give particulars sufficient to identify the person or entity against whom an investigation, prosecution or any process contemplated;
 - [d] give particulars sufficient to identify a reporting entity or other person believed to have information, documents or material of assistance to the investigation or prosecution;
 - [e] request the competent authority to whom the request is addressed to, obtain from a person or entity, information, documents or material of assistance to the investigation or prosecution;
 - [f] specify the manner in which and to whom information, documents or materials obtained is to be produced; and
 - [g] contain any other information or particulars as may assist the execution of the request." The Previous **sub-Clause [2] becomes [3]**

- 125. CLAUSE 50 sub-clause 3a- Request from foreign state-** be amended by inserting the word **"and"** immediately after the punctuation mark on the last line and changing the punctuation mark to **"semi column."**
- 126. CLAUSE 59** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 51.**
- 127. CLAUSE 51- Attorney- General may refuse request-** be approved.
- 128. CLAUSE [60]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [52].**
- 129. CLAUSE 52- Attorney- Request by order to person resident in foreign state-** be approved.
- 130. CLAUSE [61]** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE [53].**
- 131. CLAUSE 53- Request without order-** be approved.
- 132. CLAUSE 62** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 54.**
- 133. CLAUSE 54- Extradition-** be approved.
- 134. Part X be amended to become New Part IX**
PART IX- ENFORCEMENT MEASURES ON TERRORIST PROPERTY
- 135. CLAUSE 63** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 55**
- 136. CLAUSE 55 sub-clause 1- Search for property-** be amended by deleting the phrase **"or magistrate"** before the word **"who"** and insert the phrase **"by the Head of Centre in an application made by the Attorney- General"** after the word **"oath"** to now read "A Judge who is satisfied by information on oath by the head of Centre in an application made by the Attorney-General that there is reasonable ground for believing that there is in a building, vessel, vehicle, receptacle or place."
- 137. CLAUSE 55 sub-clause 1a- Search for property-** be amended by inserting the word **"to"** after the word **"suspected"** to now read "anything upon or in respect of which an offence under this Act has been or is suspected to have been committed."
- 138. CLAUSE 55 sub clause 2a- Search for property-** be amended by deleting the word **"of"** after the word **"search"** to now read "search the building, vessel, vehicle, receptacle or place named in the warrant and every person found therein and if anything searched for is found, to seize the same and arrest the occupier or owner of the building, vessel, vehicle, receptacle or place; and"
- 139. CLAUSE 64** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 56.**
- 140. CLAUSE 56 sub-clause 2- Seizure of property-** be amended by replacing the figure **"10"** with **"14"** to now read "The Attorney- General may, in relation of property seized under subsection [1], make an application by way of an ex-parte notice of motion, to a Judge, for a retention order of the seized property within 14 days after the seizure of the property."
- 141. CLAUSE 56 sub clause 4- Seizure of property-** be amended by closing the space between the word **"for"** and the letter **"a"** on the second line.
- 142. CLAUSE [56] sub-clause 5b- Seizure of property-** be amended by replacing the word **"detention"** with the word **"retention"** on the last line
- 143. CLAUSE 65** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 57.**

- 144. CLAUSE 57- Destruction of property-** be amended by inserting the phrase **"and 56"** after the phrase **"section 46 [previous 54]"** to now read "A court may order the destruction of property seized under **section 46 and 56** if satisfied that it is dangerous to retain the property or the property has little or no financial or other value.
- 145. CLAUSE 66** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 58**
- 146. CLAUSE [58] sub-clause 2[a]- Restraint orders-** be amended by replacing the phrase **"a police officer"** with the phrase **"the Inspector General of police"** to now read "a warrant authorizing the Inspector general of police to search the premises or vessel for the property and seize the property and any other property which the police officer reasonably believes maybe forfeited."
- 147. CLAUSE 67** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 59.**
- 148. CLAUSE 59- Order of forfeiture-** be approved.
- 149. CLAUSE 68** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 60**
- 150. CLAUSE 60, sub-clause 1- Application for forfeiture order-** be amended by inserting the word "an" after the word "of" to now read "The Attorney-General may make an application to the court by way of an ex-parte notice of motion for a forfeiture order in respect of a terrorist property."
- 151. CLAUSE 69** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 61.**
- 152. CLAUSE 61, sub-clause 2- Interested Parties-** be amended by changing the second **[a]** to become **[b]**.
- 153. CLAUSE 70** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 62**
- 154. CLAUSE 62- APPEALS-** be approved.
- 155. Part XI** be amended to become **New Part X**

PART X- MISCELLANEOUS

- 156. CLAUSE 71-** be amended to now become **NEW CLAUSE 64** and a new **CLAUSE 63** be inserted with a side note **"Automatic Jurisdiction of the High Court."**
- 157. CLAUSE 63-Automatic Jurisdiction of the High Court-** be inserted to read "The High Court of Sierra Leone shall have automatic jurisdiction to try an accused person on any indictment containing offences under this Act without the need for a preliminary investigation or a prior application for the preferment of an indictment."
- 158. CLAUSE 64- Regulations-** be approved

CONCLUSION

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Legislative Committee, having scrutinised the Bill entitled: THE COUNTER TERRORISM ACT, 2024, hereby recommends these proposals to the House for approval. The Report reflects the consensus of Honourable Members of the Committee. I therefore move that the House pass the

Bill entitled: THE COUNTER TERRORISM ACT, 2024 through Committee Stage, Third Reading and into Law.

I thank you for your attention.

Signed:

.....

Hon. Abdul S. Marray Conteh
Chairman, Legislative Committee
[Second Session, 2024-2025]

[Question Proposed]

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Chairman, I rise on S.O 57 to inform the House that on the 30th June to the 1st July, 2011, a final draft of the African Model of the Anti-Terrorism Law was endorsed by the Seventeenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. In that Model, there is the definition of terrorist act, which was exactly inserted into this Bill and most of what is embedded in this Bill are extracted from that Model. However, there is a critical omission on the definition of 'terrorism act.' In the Model, it says, notwithstanding the definition of terrorism act or in any other law or in any other Act, the following shall not be considered as terrorism act if the act is as a result of an advocacy, protest, descent or industrial actions. So, I also want to bring it to the attention of this House that we have had so many views from the public and we are servants of the public. We are sent here by our people. One of our primary responsibilities is representation and we should make laws that are in line with the views and aspirations of our people. I have conversed with my counterparts on the other side and we have decided to accommodate more views, so that this Law will be able to stand the test of time and at the same be able to reflect our own culture, Constitution, etc. Therefore, I want to request that we discontinue with the Committee Stage, in order to give due consideration to Standing Order 57.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you, Mr Chairman. We are mindful of the fact that this is a progressive Parliament. This is now the Sixth Parliament. This law did not start in the Fifth or the Sixth Parliament. The drafting stage started way back in

the previous administration. Since we have a progressive Parliament, we want to make sure that the laws we enact here stand the test of time. We do not make laws for certain sets of people; we do not make laws to target others; we make laws for the benefit of everybody, irrespective your tribe, race, religion, region, etc. As I said in my debate, if you behave like a terrorist, you can be labelled as a terrorist, whether you are the son of the Prime Minister or you belong to the highest political party in the land. In other words, if you behave like a terrorist, you will be treated like one, whether you belong to the SLPP or the APC.

Mr Chairman, we do follow standards and if you look at the definition of the word terrorist, it is the same. In fact, there are certain clauses that seem as if we just transferred them from the African Charter into this Bill. I perfectly agree with the Honourable Member, but we have the internal laws, such as the Public Order Act, the Criminal Procedure Act, etc. These laws contain disciplinary measures within the public sector. As he said, there are omissions and we need to do something about them. Of course, when you want to demonstrate industrial actions, there are procedures you should follow based on existing local legislations. I agree with him that we should give a little bit of time, so that we can do some adjustments with the Chairman of the Committee. Nevertheless, let me admonish the public that when we gazette a Bill, it is for the attention of the public. We are only trying to deviate from the normal route. We are encouraging the public because we have agreed to make this Parliament more progressive and participatory.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the laws are very clear. Gazetting a Bill is for the attention of the public and that is why you have the different Bills. People write to us and I think I have read out some of the petitions, especially those from the legal profession. They do not even make reference to the clauses that we have in the Bills. They just condemned the Bill entirely by saying, this Bill should not be passed into law. How can you say we cannot enact a law? There is no perfect law in the whole world. I am sure countries deemed to have perfect democracies always amend their laws as well. So, we want to admonish the public that if you want us to consider your views, make specific reference to the Clauses in the Bill that you have problems with. You cannot say the House should not pass this law because it is

unconstitutional or against the human rights principles. We have the fundamental rights, as entrenched in the Constitution, to make laws. This responsibility is clearly stated in Section 105 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991. I want to agree with my colleague that we talk to the Chairman of the Legislative Committee, so that we can look at the Clause he mentioned. When I spoke with the Minister, he consented to it. Let us give the Bill a little bit of time before we take it to the Committee Stage.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to move that we adjourn for the Committee Stage because we have already moved for S.O. [57]. We have read the report and in the next adjourned date or whatever time we agree upon the whole House will look at it line by line and clause by clause. We are anticipating that we accommodate the position he has put forward and we make some amendments where necessary.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agree to]

[Motion of the Leader of the Opposition has been carried]

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, you may leave.

[THE HOUSE RESUMES]

[B] THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACT, 2024

[INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING]

THE MINISTER OF TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION

DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE *[Minister of Technical and Higher Education]*: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, The National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act, 2024 be read the first time.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Bill entitled, the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act, 2024, has been read the first time]

[SECOND READING]

DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, The National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act, 2024 be read the second time. Mr Speaker, the National Council for Technical, Vocational and other Academic Awards [NCTVA] has operated since 2001 to validate, accredit, examine and certify Technical and Vocational Education and Trainings, otherwise known as TVET. Whilst instrumental in advancing educational and skills development in Sierra Leone, the Council's legislative framework has not involved significantly meeting modern national and international requirements. The proposed revision to the National Council for Technical Vocation Award Act, addresses critical gaps ensuring alignment with contemporary needs and global standards. The most important justifications for the proposed changes include:

- ❖ enhance institutional focus and scope. The renaming of the body to the National Council for Technical Vocational Educational and Training, NCTVE reflects the clear focus on Technical and Vocational Education and Training [TVET]. This rebranding aligns with the national objectives under the Sierra Leone national qualification framework and international frameworks like the Africa Continental Qualifications Framework. The broadened scope includes formal, non-formal and informal education, enhancing inclusivity and catering for diverse learning pathways;
- ❖ the second justification is to strengthen governance and accountability. A revised Council membership structure ensures broad representation, including key stakeholders, such as the Sierra Leone Local Government Agency, Teaching Services Commission and private sector representatives. This diversity will enhance decision-making and policy implementation. The defined roles and time limits for Council members, including the Chairman and Director, will foster accountability and clarity in governance. The mandatory annual reporting and adherence to rigorous financial oversight mechanisms will improve transparency and trust;
- ❖ the third key justification is modernised and comprehensive regulatory functions. The amendments expand the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education's functions to include, accreditation of institutions and programmes across all levels from basic vocational certificate to higher diplomas. Validation and monitoring of curricular in collaboration with stakeholders will ensure relevance to labour market demands and introduction of a national assessment system to promote industry-driven training and standards. These measures will bridge the gap between training outcomes and industry needs enhancing youth employability and national development;

- ❖ the fourth key justification is alignment with international best practice. The incorporation of competency-based education and training, recognition of prior learning and integration of national and international standards underscore the Council's alignment with global trends. The shift towards securitised certification and centralised accreditation ensures the credibility and international recognition of Sierra Leone's Technical and Vocational Education and Training [TVET] credentials;
- ❖ the fifth key justification is deterrence against non-compliance. The revised Act introduces penalties for institutions operating without accreditation, falsely advertising programmes or failing to use integrated certification systems. These include fines, suspensions and revocation of accreditation, reinforcing regulatory compliance; and
- ❖ the sixth key justification is support for sustainable education and skills development. The Act emphasises partnerships with international donors and private sector entities, providing avenues for sustainable financing and resource mobilisation. The establishment of regional offices will enhance accessibility, ensuring nationwide service delivery and equity. The proposed changes directly contribute to the transformation of Technical and Vocational Education and Training [TVET] in Sierra Leone, which is central to the vision that we have within the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education to continually improve upon education quality and relevance. By prioritising accreditation, aligning curricular with market demands and ensuring equitable access. These amendments address systemic barriers to progress. The focus on youth employability and skills development aligns with Sierra Leone's human capital development agenda, the youth employment skills and ensure sustainable national growth.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, The National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act, 2024 be read the second time.

[Question Proposed]

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a testament of patriotism for the Green, White and Blue. I was two hundred miles away when the Director, Victor Hugo Kamara posted the Order Paper, whereby this Bill will be discussed today. So, I decided to come to Parliament, so that the issues surrounding this Bill are addressed. I have looked at the document. Honourable Members would agree with me that we have had several issues relating to accreditation, authenticity of documents, etc. How are these treated in our society? Today, we have a document wherein, if enacted by this noble House, will address

most of the concerns or problems in the education sector. Sometimes certificates from Sierra Leone are not considered for admission or employment in other countries. In other words, we have had situations where people produced documents, but those documents could not stand the test of time. The Minister was highlighting the justifications this document is going to strengthen the government's ambition, government's laws and we owe a responsibility to our young people. Today, we have lots of people who want to go to the Technical and Higher Education thinking that technical institutions will have a middleman power and if this middleman power is strengthened, it will be a thing of the past.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is the outcome of collective responsibilities we have had in this House. Our predecessors presided over the certificate audit, where it was conducted in this country and that provided solutions to the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education. I am sure before he left office, he demanded for that report and through the special efforts of this House, it was presented to the then Honourable Speaker, Dr Chernor Abass Bundu. I believe a submission was made to the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education in terms of ensuring that some of the mushroom organisations should not establish any educational institution in this country. Some of these institutions do not even have the logistics and capability to train people. We want to ensure that when our people leave the shores of Sierra Leone, they should be able to defend those certificates. I think this is why some measures have been put in place to serve as deterrent.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Page 9 of the Bill states that these people will be able to provide validation services for both national and international awards. This is very important because people will be there to validate those documents, especially for those bringing certificates from other countries to Sierra Leone. The Council will monitor those qualifications, whether they are on the same standard or not. This is very important, Mr Speaker. It is important to have documents that can speak volumes and to also have committees that are committed to ensure the validation process.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have to look at the offences as well. People used to do certain things without imposing fines on them, but today, we have a

document before us that is going to take care of that. Part 6, Clause 28 of this Bill states that the institutions shall not offer a programme listed under Section 11[2] of the Act. So, we have institutions that are responsible for that and if this is done, it will be good for this county. I want to entreat the Minister that when we go to the Committee Stage, we are going to proffer other solutions. I have a concern with regard the fine recommended by the Minister in Clause 28, sub-section 2. It states that the institutions that contravene sub-section 1 shall be liable to a fine not less than **fifteen thousand Leones [NLe 15,000]**. I think this amount of money is too small. We have to increase it in order to deter people from committing such offences. We do not want to see institutions to do whatever they want to do to undermine the accreditation process. This is why the Bill is timely because we should know what is happening.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are many institutions and we are aware of the fact that those who have gone to these institutions hold outstanding positions in our society today. I can recall two individuals, like the former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom; Retired Hon. Sir Tony Blair. He had no degree when he took office. He only had a diploma certificate as his qualification; but with time, he built up his career to a higher height. In Sierra Leone, Dr Philip John Kanu, Vice Chancellor and Principal of Milton Margai Technical University, started his journey at the Makama Institute Learning in Makeni. When he came to Freetown and with the concerted efforts of the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education, he got a scholarship; and today, he is one of the most educated individuals in the country. Rome was not built in a day. You can start from down and grow to a higher height in our society. There are several other examples where people started their journey in a very low standard, but later climbed to a higher height. I know this is a very straightforward Bill. Therefore, I encourage my colleagues to look at it carefully and do the needful. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

HON. MARIAMA BANGURA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, in a rapid changing world, driven by technology and innovation, technical and vocational studies is no longer... - *[Interruption]*.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Honourable Member, just a minute please. Mr Speaker, there is a bit of confusion here. The Minister laid the National Council for Technical Vocational and Education Act, 2024. The Chairman debated the Tertiary Education Commission Act.

