



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMETARY DEBATES**

**(HANSARD)**

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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**SECOND SESSION-SECOND MEETING**

**THURSDAY, 11<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2014**

*SESSION – 2013/2014*



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**VOLUME: II**

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Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Fourth Parliament  
Of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House  
Held on Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2014.



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

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

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**SECOND SESSION-SECOND MEETING  
OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT  
OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC**

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**Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2014.**

*The House met at 10:08 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown.*

**I. PRAYERS**

*[The Clerk of Parliament, Hon. Ibrahim Sulaiman Sesay, Read the Prayers].*

*[The Speaker, Hon. Sheku Badara Basiru Dumbuya, in the Chair].*

The House was called to Order

*Suspension of S. O. 5(2)*

**II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING, HELD ON THURSDAY, 21<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST, 2014.**

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2014. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3?

**HON. ROSALINE J. K. SMITH:** Mr Speaker, Page 3. It says: "*The following Honourable Members of Parliament were absent.*" Mr Speaker, I was absent with excuse.

**THE SPEAKER:** Have you averted to the page to make sure that your name is not among those that are marked absent with excuse?

**HON. ROSALINE J. K. SMITH:** Yes, Mr Speaker. My name is on Page 3, item 28.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Clerk, for all I know, the Honourable Member did have the permission of the Speaker to be absent. Therefore, she was absent with excuse. Please, have that corrected. Page 4? Page 5? Mr Clerk, please look at Page 5, under the Second Reading. I don't think whether Honourable Ansumana Jaia Kaikai's name is correctly spelt. Please, check it properly. Page 6? There being no further amendment, can someone move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2014?

**HON. AMADU KANU:** Mr Speaker, I so move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

**HON. JOHNSON:** I so second, Mr Speaker.

*(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)*

*(Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2014, was unanimously adopted as amended)*

### **III. PAPER LAID**

HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in my capacity as the Deputy Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, on behalf of the substantive Chairman, I want to lay on the Table of this Honourable House two reports of the aforementioned Committee, on the accounts of Sierra Leone. One of these reports has to do with the Local Councils and the other has to do with Ministries, Departments and Agencies. Mr Speaker, before I do so, I want to crave the indulgence of this Honourable House to go and read these reports and take note of the recommendations made by this Committee, so that when we come to discuss these reports, Members would be able to contribute meaningfully.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Komba E. Koedoyoma, you are a very senior Member of Parliament. What did you say you were going to do?

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA:** Mr Speaker, possibly you were having some discussions and you did not hear what I said.

**THE SPEAKER:** Not at all, Honourable Member. I did hear what you said; otherwise, I wouldn't have called your attention (*Laughter*).

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA:** I wanted to make some preliminary remarks before I lay these reports.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, under whose authority were you doing this?

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA:** I did ask for the permission of the Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, you must quote an authority to support what you are going to say.

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA:** Well, I really wanted to make reference to the relevant portion of the Standing Orders, but I do not have my Standing Orders here.

**THE SPEAKER:** Please, make sure you refer to the relevant Standing Orders before you proceed.

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA:** Mr Speaker, you are not with me.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, I am with you.

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA:** Then, I am standing on S.O. 18(7).

**THE SPEAKER:** Proceed, Honourable Member.

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Like I said, these reports contain recommendations proffered by the Committee and the way forward for the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies' (MDAs') accounts, which were submitted to them on behalf of the people of this country, approved by this Honourable House. I am appealing to Honourable Members to take their time and read what the Committee has recommended, so that we will be ready to make meaningful suggestions. Already, the funds which have been provided to this Honourable House are under criticisms and we have not made mention of the moneys which are now being allocated to the other institutions. I am sure that when we would have read this report, we will be able to exonerate Parliament and its functions.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now lay on the Table of this Honourable House the following reports:

- report of the Public Accounts Committee, on the Report of the Auditor General on the Account of Sierra Leone, for the financial year, 2012; and
- report of the Public Accounts Committee, on the Report of the Auditor General on the Account of Local Councils, for the financial year, 2012 (*Applause*).

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, I refer you to S.O. 14. That provision talks about the 'Order of Business.' And with the authority vested in me by this Order, I would like to interrupt the proceedings at this point to make a very important announcement. I have been advised by the Majority Leader and Leader of Government Business, in consultation with the Minority Leader that immediately we adjourn this proceeding, Members of Parliament are kindly asked to go to Committee Room No. 1 for a very important discussion. However, I must say that this meeting is *exclusively* for

Members of Parliament. Therefore, strangers will not be allowed to attend. Thank you very much.

#### **IV. MOTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

PROPOSER: HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU, MAJORITY LEADER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

SECONDER: HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA, CHIEF WHIP

##### *1. Introduction*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service held its Seventeenth sitting on Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2014 and interviewed ten Presidential nominees for the following appointments:

- i. Minister of Health and Sanitation;
- ii. Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation;
- iii. Chairman and Members, (West, East & South) Statistics Sierra Leone Council;
- iv. Commissioners, (West, East and North) the Right to Access Information Commission; and
- v. Board Member, Sierra Leone Commercial Bank.

##### *2. Procedure*

The Committee maintained strict adherence to its established procedures. The nominees were interviewed on issues relating to their educational background, track records in public office, declared assets, tax obligations and their vision for a successful and nationally productive tenure of office. Allegations of corruption in public office and unsuitability in terms of characters were closely scrutinised.

