



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION-FIRST MEETING

THURSDAY, 20th DECEMBER, 2012

SESSION – 2012/2013



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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held on Thursday, 20th December, 2012.

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PROPOSER: HONOURABLE S. B. B. DUMBUYA

SECONDER: HONOURABLE DR MATHEW TEAMBO

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THE FIRST REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE BE ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE AND THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN BE APPROVED.



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 FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Thursday, 20th December, 2012.

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

I. PRAYERS

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

[The Speaker, Hon. Justice Abel Nathaniel Bankole Stronge, in the Chair].

The House was called to Order.

S O 5(2) SUSPENDED

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA (Majority Party Leader): Mr Speaker, I would like to make an amendment in respect of the Order Paper for today, 20th December, 2012. I would ask that we have Roman figure II; Swearing-In of a New Member of Parliament. Therefore, the original Roman figure II becomes III; and III on the Order Paper becomes IV.

THE SPEAKER: Is there any objection to the proposed amendment? Mr Leader, if there is no other amendment, please proceed.

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: I now invite Honourable Alhaji Seneh Dumbuya to come forward for the oath of office.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I must inform you about the Honourable that is about to be sworn-in. He has written to the Clerk, explaining the reasons for his absence; and I have approved.

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Please come forward Sir.

The following Member subscribed to the oath as a Member of the Sierra Leone House of Parliament:

(1) Honourable Alhaji Seneh Dumbuya.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I say congratulations.

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR TUESDAY, 11TH AND FRIDAY, 14TH DECEMBER, 2012.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we now move to Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday, 11th December, 2012. I believe we all have copies. As usual, I will go through page by page. Page 1?Page 2?Page 3?Page 4?Page 5?Page 6? Can somebody move that the record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday, 11th December, 2012, be adopted as presented?

HON. BENNEH BANGURA: Mr Speaker, I so move.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. KUYAMBEH: I so second.

THE SPEAKER: Any counter motion?

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

Record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday, 11th December, 2012 was unanimously adopted as presented.

THE SPEAKER: We move to record of Votes and Proceedings for Friday, 14th December, 2012. Page 1?page 2? Page 3?Page 4?Page 5?Page 6? Can somebody move that the record of Votes and Proceedings for Friday, 14th December, 2012, be adopted as presented?

HON. ALIMAMY G. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, I so move.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. BENNEH BANGURA: I second the motion.

THE SPEAKER: Any counter motion?

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

Record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday, 11th December, 2012 was unanimously adopted as presented.

III. MOTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

PROPOSER: Honourable S. B. B. Dumbuya

SECONDER: Honourable Matthew Teambo

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now present to you the First Report of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service on Parliamentary vetting of Presidential Nominations.

Introduction: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service met on Wednesday, 19th December, 2012, and interviewed one Presidential nominee for appointment as Minister of Finance and Economic Development.

Procedure: The Committee maintained strict consistency to its established procedure. Certain questions were put to the nominee on his educational background, track record in public office, declared assets, tax obligations and his vision for a successful tenure of office. Allegations of malpractices in public office and unsuitability in terms of character to hold a ministerial appointment were closely scrutinised.

First Sitting of the Committee on Wednesday, 19th December, 2012

The following nominee was interviewed:

(1) Dr Kaifala Marah, Proposed Minister of Finance & Economic Development

Dr Marrah is an eminent professional in financial governance and public sector reforms with eighteen years of work experience at both the national and international levels. At the international tier, Dr Marrah has served as Budget Analyst at the New York State Senate, during which he was appointed as Graduate Fellow at the Centre for International Development to work on budget improvement in Mexico, Latin America and Parliamentary Reforms in Kenya. He attained international prominence in financial governance and economic development at the Commonwealth Secretariat, where he worked as Senior Advisor on Public Expenditure Management for Developing Countries. Dr Marah became renowned for developing the 'Guidelines for Public Financial

Management and Country Self-Assessment Toolkit on Public Financial Management for Commonwealth Finance Ministers and Heads of Governments.