THE SPEAKER: It is alright. Please do not go into all of that.

HON ABDUL KARGBO: It is to guide Members of Parliament on what we are debating here.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I hope you have your copies.

HON. MARIAMA BANGURA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in a rapid changing world, driven by innovation and technology, it is clear that the study of technical and vocational subjects are no longer optional, but are compulsory because they are very essential. I have always been saying here that we have good laws in this country. The incorporation of the 6-3-4-4 into the educational system is to empower the middle-man power; and today, we are here to discuss a very important aspect of our development. I think the Bill before us is not contentious, but we need to monitor and facilitate what is in it. The 6-3-3-4 system of education is an area that should have allayed the fear of the middleman power.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there should be technical, vocational education and training facilities in most of the secondary schools, but I wondered how many secondary schools inculcate technical and vocational education, and training wherein, these kids will no longer sit to the West African Senior School Certificate Examination. There is a saying that says, let us catch them when they are young. The issue of technical and vocational skills is not just a lip service. We know our children sat to the Basic Education Certificate Examinations and after that, we are able to tell whether these kids should proceed to the West African Senior School Certificate Examination class or to the TECHVOC class. How many TECHVOC institutions do we have to salvage this situation? I am sure this nation is in dire need of these skills to empower the middleman power.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, lack of proper monitoring is one of the problems affecting this country. How many of our schools are offering these technical courses

or subjects? How many of our schools practice technical drawings? How many of our secondary schools have computer labs? Mr Speaker, the only thing that is a bit contentious is the qualifications of the Chairman. He/she must have a Master's degree in education or vast knowledge in administration. You are telling us that the individual to head the Technical and Vocational Institute should have a Master degree in Education. What do we want to teach our kids? In my opinion, it should be somebody with vast knowledge in technical vocational studies, so that kids opting for this course will see the need to learn and compete. This is very important, especially for parents who know that their kids are weak in school, but can do better in TECHVOC education. Well, I will not say weak kids, but not everybody will get white-collar jobs. There are kids who are very good in technical skills and parents should encourage them to achieve their dreams. They can do better in other areas than formal education. Some parents refused to take their kids to the TECH-VOC institutions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have to improve the monitoring aspect of this Bill. As a school head, you should be able to tell whether the result is okay for the child to be here or not. This is an additional step and it can be in the right direction if it is properly monitored. We have the laws, but our problem is proper implementation and monitoring. Like I said, let us add more value to the **6-3-3-4** system of education. This will give us better middleman power because we are in dire need of the middleman power. This is a very good Bill; and I believe if proper implementation is done, it will better the lives of many Sierra Leoneans.

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to join the Chairman and my dear sister to debate on this wonderful Bill that is in front of us, which is the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act. It is a unique Bill for Sierra Leoneans to know that we are about to do something that is very good. Mr Speaker, **90%** of elites in Sierra Leone, including some us here, went through the National Council for Technical and Vocational, and Other Awards. In those days, when they mentioned the NCTVA, you became jittery because it was so rigid, tight and strong. I do not, however, know what could be the problem these days. Mr Speaker, if we are talking about the review of this wonderful Bill, we have

to look at the issues in our technical institutions. Madam Minister, what is going on with our technical institutions in Sierra Leone? For instance, we used to have a technical institution in Kambia, but what is happening there? There is nothing like a technical institution. This means after BECE, the girls find themselves at Doffcut, Mabela and Lumley, selling items. They call themselves Abacha girls. If you ask them, they will tell you S.O [2] ar go skul oo, na form three ar stop or na wi sit BECE.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the initiative of the 6-3-3-4 was to ensure that those who cannot make it to the university learn other skills. This is because not everybody can go to the university and that is the gospel truth. It was meant to ensure that after form three, those who could not enter senior secondary would have something to do in order to better their lives. I think the only institutions we can boast of are: Muraldo in Lunsar, Muraldo in Freetown and the Government Technical Institute in Freetown. The Young Women's Christian Association [YWCA] is struggling to survive. The Sierra Leone Organisation for Industrialisation Centre [OIC] in Makeni is doing well. The Organisation for Industrialisation Centre [OIC] in other places is also trying. There are other life support machines, especially the Young Women's Christian Association [YWCA].

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go to the Young Women's Christian Association [YWCA] building, you will find out that there is nothing to write home about. We are happy for this review. Other Speakers have said that the Bill is not contentious and I want to confirm that it is not controversial. When we talk about education, all of us become interested. I am here because I am educated; I am here because I started from the Milton Margai College of Education and Technology [MMCET] and we were struggling at the time when girls were girls and boys were boys. I am saying this because we have degree holders today who cannot write a letter or better English. I am worried and I am sure my sister is also worried. Some of us that read English are also worried. The Minister said that English and Mathematics are no longer compulsory subjects in our education. Where are we going? A question was asked by a Temne man S.O [2] do mas kua? The reason is that if English is not compulsory, how will the kids learn or write a simple letter?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I started writing letters when I was in class four. At class seven during my selective entrance, I was writing good English. We are not against the radical inclusion, but we need to look at it very carefully as a House. English has to be prioritised, Mr Speaker. We cannot say no to the English Language. We cannot bring things that are not important to our curriculum. We should not tell people that we cannot prioritise English. I am sure for those in the Art stream, mathematics should not be a priority for them, but English should be compulsory. It has to be a compulsory subject because it is part of your discipline, whether you are going for Law, Linguistics or otherwise. I am so happy because I was part and parcel of the review process.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the review process was about to commence, we went to the NCTVA and informed them about our readiness to support the process. Some of us have two certificates from that institution and we are ready to ensure that we enact a law that will stand the test of time. My dear Minister, as an educationist and a mother, the manner in which our education system is unfolding is nothing to write home about. Let us go back to the drawing board and do the needful for Sierra Leone. It is good to make laws, but let us make laws that will stand the test of time. Our kids are the future of this country. Let us give them the education they deserve. We are talking about quality education and quality education has to be prioritised for Sierra Leone. People used to refer to Sierra Leone as the 'Athens of West Africa.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I went to London to represent the Sierra Leone Parliament, I was praised by the Speaker after delivering a wonderful presentation. The Speaker asked: "Can the Honourable Member from Sierra Leone come up?" I was honoured and that tells you that after our struggled yesterday, we are enjoying today. The Bo school motto says, 'manners maketh man' and the manners will only make you, if you do the things that are good. So, we are supporting this Bill. Even though the Bill came today, we are unanimous in terms of supporting its approval. I got it this morning and I became interested. I became interested and I will support its passage into law.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is important to make Sierra Leone to be at the top of other nations. I want to thank the Minister who is piloting this Bill and the NCTVA team. Thank you for bringing this wonderful Bill before us. I implore all Honourable Members to do the needful. Let us cross the **T's** and dot the **I's** for the benefit of Sierra Leone.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much Honourable Member. You have proven the point that you are from London.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have listened to the speakers before us this morning. Historically, if you look at our current institutions, you will know why the NCTVA is crumbling and it is almost fading out. When some of us took the first BECE, there were few schools in the Western Area and the provinces were senior secondary schools in terms of those going for the curriculum and those for the TECHVOC. Schools like Government Rokel Secondary School, Sierra Leon Muslim Brotherhood, Government Model Secondary School, etc. were TECHVOC schools. They were not independent and they had nothing to do with the WASSCE. However, there was a division that created the problem. Even though pupils were doing TECHVOC in those schools or offering technical subjects, such as engineering, there was no system in place to absorb them if they wanted to continue with the same course at the university level. For instance, learning construction at Secondary School, which is a specialised course in the universities, but there was no link between the NCTVA and the universities. This was why they were not included. In fact, when people went to the Milton Margai College or other institutions where they usually take the NCTVA for diplomas and Higher Teacher Certificates, the transition from those institutions to the modern university to continue the same courses required WASSCE results. In fact, the student would have to retake the WASSCE exams. So, it was imperative that the National Vocational Qualification [NVQ], which was supposed to be taken, had no use in the academic system. This is because when you want to come to the mainstream academic work, they would ask for the WASSCE result. This is the reason the schools that were taking the NVQ exams faded out and started taking the WASSCE exams. The tertiary institutions were asking for the WASSCE results.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, even when we are making the laws, we also need to have a kind of Hybrid system. I attended one of the schools and I was trained in construction works. In other words, I was trained in the technical field and I took the NCTVA exam at secondary school or at tertiary institution levels. If I come from the Milton Margai University, it means I have completed a Higher National Diploma in building or in civil engineering; and if I decided to go to Fourah Bay College, there must be a link to consider my HND from NCTVA to take me to the university. However, if WASSCE is the only criterion, then what is the use of the NCTVA? That is where we have started missing the point. If you go to countries like Nigeria or Ghana, you have multiple entrances of qualifications into their universities. In Sierra Leone, it is just one way; it is either WASSCE or you take it the hard way. That is why universities will tell you, S.O [2] na dis number wi dey take. Wudat ihn hat, Leh ihn go Police. It is painful, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, how many TECHVOC schools are in this country? I hardly hear of any one because all of them have moved to the formal school system. In the whole of Eastern part of Freetown, it was only Ahmadiyya, Congress and Methodist Boys High School that were senior secondary schools, but the others were TECHVOC schools. Today, everybody is taking the WASSCE and people are blaming those who took the O-level exams. You would agree with me that WASSCE is almost the only form of qualification that qualifies someone to enter university. Even when you go to training centres, where they are meant to train people in various technical skills, they also ask for WASSCE results and not the NCTVA qualifications. So, this means you do not need anything to do with technical education at secondary school level; all you need is WASSCE. So, this is how sad the system has become. Inasmuch as we are making laws, it is also important to look at some of these issues. In fact, for some of us who took the NCTVA exams, it took five years before our results were published. Imagine, five good years for a diploma certificate to be issued to us.

THE SPEAKER: Madam Minister, these are very serious allegations. They are very serious and troubling. Please take note of some of these concerns. This House wants to hear the reasons responsible for some of these challenges.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, if you look at the allocations given to some of these institutions, you may be tempted to ask yourself if these are credible institutions we should depend on to conduct examinations for our kids. In fact, when you look at the NCTVA curriculum, they are almost in line with the curriculum of those in the formal schools. So, you ask yourself the question, what is the technical education doing? They struggle with the same diploma in Business Administration for a technical course just as the one in the formal institutions. If you want to take NCTVA exams, the only one you get is gara tie dying, soap making and hair dressing. In Sierra Leone, every other day we hear people say that the companies are coming to Sierra Leone to mine our iron ore and they are bringing foreigners to even drive their tractors. This is because we have not reached the level of empowering our technical knowledge to address the basic needs we complain every day. S.O [2] den dey mek black soap. My brother from Bo knows the important of black soap. S.O [2] na Latif tok am oo, no to me.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is very serious and we are bringing out these issues to ensure that we build these institutions. We have to take back the value of the technical education to the secondary schools and the kids in the secondary schools are admitted to do this not just because they could not pass WASSCE, but because we want to build careers in them. They must be given the opportunity to interface with the tertiary institutions where they will be accepted or admitted. If somebody wants to be a plumber and he or she has started learning that profession at secondary school level and would want to be admitted at the engineering department at Fourah Bay college, he/she must be given that chance. It should not just be a matter of the WASSCE. We have technical universities that are more academic than even being technical. Go there and you will see what they are doing. They are only carrying the name technical universities, but they do the same things the formal schools are doing, such as linguistics, history, etc. Mr Speaker, we have another Bill before us, but I am sure when we go to the other stage of this Bill, the Chairman will explain what it entails. I am saying this for the records.

HON. MATHEW SAHR NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Point of Order. I refused not to interrupt my colleague, but I have seen that we have to do some corrections. The

document is in front of us. If you go to the schedule, it is very clear. We have the list of universities like polytechnic institutions where we have the Milton Margai Technical University, Eastern Technical University and Freetown Polytechnic University. The reason for this Point of Order is that it was in this very House we enacted the University Act and changed the nomenclatures of these universities. So, if you are watering them down, I wonder what you are talking about. It was during the Fifth Parliament we changed their nomenclatures. I refer you to the last page of the NCTVA Act. If you look at the content under the functions of this Bill in Clause 11, it tells you the structures of the university. How do you want the structure of the university to look like? I will elucidate this point when we are wrapping up the debates. I shall tell you exactly what you are going to do, but for now, there are universities listed in the schedule that are in charge of vocational and technical institutions.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Thank you very much, Mr Leader. I think you are just saying the same thing I have said. However, maybe you made it clearer for me to expand the point. What I am saying here is that if for example, you look at the entrance qualifications for Million Margai Technical University, you will understand what I am trying to say. It has no provision for examination taken by the NCTVA. If you go to Eastern Technical University, it is the same thing. They will require you to get five credits in the WASSCE and this is why pupils in secondary schools do not have space in these universities. I am saying there must be room for pupils who study technical courses at secondary school level to gain admission into these technical universities without the WASSCE factor. If I am a tiler and I want to continue doing that job, I should be allowed to do so in any technical university. I must go there with the NCTV examinational criteria. That is my point, Mr Speaker. I did not say there are no technical universities; they are in existence, but the gap between them and the schools is wide. This is because they only cater for the formal education, which is the WASSCE. I am sure this is not the case in other countries that have technical institutions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we must, as a country, put serious financial contributions into the TECHVOC because unlike the normal school system, where

you pay seventy or thirty thousand Leones per child for free education, with regard the TECHVOC, it demands far more than that and that is why it is difficult to maintain. If you look at the instruments or materials the schools need to capacitate their kids in the technical aspects, they are expensive and it goes beyond the black board and chalk. So, as we enact some of these Bills, let us also have in mind, as Members of Parliament, that the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education should ensure that we have a Technical Vocational Education Training Institution for secondary schools that requires a special budget line. They should not be aligned with the normal school system and they should not be given the same allocations. This is because they need to perform lots of practical work and they would need helmets, boots and other things.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we failed to do what I have just said, we will have an educational system in Sierra Leone where foreigners will come and perform plumbing work. If you go to these plantation companies, even the people who are turning the water into their tanks are foreigners. This is because we are not capacitated enough to perform those functions. So, it is an appeal and I am not crying the government down. I know they have lots of activities to do, but we have to build our manpower at the basic secondary school level. We need a special budget line to address those very important issues for our future. No country grows without education and no country grows without a technical education. You cannot transform a nation based on historical perspective. We have to put all hands on deck if we want to succeed. I am appealing to the government to ensure that the schools that opted for TECHVOC courses are given the chance to do so. These schools must be given the same opportunities and they must be encouraged.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the NCTVA must tighten the exams. I know the exams are not as you expect them to be. Owing to the technical aspect TECHVOC courses, they should be given enough funds to ensure that the exams they conduct are credible. This will encourage parents to ensure that their kids are absorbed into the main stream of education otherwise TECHVOC institutions will only be seen as places for dropouts. This will mean our country is also dropping out of modernisation. Thank you very much.