##### *3. Seventeenth Sitting of the Committee, held on Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2014*

The following nominees were interviewed on oath:

i. *Dr Abu Bakarr Fofanah, Proposed Minister, Ministry of Health and Sanitation*

Dr Abu Bakarr Fofanah is a medical doctor with specialty in the 'Control and Prevention of Communicable Diseases in developing countries. In 2013, he was appointed as Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation, a position he has held to date.

Responding to inquiring questions, Dr Abu Bakarr Fofanah said that as Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation, he was the Principal Assistant to the substantive Minister of Health and Sanitation and performed such duties as were assigned to him by the Minister. "One of my biggest successes," he said, "was the completion of the 'District Strengthening Health Service Project' that involved the construction of seven health facilities in five Districts: Port Loko, Tonkolili, Bo, Kenema and Bonthe districts."

Answering to further questions, he said: *"Ministries of Health, the world over, are very large and complex establishments, with very critical mandates to fulfill. An effective fulfillment of those mandates, call for team work and effective policy coordination, regular meetings and feedbacks. Without these, one will not be able to make any significant gains. So, I believe in teamwork and my major role will be to mobilise resources for my professionals, provide benchmarks for them to achieve, a performance contract and I will hold them to task."*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when he was asked to comment on the work of the former Minister of Health and Sanitation, he said, *"The former Minister of Health and Sanitation was a likeable person. She was very serious about performing any duty assigned to her and she did what she was able to do, given the circumstances under which she was operating."*

ii. *Ms Madina S. Rahman, Proposed Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health and Sanitation*

Ms Madina S. Rahman is a highly experienced nursing professional with remarkable leadership qualities to lead others in high-demand situations. She has expertise in adult,

acute care, medical, surgical and oncology cases. She is highly effective in coordinating efforts between and among staff, stakeholders and public officials in meeting the vision of the entity. Since 2013 to date, she has been a Healthcare Management Consultant for the Ministry of Health and Sanitation to provide guidance and contribute towards planning, management and implementation of healthcare interventions in the following hospitals: Connaught Hospital, PCMH, Ola During, Lakka Psychiatric, Rokupa, Lumley, Macauley Street and King Harman Road.

Talking about the effects of the Ebola outbreak on nurses, Ms Madina S. Rahman said: *"Infection control has been a challenge for the nurses. I think we need to re-educate them. We have already trained senior nurses who are currently in the wards, doing on-the-job training to make sure that the mistakes they have been making are not repeated. Henceforth, there are going to be nursing police in all healthcare facilities to ensure that nurses and other healthcare workers adhere strictly to protection regulations."*

On the issue of allowances for healthcare workers, she said, *"The rates have all been announced on radio and we have ensured that all the District Medical Officers will come to pick up the money on time and make sure that they pay those allowances on time. Healthcare workers are risking their lives and the least we can do for them is to ensure that they get their compensations in a timely manner."*

*iii. Dr Sullay Sisco Kamara, Proposed Chairman, Statistics Sierra Leone Council.*

Dr Sullay Kamara is a multi-disciplinary development expert, with basis in both Social and Physical/Engineering Sciences. He has (over 35 years of experience in Development Practices, Social and Governance Research and Development), extensive experience in providing technical assistance to Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government, including the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Energy and Water Resources, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, NACSA, NASSIT etc. He has also served as a Consultant

to many donor funded projects, such as the World Bank, African Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, ECOWAS and has had extensive experience in NGO work.

In his response to probing questions, Dr Kamara said that he had worked for Statistics Sierra Leone. In January, 2013, he was appointed Chairman of the Technical Committee on the upcoming Census. Dr Kamara promised to draw on his wealth of experience gained from other pertinent work situations, both nationally and internationally for the success of the Council. He also promised to inquisitively look into the minutes of the previous Board. *"In my profession, we look for the good and the bad, because it is from that good and bad that we learn to make good things. So, in reality, I am indifferent to some bad, as long as my goal is to be good."*

iv. *Dr Emmanuel Conteh, Proposed Member, West, Statistics Sierra Leone Council.*

Dr Emmanuel Conteh is an expert in policy and development, with core areas of interest in development policies and strategies, policy implementation and management, development economics, project planning and management etc. Dr Conteh is currently a Senior Lecturer in Development courses at the Milton Margai College of Education and Technology. He viewed his role as a Member of the Statistics Sierra Leone Council to be three fold:

- a. to provide strategic guidance to the Statistician-General, in terms of the quality and improvement of data;
- b. to advise the Minister on government's statistical policy; and
- c. to do oversight to help build the capacity of the institution.

The nominee promised to work to the best of his ability for the success of the Council.

v. *Madam Margaret Vandi, Proposed Commissioner (EAST), Right to Access Information Commission*

Madam Margaret Vandi is the Assistant Project Coordinator, "Example Sierra Leone Ltd," a position she has held since 2012. Educated abroad, Madam Margaret Vandi has had extensive work experience in the United Kingdom.

Reacting to questions on her role as a Member of the Commission, Madam Margaret Vandi said that the country has had problems with journalists who believed that they should have access to all information about Government and to publish it. "They sometimes forget that certain information cannot be accessed for security reasons. My role would be to advice on these issues," she said.

*vi. Mr Kasho Sam Woode, Proposed Commissioner (West), Right to Access Information Commission*

Mr Kasho S. Woode is a Librarian with extensive work experience in that field of endeavor. He promised to work to the best of his ability to ensure that the Commission works according to the Act that established it. He called for unity among fellow Commissioners for the good of the nation.