In his capacity as 'Chief of Staff' in the Office of the President, Dr Marrah's work involved advising the President on policies, technical research and performances of MDAs, providing oversight for the 'Strategy and Policy Unit (SPU), the Extractive Industries, Transparency Initiative (EITI), the Free Health Care Initiatives and coordinated development partners' issues on the economy, reforms and diplomatic relations.

Responding to inquiring questions, Dr Marrah said: "I consider myself as a Sierra Leonean, to serve in the name of God and the people of this country, and most importantly, to deliver on the aspirations of His Excellency the President for the people of Sierra Leone as enshrined in the Agenda for Prosperity. He promised to work on his humble experiences within the Commonwealth and elsewhere, adding that: "I do hope to bring learned values to this honourable job to deliver for and on behalf of the people of this country."

Reacting to questions on his vision for the Ministry of Finance, he said that his vision was to mobilise the required resources, strengthen financial discipline and enhance the oversight role of Parliament, particularly the functions of the 'Finance Committee and the Public Accounts Committee.' "I do strongly believe that in the absence of strong oversight, the economy would not perform as expected. I would draw from my humble experience that no one can know it all, do it all or do it alone. I would have to rely on this Honourable House and other relevant institutions to ensure that we strengthen the economy, bring down inflation and ensure that the GDP grows for the success of the President's Agenda for Change."

Second Sitting of the Committee on Thursday, 20th December, 2012

The following nominee was interviewed:

(1) Dr Samura M. W. Kamara, Proposed Minister of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation

Dr Samura Kamara is a professional Economist of both national and international; and has a wealth of experience, expertise and leadership skills in macroeconomics, financial policies formulation and implementation, development financing, government budgeting and public financial management.

Internationally, he had a lot of work experience and good relationship with the Commonwealth and many bilateral and multilateral development agencies, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, Africa Development Bank (ADB), European Commission, and the Department for International Development (DFID-UK). Dr Kamara is renowned for designing and implementing macroeconomic and structural adjustment programmes, aid administration, fiscal and balance of payment policies in developing countries with proven ability to facilitate cooperation and partnership.

Nationally, he has held many senior Government positions like Senior Macroeconomic Policy Adviser, Financial Secretary, Secretary of State for Finance and Minister of Finance and Economic Development in the Ministry of Finance, Deputy Director of Research, Executive Assistant to Bank Governor and Bank Governor in the Central Bank of Sierra Leone.

Reacting to questions posed by members of the Committee, Dr Kamara reiterated that he has served his country with devotion and dedication in various senior executive positions, including but not limited to Financial Secretary, Minister of Finance; Governor, Central Bank of Sierra Leone. "If given the required blessing of approval by Parliament," he said, "I promise to draw on my experience and to work to the best of my ability as I have always done for the success of the foreign policy objectives of this nation."

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 Kaifala Marah, Minister of Finance & Economic Development; and
- ii. Dr Samura M. W. Kamara, Minister of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the First Report reflects the unanimous views of members of the committee. I therefore move that the First Report of the First Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations contained therein be approved. Signed by Honourable S. B. B. Dumbuya, Chairman and Leader of the House.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. MATHEW TEAMBO (Majority Chief Whip): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to second the motion.

(Question Proposed)

HON. ERIC KOEDOYOMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today is a very happy moment as I rise to make a very short contribution to the Nominees before us this morning. I am sure that the two nominees are among the eminent Sierra Leoneans who have served this country in diverse ways. And today, their services are being recognised by the Head of State by nominating them to positions of Minister of Finance & Economic Development and Minister of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what makes me happy is the fact that as an old teacher (as my Leader has been saying to this House) the moment of a teacher's happiness lies in the success of his products. I am very proud of Dr Marrah. Dr Marrah, I wish you more successes. He has been my student many years ago; and during those early years, I have identified him as a prominent, obedient and progressive student. Today marks the day I was telling him about. We have seen his worth. We hope to see you perform more in your new position. I am sure that members of the Committee on Appointments and Public Service were left with no iota of doubt about