[Suspension of S.O 5[2]]

HON. UMU PYNE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker for giving me the chance to give my contribution to this debate. I just want to say thanks to our government, to the President and to Madam Minister for being here today to present this powerful Bill to us. I am very proud because you are a woman and a role model. You have given opportunities to girls and other women to develop themselves educationally. I do not have much to say, but to praise and thank you because in the previous years, we did not have the chance to talk about this Bill in the media. Today, through the help of this government and the Big Five Game Changers surrounded around the human capital development, this Bill is here today. I know we have produced more educated women in Sierra Leone as compared to the previous years. Many young girls have sat to the WASSCE, although most of the universities now ask for WASSCE requirements, but I know with this Bill before us, it will be advantageous to most of our girls to pursue their goals. So, I really want to commend you and your team. You have done a lot and I know many teachers are awaiting their NCTVA results. In the previous years, there was timeline for the publication of the results. I just want you to work regarding the timely publication of results. Sometimes human beings make choices. I am sure selling at Abacha is not a bad idea, but it is the choice that someone makes. I just want to say this government is doing very well when it comes to education and this government has produced more girls at WASSCE level. It was not like this ten years ago. I want to say kudos to the government and the President of Sierra Leone. I stand here today to kindly ask my colleagues to say yes to this Bill. Thank you, Madam Minister.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to begin by thanking the Minister for presenting this Bill to us. Mr Speaker, the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education is extremely important for Sierra Leone and I am also pleased with Madam Minister for the composition of the Council. I realised that we have the Conference of Principal Chief Education Officer and this shows that there is synergy between the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the 6-3-3-4 system of education was introduced in 1991, it was for this purpose. The essence of the 6-3-3-4 was to allow the teachers to examine the pupils for six years in primary school. At the end of the first three years in secondary school teachers should be able to identify pupils who should go to the senior secondary schools and those who should go to the technical secondary schools. I think this was where we missed the point because not all schools should have been senior secondary schools. Like what the Honourable Member from Kambia was saying, we used to have secondary schools that were purely technical and vocational schools. Mr Speaker, when we were at the GCE O' level class, there were lots of dropouts because those who could not pass the exam ended their educational career. So, that is why the Government wants to change the trajectory.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we want to improve the middleman power and that was why the 6-3-3-4 was brought into existence. Madam Minister, you would agree with me that we have gone into the old system and there is no need for the 6-3-3-4. This is because we are unable to access our pupils. We just prepare them for the WASSCE and if they failed the WASSCE that will be the end of their education. This was why the 6-3-3-4 was introduced in order to handle the middle level manpower. I am very pleased with the aspect of having technical universities. We should not just concentrate on technical universities; we should also have technical vocational institutions. In the case where pupils sat the BECE and if they did not have the requirements, they should be able to go to any of the technical institutions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like what the Honourable Member said, everybody wants to take the WASSCE exam and when you take it, the requirement to the universities and other colleges is five credits. If you do not have five credits, that is the end of your education. The sad thing is that even in our universities, we create diploma courses, certificate courses and we have students who go to these universities, spend two or three years doing these courses and after that, they are not enrolled into the degree programmes. In fact, they will be asked again to take the WASSCE before admitted into the degree programme. I believe if someone has

spent two years doing a particular course and has attained a diploma or a certificate, he/she must be admitted into the degree programme.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you would agree with me that before now, O'Level was the requirement for the University. If you pass the O'Level and the A' Level, you would be admitted to second year in the University because it was expected that if you passed the O'Level and has spent two years taking the A'Level exams, you are qualified to be exempted from entering first year. I do not know what is happening in our universities today. Students are awarded with diplomas or certificates, but could not gain admission for degree programmes because they do not have WASSCE requirements. Madam Minister you have worked in many countries and in countries like South Africa, you have to start from the certificate level. There are people in this country who did not have O'Level certificate, but they started from, Higher Teachers' Certificate; and today, some of them are professors. They went through these certificate courses and some of them are now professors, Master's degree holders and academic doctors. That is why we always talk about leakages and examination malpractices all over the country. It is because everybody wants to pass the WASSCE at all cost. If you do not pass the WASSCE, you will not be enrolled into the University. That is why teachers sell grades and that is why leakages are all over.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you would also agree with me that parents strive to buy question papers just to help their children pass the WASSCE. They even involve in bribery because if their children failed the exam, that will be the end of their education. Today, if you want to enrol into a Cadet course in the Military, you should have first degree, but in those days, an excellent A'Level result would admit or recruit you as a Cadet Officer. They have watered-down the whole system and everybody is going helter-skelter to ensure that they pass the exam. We have students who have eight As' and many Bs' in the WASSCE, but they cannot even defend themselves during university interviews.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know someone who had a powerful result and I asked her, are you going to do law? She said: "I would be going to Milton Margai." The person had three As,' but was not even sure of herself. I told her that with this

result, she could go for law, but she said, S.O [2] Honourable, mi are dey go Milton Margai. Today, we have Art students with As' in mathematics and F in English Language. It is because those marking the papers are accessible by the students and that is how it has been. Madam Minister, we should not be overlooking these things. If we have institutions that prepare people for the NCTVA exams, we should encourage them; we should make it extremely robust. The NCTVA exam used to be a requirement to the University. Today, the course is not even interesting because no one wants to waste his or her time for two or three years. This is because after your NCTVA exam, you are expected to enter University, instead of being subjected again to take the WASSCE exam. If you failed the WASSCE exam, you will not be admitted into the University, but if you passed, you will have four years doing degree.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure if you study very hard, you will just spend four years in the University. However, if you do not get at least three O'Level or three credits in WASSCE, you have to go through these difficult measures and you will be subjected to tedious national exams, which is the NCTVA. Madam Minister, I am very happy that you have brought on board principals and vice principals of various secondary schools. I am also happy that the Chief Education Officer is part of the council. Madam Minister, what is scary about this Bill is that in Section 12 of this Bill, you have created the position of a Director and you have recommended that the Minister shall appoint the Director. This means it is going to be the responsibility of the Minister; whether or not the Council recommends, the Minister is not obliged to listen to their recommendations. Madam Minister, you can be a very good, reasonable and understanding, but let us assume we have 'the man of the world' as Minister, and if the Council is represented by serious minded people decide to recruit someone who is qualified to be Director and in the process, the Minister says no, I will not accept it because it is the Minister as per this Bill, who has the right to appoint the Director. This will create administrative problems.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go further, you will find out that the Deputy Director should be appointed by the Council. The Minister has taken the appointment of the Director and left that of the Deputy Director in the hands of the

Council. You also made reference to Directors and in Section 14[2], you now tell us that the person shall not be qualified for appointment as Deputy Director General. You mentioned Director, but when you come to the position of Deputy Director in Section 14[2], you said Deputy Director General. What are you saying here? Are you saying that we should have a Director General or Deputy Director? You first mentioned Director, but later referred to Director General. I want to know if that was a typo? Were you really looking for a Director General or just a Director?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am certain that this Bill will have to be committed to the Legislative Committee, so that those corrections will be made. Madam Minister, let us review the entire education system of this country. I could remember during the reign of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah. Mr Speaker, when he noticed that a good number of pupils who were unable to pass the WASSCE exams, but had three or four credits, he introduced accessed courses. This allowed those who could not be admitted to the degree programmes to spend additional one or two years to enable them matured enough to proceed into the degree programmes. Today, however, you have people with four credits roaming about the streets. Madam Minister, those with three or four credits are extremely intelligent. There are pupils who passed the WASSCE exam because they do not have access to the question papers and even the teachers marking their scripts. They are the ones roaming about the streets, languishing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, students in the University will tell you, S.O [2] Uncle, ar get for go see mi lecturer oh. This is all over this place to the point that some universities are now conducting entrance exams even if you have five credits. This is because they do not even trust our external examiners and we have good pupils who genuinely got three or four credits, but they are languishing. We have those with six, seven and eight credits who do not even pass the entrance exams that are being conducted for them. Madam Minister, I am happy that you have brought this before us, but let us try to have a conference to look at the general educational system and see how best we can make it accessible for all. We should have the right people to these institutions. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Deputy Leader of Government Business, you have spoken well and you have actually made my day. Madam Minister, it is my hope that you will take the necessary actions. So many things are wrong with our educational system. Like what Honourable Umu Pyne said, you are a woman and a mother, and as a mother, you know exactly what your children want. Please use that kind of inclination to see what you can do about our educational system. Some of the things he has said here are those that are actually wrong with us. We used to have access courses, but the reasons for the removal of those access courses were not communicated to the public. If you think somebody is not matured enough to be admitted into the degree programme, I think by the time the person would have completed the access course, he/she would have been matured. Examination malpractices are all over the place.

Honourable Members, people are buying grades in the university. I have seen somebody with a Master degree, but could not utter a simple sentence in English without an error. How have we come this far? What is actually wrong with us? Who is bewitching this nation?

HON. JIBRILA S. MOIJUA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I listened to the previous speakers and the concerns they raised, it is pathetic for this nation. If you look at the spirit and intent for which this Bill was drafted, you will begin to realise that with its passage into law, we will be able to answer most of those questions. The title of the Council used to be National Council for Technical, Vocational and Other Awards, it is now vocational education. This means that when it was structured in that direction, people who did HTC would have had to take the NCTVA exams and they later went to the primary and secondary schools to teach the formal education. I think there should be a fashionable alternative aside the formal education in this country. With that, I am sure people will begin to develop interest in the Technical for Vocational Education and Training Institution [TVET] sector, by creating the middle level manpower capacity in this country. We believe that it is only the white collar jobs that make people to be respected in this country.

HON. MATHEW SAHR NYUMA: Point of Order. I do not know what the Honourable Member is referring to as the white collar jobs. For the sake of clarity, I urge you to tell us which one do you refer to as white collar job and which one is not. Please tell us, otherwise you withdraw the statement.

HON. JIBRILA S. MOIJUA: I do not know whether we need any formal education to tell us the meaning of the white collar job. For instance, people who studied Accounting for them to work in the banks, and such jobs are considered to be white collar jobs as against someone who is an auto mechanic. He/she goes to the garage to repair vehicles. It does not matter the money you get from the mechanic shop, but as long as that job is the course that you read, society does not respect you much.

HON MATHEW S. NYUMA: Point of Order, Mr Speaker. You do not make someone's career inferior. Those jobs are classified based on qualifications. You have the formal sector and if you are a mechanic, you are being referred to as a mechanic. Again, if your mechanical skills are from the TECHVOC institution, you are being referred to the same way as those in the formal sector. This is happening even in the Western countries. You have people who are doing those jobs and you have those who are doing mechanical jobs. There are levels in those countries because you have those who do the design and those involved in the practical aspect of the work. We even have the marketers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague is saying that if you are an apprentice, it is not a white collar job. We have Accountants in Sierra Leone. You do not know who invented these jobs; perhaps they were invented by blacks. How can you say they are white collar jobs? I cannot accept that definition because you are presenting us in an inferior manner. So, it is either he withdraws his statement or let him explain to us properly. Do you mean when someone works at the bank, he or she has a white collar job or when the person is working at the garage, it is not a white collar job?

THE SPEAKER: What he was talking about was that he was referring to those rosary jobs; i.e., those who sit and relax in the offices with air condition. These are

generally called white collar jobs. You are not going to the farm to plough or man the gate. How does English word or phrase describe those kinds of jobs.

HON. JIBRILA S. MOIJUA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I took it from that perspective. I just want to re-emphasise the importance of this Bill with regard the issues being raised. Today, we have many unemployed graduates in this country as a result of this problem. We have seen people who have taken the WASSCE exams more than five times because they want to go to the University to earn a degree in Banking and Finance, Law, etc. People are influenced to do certain things at their own expense and sometimes they misplace their career paths. There are people who want to enter the University at all cost. There were Arts students who later converted to the science stream just to get University requirements. Some succeeded and they were admitted, but they are without any knowledge in their area of studies. This is why we now have fashionable pathway that if you do not pass the WASSCE, you have an institution you can go and get educated. This will help you to get a job that will put food on your table.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have seen developed countries like Germany, Japan, South Korea that cherish this aspect of education. It is flourishing over there and the German government came to our aid when our civil war ended in 2002 with the monumental project. We saw how they tried to help us understand that process, but we gave it a blind eye because we are still focusing on acquiring degree programmes in this country. When I graduated from the University, I met a senior engineer in this country for job. I said we have graduated, but can you help us with jobs? The man asked: what did you study? We said we studied Sociology. The man said oh "if you have read engineering, I would have asked you to come to my office in Freetown tomorrow for job." This means we have every need to prioritise the technical vocational education and training institutions in this country; we have every need to understand that getting a degree in Sociology and other similar courses will not make you a wealthy person in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to advise or recommend that the Ministry of Information and Civic Education should add to our knowledge through sensitisation of the public on the need for technical vocational training courses. If we

equipped the TECHVOC institutions, people will not be bothered to take the WASSCE all in the name of getting get degrees, but to understand that there are other courses or other areas that people can read and still live and be respectable people in this country. When we were in the University, we had district associations, such as the Bonthe District Student Union [BONDSU. We refuse to extend that membership to institutions like the Sierra Leone Organisation of Industrialisation Centre because they were reading gara tie dying and other courses we thought were inferior. We considered them as inferior academic institutions. That is also something that is justified because if you go to those institutions and engage in informal courses, you would have to pay the price. They consider you as someone who is not important in society.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Minister for this Bill that is before us. This has enabled us to understand that we should have an alternative pathway to what we consider to be formal education. This is not just a matter of being graduates, but a situation wherein you can get education and be relevant or useful in society. The document is also talking about industries driven-demand. We are doing courses that are not useful to the companies that are coming into the country. Somebody was talking at the Mill in Ghana. He was the Mill manager responsible for the renewable energy. I visited him and he said: "In Sierra Leone, I see people reading Accounting, but where are the banks? You can do what I am doing without a university degree. Do you know how much I earn here?" That was just a privileged conversation between both of us. So, these are some of the things we should be looking at in this document. Thank you so much, Mr Speaker.