*vii. Mr Daniel Buya Kanu, Proposed Commissioner (North) Right to Access Information Commission*

Soon after graduating from Fourah Bay College, Mr Daniel Kanu went to the United States, where he acquired work experience in the following positions:

- a. 1991 – 1996, Store Manager, Southland Corporation (711) Dallas Texas;
- b. 1996 – 2002, Store Manager, Radio Shark Corporation, Dallas Texas, USA; and
- c. 2002 – 2011, Fleet Agent, American Airlines, Dallas, Fort Worth, USA.

Reacting to inquiring questions, Mr Kanu said that he was a freelance journalist. He did not, however, believe that journalists should have access to all kinds of information relating to government activities. "*Certain information, particularly those bordering on the security of the State or personal medical documents and the like, should not be accessed by everybody,*" he said. He promised to work without fear or favour, but would do justice to all.

viii. Mr Julian Cole, Proposed Board Member, Sierra Leone Commercial Bank

Mr Julian Cole is a Legal Practitioner and Public Relations Officer for the Sierra Leone Bar Association. He viewed his nomination as a call to national duty; to be part of the Advisory Board to the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank. He promised to ensure that his legal background would be amplified in the boardroom of the bank. "I promised to do my best," he said.

ix. Mr Mohamed Alimamy Fofanah, Proposed Member, (East), Statistics Sierra Leone Council

Mr Mohamed A. Fofanah is an educationist, who has spent the better part of his work life in teaching. He is currently the Supervisor of schools, Kenema District. Answering to interviewing questions, Mr Mohamed Fofanah promised to draw on his experience in other work situations for the attainment of those objectives for which the Statistics Office was established.

x. Mr Daniel Joseph L. Hadji, Proposed Member, South, Statistics Sierra Leone Council

Mr Daniel Joseph L. Hadji started his work life as a journalist from 1979-1997 and was the Northern correspondence for the New Citizen Newspaper. From 1992 to 1997, he was Deputy Editor and Columnist of the Vision Newspaper. In 1997, he joined the Ministry of Mineral Resources as a 'Mines Monitoring Officer.' He is currently the Senior Mines Monitoring Officer for the Southern Province. He promised to work to the best of his ability for the success of the Statistics Council.

#### *4. Recommendations*

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

- i. Dr Abu Bakarr Fofanah, Minister of Health and Sanitation, Ministry of Health and Sanitation;
- ii. Ms Madina S. Rahman, Deputy Minister of Health & Sanitation, Ministry of Health and Sanitation;
- iii. Dr Sullay Sisco Kamara, Chairman, Statistics Sierra Leone Council;
- iv. Ms Margaret Vandi, Commissioner (East), Right to Information Commission;
- v. Dr Emmanuel Conteh, Member (West), Statistics Sierra Leone Council;
- vi. Mr Kasha Sam Woode, Commissioner (West), Right to Access Information Commission;
- vii. Mr Daniel Buya Kanu, Commissioner (North), Right to Access Information Commission.
- viii. Mr Julian Cole, Board Member, Sierra Leone Commercial Bank;
- ix. Mr Mohamed Alimamy Fofanah, Member (East), Statistics Sierra Leone Council; and
- x. Mr Daniel Joseph L. Hadji, Member (South), Statistics Sierra Leone Council.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Seventeenth Report portrays the unanimous view of the Committee. Therefore, I move that the Seventeenth Report of the Second Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations contained therein be approved. This report was signed by Honourable Ibrahim R Bundu, Chairman.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

**HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I second the motion.

*(Question Proposed)*

**HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand here this morning to make my contribution on the presidential nominees. Sierra Leone, as a nation, is going through hard times; is going through worrying times; and a war that is so invisible as compared to the military war. Today, among the nominees, are the political Commanders and Deputy Commanders to fight this war. I mean the proposed Minister and Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation. But we must accept the effort made by this government. We must appreciate the President and his team and the EOC for the tremendous effort they have made in the fight against Ebola. Somebody has been nominated to take over the mantle of leadership, in order to provide the necessary leadership in the health sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what we must accept and take advantage of is the lapses in the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. If we do this, I believe it will help us in the fight against this war. Again, we must be cautious when we sit on television and when we talk on radio, especially as spokespersons for the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. In any war, and in any country, whoever stands as the spokesperson must be cautious and highly sensitive of whatever he/she says on television or radio. This morning, those that watch the television will affirm to what I am saying. We must take this war very serious, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we must call the attention of the proposed Minister of Health and Sanitation to make sure that his phone line is always available at all times. You must acknowledge to texts, and see how best we'll take this war to the end. We don't want to be categorised like Liberia. Mr Speaker, we know that they are suitable for the job for which they have been nominated.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I come from the Western Rural District and we have been categorised as one of the high risk areas of this Ebola war. Mr Speaker, considering the population in the Western Rural, we must take the Western Rural very serious. We don't have a DMO for that district. We share DMO with the Western Urban and we want to challenge the Minister that we must take Western Rural as a district and we must have a DMO. We have four burial teams in the Western Area and all of