the manner in which he answered the questions. We have every confidence that he will deliver and he would help in the President's Agenda for Prosperity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the less said about Dr Samura M.W. Kamara, the better. I am pretty sure that the President had problems in locating both men to their respective positions. This is because they are equally qualified. I do hope and pray that Dr Samura Kamara's new appointment would help to develop this new Agenda for Prosperity. Looking back at what he had done for this country, I am sure he would bring innovation in the foreign ministry and will help to enhance the country's foreign relations. He was put to a lot of questioning by the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service on his new role, especially when he is moving from financial management to foreign affairs. The Committee was left with a lot of satisfied views on the answers he provided us with. I am sure what the committee did on behalf of Members of Parliament and looking at the track records of these gentlemen I leave the matter to the House to make a decision. It is up to Members of Parliament to commend the committee for job well done. We are now recommending them to this House for approval. I thank you Mr Speaker.

HON. HASSAN SHERIFF: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I am going to be very brief in my contribution on the two gentlemen seated before us this morning. I know they have faced the Appointments Committee in Committee Room 1; and they have been recommended for parliamentary approval. I will like to report on Dr Kaifala Marah, who was the former Chief of Staff. He has got a lot of international and national experiences. I am left with the impression that he is going to do a very good job in his new position. But I have some concerns here. The last Minister of Finance from 2007-2012 did a very good job in the first few years. Later, he disappointed Members of Parliament, including myself as a seasoned Member of the Finance Committee. We don't want to go through the same experience this time around. Therefore, I must remind Members of this House that we expect the new Minister of Finance to live up to the expectations of the people of this country and Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am impressed with the third paragraph, when Dr Marah said: "his vision was to mobilise the required resources, strengthen the financial discipline, enhance the oversight role of Parliament, especially the Committee on Finance and the Public Accounts Committee," of which I was a member. These are very important committees in all Parliaments.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am also impressed by the report of the Appointments Committee and the Public Service on the proposed Minister of Finance & Economic Development, Dr Kaifala Marah when he said: "I do strongly believe that in the absence of strong oversight, the economy will not perform as expected. I would draw from my humble experience that no one can know it all, do it all and do it alone". I'm glad that this young man has developed some great experience overseas that no man is an island. You should be able to work with people, particularly the committees to enhance successes. I don't know you personally, but I've heard about you. Do I know the former Minister of Finance, Mr Carew? No. But I was here to approve him and I am here again as a Member of Parliament to approve you as the next Minister of Finance. I do believe and I want to believe you will follow the words that you have uttered on this paper. These are words on paper. We want to see the practical aspect of it. We want to see some actions here as the President said during the campaign: "action pas intention." S O (2) Mr Speaker. We want to live with that message Dr Kaifala Marah. We are about to end the month of December. You are coming on board with few challenges. One of the first challenges is the payment of salaries of Members of Parliament...- (*Applause*). You will be seeing me knocking at your door as I used to do when Dr Samura was there as Finance Minister. I will not be going there to put up any confrontation but to chat the way forward of this Parliament and to push the Agenda for Prosperity in order to make the lives of Parliamentarians more pleasant. As the representatives of the people, we should be made pleasant and comfortable. We also want the people of this country to be comfortable. We are going home to our respective constituencies for the Christmas holiday. Members of Parliament are wondering whether they are going to access their salaries before the end of this month. I want to plead on