HON. RUGIATU KAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me start by expressing my satisfaction towards the Bill that is before us this morning. This is a Bill that is going to develop our future generations. Normally, I like to speak from experience, especially when I am debating in this Parliament. In 2007, I was in Songhai Centre and I was there on a youth training course. My roommate was a Ghanaian and she was also there for the same training course. She was doing poultry and I asked her about their 6-3-3-4 system of education. She told me that when she sat to the BECE, because she did not have the requirements to enter senior secondary school, she

had to go to the vocational sector within the same school, while those who passed the BECE further their studies to the senior secondary school. She said after three years, while her other colleagues were taking the WASSCE exams, she was also taking the technical vocational education and training exams to enter the vocational school. This tells you that at the end of the day, there is no gap between the one in the technical vocational education and training school and the ones we call the regular school.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is very important that we look at the 6-3-3-4 because in my own opinion, I do not think we are on the right track. If you go on Facebook, you will see how developed even the estates infrastructure in Ghana and Nigeria are and you will see the difference. If you look at Sierra Leone now in terms of constructing beautiful homes, engineers are now coming from Ghana and Nigeria to build our houses. This is because Sierra Leone does not have the kind of idea needed to build beautiful houses. So, I think this is very important and I want to toe line with my colleagues Honourable Members that we have to start all over by sensitising our people. They should not think that their children will be considered as dropouts if they attend these TECHVOC schools. Today, in terms of qualifications, all qualifications are important. My colleague mentioned black soap. If you go to the market and ask the cost of the black soap coming from Ghana, it is over one hundred and fifty Leones.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go to Facebook, you will see how the young people are creating jobs for themselves from their homes. They are not even renting places any longer. You will see a lady processing black soap inside her house and she will package and sell online. She does not need to rent a store or to open a factory for that at all. I am sure we have to sensitise our parents that a child that is doing carpentry, driving or plumbing is not a dropout. I think we have to encourage our people to build the middle manpower; otherwise we will be in trouble. Just like what the previous speakers have said, the WASSCE exams brought lots of problems for us, especially the girl child. This is because some girls have taken the WASSCE exam several times; and at the end of the day, they became discouraged.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my sister got married recently. I am not talking about the material she bought, but the sewing of the wedding dress cost her one thousand, eight hundred Leones. Surprisingly, the tailor was from Ghana. She paid one thousand, eight hundred Leones. Do we have tailors that are charging one thousand, eight hundred for just a dress? This is very important for us and that is why we should continue to encourage the young ones to change the mind-set of their parents. We should tell them that no qualification is useless or inferior. In fact, most of the job adverts are requesting for degree holders. We have to look at this critically because those who did technical courses should also apply. This is not the case because everybody wants to get degree. I think we have to start by seeing adverts that are requesting for diploma or higher diploma. This will also encourage more people to engage in these courses. This is very good and I am very impressed with this Bill. I want to urge my colleagues to speedily enact this Bill into law. I thank you.

HON. BASH KAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me the opportunity to speak on this issue.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Bash Kamara and Honourable Saa Emerson Lamina, we have another Bill that is almost the same with what we are discussing now. Can you wait for the second Bill, please? This is because we have a very long day.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I said the last time regarding the standards in this House, especially for Bills, I made my point that even though the Standing Orders may not have provided compulsory procedure in respect of pre-legislative hearings, I strongly recommended that the previous Bills that came before us, ought to go through pre-legislative hearing. If we have gone through that, then the unprecedented that happened today would not have happened. Sometimes we recommend these procedures out of good faith. When a Bill has been committed to the Legislative Committee and then a report is produced and presented by the Chairman of the Legislative Committee, the normal procedure is to proceed. I am not saying it is wrong. It is unprecedented after presenting the report, the Bill is sent back. The reason is because the views of MPS would have brought out some of the lapses during the pre-legislative hearings.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Point of Order. I think the last time we agreed on how we should accommodate ourselves, relying on Section 91 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991. We did not do anything wrong. People just want to make addition. That is why I said that the publication of the gazette is for the public consumption and we did it at the committee level. We made an announcement and the Motion was requested by your leader. We have done nothing wrong. We can ask for the amendments during the Committee Stage, but because we wanted the correct wordings of the amendment, we decided to discontinue the debate. My colleague on the other side is presenting us as if we are on the wrong side. Some of these things get me offended. The last time I was furious about it. This Bill was out since Friday and there was enough time to the effect. You can read this Bill in one or two hours; you could have read them on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday. I can produce the record if you insist. The reason I am always at the defence is that we cannot work without the support staff. The support staff are in charge of distributing Bills. If you check your pigeon hole, you will find them there. Mr Speaker, after 3:00 p.m. we do not distribute anything. When you mentioned some of these things, members of the gallery tend to see us as people who are not doing the right thing. I do not like this at all. The Order Paper was out on Friday and you should have read the documents within two hours. I do not see any controversy in it. The reason we took them back to the Committee was to look at them further. Mr Speaker, what is not mentioned here is the legal link. They did not make any provision relating to the legal link in the Bill and that is contrary to the human rights and the Constitution of this country. They just made a broad statement, but we bent backwards and accommodated them. I am sure you want things to happen, but please understand that we work with rules and procedures in this House. I rest my case.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: For the order of this House, I started rounding off the debate, but the Leader of Government Business has his own bite. For me, it does not suit me much for other Members of Parliament to be seeing us, as Leaders, altercating ourselves. I think the best way to do, after I round off, he can address me because he has the final say. Secondly, I did not complain about late submission of this Bill. It is another complaint, but that is not my complaint. My concern was for

Bills to be given due diligence. It ought to go through the pre-legislative hearings, even though you are not forced by the Standing Orders to do so. The Standing Orders does not force you to do so, but you can choose to ignore pre-legislative hearings. My point now is to convince you that pre-legislative hearings are necessary because if you had listened to me before the Bill came into this Parliament, it should have gone through the pre-legislative hearings and all the issues would have been addressed. If it had happened that way, the unprecedented that happened today would not have happened. That is my point, Mr Speaker. If we take this route, we will continue altercating ourselves.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O. 34. I am talking to my colleagues and he is still making reference to the Bill. We have done nothing wrong. It is not before us for discussion and we have unanimously resolved the issue. I spoke to the Opposition over the weekend that we should stop discussions on the Bill and commit same to the Legislative Committee, so that we can do some amendments. Now let me tell you, somebody maliciously wrote to the general public, accusing the Opposition of sell-out. The Leader brought it to my notice and I said we allowed them to come to this Well. If they were interested, they should have come to the Committee Stage. You might not like the Speaker, but he is in charge of Parliament. So, we are encouraging the people because they did not read the Bill, but they levelled allegations against the Opposition. I said did you ask them if they had read the Bill, he said they did not read the Bill. When the Bill was distributed, they said I should consult with the professionals.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want him to know that we have not done anything wrong. The Bill before us is Counter Tourism. I said we should bend backwards and I rely on Section 91 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991 on how we should regulate ourselves in order to proceed with the Bill. The Honourable Member kept on bringing this issue to the Floor. He even said 'it is an embarrassment.' It was an understanding between me and the Leader of the Opposition. Therefore, I need not to be rigid and that is why I have to show some understanding. I am an understanding Leader and I have to give him the human face. If he has been attacked maliciously, I should give him the human face

irrespective of where we belong. That is how leadership goes and that is why we have the Standing Orders. I am not interrupting you; I am trying to clarify the issue that you have raised. I do not want you to dwell on things that are not good for us on the government bench. So, I am telling to ignore and proceed.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, like I said before, I never said you did anything wrong. I know it is very clear that your ruling was not against the Standing Orders. My point was just to persuade you that it is necessary, even though it is not in our Standing Orders, for pre-legislative hearings. Secondly, we are here with two Bills, but no reference to Pre-legislative hearings. Thankfully, the two Bills before us are not controversial. However, my worry is us going through with that trend, is now becoming a procedure or accepted procedure. It is not good for due diligence. Some of us frown at taking Bills for granted. Even if it is not controversial, I always stand for due diligence for every Bill. The Bill may not be controversial, but it is very important to the development of this country, especially the Bill that is before us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know that ever since the 6-3-3-4 was introduced, it was introduced to boost the provisions in this Bill, but this country has failed. We have never got our intended outcome from the 6-3-3-4 system of education. When I looked at the long title, I commended the drafters because if I were in Parliament when the extant law was enacted, my question would have been what do you refer to as other academic awards? This is because it makes no sense to me. As long as you make provision for technical and vocational education, then what do you mean by other academic awards? In this long title, it has already been left out because 'other academic awards' has been made redundant. It has been taken off and I commend the Minister for that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my only issue is with the long title, which is a simple channel, but we are saying that if they had listened to us, they would not have done the same mistake. If you commit the same mistake hundred times, we will correct it hundred times. In the case where the intent to repeal an Act of Parliament, but refused to include it in the long title, it can never be accepted. Any mistake of that nature would be corrected. It would do us good if they listen to us. When piloting their own Bills, they avoided the same mistakes. The same mistake

was done in the previous Bills, which we have already passed, but I am seeing the same mistake here.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in Clause 13, we made a landmark decision in this House regarding heads of administration, their appointments, their terms of office, their qualifications, etc. I am confused here, Mr Speaker. In Clause 13, the appointment of the Director is not too clear whether he is head of administration; whether he is a member of the Board or whether he is the Secretary to the Board. In fact, in Clause 13, the qualification is set at Master's degree plus 10 years' experience. In Clause 14, there is a provision for a Deputy Director of which the qualification is a degree and five years' work experience. That is another issue to be discussed at the Committee Stage.

THE SPEAKER: Is the degree qualified?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: It is not qualified.

THE SPEAKER: If you are referring to a blank degree for TECHVOC and you talking about academic, then what are we saying?

HON DANIEL B. KOROMA: As I said earlier, we will deal with that at the Committee Stage. I only wanted to prepare the mind of Madam Minister. I want you to be abreast with the issues before the Committee Stage. This is because after our exchanges, the Chairman at that time would have to ask Madam Minister what would be her take. That is why we are bringing some of these points. The most technical area that is confusing is the landmark decision we took the last time regarding heads of administration, their terms of office and the manner of appointments. In Clause 14, the term of office for the Director has been brought to five years, while in Clause 3, Paragraph [Q], the Director is being mentioned as a member of the Board. The term of every member of the Board is three years. So, if the Director is part of the Board whose term of office is three years and the term of office for a Director is five years, this seems contradictory. It is not an oversight; it is technical.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am also confused about Clause 17 because in Clause 16, it says the term of office for the Director is five years, whilst the Director

is still member of the Board whose term of office is three years. In Clause 17 again, I am also confused because there is provision for the Registrar with no term of office, but the Registrar is being described as Secretary to the Board. My question is that what is the role of the Director who is a member of the Board with a term of office of three years? There is a provision for non-member of the Board whose term of office is five years, but not a Secretary to the Board and he is not being described as Secretary to the Board. We also have another third party in the name of Registrar, who is now Secretary to the Board, but is not placed under Clause 3 as Secretary to the Board. The Registrar is placed in Clause 17. This is more confusing, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what I am about to say is in line with the appeal made by the Honourable Member from Moyamba regarding the activities of the National Civil Registration Authority. This is where he made a landmark press release and it will take effect on the 1st January, 2025 that every citizen and non-citizen ought to have his/her national identification card, otherwise they will not be entitled to anything as a Sierra Leonean and none Sierra Leonean residents of this country. The problem he raised was that the activities or services of the NCRA are not accessible in the provinces. People have to come all the way from Krobola, Tihun, Pujehun, etc. to come to Freetown to get their National Identification Cards or they have to come all the way to the regional headquarters for their ID cards. So, he pleaded that the services of NCRA should be decentralised to at least the district levels. In my opinion, it should be decentralised even at the chiefdom levels.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what I have just said is being done in Clause 34; i.e., it is not made mandatory. This means the Minister can choose to establish regional offices or decide to centralise everything in the Western Area or Western Urban. In my opinion, the discretion to establish regional offices in the provinces should be expunged. It must be made mandatory for your services to be accessed by Sierra Leoneans in the provinces. Those offices must be established in the districts. If you cannot go to the district, you should have district offices in addition to regional offices. As I said earlier, we are bringing these issues to help the Minister get the right thing done.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that the Bill non-controversial. It is very good and I believe if we had got it right, when we established the 6-3-3-4 system of education, this country would have been very rich or strong in terms of our middle manpower. In fact, even the existing institutions at that time were not fully utilised. For instance, the Opportunities Industrialisation Centre [OIC], I did part of my secondary school education in Makeni and the OIC was one of the best. There was also Opportunities Industrialisation Centre [OIC] in Bo. They trained people for one year and then after that, they may use you through internship or apprenticeship programme for another six months. They used students to build schools, hospitals or health centres and construction of feeder roads. So, they used your expertise to work for them for free, while they get the money. Therefore, at the end of the year, they would use part of the money to buy a kit for you and your certificate. This was how these institutions became financially sustainable.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our expectation was that when the 6-3-3-4 came into existence, those existing institutions would have been strengthened, funded and encouraged to grow. In fact, there was also a Sierra Leone Opportunity Industrialisation Centre [OIC] at Cline Town. There is another one at Ferry Junction, known as Trade Centre. If you go to that institution at Ferry junction, you will shed tears because you will really see the intention of those who established Centre at that time, but the facilities are dilapidated and destroyed. I can say everything is gone. No country can develop without the middle manpower. That Trade Centre is over forty years now. The blame is not on any specific government; the facility is over forty years old. Therefore, our expectation is that the Trade Centre should have been better today than forty years ago. If you visit that institution, you will find out that the Trade Centre is worse than how it was. That should not be the objective of the nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe with the enactment of this Bill, I know that Opportunity Industrialisation Centre and other institutions that are meant to build the middle manpower will kick-start again. These institutions must be given the required support, so that we can get exactly the glory Sierra Leone deserves. We are

always yearning for past glories, while others are feeling sorry for their past events. In Sierra Leone, our history is better than our present. However, our future is in our hands. If we want to take it the positive way, it is in our hands. I believe this Parliament cannot stop such an initiative because it is one of the steps to ensure that our future is better than our history, instead of the reverse, where our history is always better than the present and there is no hope for the future.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members. I want to use this time to urge my colleagues to support this Bill. In fact, sometimes I stand against committing all Bills to the Legislative Committee. In the Fourth Parliament, you would agree with me that we committed Bill[s] to the Legislative Committee only when it is very sensitive, critical and of public concern; otherwise, we went straight to the Committee of the whole House and passed into law. In my opinion, this Bill does not deserve any further committal. We can pass it now because it is very important.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in Clause 28, under the offences provision, you introduced a new standard. We have our own standard, Madam Minister. We cannot use your standard by specifying figures for lower and upper limits; i.e., "not less than fifteen years, not more than twenty years." No, we cannot use it that way. Leave that to us, Madam Minister. However, I commend you for your third provision which states that for any subsequent offences, continuation of the offences on a daily basis, there is also a fine for that. I want to commend you for that because for some people, fine may not matter to them; they will just pay and continue. They benefit more from the Commission than the fine levied. The profit for non-compliance far outweighs the consequence. This is why they will continue to pay fines and get more profits. It seems as if non-compliance is a profitable business for them. However, by recommending further fines for continuous disobedience/violations is commendable. On note, I urge my colleagues to speedily pass this Bill into law. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

HON. JOSEPH WILLAMS-LAMIN: Point of Order, Mr Speaker. The public is watching us and to state here that the Polytechnic Centre at Ferry Junction is on life support.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, when you said it is on life support means that government is not making effort. That is not the impression. Of course, Government is doing everything humanly possible to improve the conditions of these institutions. However, let me say with all authority that they are not in good conditions. As a people, let us be honest with ourselves. These institutions are not in good shape. Government is making frantic efforts to ensure that they are kept alive, but they are not in good shape. We just need to say the truth here. Nobody is going to say that it is the current government that has caused this. In fact, nobody will say that as long as I am seated here. It is not the government of President Julius Maada Bio that has caused the problem; it is not even the government of Ernest Bai Koroma or the government of Ahmed Tejan Kabbah. It is all of us and all of us are responsible. This nation is responsible for what we are going through now. That is why some of these discussions or issues are not political questions to be debated. They are not campaigned questions to be debated at all; these are just the plain facts.