them are from the Western urban. As I speak, we have 3 corpses in Waterloo and beyond. We're still awaiting the burial team and we want to ask this Minister that if approved by this Honourable House, we must have a burial team in the Western Rural, because that is a hot spot. If we down play the Ebola issue in Western Rural, then we are risking the lives of those in the Western Urban. This is because people are moving in and out of Waterloo. We also need one ambulance to be stationed in Waterloo, the headquarters for the Western Rural, to respond swiftly to Ebola cases. We have about 16 cases to be collected in the Western Rural. We will be using the Jui Hospital and the King Tom hospital to treat Ebola cases; and there are cases within quarantined homes that need to be considered. The issue of quarantining is when you suspect of a case, immediately you go in and remove the patient, you are jeopardising the lives of the others, as we've heard of the 32 cases, wherein 2 are still languishing among the 32. We must respond swiftly to this crisis order than that we'll be heading for doom. That is not the intention of His Excellency the President. We want to see how to fight this war within the shortest possible time, so that at the end of the day, we'll see our children go back to school; we'll get back to our families; religious gathering will be revitalised; and we will start to enjoy our tradition and culture.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, another issue we need to address is the problem of taking specimen of corpses. This is still a challenge for us in the Western Rural. When the burial team goes, they will not take blood sample of the corpses to give us feedback. The question is how can we make some traces when there are no feedbacks after the burial? This must stop now and we must start to take specimen of corpses. Mr Speaker, feedback should be given within 72 hours, so that contact tracings are carried out. Our challenge is to protect and take care of those that are alive and not the dead.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to call on the attention of each and every one of us that we are in a state of public emergency. In Section 29(5), whatever comes out as a press release from the President or the office of the President is not debatable at all. What we are seeing or hearing on television and radio programmes is against Section 29(5) of the 1991 Constitution of this country. In other words, people go on

radio and television to debate decisions taken by the office of the President. Section 29(5) of the national Constitution gives power to the President and whatever press release that comes out from the office of the President, is an order and we must accept it (*Applause*). Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**HON. PATEH BAH:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, taking into consideration the current state of our nation, I will not talk about the other nominees before us this morning, but the proposed Minister of Health and Sanitation and the Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation. Having gone through his résumé, I believe he has the capacity and the necessary experience to do the job.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was fortunate to engage with the proposed Minister of Health and Sanitation on Saturday, when I had a serious case in my constituency at Regent. I have never had the telephone numbers of the Minister. I called upon the Minister for Public and Political Affairs and he gave me his number and I called him. I was very happy with the way he responded to my call and the action he took. This means that we can be assured that the new Minister awaiting parliamentary approval will do a brilliant work.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, coming from rural part of Western Area, we are facing some challenges and we need support in terms of surveillance and the burial teams. I've had corpses in my constituency that are not attended to, on time. I want to crave the indulgence of the proposed Ministers to make sure these problems are solved. In fact, on Saturday, the Regent to Jui road was barricaded by the people. I had to go there to assure them that the problem would be solved. But this will be an omission, if I fail to commend one of your staff that I have been dealing with, Mr Nyandaemor. He is the head of the burial team and he is doing very well, Mr Speaker. I think we need to have another set of burial team in the rural area.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having gone through this report, I have no doubt that the proposed Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation will perform very well in her new position. She has a wealth of experience, coupled with management skill. She will

definitely work with the proposed Minister of Health and Sanitation. With these few words, I want to urge this Honourable House to expedite the approval of these nominees.

**HON. ISATA KABIA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a very special day, as deputy Chairperson of the Committee on Health and Sanitation in Parliament. I would like to talk about the proposed Minister of Health and Sanitation. With your permission, Mr Speaker, he said: *"Ministries of Health the world over are very large and complex establishments with very critical mandates to fulfill and effective fulfillment of these mandates call for teamwork and effective policy coordination, regular meetings and feedbacks. Without this, one would not be able to make any significant gains. So, I believe in team work and my major role will be mobilising resources for my professionals, provide benchmarks for them to achieve a performance contract and I will hold them to task."* I think this short paragraph is telling us the kind of Minister we may now have and the kind of results we may expect (*Applause*). The Minister is coming at a very difficult time for this country, but I believe he is coming at an opportuned time for us to measure his efficiency and effectiveness. At this time in Sierra Leone, we are at the lowest possible stage. We are very demanding because at this stage in our history, we will like to see the Health Ministry in Sierra Leone addresses our health problems. Ebola is new to us as a country, as a region and we have been caught on a race. There won't be the same excuse next time. Ebola came at a time when the Ministry of Health and Sanitation has already been overstretched and inadequately resourced, even though this government has made so much input into this Ministry. But Mr Speaker, the input is one; the effective use of that input is another thing. If we are to look at Sierra Leone before 2010, the amount of funds we got for the Ministry of Health and Sanitation has almost doubled, but we still fall short of the Abuja Declaration. We have to keep that in mind as we are setting targets. Teamwork is not just for one day. It has to be continuous. It has to be the very foundation upon which your Ministry has to be built. All the reports we have heard this morning from the Chief Whip and other Honourable Members from the Western Area have been the