behalf of the House and myself to go the extra mile in ensuring the payment of salaries before Christmas. If approved, I wish you the best of luck. I don't want you to be surprised when you hear me knocking at your door to champion the cause of Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I don't have much to say about Dr Samura. He has been coming here when he was a Financial Secretary, a Bank Governor, a Minister of Finance and Economic Development; and now, as a Minister of Foreign Affairs. The past ministers have done a lot. There is no secret about it. But their lot was not good enough. This time, we want ministers to invite Members of Parliament, particularly Members who are serving those committees to be represented when attending some of these international conferences. We want to be exposed to international conferences, to enable us learn more from our partners and friends around the sub-regions. We don't want you to be coming only to approve loans and agreements. This is what has been happening in the past. We were not feeling good about it as Members of Parliament. Please Mr Minister, you should put down in your diary that it's important to have one or two Members on board when attending international conferences.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before I conclude, I want the House to reconsider the approval of these two gentlemen sitting before us in the persons of Dr Kaifala Marah and Dr Samura M. W. Kamara. I thank you very much Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, your brevity impresses me *(Laughter)*.

HON. FRANK KPOSOWA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament...-
(Interruption).

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, before you proceed, I want Honourable Members to note that time is of the essence. These two gentlemen have to go through some processes today, of which I am not at liberty to divulge now.

HON. FRANK KPOSOWA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am going to be very brief. I want to submit that the two gentlemen before us are men of distinction. Why?

I may not have much to say about Dr Kaifala Marah. I would want to say that I have known Dr Samura Kamara for a very long time. The first time I met him was when I was invited by the Governor of the Bank of Sierra Leone, Dr James Fornah. I was there as a Media Consultant. During that time, I relied heavily on Dr Samura Kamara's experience and competence to carry out my research. At the Ministry of Finance, Dr Samura Kamara was one of the three people who transformed the economy of this country.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I have given you sufficient hint to appreciate the fact that time is of the essence.

HON. FRANK KPOSOWA: Mr Speaker, both Dr Samura Kamara, Steve Swarray and Edmund Koroma played important roles in the transformation of the economy of this country from one of non-performance to enhanced structural adjustment funding. This man is somebody we can rely on. I want to join others in approving these two gentlemen.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI (*Minority Leader*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the two nominees, having gone through the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service, and having presented the outcome of that interview by the Leader of the House, all I can say is that what is presented here is a true representation of what transpired in the Appointments Committee. All I can say is that I will encourage this House to speedily approve the appointments of these two nominees. One of the nominees is taking after the other. There are serious issues of financial matters that need to be addressed in order to ensure that Members of Parliament enjoy their Christmas (*Applause*). We will not continue holding them up. I want to encourage this House to speedily approve their nominations. We wish them well in their new dispensation after they would have been approved. I thank you very much Mr Speaker.

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Mr Speaker, the older Members of Parliament are very much in need of money but I'm in great sympathy with our new Members of Parliament (*Applause*). Members have to go to their various constituencies to thank their constituents; and I cannot imagine them going there empty handed. I want the Finance

Minister to take note of that. Mr Speaker, when we interviewed these nominees, they left nobody in doubt that they are fit for the respective positions for which they have been nominated. I would therefore ask the House to give their approval.

Mr Speaker, I was greatly amused when my good friend and brother, the Honourable Komba Eric Koedoyoma did say that he taught Dr Marah. Well, I want to say that the time he was teaching Dr Marah, he was an Assistant Teacher then and I was a Senior Teacher (*Applause*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Dr Samura had been a very serious minded somebody throughout his life. I can say that with every degree of competence. Both of us went to school together. He has been somebody with sobriety and he has never failed to demonstrate some of these qualities. I therefore commend them to the House for approval. Thank you very much.

(Question proposed, Put and Agreed to)

(THE TWO PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES WERE UNANIMIOUSLY APPROVED)

THE SPEAKER: Mr Ministers it's left with me to congratulate you. I have known one of you socially. I have known the other to be very much official. I congratulate you and wish you well. These are not easy times. Citizens of the country have their eyes on us all. We must endeavour to discharge our respective responsibilities to the best of our ability. I congratulate you once more.

ADJOURNMENT

(The House rose at 10.45 a.m. and was adjourned until Friday, 21st December, 2012, at 10.00 a.m.).