Honourable Members, we have allowed ourselves as a nation to go down the drains; we have allowed ourselves to be in this kind of state. That is why sometimes when I saw people bringing politics in some of these issues, I do not take it kindly. If you go to the Trade Centre now, beginning from the head of that Trade Centre to the staff, and even their students, to all of us, we have caused this kind of problem. However, what is important is that we need to say these things, so that the Minister will hear them and take the necessary action. We need to say them out loud and clear. This is because she has been given that mandate to correct some of these issues in the education sector. We are hopeful that she will take the necessary actions. I am extremely hopeful that she has heard a whole lot of these problems.

Honourable Members, the Minister has heard a lot in a single day relating to our educational system. I expect her to take the relevant actions because very soon, we will be bringing her to question her regarding some of the progress being made. We will be asking her relevant questions relating to these institutions and our

educational system. We will be talking about the formal education and the TECHVOC institutions. Honourable Joseph Williams-Lamin, I know you are a politician. Interestingly, I am a politician, but I am not a party politician... - [Undertone]. I have an open mind about Sierra Leonean's questions. For certain things, I can stand here and blame certain people; but for other things, I do not blame anybody. I blame all of us.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. For me, I should have given the Chairman the chance to educate us because I saw the report concerning the technical institutions from Brookfields to the East and across to the provinces. I read the report and the report was laid here. She was trying to define her credibility which she has put on the line. The premises that led to the conclusion were very devastating that they are not working and they are not doing that. We take it politically that they are riding on our platform for coming to the governance part of education. We will never stand the face of anybody to take it away from us. That was what took us to power. We removed the 6-3-4-4 and reintroduced the 6-3-3-4. I have no doubt in the Minister's ability to transform the education sector. I know the number of publications she has made. She is very close to be a professor. I think I have read one of your publications in this Chamber. I have approved some of your staff in different levels. I want to say thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to first take two things into consideration. First, we are not doing away the administration of the TECHVOCs; we are transforming the technical Universities and that is why we have the Council. I am going to read the memorandum of object and reasons and tie it with the constitutional provision in Section 9 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991. President Bio was not here when the 1991 Constitution was enacted. I am going to read just two Sections. That is why we have two Bills and we are going to put the two Bills together to look at them and see the distinctions between the TECHVOC and the Tertiary Education Commission. We do not need to confuse ourselves. I have heard Members talking about the extreme things as if the people working at the Tertiary Education Commission are not doing anything. You have gone too far into the administration, talking about result or quality control. This has

to do with the administration. What we have in front of us is a framework of the structural transformation of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Institution. Mr Speaker, with your leave, I now read the memorandum of object and reasons. It says:

“The purpose of this Bill is to continue in existence of the National Council for Technical Vocational and other Academic awards which is now to be known as National Council for Technical and Vocational Education, to provide accreditation, validation of examination and certification services for awards in certain specialised and professional programmes in formal, non-formal and informal sectors and to provide for other related matters.”

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the wordings are very clear. We said let us invest in education that has to do with human capital and that is the right thing to do. If you want to develop a nation, it can only be done through education. We have built structures. We have realised that the Minister has done nothing wrong; what she has done was to bring us to speed by saying that there is not much to do. We were busy talking about policies, but what about physical transformation? What about transformation that has to do with policy that drives these institutions which are backed up with the financial programmes that we have brought to these institutions? I refer you to Section 9 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone. When we talk about education, it is not because President Bio wants to make political gains, but he saw it necessary. When he was a soldier, he sacrificed for this country and he said the only way he could change the lives of people was through education. The side note of Section 9 of the 1991 Constitution is Educational Objectives. Section 9[1]: “The Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal rights and adequate educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels by: 9[1[C] providing the necessary structures, finance and supportive facilities for education as and when practicable.”

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, both Bills specifically mentioned the functions being highlighted in the 1991 Constitution by addressing parities in the tertiary educational system. Madam Minister, as I said it earlier, I have read your curriculum vitae and I know you are in the right direction. Let me borrow from what you said in

the schedule that you listed the institutions. This is because it was deliberate. In fact, in line with what you have in the memorandum of object and reasons, you are telling us that you are bringing parities in the educational system. You have highlighted the qualifications criteria for the formal, non-formal and informal sectors. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I shall be talking about the functions, you will see exactly what I will be driving at. In addressing parity, you went straight to the tertiary institution. I used Section 9[1c] to campaign and I won votes; everywhere I went, I used the constitutional provisions to campaign. People have been saying this long time ago, S.O 2 politician den dey lie. Some of us are trying to clear that impression from the minds of our people. You cannot continue to classify us because of the mistakes of those who have robbed us from our social rights. This is nothing, but the truth. In fact, what they have done in this Bill was that they have given us a list of committees. There is a Finance Committee, but there were allegations that lots of funds have been invested in tertiary education, but the funds were not properly accounted for. People have been shouting without proffering solutions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, We know that we have to put in place system controls if we want to see the light at the end of the tunnel. In 2023, they said, S.O 2 di pikin den don go spy without giving preference to our children and the Ministry of Basic Education. Madam Minister, those kids under custody. Whatever parameter they used is in place because we should not be boasting with it. We should be checking for standards. We should not put our tertiary education into a hypothetical situation. In other words, we should not continue to cry down our universities. I attended the Fourah Bay College. Like what somebody said, the classification of the universities is not the problem and I clearly agree with the person. Not everybody is yearning for a degree, because there are those who are interested in having a certificate in technical and vocational education.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure the middle manpower is very important. America is great today because of the middle manpower. Tony Blair did not go to the University; he has no degree; he only has a polytechnic degree, but he ruled and controlled people who were professors; he controlled the world; he served

ten years and resigned later. The country went into oblivion for a very long time and they only resurrected because they had a good leader. So, it is not the issue of education, but it is the system checks we have to embark on. The system is complete and that is why I am taking my time to go through the functions of these TECHVOCs. When I graduated from the University, I lectured basic computer at the Polytechnic in Kenema.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have clear distinctions between TECHVOC and the formal sector of the education, especially those who want to do degree programmes. If you go to those classes [I am talking about the certificates and diplomas], even your intonation, choice of language and mode of explanation are totally different. You have to mind your words because of the level and because they want to understand the concepts. So, if you want to change somebody, you have to look at the level of communication. If you look at the curriculum that we have in the universities, you have to first of all look at them and operate on them. There are great men in Sierra Leone that do not have degrees, but they have done great jobs and they are innovators. We should not cry them down because they do not have degrees. I perfectly agree with the Honourable Lady over there when she said that if you check the cost of black soaps and compare it to Irish spring now, one ball black soap will buy two Irish Spring Soaps. This is because the content of that black soap has been formulated in such a way that the chemicals befit our status and solve our problems.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to inform the Minister that she should not feel discouraged because Bills are proposals, but the intent of your proposal is good for Sierra Leoneans. You have clearly told us that you look at the formal, non-formal and informal sectors, which is a deliberate act. There are times when you are dealing with the TECHVOC, you have to explain maybe in Temne, Mende and Krio for people to understand. The essence of communication has to do with understanding and the essence of education is to transform someone's life. You can read books, but that does not mean you are educated because you have not trained society. You have listed several institutions, but you have to setup a system where people can control the community or others who are not interested or qualified.

There are people who are not interested to have degree, but they are interested in the middle manpower. I am certain that if the middle manpower is well-equipped and well taken care of in Sierra Leone, this place will be transformed into paradise. I have the data, but I will not reference them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the elites have a way of classifying the middle manpower. The middle manpower in China and America is so great that it enhances the development of their countries. Development is like a pyramid, one level supporting the other; and if you go at the top, that will be the limit. Mr Speaker, I will read Clause 34. I am responding to what the Honourable colleague said about the NCRA. I am sure the NCRA is all over this country. They have offices in most of our districts. In fact, they have agents who go around, collecting the details of those who cannot come to the centre because of the nature of the terrains. Clause 32[1] on Page 23 reads: "A Council may establish offices in the administrative regions of Sierra Leone and districts as the Council may determine." It does not have to be mandatory; there must be willingness to do so. The spirit and intent to have a stream with the aim of correcting certain things must be there. That is why they said, you are running a cash budget since after the war or even before the war.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Clause 23[2] reads: "A regional or district office, established under sub-section 1, shall be provided with such officers and staff as deemed necessary for the proper and effective performance of the functions of the Council." You can now see the mandatory Clause. They have even given you two options where you feel the universities that are dealing with these TECHVOC institutions are well-established. They will look at the formula to determine where to establish a district office. They are now saying that if you have established an office, it is mandatory that you do the formula.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in Clause 11, I will take your time to read few lines on the functions of the Council. In this Bill, the responsibility of the Director is expressly stated. Also, the responsibility of the Deputy Director is clearly expressed in the Bill. The functions of the Registrar are clearly stated as well. So, where is the confusion? There is no confusion. I will make reference to it and I want you to keep it in mind. Let me tell you some of the functions outlined in Section 9 of the

Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991. Clause 11 [p] says: "Review, develop and operationalise curricula in collaboration with other stakeholders, including the private sector for skills and education programmes based on standards registered under the national qualifications framework and other international standards." Madam Minister, like I said, you have read books, but you are carefully educated and you know the emancipation of coming from a position of inferiority to a position of superiority. Even as you are addressing the issue relating to technical and vocational education and training institutions that has to do with the middle manpower and informal education, you have developed curricula that have to deal with those issues in the context of the Sierra Leone framework and within the context of international standards.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me take you back to Page 10, Paragraph [I]. It says: "Provides technical advisory services to ministries, departments and agencies on matters related to the management and improvement of skills and education systems." This is in line with Section 9 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone. You went on further to say the Council shall "conduct research and development in skills and education." On Page 9, you said: **"The Council shall see, develop and implement a national examinations and assessment systems in skills and education sectors, and facilitate collaboration between training institutions and industries to promote.... - "** Madam Minister, please take note of these things. You also said: "Industry-demand driven curricula development and replacement." Madam Minister, do you know what you have done? You are now looking at what we are doing here. When we were at Fourah Bay College, we were doing something different because people were asking questions. People wanted to know why we were doing Greek and European History. We had that argument at Fourah Bay College on several occasions. You also said you are now going to structure our educational system based on the needs of our industry. This is because we are talking about TECHVOC institutions. S.O 2, if na black power shoe wi bin dey mek, we for now do a curriculum wae fit for wudat den for do the black power.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have been doing push cart [Omonlankeh], since 1960s and if we want to transform that profession, we have to link it with the industrial provision. We have got engineers, but we have never changed the face of our push carts. You also mentioned 'workplace experience and learning.' This is necessary and that is why you talked about sacrament. You have always been mindful of handling the sacrament. In the sacrament of this Bill, we will ask you for the sacrament and we expect you to give us the necessary professionalism that will serve in this institution. However, if you cannot work in line with our demands, we can lay it off. That is what is expressly stated. If you go to these technical institutions, you will find out that there are people they have extended their contracts due to lack of middle manpower. These are people with experience and long standing service in the practical work.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just decided to take some of these issues for the attention of the Minister. If you look at that same clause provision, you made mention of secondary and tertiary. I do not know whether we need more knowledge with regard the Bill that is before us. When you look at Clause 11, it says secondary and tertiary education even within the technical and vocational education and training institution. So, it is intertwined and you spoke about us coming from the secondary and tertiary level. I am sure you are deliberate with this definition in Clause 11. You stated what we will be expecting from you as far as these functions are concerned.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the Director General and Deputy. I see nothing wrong with them. In Clause 11, it says: "The Director General shall responsible for the efficient management of Agency." I am reading it because this was how it was presented. We all know that Bills are proposals. We can make some changes to get better laws. There can be typographical errors, but the manuscript is not like that. What we have in front of us is the Council and not Agency. I will not come and change it now. I am not at the Committee Stage. I read it as it is, so as to prepare your mind for possible amendments. You said: **"Without prejudice to the generality of sub-section 1, the Director General shall be responsible to provide overall leadership in the administration and**

management of the day today business or activities of the Council.” Let me go to Deputy Director General. It says, **“The Deputy Director General who shall be appointed by the council, after consultation with the minister.”**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Clause 14[2] states: **“A person shall not be qualified to be a Deputy Director General under sub-section unless he/she holds a degree.”** I read that provision for my colleague to understand the qualifications to be considered for the position of a Director General and Deputy Director General. Their qualifications cannot be the same and it has been the normal standard. In this Bill, it is stated that: **“The Deputy General shall serve as a principal assistant to the Director in the administration of the Council, carrying out such duties as may be assigned to him by the Director and also act as Director in the absence of the Director.”** Mr Speaker, even for the speakership position, the Deputy is enshrined in the Constitution as the principal assistant to the Speaker. In the case of the Registrar, it is mentioned that: **“The Council shall have a Registrar who shall be appointed by the Council on such terms and conditions as the Council may determine. A person shall not be qualified to be appointed as a Registrar in the Council, under sub-section 1, unless he holds a degree in administration and management.”** Mr Speaker, whether we have to increase the years or not, these are things we have to take care of. However, there must be a proposal that will give us direction.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Clause 18[1] states: **“The Director shall serve as a secretary to the Council and shall be the principal adviser on administrative matters relating to the technical functions of the Council. Without prejudice to the generality of sub-section 1, the Registrar shall, subject to the direction of the Director and the Deputy Director, be responsible to coordinate activities of the Council and its committees.”** It is very clear that the drafters who did this work did so in good spirit. They have promised to put in place structures where some of these concerns will be addressed. You have identified the issues and how you want to handle them. That is why if you go back to Clause 6, you will realise that the committees are clearly listed. You have the Financial and Administrative Committee, Curriculum and Examination Committee,

etc. We are not talking about confusion; we are saying that you have brought the Bill to us; and where necessary, we will make amendments.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister highlighted certain issues affecting our technical universities. You would agree with me that these universities need to be structured. You cannot just talk about bringing an annual report to Parliament for it to be laid. I am saying this because there are structures to be followed and this Council is going to be in charge of handling some of these vital issues. Madam Minister, let me draw your attention to Clause 31[1]. I have read it severally, but I seem not to understand. It states: **"A person shall not, [a] procure or cause to be procured, make or causing to be caused to be made, produce or cause to be produced or make a force of fraudulent declaration or representation in relation to the certificate."** You do not need to bother yourself because I detected some mix up somewhere. You are not a drafter or a lawyer. Maybe by the time we go to the Committee Stage, the drafters would have handled it appropriately. I just wanted to state here that sometimes we do have typographical errors or mixed up somewhere. How can you say you want to call a meeting for members to sign? What can prompt the Chairman to call for meeting? I think we have to increase that number. What you have in this proposal is three. Please check properly or if you need the reference, I can give it to you. We need to have more numbers because the ones in the proposal are very small.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we cannot work with what is stated in the Bill. So, if you want to call a meeting for the Chairman, we must talk about the numbers. Please look at Clause 5[3]. You said a minimum of three people shall be called to a meeting. If you check in the Tertiary Education Act, it is different. The number to be called for a meeting is eight. Let me say Kudos to you Madam Minister. What nobody has mentioned let me mention it now. Do you know what you have done? There are allegations upon allegations and we are so selfish because some of us are educated, but we tend to ignore the people who are trying to be educated like us, so that they can be respected in society. You have mentioned the penalties and they should be implemented. For instance, if a person is involved in some practices that are not in

the dictate of the Council and even those in the Council, the person should be removed from the Council.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are penalties in both Bills. We need to increase those penalties. We appreciate you for that because you have done a very good job. You suggested by tying this one to four penalties, so that people can understand the seriousness of the Bill. It is going to serve as deterrent. As I said in subsequent debates that I do not want to make crime lucrative, but to make crime punishable. The only way we can transform this country is through education. We are selfish because we have the opportunity and those who are educated have decided to deprive others from being educated.