same. The burial teams should be added and the coordination needs to be more effective. We don't have enough PPEs at the Medical Stores and our nurses are on strike for lack of PPEs. This doesn't make sense (*Applause*). This is no longer a health issue. It's a state security issue and we must mobilise all resources available to address this plague that's now ravaging our nation. I hope the advice of the Chief Whip will be well noted. We must measure their effectiveness of the proposed Ministers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the test for Ebola on corpses was not previously available. It is now available in Sierra Leone and there should not be any further delay in confirming those cases, using the PCR test. We must make sure that the studies that came out of this particular plaque are accurate. We can't stand to estimate the amount of deaths from Ebola by next year. We should have an accurate report based on the use of all the available systems for us to test or confirm cases. The treatment centers around the country are not adequate, but those that are available must have the requisite effective measures put in place to prevent further infection. Those who fear to seek medical treatment will say this is one of the areas one can easily get the disease.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for the past three days in my Constituency, we've moved around with a sensitisation team, using a short skit to inform people. Mr Speaker, it will interest you to know that any village we visited, as soon as we arrived, people were running into the bushes. This should tell us the amount of work we need to do, before the three days lock down otherwise, there will be nobody in those houses that we propose to check. We must make sure that the people understand what we are doing. This is simply a way of educating them and to afford them the opportunity to ask us questions. This is because more work needs to be done on the in order to maximise the understanding of our people before the three days short down.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to implore this Honourable House to approve the proposed Ministers of Health and Sanitation. I want to inform them that the Committee on Health and Sanitation in this House is here to oversee their activities.

We are here to give advice in order to enhance their work. Thank you very much  
(*Applause*).

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to join my colleagues who have spoken well about the nominees before us this morning. These are fine nominees who are going to take responsibility of our health situation in this country. I was part of the Committee that examined them at the initial stage. Mr Speaker, to the best of my ability, I found these nominees eminently qualified, especially the proposed Minister and Deputy Minister to serve in the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. I say so because for a very long time in the history of this country, we have not had personnel who were trained to take up leadership of those institutions. This morning, we have before us a professional medical doctor and a qualified nurse to manage the affairs of our health Ministry. This is a good thing for this country. We hope the advice my colleagues have given in the past will suffice to do a good job.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have no doubt as far as these nominees are concerned, because their appointment energizes the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. The medical doctors will now have no reason to complain, because they have their kind who is going to manage the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (*Applause*). For the nurses, they have now got their pair. Mr Speaker, if you look around the gallery, you will see nurses. If my memory could serve me well, I think this is the first time the nurses are coming in their large numbers to give support to their kind (*Applause*). They too must not complain, because they have someone who would now give them the necessary support, in terms of the provision that they need, particularly in the area of the PPEs. I am saying this because this is one area that this country had been suffering from, but we now have somebody who has had a wealth of experience from a foreign country. I hope that the experience gained would be utilised to provide the leadership needed. We hope that Madam Rahman will not disappoint this House and the President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know that there are challenges awaiting these nominees, but the question of failure should not be part of their objectives. I represent

a district which borders our present day epic center and Guinea, as well as Tonkolili District. We are having very serious challenges in those areas. How do we manage the various crossing points between Kono District and Kailahun District; Kono District and Kenema District; Kono District and Tonkolili District or Kono District and Guinea? Koinadugu is safe for now because by the statistics presented every morning, they have not reported a single incidence of Ebola.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to appeal to our proposed Ministers to seriously look into the area of... - *(Interruption)*.

**THE SPEAKER:** That is a very important qualification.

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want our proposed Ministers to seriously start thinking of how they will be able to address these challenges. First, we do not have adequate ambulances to move from Kono to other areas in the district. The other very serious challenge is the nature of the roads in the district. Please, I want you to think about this very seriously. I want to inform this Honourable House that our few doctors and nurses in the district are overstretched in terms of their performance. All the issues raised by my colleague Honourable Members from the Western Area are even far more in terms of the unavailability of the resources in Kono.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other nominees should not be left out, because they are also important to the development of this country. In the area of Statistics Sierra Leone, we now have more than qualified person to head the Council. We hope Dr Kamara will be able to energise the Council, even though we have had hiccups in the process of the Council's work plan. We hope when that is extended, we will put it on an active line of action, so that the activities of Statistics will be appreciated by everybody. When you talk about Statistics in this country, people do not know what that department does. Therefore, you need to do a lot of sensitisation for the people to understand the nature of your job. This advice also goes to the other members of the Council, representing the other regions of this country. All of you should work hand in

gloves with the proposed Chairman of the Council, Dr Kamara, so that the activities of Statistics Sierra Leone are made known to the people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the Access to Freedom of Information Commission. I'm happy to note that two of the proposed nominees to serve in this Commission are also qualified for their appointments. I know that they too will be able to energise this Commission, so as to enable members of the fourth estate to know their rights and limitations. For now, it is a field day for the members of the fourth estate and their radio stations and newspaper outlets are criticised because of what they say against this House. I think you should be in a better position to advise them. This means that before they print out any newspaper, you must be able to crosscheck the information they want to give to the public. I hope that proposed Commissioners will be able to take cognizance of what I have just said.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, they are doing a good job because we are all fighting this war together, but it is of no use to fight a war and at the same time shoot at members who are also fighting the war on your own side. I am appealing to the Board members of the Commission to always give good advice.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like I said during the interview that Mr Cole will be able to proffer good advice based on his legal background to the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank. On that note, I wish you well, if this House approves your nomination. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Komba E. Koedoyoma, it is good that you turned your attention to the other nominees. I was going to say that not that they had been disregarded, but I'm sure, if approved by this House, they can do their work effectively. That is why so much emphasis is being put on Ebola. I am sure that is understandable.

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the President for not putting square pegs in round holes (*Applause*). This means that the President has nominated people who have the necessary

experience to manage the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. The Minister of Health and Sanitation is a specialist in the control and prevention of communicable diseases, like what we are experiencing now. Therefore, I want to thank the President for nominating the right person to take responsibility of that Ministry.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to confess here that the only time I knew about Ebola was when it entered in Kailahun District, because I don't have the background. We have been hearing that Ebola started in 1976 and I believe that both the Minister and his deputy must have read about Ebola. I have no doubt that they will live to our expectations of this Honourable House. I believe these people will be among the national awardees next year (*Applause*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to give a piece of advice to these nominees, if they want to succeed, their human relationship should be very good. They have to think about the cleaners, porters, nurses and colleague doctors. In fact, the applauses around the Chamber have shown that their human relations were very good. What is happening in this Chamber has never happened in terms of the supports these nominees are receiving from their colleagues. This is a clear indication that they are going to succeed (*Applause*). I know that my sister, having heard about the number of women and children who have lost their lives in this epidemic, I believe that she will take that into consideration. I know she is a woman of substance; a woman of positive result and above all a mother. She should not forget that the young ones are risking their lives to save others.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the right to access information is a new phenomenon in this country. Those who are nominated to serve in that Commission should know that this is a new office. I hope they know their terms of reference and they should work within the confines of their terms of reference. "*Information,*" they say, "*is power.*" For the rest of the nominees, I have no doubt they will excel in their new appointments. Mr Speaker, it gladdens my heart whenever women are nominated to serve in respectable positions in this country, because I have passion for women. If

you listen to the news about this Ebola, the women are more vulnerable than the men because we carry the burdens of men. Women lead and men follow. We care for the men.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President has called us to do what we could to stop this menace in this country. I am one of the actresses and we have just developed a short skit about Ebola. The film is going to be in all the three major languages in this country. I believe that you are going to do what you are appointed to do and you have to work with your colleagues. Teamwork should be your target. I want to congratulate you in advance. Thank you (*Applause*).

**HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI (*Minority Leader of the House*):** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to join my colleagues to endorse the nominations of these eminent men and women before us this morning. Their appointments are from four sectors: the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, Statistics, the Right to Access Information Commission and the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank. All these sectors are very important for the development of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start with the Minister and the Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation. As a result of the nomination of the deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation, we are seeing nurses in this Chamber. I hope that their presence here is an indication of the support they will give both nominees and the other doctors and the nurses (*Applause*). The support you came here to give to these nominees should not only be seen in this Chamber, but even when you are in the field. If I'm not mistaking, for quite a long time, this Ministry has always had leaders that are not necessarily professionals when it comes to health matters. What we have had in the past were more of Administrators or people who are coming from other sectors. This is the first time we are having professionals like trained medical doctors and qualified professional consultant nurse (*Applause*). This is very good because I'm sure that all of them will now be speaking the same language. We are at a cross road in Sierra Leone. The Ebola is posing serious challenge to everybody in this country. That is why we see

cross-party collaboration, institutional collaboration and national and international collaboration. Ebola is very new to us and it is real. Our efforts and work is to ensure that we get rid of it once and for all not only in Sierra Leone or the sub-region, but the world at large.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we did interview the two nominees and we asked them critical questions to actually test their abilities. We also did that for us to know their vision for the institutions they were nominated to serve. I want to tell the two Ministers that the challenges ahead of them are enormous. If you listen to the radio, you'll hear people highlighting some of these challenges I am talking about. Mr Speaker, even in this House, Members of Parliament are facing challenges. I come from Kenema District that has suffered more than any other district in this country. This is because Kenema District is one of the epicenters and the challenges have been such that the government has paid special attention to that district. I am part of the 'task force' and I am always in Kenema. In fact, what I have proposed is that, because of the structures we have put in place, maybe not all the districts are at the same level. We are proposing that the EOC in Kenema makes a special presentation to the 'task force' with most of the DMOs present, so that they can share information and learn from each other.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the security forces are also doing very well. The challenges are, however, enormous. We see they are being fought when they go to either quarantined houses or they accompany the burial team to bury Ebola victims. Of course, we are not used to this type of burial that is going on because everybody looks forward to a befitting burial in line with his or her culture, but the Ebola epidemic has precluded this because of its vulnerability.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to tell the Minister that if he is approved, he must make sure that the resources are made available. The reason is that, whenever we attend the Presidential Task Force, the reports are given that resources are sent to the district headquarters towns, but when you go to the district headquarters towns,

workers complain of lack of resources. I'm just coming from my Constituency and I've toured that constituency for four to five days. I have entered all the eleven PHUs in my constituency. They are not part of the remuneration of the Le82 billion that the government has given. Mr Speaker, people visit those hospitals and these are people who may not know their Ebola status. They are supposed to be treated where they see that a particular case is different. In most of the hospitals, health workers are complaining of lack of personal and protective equipment like gloves, gynecological gloves etc. Mr Speaker, lack of electricity is another problem in our health centers. The PHUs should be opened 24 hours or 7 days a week. Patients are admitted at night.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we hope that specific attention will be given to these challenges. As Members of Parliament, we will visit our constituencies and our districts. Our role is also to take information from those districts and bring them to the attention of the Ministry through the various structures that have been put in place. We can also use the media to call the attention of the government and the public on certain issues. So, after your approval, we are expecting you to make a difference. You have no option but to succeed because everybody has hailed your nomination. Everybody is saying the President has nominated professionals to serve in the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. You need the resources but you also need the cooperation of all your staff. I want to challenge the nurses that their presence should not only be felt here, but it should be translated into willingness, commitment, patriotism and teamwork. I know that you have sacrificed a lot for your country. You have been at the forefront of this fight. We hope that the negative things that have been happening will be a thing of the past. In fact, the Deputy Minister did say that there are some lapses in the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. We hope that with her presence, those lapses will be addressed properly.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, The Statistics Office is very important because statistics is about people. Today, we are talking of Ebola; and when you talk about Ebola, you are talking about morbidity and mortality. We want Statistics, as an institution to also work closely with the Ministry of Health, so that at the end of the day,