Mr Speaker, our leader took oath to defend the Constitution and he has decided to remain loyal to the dictate of the Constitution. His policies are in line with his manifesto. Mr Speaker, while others were fighting the teachers for eleven years, these days we are busy transforming people through education. That is what we are doing. While others are on human capital development, we are mindful of the constitutional lapses and that is why we have this Bill before us. We are also mindful of the fact that education is the beacon of hope. We rely on non sibi sed allis, which is the motto of Fourah Bay College. Mr Speaker, we have to support this Bill. We have to take cognisance of the typos and also where necessary the standards for making good laws for everybody. We have data where we have many challenges, but some of them are purely administrative.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to inform the Minister that the setting up the Council for technical and vocational education, and training institutions will help us. With the penalties you have proposed as mitigating measures, they will help us to shape our educational system. Some people have shouted for far too long without bringing solutions to the table. In fact, they only added more problems instead of solving the issues. We have grumbled for far too long, but I have known you to be a Minister of few words. That is why even in the composition of the Bill, you spoke about female representation and gender parity. We are trying to interpret the policy that has to do with constitutional provision, our manifesto and many other things.

We have not reached there yet due to several challenges. All of us should work together in order to address these challenges.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to develop this nation, we need to accept a simple formula and that is the only way we can make this nation a better place for all of us, irrespective of our political differences. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of blessed memory was paying fees for students who were affected by the war and the Paramount Chief from Kailahun District knows about it. He paid for students because there was no means of getting money to pay for themselves. So, there was a blanket fees and that policy continues with President Bio. You would agree with me that good policies are always accepted. While using this Well as catalyst to prompt good behaviour in terms of policy, I want you to know that it is the SLPP, APC and the Paramount Chiefs are contributors. This country can be a better place for all of us through education and it is through education we can transform this nation. I thank Madam Minister and Honourable Members for their numerous contributions.

THE SPEAKER: Madam Minister, you have heard all the comments made by Honourable Members. We want to hear from you, but before that, I want you to know that this House is with you. We are with you in everything. Wherever you want us to come in as a Parliament, please inform us. We will give you all the necessary supports to ensure that you achieve the best for this nation.

DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker and many thanks to the Honourable Members for your very positive and constructive feedbacks on the Act that we have presented this morning. As Ministry of Technical and Higher Education, we take on board the very invaluable comments that you have suggested today and we will be taken into consideration as we finalise the Bill.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to respond to some of the concerns that you have raised and also the plans that we have in the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education to address some of these issues. You would agree with me that before 2018, the Ministry of Education was overwhelmed, but through his wisdom, President Julius Maada Bio thought it fit to split the Ministry of Education into two: the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education. We believe that such move has been quite important in

bringing the importance of the technical and vocational training to the forefront. This is because when the Ministry of Education was born, technical education was buried in the Ministry and it was not given the attention that was desperately needed for us to position it as a platform where we can build the middle manpower and support the social and economic development in Sierra Leone. Since 2018, a lot has been done within the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education with the supports from the GoSL and development partners to position the technical vocational education and training institution to provide the middle-man power and making technical vocational education and training institution to be attractive.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what we are doing within the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education, as I have said many times, is that we have to protect the investments that the government, under the leadership of His Excellency the President, has made with the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education. We know about the free quality education, which gives us the foundation. We have to protect that investment and position our young people to contribute positively to social and economic developments. Within the Ministry, we have strategic plans and one of the plans is how we can strengthen our regulatory authorities. This is why we are here today because the National Council for Technical Vocational Act is the only regulatory agency for vocational trainings. What we are presenting here today is part of the road map; a road map of a very ambitious and transformative agenda that we have to strengthen systems within the technical institutions and to also change the perception of people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I made my submission, I was hoping that the number of concerns you have raised would be addressed around the plans we have in the sector. So, I will start by changing the perception; but unfortunately, there is a general misconception among young people. Parents and caregivers consider vocation training as second class and it is for dropouts. We have heard many times today that in other parts of the world, that is not the case. There is evidence that shows the opposite and we have to ensure that we first change the perception of our young people, our parents and our caregivers on the importance of vocational training and that involves a multi-sectorial approach. In other words, it

involves working with the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education. That is why I am very happy when I heard suggestions about how we can work with the technical vocational education and training institutions. How do we ensure that we create space for young people who are grounded in technical skills? This is because technical education is all about hands on training and we will pass them along to our Government Technical Institutes and not by limiting them. We shall explain that later, but it is not meant to go all the way to Doctor of Philosophy [PhD].

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, TECHVOC first evolves working with the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education. Another suggestion is to work with the Ministry of Information and Civic Education to help us to advocate or popularise the importance of these institutions. It also involves looking at the young people who have gone through technical training and getting them to serve as ambassadors and give us positive case studies of how vocational training has had a positive impact on their lives. We have examples from the project we have implemented with support from the World Bank and the Government of Sierra Leone regarding the skills being implemented and also working with the parents. So, this is all hands on deck.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to ask for your continued support because it is also involved working with your communities. Please help us to get the message to your communities that vocational training is not a second class venture and it is not for dropouts; it is quite a lucrative educational pathway. I am sure with the plans we have on the issue of trainings, we want to change the quality of this institution to an advanced one. It will be a shameful thing for us to cajole young people, parents and caregivers into believing that vocational training is the way to go, but when they get to the technical training institutions, there is something questionable about the quality. As I said before, vocational training is all about hand on training. It involves having the equipment or tools that will enhance efficiency and effectiveness. We have to ensure that the right equipment are in place in order to create the conducive learning environment, so that young people will be trained properly and effectively within these government and technical institutes. This will ensure that the curriculum is fit for purpose.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, early last year and with supports from the World Bank, we conducted the Labour Market Survey and everything that we do within the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education has to support the government agenda. What we did was to go back to the Medium National Development Plan, where we identified sectors that would be referred as broke sectors as stated in the National Development Plan. We conducted the Labour Market Survey, where we spoke to partners, both in the public and private space and asked them the types of skills they would like to see in young people when they graduate? The output of that exercise is that we can cycle back and look at that and use it to align our curriculum to ensure that it speaks to the work with the demands of our current market. This will ensure that we train in a demand-led manner and increase the chance of employability for the young people. This is because we have trained them in the way that speaks to what the industry players want. That will ensure that it is relevant.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, regarding the policy, once we have the curriculum, we have to ensure that we have the equipment or tools that will be informed by the curriculum. This is why we have to work with partners, with support from the Government of Sierra Leone to ensure that the Government Technical Institutes have the equipment or tools that speak to the curriculum. We are also working to ensure that our trainers are capacitated to deliver the curriculum and they can use the equipment to deliver effectively. There is something that we mostly overlook which has come up during the debates. It is the issue about how do we ensure that we protect this investments in equipment. This is very expensive, especially that which has to do with maintenance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have drafted an asset policy that would give strategic direction to all higher educational institutions the mandate to develop assets policy that aligns with our national assets policy. We will have one for the sector, and all our higher educational institutions for both vocational training and universities. We will also ask them to complete an asset policy and we have already developed a template that we have shared with all our government technical institutes for them to update the assets register, clearly showing where and when they are required. We would also want to know the lifespan or if any maintenance

was carried out. This is to ensure that we get a sense of what is happening. Most importantly, we are going to be working with our vocational training institutions, to ensure that they put aside a maintenance fund for building equipment. This could be a small percentage of what the students pay as part of the tuition fee. This is important because we do not want a situation where it is only when equipment needs to be repaired we start looking for funds. If it is utilised, then it will be saved to expand the lifespan of these equipment and utilise them for a very long period of time. So, that is what we do with regard to the quality and relevance of this sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have also developed a policy known as the Dual Apprenticeships Policy. The Dual Apprenticeship Policy is a structured way in which a young person will be able to acquire, on the job training in a real-life context with industry partners. So, not only will it allow a young person to have real-life experience on the job training, it will also increase their chances of employment. This is because we can all agree that if a young person does very well while they are in the industry, the chances of them to be retained by that industry players increases. Most importantly, it also allows us to get our industry partners to see themselves as key stakeholders in how we train young people. They should not be disconnected. We produce; we capacitate and absorb them to some extent. Therefore, if we bring them to the table and ask them about the Labour Market Survey topic that I explained earlier, they should be able to help in terms of implementing the Dual Apprenticeship Policy, where young people would spend time within a government technical institute or maybe spend time in the industry in order to apply the technical knowledge he/she has acquired in a real-life setting. It helps us to strengthen the linkage between the two entities because we cannot afford to work in isolation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I said earlier that as a Ministry, we have to support the government's agenda. We are all aware of the Youth Employment Scheme, which we have committed to the government to provide five hundred thousand jobs for our young people over a five year period. We are very realistic that we are not going to be able to achieve that on our own. We need all hands on deck. We need industry partners because they are integral in this process. We also

need to ensure that we encourage entrepreneurs to train our young people. In Technical Vocational Education and Training Institution, evidence has shown in other parts of the world that TECHVOCs, if linked to entrepreneurship, it will position a young person to be a job creator as opposed to being a job seeker. We are working with partners as to how we can support the next step after training. How can we have a start up plans for our young people? How can we encourage them to come up with business ideas that address social problems or social enterprises? How can we link them to existing resources that we have within our technical, higher and educational sector?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have a centre of excellence entrepreneurship and innovation within the Institute of Public Administration and Management [IPAM], The Business School is under the University of Sierra Leone. How can we link our students to be grounded as to how to develop a business plan? How to navigate through the bottlenecks they face. How can we encourage them to form corporation, so that we are not saturating particular markets. These are some of the plans we have within the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education to change the perception. We want to ensure quality and instil relevance in our vocational trainings, which is meant to collectively build the middle manpower.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have to train young people in a way that speaks to the demands and position of our young people to contribute positively to the socio-economic development of this nation. There is also something we are working on within the Ministry, which is the proactive approach. I think it came up during the debates, where we have certain sectors that we could have a Sierra Leonean serving in that role, instead of somebody from other country. What we have to do as a Ministry is to be very proactive. If we know that there is going to be an industry that will be set up, we speak to the relevant Ministry. We have to know the skills they need and then we can start training them. This is important because in the event the industry is fully functional, they would have got the skills needed. This means working with the Ministry of Employment, Labour and Social and Security. Sierra Leoneans will have to speak because we have capacitated them and we have fostered in them the skills that are needed to thrive within that sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, going back to our Government Technical Institute, we do things within the Ministry that have to do with gender equality, social justice and inclusivity. Yes, we have a number of challenges and we are trying to address them in a very strategic manner. One challenge that we have is that we do not have district equity. This means not every district has a Government Technical Institute. We currently have eleven Government Technical Institutes in ten districts because Kono district has two. So, it means we have six districts without the Government Technical Institutes. We do not want to disadvantage a young person in that sector, who will not be able to access technical training. So, we are working with partners to see how we can build and equip six Government Technical Institutes in order to ensure that we have district equity. It is my dream for every district to have one Government Technical Institute.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I said earlier, we have to work with the heads of the institutions to ensure that they have a maintenance plan for the investment of the equipment within these institutions. We also have a mid-term plan and a Government Technical Institute in every district. However, we want to change the nomenclature of these Institutions. The core functions of higher education institutions in Sierra Leone are research, teaching and community service. Informed by that, we have decided within the Ministry to convert our Government Technical Institutes from being called Government Technical Institutes into Community Technical Colleges. There is a reason for that and it is not just about changing the name. We have spoken to the young people and they have told us to use better words. I am going to a technical college than to say I am going to a Technical Institute. This is because there is a misconception attached historically to Technical Institutes. I remembered I said earlier that we are working to change the perception of our vocational trainings.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Community Technical College will be aligned with a University. What we mean is that we will mark our universities that we have by region and then mark the Government Technical Institute or Community Colleges that we have in that region and create a linkage between the two. It creates a platform for resource sharing. This means as much as we would like to have our

Community Colleges fully equipped at this point in time is not the case. Most universities, if not all, have equipment to support trainings. So, if we link our Community Colleges to a University at a regional level, it would create a platform for resource sharing. So, a student enrolled within a Community College will be able to go to the University for practical and get the much needed hand zone training that for vocational trainings. It also creates a platform for expertise within the University to teach within the Technical Colleges. Most importantly, we will ensure that the focus of these Community Colleges will be aligned to the economic activity within that district.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if a district is booming in agriculture, it makes no sense for us to have a Technical College that is focusing in building and construction. Building and construction is important, but if a district is booming in agriculture, we have to ensure that one of the programmes that we offer within the Technical College is agriculture. That way, we create a channel to train you and then go to the Community to contribute positively at district or community level. This will have a positive effect on the socio-economic development of that district. This is not something we would want to do overnight. We are very realistic and we can identify certain sectors, for example, Feed Salone is our flagship programme and we have to ensure that we start by supporting the Feed Salone and identify other sectors that are directly linked to our development plan or our socio-economic development plan.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we will also set centre of excellence., so that once we convert our Government Technical Institutes to Community Colleges, we would want to identify centre of excellence at regional levels. I will give you an example. The Government Technical Institute at Kissy is now being converted to a centre of excellence for the automotive sector with the support from the government of Sierra Leone. So, this came about as a result of the visit of His Excellency the President to Japan, where he requested support for training in the automotive sector. It was honoured by the government of Japan and they have supported us and Government of Sierra Leone. So, the Government Technical Institute at Kissy is now a Centre of Excellence in automotive trainings. This means a young person can go there to acquire training because the equipment are available.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the curriculum has been reviewed to align with the labour market. They have partnership with industry players, seeking for automotive trainings. It also creates a channel for young people to be absorbed into the system. This is just an example, but we would like to do so for the Community Colleges to become centres of excellence, focusing on a specific sector. We also partner with the Ministry of Agriculture to see how we can develop programmes within the Ministry of Agriculture and how we can convert the Community Colleges or Government Technical Institutes into centres of excellence to support the Feed Salone programme.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there was a concern raised regarding how we can monitor things that are already in the Act. That is a very important question because Bills are already ambitious ideas; they have ambitious plans and we have made a lot of progress. I really have to commend my team for their dedication and commitment to the vision that we have within the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education to change the narratives of vocational training. In the case of monitoring, it is something we should not overlook. It is an important point that was raised and I thank the Honourable Member for bringing it up. We have National Council for Technical and Vocational Act as a regulatory authority. We have the National Council for Technical Vocational and Other Awards is one of our agencies. We are working with the partners to use technology. I am glad this also came up during the debates that we are living in an era of technology and innovation. How can we ensure that we incorporate technology and innovation into our systems to ensure transparency, accountability, efficiency, integrity, etc?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have an ongoing dialogue with one of the United Nations Agencies and they have committed to supporting the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education to develop a comprehensive education management system, not just for vocational training, but also for universities. This will be developed and informed by what we want. We will tell them the functionalities we want to see within our education management system and they will develop those functionalities. The idea is, we have two systems and we have other technology platforms that have been developed; for instance, the Technical Vocational