we will have adequate and reliable statistics in Sierra Leone. So, Statistics Sierra Leone is already part of EOC, either at the district or national level. I think they should come on board, because we are talking about people. We are talking about illness, deaths and resources. Statistics is not only about census, as people are thinking. It also includes animals and plants. At times people may want to know about their fauna and flora. We may also want to know what our industries are doing and the amount of minerals we have in this country. Therefore, statistics has to do with both the human and the non-human environment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about information. Today, we are ratifying the Commissioners to the Right to Access Information Commission. This is very important at the time we are fighting the Ebola disease. What we need is accurate, credible, balanced, non-politicised, non-individualistic and non-selfish information (*Applause*). I wish members of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) and members of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists are here to listen. This is because we don't want people to use the medium, either the radio or the TV to castigate people to give out false information or spread hatred messages. This is what some media houses are doing, particularly against Members of Parliament who are working here to ensure that the Ebola is put to rest. I want to say here that it was not only Members of Parliament that were given money, other stakeholders have been given money to help fight this Ebola disease. Today, if you read the newspapers, the caption will say Minority Leader of Parliament speaks fire. I am speaking fire because whatever money that is given to every Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) or individual has to account for it (*Applause*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have cautioned every Member of Parliament to be meticulous and careful. If you give out a single cent to people or a group of people, make sure that you are given a receipt, take photos or video the activities. Sometimes, the very people you work with are the ones that will say; S.O. 2, Mr Speaker '*wi nɔ de si wi Mɛmba ɔf Palimɛnt; i nɔ de kam si wi sɛf.*' When some of these false rumours are lingering around, you take out your Ipad or camera and print all those photos and the

receipts and show them. We want the IMC to monitor what the media is doing. We are not gagging against the media, but they must be responsible. They must have an obligation, in terms of giving out the correct information. People should not use this Ebola as a subterfuge to release personal vendetta against a Member of Parliament or anybody. This is what is happening, specifically in Kenema District. I am going to see the IMC boss. There are mushrooms of radio stations in this country and some of them are behind the toilets. This means that you don't even know whether they are radio stations. I wonder why the IMC gave them certificate to operate radio stations in this country. Mr Speaker, most of them are not credible journalists at all. They sit on these radio stations to castigate Members of Parliament. They come up with stories that are not real. They must be held to account for this unprofessional conduct.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is not the time to castigate people on the radio. We must be responsible. We have said in the regulations that anybody who distorts or who gives out messages that are not correct, you are also considered as an enemy of the people and you must be dealt with (*Applause*). However, I commend many media houses for the good work they are doing. Some of them are giving out credible facts to the public. They are spending their own money to continuously sensitise and educate the people. We must commend them for their sacrifice. They are good patriots of this country. Mr Speaker, there are those that need to be censored, because they think that this is the time that they can settle scores. If you want money from your Member of Parliament, don't go to the radio station to shout and scream. You should go to him/her and present your proposal. If he/she feels that the proposal is good, he/she will give you something to implement it. Shouting all over the place, discrediting people is not the best way at all (*Applause*). I want to say here that we cannot be intimidated by anybody.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will like to talk about the nominee for the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank. The Sierra Leone Commercial Bank is the bank after my heart. I have known no other banking system in Sierra Leone except the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank. It is a good bank and it is almost found in every part of this country.

We hope that the good work they are doing will be complemented by you. The banking system needs to be commended because they are providing essential services to the public. Mr Speaker, the Ebola epidemic has affected the banking system, especially the quarantined areas. In fact, what is happening now is that, there are more withdrawals than deposits. This is happening because the commercial enterprises or the business people that used to deposit their moneys have been negatively affected. There are more withdrawals than deposits. And Mr Speaker, it is only when people deposit more into their accounts loans and grants are given. Interests are also collected from what has been deposited into those banks. Therefore, the Ebola crisis is affecting every sector of the economy, not only the health sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to implore this Honourable House to speedily ratify the nominations of the nominees before us this morning. We wish every nominee good luck and hard work in their respective institutions. We want to thank the President for nominating another woman in the Ministry of Health and Sanitation to deputise the substantive Minister. There is another nominee who is also a woman from the Eastern Region, representing the Right to Access Information Commission. We want to commend the women for their appointment. I hope that they will make a difference in their new positions. I have no reason why you will not contribute or prove yourself positively. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU (*Majority Leader and Leader of Government Business*):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Minority Leader has made my job very simple this morning. I want to apologise to Members of Parliament who were slated to contribute, but because of circumstances beyond our control, they were not given the opportunity to contribute.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am happy to see the nurses and doctors who are here to support their colleagues. My only worry is that, they should be in their various hospitals to attend to patients. This is because anything can happen to those patients. They shouldn't have left the hospitals to come to Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the fight against Ebola is looked at in two ways. The first one has to do with those who are not professionals in the medical field. I call them social mobilizers and they are in the majority. Those who are infected by the Ebola virus, it is the responsibility of the Minister of Health and Sanitation and his staff to care for the infected people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say that there are two professions that no amount of money or salary will be enough to pay them: the teacher and the health service provider. When you are uneducated and ignorant, it is the teacher that imparts knowledge in you. That is the knowledge we are using today to discuss issues (*Applause*). Also, when somebody is sick, the medical doctors and nurses are the redeemers. I want to salute our doctors and nurses for saving the lives of our people. We are not going to waste your time, because there are patients waiting for your services in the hospitals. A lot of people are coming out with information to discourage you. This is a profession you signed for and whatever you are doing to save lives, do it for God (*Applause*). Sierra Leone is a dangerous country. This is because we have people in this country who are ignorant and others who are arrogant. They arrogantly bring out information that will discourage you not to continue the good work you have started. Please, don't run away from your profession and don't allow yourself to be provoked foolishly. It is only God that will reward you. We hope God is going to reward you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with the various pieces of advice proffered by other colleague Members of Parliament, I want to join them in admonishing and advising the nominees that Sierra Leoneans are watching. This is because out of 6 million people in this country, you have been the fortunate one to be appointed to serve this country (*Applause*). You are not the most educated or rather the most competent Sierra Leonean, but you are the luckiest at this time. Please, don't allow somebody to undermine the confidence imposed in you. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker (*Applause*).

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, before I put the question, I would want to refer Members of Parliament to Standing Orders 75, but more particularly the Journalists. The rubric of S.O 75 talks about '*Premature Publication of Content of Select Committee Report.*' Under S.O. 75, Sub-section 1 says: "*Evidence given before or any paper forming part of the records of the Select Committee may be printed for the exclusive information of the Members of the Committee, but shall not be published before the proceedings of the Committee are reported to Parliament.*" Sub-section 2 says: "The evidence taken before any Select Committee and any document presented to such Committee shall not be published by any Member of such Committee or by any other person before the Committee has presented their report to the House." Sub-section 3 says: "*Contravention of this Order constitutes contempt of Parliament.*" I want the Journalist to be fully educated on these provisions. You are warned.

*(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)*

*(Motion of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service was  
unanimously ratified)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Ladies and gentlemen, I congratulate you on behalf of Parliament. For the doctor and the nurse, I want to tell them that expectations will be sky-high. They used to say that non-professionals were asked to manage this Ministry. Today, professionals have now being appointed to manage the affairs of this Ministry. Therefore, the expectation of the people is that, within few weeks, we should be saying good bye to Ebola. For the other nominees, I congratulate you and I have no doubt in my mind that you will carry out your functions effectively.

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on S. O. 23. I want Members of the Appointments Committee to see me immediately after adjournment. Mr Speaker, few weeks ago, this Honourable House endorsed the State of Public Emergency and that must be obeyed by everybody. Unfortunately, those of us who are reading newspapers and listening to the various radio stations in this country

will agree with me that most of the statements coming from the public are very disheartening. Journalists are expected to inform, educate and entertain the public. Instead, Journalists are undermining the law that we passed in this House. This is unacceptable and we will not sit by and watch them undermining the law. Therefore, with the leave of Mr Speaker, I want to use this podium to read Section 29 (5) of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone. It says: *"During a period of public emergency, the President may make such regulations and take such measures as appear to him to be necessary or expedient for the purpose of maintaining and securing peace, order and good government in Sierra Leone or any part thereof."* Section 29(5) states: *"Without derogating from the generality of the powers conferred by Sub-section 5, and notwithstanding the provisions of this chapter, the regulations or measures may, so far as appear to the President to be necessary or expedient for any purposes mentioned in that sub-section -*

- a. make provision for the detention of persons, the restriction of movement of persons within defined localities, and the deportation and exclusion of persons other than citizens of Sierra Leone from Sierra Leone or any part thereof;*
- b. Authorise -*
  - (i) the taking of possession or control on behalf of the Government of any property or undertaking;*
  - (ii) the acquisition on behalf of the Government of any property other than land;*
  - (c) Authorise the entering and search of any premises;*
- (d) amend any law, suspend the operation of any law, and apply law with or without notification... "*

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am not sure the public is aware of these provisions. As representative of the people, I think it behooves us to educate the public. We don't want to see our people fall foul of the law, but any attempt by any medium or any media house to anchor hate messages will suffer the consequences of the law. You have a responsibility to carefully read the Constitution and understand it

provisions. If you don't understand, go to a lawyer for interpretation. Please, seek the advice of those who are legally minded to explain to you. Orders of the President are not debatable at all. Also, regulations coming from state institutions are not a subject of debate. I want people to adjust their radio programmes.

Mr Speaker, I want to crave the indulgence of my colleague Honourable Members to summon:

- (a) the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice;
- (b) the Minister of Information and Communications;
- (c) the Chairman, Independent Media Commission (IMC); and
- (d) the President of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalist (SLAJ).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want the aforementioned personalities to come, so that we can advise ourselves. This is not the time to joke. There are existing byelaws in this country, but people do not seem to know them. Also, any other relevant authority that will enhance the full enforcement of this emergency is invited. Thank you very much.

**HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before I second the Motion, I want to draw the attention of Honourable Members to 29(6g). It says: *"Provide for the apprehension, trial and punishment of persons offending against the regulation."* Mr Speaker, this is very important and this is not the time for people to think that they can break the law and go free. Therefore, I second the Majority Leader's motion. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any counter motion?

*(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)*

### **ADJOURNMENT**

*(The House rose at 11.50 a. m. and was adjourned sine die)*