Education and Training Institution Mills, which was supported by the World Bank SDG project, which gives us an idea in terms of data on programmes, gender and tutors within our vocational training institutions. These systems will eventually speak to a dashboard, which means we will come up with the indicators and I can sit in my office or you can be in the Well of Parliament and click on the dashboard and you will be able to see how the these institutions are performing based on those indicators. It makes logical sense with these indicators to be aligned to what we want to contribute. Therefore, it has to be aligned to Sierra Leone. There is nothing stopping us from having indicators that align with the African Union Agenda 2063, and the SDGs, when it comes to education at national, regional, Continental and global levels. So, that is something we are working on.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, last week we celebrated the International Day of Education and the theme was centred around 'artificial intelligence, automation and preserving human legacy.' In as much as we want to introduce technology into our education systems, we must not overlook the importance of human legacy. So, in all of these, we have to ensure that we maintain and protect human legacy in monitoring these systems. We have district Directors in every region and we can utilise them more with the regional offices that we have in the Act for the National Council for Technical Vocational and Other Awards. How can we ensure that we maintain the human legacy and complement these efforts? In the interest of time, I will stop here, but all the other concerns you have raised are valid. We value them and they will be addressed at the Committee Stage.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, 'The National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act, 2024 be read the second time.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agree to]

The Bill entitled, The National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act, 2024, being an Act to continue in existence the National Council for Technical Vocational and other Academic Awards, which is now to be known as the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education, to provide accreditation, validation, examination and certification services for awards in certain specialised and

professional programmes, informal, non-formal and informal sectors and to provide for other related matters has been read the second time.

HON MATHEW S. NYUMA: Honourable Members, I stand on S.O 51[1] so that, we commit the Bill to the Legislative Committee for further scrutiny.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agree to]

Pursuant to the Standing Order 51[1], the Bill entitled 'The National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act, 2024 has been committed to the Legislative Committee for further scrutiny.

C. THE TERTIARY EDUCATION COMMISSION ACT, 2024

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

THE MINISTER OF TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION

DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE *[Minister of Technical and Higher Education]:* Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, 'The Tertiary Education Commission Act, 2024 be read the first time.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Bill entitled, the Tertiary Education Commission Act, 2024 has been read the first]

[SECOND READING]

DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, 'The Tertiary Education Commission Act, 2024 be read the second time. The Tertiary Education Commission [TC] in Sierra Leone was established in 2001 to regulate, monitor and advise on tertiary education matters. Over the years, the Commission's operations have been hindered by several systemic and legislative weaknesses which the proposed amendments aim to address. These revisions are essential for achieving the Commission's objectives, ensuring quality service delivery and adapting to the evolving needs of the tertiary education sector. There are key justifications for the proposed changes. These are:

- ❖ to enhance enforcement powers. The current Act lacks adequate enforcement provisions to address illegal constitutions and the proliferation of fake degrees. The proposed amendments introduce penalties, including fines, imprisonments and assets confiscation for violation of unaccredited institutions for using fake degrees. These measures will strengthen regulatory compliance and deterred academic flawed;
- ❖ to modernise an inclusive governance and update the membership structure of the Commission to reflect the needs for broader stakeholder engagement. For example, including representatives from West African Examination Council and from the Sierra Leone Labour Congress will ensure a more holistic approach to decision making. Rational representation of vice chancellors and principals enhance inclusivity and equitable participation across both public and private institutions;
- ❖ expanded functions to meet sector demands. New responsibilities such as monitoring academic progress, validating qualifications and accrediting institutions offering online and blended learning. Ensure the commission remains relevant in a rapidly changing educational landscape. The introduction of mechanisms for evaluating institutional resource needs and assisting in donor fund acquisition aligns with the government's focus on sustainable development and capacity building in education;
- ❖ the fourth consideration is improved quality assurance. Provisions for registering and accrediting of academic and non-academic programmes will help ensure their alignment with national socio-economic goals and global standards. Strengthening the Tertiary Commission's authority to suspend or close non-compliant institutions reinforces its role in maintaining high academic standards;
- ❖ the fifth key consideration is institutional autonomy and accountability. Maintaining the Commission's independence while enhancing its ability to audit, investigate and recommend remedies, underscores a commitment to transparency and accountability. Annual reporting requirements and robust financial oversight mechanisms such as mandatory audits will booster public trust and ensure responsible governance; and
- ❖ the six key consideration is alignment with government and international objectives, which ensures that mandating compliance with the government's financial management policies and supporting the development of national and international equivalency frameworks. The amendments ensure alignment with broader development goals and international educational standards.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the proposed changes directly support the visions within the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education to transform our higher education institutions, specifically our universities, by introducing robust accreditation systems focusing on programme relevance and ensuring equitable

stakeholder representation. These amendments address systemic barriers to quality education. Furthermore, they position the Tertiary Commission as the pivotal player in fostering a skilled and competitive workforce, which is vital for Sierra Leone's socio-economic progress.

Mr, speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, The Tertiary Education Commission Act, 2024, be read the second time. I thank you.

[Question Proposed]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I am going to take one from either side. Of course the Bill will be committed to the Legislative Committee for further scrutiny and you can make your contributions at the Legislative Committee. Let us try to conclude this debate. This is a plea to all of you so that we will have one from either side. Thank you very much.

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on behalf of the Committee on Technical and Higher Education in the House of Parliament, I want to extend our profound thanks and appreciation to Madam Minister and her team for putting this document together and by extension to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone who has prioritised education by allocating over **20%** of our national budget to education.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable Members, we met with Professor Alghali who is the Chairperson of the Tertiary Education Commission in October, 2023 and I asked him about the register of the tertiary institutions in Sierra Leone. Based on the register presented to us, we have eleven universities in Sierra Leone, fifteen colleges and eighty-nine technical institutions across the country. However, when I came this morning, the first person I looked for was Professor Alghali. One of the issues he emphasised when we visited him through oversight was compliance. Several institutions have been established to operate in Sierra Leone. Some of them were registered for the very first time, but in terms of contributing to the annual registration, they are nowhere to be found. This makes it very difficult for the

institution to operate. Nevertheless, these Bills, as my colleague said, are non-controversial.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are deterrents against offences and there are also responsibilities in this Bill. On Page 10, Clause 3[d] states: "to ensure that investigation relating to the Tertiary Education Institutions are conducted in the national interest and [e] monitor and register degrees, diplomas and certificates issued by the tertiary institutions throughout Sierra Leone.

This is very important because we have had the 'Dominion University' saga. These were online institutions that were not registered or accredited. It was alleged that they were registered in Uganda, but when we investigated, we found that they were not. The issue of fake degrees and universities was investigated by a special ad hoc committee, headed by the Honourable Kandeh K. Yumkella who was the Chairperson of that Committee. I was an active Member of that Committee. This University only used electronic media to register and later found themselves everywhere.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go online, the first thing they will ask you is that do you want to do PhD or Masters within this short period? They will tell you to come to this University and you will be awarded the degree. But today, we have strengthened the Tertiary Education Commission in such a way that what used to happen is now a thing of the past. During the Fifth Parliament, somebody told us that even if you have PhD, when you come to Parliament, you have to start all over. I said that is not true. It is just that if you are accredited with proven track records, it would just be a couple of months for one to be grounded on parliamentary procedures and practices.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure the penalties for certain offences are huge. Part 6, Clause 19 states: "A person or institution shall not operate a tertiary or higher education without the accreditation of the Commission." You cannot just come and do what you want to do in Sierra Leone. It continues: "If a person or institution contravenes sub-section 1, commits an offence and is liable to a fine not exceeding two hundred thousand Leones. In Clause 20[2], institutions that contravene this shall commit an offence and are liable for a fine not exceeding five hundred thousand Leones or the proprietor or proxy or Commission members to

imprisonment not exceeding ten years. These are serious deterrents and I believe on a very serious note that we will consider them more.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I said earlier, this is a non-controversial Bill. This will give more strength to Professor Alghali and his team to adequately advise the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education. On that note, I call on this Honourable House to go through this Bill, so that the quality of education is improved. This will enable those from the technical institutions or colleges to perform wherever they go and they will be proud Sierra Leoneans. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Chairman.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have looked at the Act itself that we are trying to repeal. It was way back in 2001, which means that it is twenty three years ago. I am sure some of the brilliant kids that were born in 2001 would have graduated from the universities and some are in the universities already. It was this Bill that led to the proliferation of institutions. It was just a Bill after the war and everybody was yearning for tertiary education. Today, people started hearing about Dominion. I am sure it did not start with Dominion; it started with the situation at College of Business Studies [CBS], where students were enrolled at a local college in Wellington known as College of Business Studies [CBS]. We also had the Saint Clement University the then Institute of Advanced Management and Technology [IAMTECH], which is now named University of Management and Technology [UNIMTECH]. The government had to intervene and sent some of the students to Njala University and other institutions across the country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have encountered very difficult history and that is I said, as a Parliament, and as a nation, we must not be slow in some of the things that are actually killing the fabric of our nation. Imagine from 2001, we have been experiencing these problems and the worst thing is not that there was no institution to regulate or address this problem, but it seems as this institution had no teeth to bite seriously those in default. So, it became a lucrative trade where everybody wanted to come and ensure that we have the best of our people or we

move away from our people. The worst is that in the silence of us the lawmakers, in the silence of the educational administrators, you will be surprised to know that we have many nursing institutions that are not accredited in Sierra Leone. I do not know how people think of some of these issues. These are the people who give injections, prescribe drugs in those local communities and give drips to people. In the community where I come from, the nurse is the first person to contact when you are severely sick. Interestingly, that nurse is being trained from a fake institution and carrying a fake certificate. Who knows, maybe the lecturer has a fake degree or certificate. In ones hopeless state, you lie down hoping that the treatment that is going to be administered will resuscitate you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure from this scenario I have given, many Sierra Leoneans have died and yet still we spent twenty three years to have a better law. It is sad. We have seen institutions registering one or two years in existence, but all of the sudden they faded out. I owe nobody an apology for this, but I will say it. Whether it is our secondary schools or tertiary institutions, the day we allow individuals to own educational institution, is the day we started digging the deep hole for the downward turn of our educational sector. When you have missionaries upholding education, they do not do it to get money. The Catholics are building schools for humanitarian purposes and to build the human capacity of a country. Today, one man will just sit in his corner and say, I want to open a college and the next day, he builds classrooms and started bringing part time lecturers and before you know it, it is registered. The day the business collapses, everything collapsed and those who were studying in those institutions do not have other places to refer to as this is my alma mater.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, some people will be telling you that they attended this institution not knowing its existence. Where is this college? S.O 2 ihn bin dey Wellington, wey am tiday? Ihn nor dey again. So, when we talk about private institutions, I was expecting this law to be strong to say, no individual can own an institution. The institution will not just die one day S.O 2 Na mi bin say ar wan open college, ar nor open am again, ihn geda d small money wey ihn don get ehn go. What do you do about it? You have nothing to do. We talk about penalties,

but are we enforcing these laws? There is something interesting, Mr Speaker. When we talk about these institutions offering unregistered courses, we also failed to understand the pains that the people who attend these institutions go through. A poor young man from school has left his village to come to Freetown to be educated. He applied in one of the tertiary institutions, but he was denied admission. He said, Okay, let me enrol somewhere for diploma course. He enrolled without knowing the accreditation level of the institution. He paid all his fees and spent two years wasting his time not knowing the institution is not accredited. The law is saying, you impose fine on the institution, but what happens to the poor student? What is the compensation for him or her? He is an innocent victim, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we will do some amendments at the Committee Stage. However, the Tertiary Education Commission also has a responsibility to be publishing our tertiary institutions every six months, so we will know which institutions have been upgraded, those who have lost their accreditation status and those that have not been paying their fees. It will even be a method of compliance for those institutions. If I want my child to study nursing, I will go to the nursing institutions that are accredited. It is not a crime to put them by category. For example, in nursing, these are grade 'A' institutions, these are grade 'B' institutions, etc. You will also tell us why some institutions are grade 'A' or grade 'B' and that will encourage others to upgrade the status of their institutions. You can say institutions below grade 'B' may not have furniture, capacity building and regional campuses. If you come to grade 'A' institution with at least three or four regional campuses, it means somebody is going to open up and because I want to be in a grade 'A' institution, I will have to go to another campus in other regions. So, I will comfortably sit in North-West and become a nurse without having to come to Freetown. I will do that also in Kambia and Port Loko and I will be comfortable with my people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we do not have that in place, it will be very difficult for our people. Some will pay; some will not and some will run. The worst is that those who have paid their moneys are the victims. Today, we have the opportunity to make laws that will change things positively. If you go around this

country, you will notice that even by the signposts of some colleges, you will think it is a Ministry. You have something like Global International College of Accredited, Finance and Documentation. The name of the college alone is a whole sentence and some are even paragraphs. If you enquire, they will tell you we have accreditation from Uganda and that is what they will tell the students. This college is accredited in Uganda. Some will tell you that the college is accredited in Somalia. When you crosscheck, you will find Somalia in the Middle East. So you go and verify if the college is in existence and its operate comfortably. This is sad, Mr Speaker. Some will tell you that the college offers online courses, but they eat into the fabric of our nation. It affects us as citizens.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are saying that if your institution is registered in other jurisdictions, but you want to operate in Sierra Leone, you must have local accreditation. We will certify the institution and we will know what they are doing. For God's sake, we cannot accredit grade **C** institution from Somalia to operate in Sierra Leone as grade **A**. Some of those colleges, with all due respect, if you look at their capacity, they are not up to the task, but these are the people we entrust this nation into their hands. Some people cannot afford to go to big institutions and therefore they look for remedy from small institutions around them. At least, it is not a crime. All we need is to have a situation where they will be given the required education in accredited institutions. It is never a crime.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, from 2001 to date is twenty five years now and we now have more universities. So, do not be afraid to say if we put punitive measures, our kids will not be educated. No, they should be educated and they should have the right to education. Today, almost in every region in Sierra Leone, has a University with the exception of the region where the Minister comes from; i.e., the North-West Region. However, I am sure she would ensure that the Ahmed Tejan Kabbah University will be in Port Loko very soon. In the North-West Region, we have had more Ministers of Education than any other region, but we are yet to have our own University. I am sure I will tell you why. I am sure because it was not a campaign promise. The Deputy Leader is not here; otherwise he would have asked me not to respond to undertones. I will not respond to undertones, but I know

Sierra Leoneans who are born and raised in Freetown, but they do not know Waterloo. Are you surprised? That is why I have always said that even when we do our field trips, we must talk to the teachers to take our kids to various places. This is because if the person knows where Masiaka is, he or she will understand that Port Loko is one of the biggest districts in Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should not just have accredited institutions, but institutions that can provide our kids the future of this nation and a better hope. I will say no matter how powerful you are as a debater, no matter how good you are as a Member of Parliament, no matter how much you have been praised to be a Director General or even the President, you should always remember that there will come a time when you will not be in that office. Somebody is going to replace you and the people we seem to protect by making these laws are ones who are going to take after us. Let us think about that and always have that in our minds. We have a future generation to take after us. Sadly, I met a principal one day. He said he was admitted in a hospital and one of the students he drove from his school was one of the nurses. Knowing the intelligence of the student, he told the doctor, S. O 2 ar don well. They asked him why? He said, "If this is the only nurse you have here, I am okay." This tells you that whatever you prepare today that is what will meet you tomorrow. So, as Members of Parliament, we will not be here forever, but the laws that we make today are the very laws that will liberate us, whether at our retirement or in full service. This is why we must do due diligence to our country and understand that no matter how they call you, no matter the name, no matter where you go, no matter the comfort of your zone, you are first of all, a Sierra Leonean before becoming a member of a political party. If we imbibe the culture of patriotism as this Bill is trying to establish, it will be good. It is a shame and the world will not forgive Sierra Leone for us to have yeh Dominion yeh even in this 21st Century. And guess what? The people who did that are still walking in the streets of Freetown freely because there were no laws like this. So, we want to implore everybody to put strong measures in place, so as to ensure that we safeguard the future of our nation. Thank you very much.

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Minister of Technical and Higher Education for collaborating with the Law Offices Department for bringing these fine documents, such as the Bill that is under review, the Tertiary Education Commission Act, 2024. She has done a very brilliant job to repeal a document that is two decades old. I believe by the time this law is repealed, tertiary education will be regulated well in this nation. I am a miner and the National Mining Agency regulates the Ministry of Mines, look at the mining companies, as well as other related MDAs. Also, this Act regulates the operations of the universities for us to have quality education.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the pride of our government is education and no one will take that from the Leadership of President Maada Bio. Today, there is a total of two million, nine hundred kids having access to education with at least **20%** of our budget being allocated to the education sector. This Bill is actually calling on Sierra Leoneans to look out of the box and treat education like how the Japanese do. No one should blame anyone for the failure of our kids or students in the classroom. We should not point fingers at the principals in the schools, the community or the parents. That is what has made Japanese education so stout because everyone takes responsibility. Mr Speaker, repealing almost two and half decades law shows how relevant this Bill is and this will actually motivate our Minister to regularly look at repealing our laws in line with emerging issues. I have begun to imagine the works of the Artificial Intelligence? It involves critical thinking that has to do with our kids.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the kids are so digital and we cannot try them, even to use television, you cannot try your seven year kid. What are you doing? Madam Minister, this Act gives you powers to repeal or make regulations for this particular law we have been looking at. The regulations will make you to be more innovative. If you go Nigeria, you will see a building call Curriculum Developers. They build curriculum in line with the times, so that their education can be relevant to what they do. Today, the emerging issue affecting the country, whether in the capital city or in the rural areas, is mismanagement of filths S.O 2 dorti. How do you

manage filths? What are the relevant courses we will use to manage filths? Do we have a policy of reduction, reusing, recycling and reproduction with regard filths education? How do you intend to reuse filths like plastic wastes? How can you recycle that and how can you reduce them? Only the educationists with curriculum experts can bring ideas for the thorough management of filths. Madam Minister, I thank you very much for this Bill.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have read Clause 3 regarding the Chairman. What should be the qualifications of the Chairman? There is a common adage that says, initiative mind cannot initiate the initiate. The Chairman has to be an initiative academic. In fact, we want to see professors or doctors in academia that chair those institutions. With that, the institutions that are in various areas, whether polytechnic or universities will now have remarkable records. In this Bill, you will now see the involvement of the Vice Chancellors because it is their duty to look after the institutions. By looking at the Principal Act, I am not too sure that they were involved. Now that the Vice Chancellors are included, they will be charged with the responsibility to run the day today affairs of the Commission. They are also involved in the administration of universities. I admire the Minister because she actually gives respect to the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act, 2022. If you read Clause 3[J], you will see gender parity at work. She stated clearly those who should be in this particular Commission and she actually pinpointed women. Are the women here? She actually respects the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act, 2022 that was passed in this Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Clause 4, we also saw the appointment of the Executive Secretary by the Commission and that is very important. I have seen institution in this country where they will first recruit the Executive Secretary of the Commission and she will become so proud to say that she was recruited before the Chairman and therefore she will challenge even the head of the Commissioners. In the event where the Executive Secretary knows that he or she is being appointed by these Commissioners, he or she will humble him/herself. There will be respect and symbiotic relationship between the Executive Secretary that actually runs the day today administration of that particular Commission and the Commissioners. I admire

the Minister a lot. The Minister uses the Statutory Instrument to analyse this Bill very well. The Minister has the power to actually repeal this twenty five years old law and that is very important.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Clause 23 states: "No person shall establish or even have false declaration." This is very important. We have seen overnight situations where somebody will say, did you know that I have college? What are the criteria for you to establish an institution? Do you have a library? Do you have the structures? Do you have researchers? How many postgraduate degree holders do you have in your institution? What is your strength in terms of research? All these are criteria for the establishment of an institution. But somebody will just jump overnight and say, he or she holds a portfolio certificate. Madam Minister, this Act has empowered you not only to levy fines as it is stated in Clause 22. In fact, this Bill will give you parliamentary powers. In Parliament, if you hit a parliamentarian, according to Section 93 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No.6 of 1991, definitely, you can even be sent to prison. This Act has already empowered you not only to levy fines, but also for those who will stand your way. Can you see the power that it has given you? Those that will stand your way not to implement the provisions in this Act should be punished.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Clause 19 gives you power to cut down the "Yeh Dominion yeh" in this country. Somebody will just jump overnight and say, do you know that my University is an accredited University? Let us look at our traditional institutions, like the Fourah Bay College, which was established in 1827. It was an accredited University. Fourah Bay College is well-structured in terms of the various courses they offer and it is linked to other prominent universities. Njala University was established in 1964 and it was also accredited by the National Council for Technical and Vocational Agency. Four days ago, I was in Illinois, Chicago in the United State of America and I got a very good time there. I was at my Alma meter University. Alma meter is a Latin word which actually means the second mother. I actually went to Njala University as a trained and qualified teacher. If you go to Illinois, you will see how they uphold standards in their University.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Kono University we are seeing today was also accredited by Sierra Leone and the construction of the university was financed partly by an Indian Bank. So, by the time this Act is passed, I will begin to see intercontinental battles between Fourah Bay College and Illinois University, Njala University and Illinois and Kono University with the Indian University. This is going to be a positive competition. Anyway, Mr Speaker, we cannot allow foreign accreditation without the supervision of this particular Act. In fact, Clause 21 states ten years imprisonment. If this Act has been passed before the Dominion University comes into existence, those initiators of that particular University would have been imprisoned for ten years. In fact, they should have also paid five hundred thousand Leones, which is equivalent to five hundred million old Leones. They are so lucky because they should have paid five hundred million old Leones and ten years imprisonment for initiating a scraped University.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we also notice in Clause 4 of this Bill that five years term of office for the Chairman. I really want to clear certain issues in this Bill regarding the five years term of the Chairman, but that will be done during Committee Stage. It is saying five years term of office for the Chairman and he/she is qualified for reappointment. How can you give five years to the Chairman which is the same with the tenure of the President? Where are we going? For the Chairman to get a degree is four years. I hope I am correct. So you people will be looking for degree holders. Well, during the Committee Stage, I will recommend for four years, instead of five years.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also admire the provision in Clause 5[3], which states that the quorum shall be eight members. I also want to clear a stinking fish of the eight members. It is not an odd number and if there is an election and in the process there is a tie, it is going to be difficult to get an outright winner. They will be there until midnight. So, let us make it an odd number. You do not have to say beside the Chairman, it is ambiguous. For more understanding, you have to remove it. Please take the Chairman off, so that we can get an odd number. Madam Minister, please take note of that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Clause 3[8] has to do with monitoring degrees. This Act gives the Minister the power and those managing the Tertiary Education Commission to monitor and register degrees in Sierra Leone. For example, if a degree is given at Fourah Bay College, at the click of a button, you should be able to monitor and know all the graduates that graduated for that particular year. They now have the power to do it, but it is in their hands. We live in a digital world wherein at the click of a button, you will know all those who graduated in 2022, 2023 and 2024 academic years. So, you will not have somebody who will say, I graduated last year from that institution. They will crosscheck to know whether it is true or not.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Minister for being innovative and Clause 3[e] has bestowed enormous powers upon you to monitor and register degrees from the various colleges. I hope you will use that power to introduce more innovations to regulate institutions. I was talking about the Artificial Intelligence and how relevant today's courses have benefited us in the working environment. But how relevant are they? People that were using typewriters in those days never knew that computers will come today. So, how critical are we to handle these issues? Today, typewriting is useless and it is being thrown into the dustbins and it is being replaced with computer. Mr Speaker, courses like Medicine and Law have taken over fifty years, but they are still relevant today. However, how relevant is Greek History?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the word education comes from the Latin word 'educare' which means 'to bring up' and 'to bring forth' from darkness to light. We want to see that this particular Tertiary Education Commission Act brings Sierra Leoneans from the darkness to light. You need to introduce courses with social skills and strategic thinking because those are the skills we use to socialise. In terms of socialisation, the Artificial Intelligence does not teach strategic thinking to be sociable in the community. There should be powerful courses that will address contemporary issues. But the question is, do we have curriculum developers in this country? Curriculum development is a very important course. Their work is to sit and think and come up with something. They Look at the environment and develop a curriculum that befits the environment. If you want to read a course in that

particular place, such as diamond cutting or polishing, that one has been in existence since 1930s. Diamonds were found in the 1930s, but there is no course relating to diamond cutting and polishing. This is why our diamonds are sold at a cheaper rate. So, it is high time we began to think about curriculum developers. Madam Minister, even as you will be responding to our comments, I want to encourage you to put in place performance trackers to the various institutions across the country. When you begin to create these competitions among them, they will sit up and do the right thing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister should be able to monitor how many students failed and how many of them passed for that particular year. The Minister should also be able to know how many students dropped out. You begin to compare and contrast at the click of the button. We have a hard working Minister and she knows what she is doing. In the area where an institution is fading out, at the click of a button, you will be able to monitor them and tell them to work harder. This document gives you the power to bring regulations, so that it will be easily governed at the end of the day.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I admire the Minister so much and I want to encourage her to ensure in her subsequent appearance, such a law should not take so long to be repealed. It is too old. I cannot elucidate more on the courses I have in mind, but I want to implore my colleagues across the aisles to support the Minister for the enactment of this Bill into law even before S.O 51[1] will be invoked. I thank you very much.

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

DR HAJA RAMATULAI WURIE: Thank you, Mr Speaker and Honourable Members for your positive and constructive comments on the document that we have presented today. I took note of the suggestions that you have made and they will be factored into our deliberations at the Committee Stage. I want to assure the House that the Ahmad Tejan Kabbah University will be in operation by the grace of God. We will discuss it as quickly as possible.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I took note of the comments from the Leader of Government Business concerning the Artificial Intelligence. As a Ministry, we are led

by the Tertiary Education Commission and there is a policy that has been developed on the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence in education. This is because we can all agree that Artificial Intelligence is here to stay. There are ethical and unethical ways of using Artificial Intelligence. We have to ensure that it is being used as a tool to deliver knowledge. We have to sensitise our educators and our students for them to use Artificial Intelligence ethically and complement their thinking and not the other way around. It goes back to the point I made earlier about maintaining human agency in the world of automation and technology. But we have to ensure that we incorporate it into our learning system that is already on the way and is led by the Tertiary Education Commission. This will ensure that all other relevant stakeholders are involved.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with regard curriculum developers, we have master programmes being offered in other countries that specialise in curriculum development. This is something we can tap into. I like the suggestion about performance contract. This is something we are working closely with the Office of the Chief Minister to develop performance contract for all Vice Chancellors and principals of our universities. We will come up with indicators that are aligned with the plans we have within the sector. Again, we are very confident that it would strengthen the governance structures within the institutions and other administrative and financial management tiers. We can even take a step further to link it to performance based financing and that has been tried and tested in other parts of the world. This means your performance determines how much money you will get from the government's subventions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one thing we always encourage our universities is to foster intra-level collaboration, for them to work together. I have said repeatedly to them that if one institution succeeds, we all have succeeded. If one institution failed, then we all failed. So, what we want to use this platform for is to achieve our goals. If institution 'A' is doing well in a particular indicator and institution 'B' is not doing so well, they should work together and see how they can create a knowledge sharing platform to support each other. That links to the plans we have and we are talking to an international partner to develop a quality management system to tap

into technology. I mentioned earlier about the education management system and the dashboard, so that the quality management system will be informed by the indicators at national, regional, continental and global levels. So, we can also contribute to what is happening on the global stage.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, please permit me to go back to the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Act, which also aligns with the Tertiary Education Commission. There was a concern raised about limiting our young people going down the vocational training route. What we have developed within the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education is a national qualification framework for both vocational training and for higher education. What that does is that it creates a platform that will not limit a young person. So, it has different levels; you can go to level one, level two and level three. For example, you can opt to leave and work, but you can go back and acquire additional education from technical university or otherwise, there is no limit. You can acquire your first degree and up to PhD. This is to further reinforce the notion that vocational training is not for dropouts.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, the Tertiary Education Commission Act, 2024 be read the second time. I thank you.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

The Bill entitled, the Tertiary Education Commission Act, 2024, being an Act to provide for the continuation of the Tertiary Education Commission, to provide for the Regulation of Tertiary Education Institutions throughout Sierra Leone and to provide for other related matters, has been read the second time].

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: Honourable Speaker, I stand on S.O 51[1] to commit the Tertiary Education Commission Act to the Legislative Committee for further scrutiny.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Bill entitled, the Tertiary Education Commission Act, 2024 has been committed to the Legislative Committee for further scrutiny].

HON. IBRAHIM TAWA CONTEH: Mr Speaker, before you release the Minister, I would want to advise the Minister and the Ministry that for neatness of proceedings and for tidiness in alignment between universities and polytechnics, you may need to go back and bring a schedule that will amend the Polytechnic Act. Milton Margai and others are still included in the schedule of polytechnics. Similarly, the Eastern Polytechnic is still a polytechnic. So, they are still polyiversity institutions. So, you may need to go and look at the schedule and bring an amendment, so that you take them off the schedule of the Polytechnic Act.

THE SPEAKER: I hope that is noted, Madam Minister. You can go and meet your technical team to have discussions around the issues Members of Parliament have raised here.

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at 3:55 p.m., and was adjourned to Thursday, 30th January, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.]