



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMETARY DEBATES

ON THE:

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, DELIVERED BY THE PRESIDENT, DR ERNEST BAI KOROMA, ON THE OCCASION OF STATE OPENING OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE, IN THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT, ON FRIDAY, 20TH DECEMBER, 2013.

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
SECONDT SESSION-SECOND MEETING
WEDNESDAY, 29TH JANUARY, 2014**

SESSION 2013/2014



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

VOLUME: I

NUMBER: 4

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 Wednesday, 29th January, 2014.

CONTENTS:

I. PRAYERS

II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING, HELD ON TUESDAY, 28TH JANUARY, 2014

III. MOTION OF THANKS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, DR ERNEST BAI KOROMA

PROPOSER: HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA

SECONDER: HON. ANSUMANA J. KAIKAI

BE IT RESOLVED:

“That we the Members of Parliament here assembled, wish to thank His Excellency the President, for the Address he so graciously delivered on the occasion of the Second Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone, in the Chamber of Parliament on Friday, 20th December, 2013.”



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Wednesday, 29th January, 2014.

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. Sheku Badara Basiru Dumbuya, in the Chair].

The House was called to Order

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING, HELD ON TUESDAY, 28TH JANUARY, 2014

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, as usual, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Tuesday, 28th January, 2014. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6?

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Mr Speaker, Page 6.

THE SPEAKER: Page 6?

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Yes Mr Speaker. My name is not spelt correctly. There should be an 'n' at the end of... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, where exactly are you drawing our attention to?

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Mr Speaker, Page 6, the second paragraph. The Committees, as read out by the Majority Whip, were unanimously accepted by Honourable Members on a motion moved by Honourable Alhassan Kamara. There should be an 'n' at the end of Alhassan.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Clerk, please take note of that. Thank you Honourable Member. There being no other amendment, can somebody move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Tuesday, 28th January, 2014?

HON. ALHAJI S. DUMBUYA: I so move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

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

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

(Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Tuesday, 28th January, 2014, was unanimously adopted as amended)

III. MOTION OF THANKS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, DR ERNEST BAI KOROMA

“That, we Members of Parliament, here assembled, wish to thank His Excellency the President, for the Address he so graciously delivered on the occasion of the State Opening of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone in the Chamber of Parliament on Friday, 20th December, 2013”

PROPOSER: HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA

SECONDER: HON. ANSUMANA JAIA KAIKAI

(SECOND ALLOTTED DAY)

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: Thank you Mr Speaker.

HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA: Point of Order, Mr Speaker. The motion was actually seconded by Honourable Mohamed Sidi Tunis and not Honourable Ansumana J. Kaikai.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Clerk, take note of that.

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today is another day in the history of Sierra Leone. We are here today, as the people’s representatives, to debate on a Speech so graciously delivered by His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. As the people’s representatives, we have a responsibility to comment on the Speech and highlight some of the problems our constituents are facing. We are also charged with the responsibility of reporting these problems to the Executive and the Judiciary. We are doing this in order to ensure that when the national Budget is prepared, the needs and aspirations of our people will be factored into the national Budget.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am here this morning to look at my constituency in particular and Sierra Leone in general. I am one of those who would want to talk about Sierra Leone and look at the difficulties our people are facing. I am also here to thank

the President of this nation for the little he has done for Sierra Leone. He has colossal problems to address in the near future (*Laughter*).

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, allow your colleague to say what he wants to say. What appears to you to be so much is little to him. He is entitled to his opinion.

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: I must say thanks to the President because in this speech, the President states in the second paragraph thus: "*I like Parliament.*" Why do you think the President like Parliament? How has he proven it? He has proven to all of us that he likes Parliament. He was a Member of Parliament and he was the Minority Leader in this Parliament. He tried his level best to promote the ideals of Parliament by proposing the Parliamentary Service Commission in 2007. We must say thanks to him. He likes Parliament because as a Parliamentarian, he has appended his signature to amend the Constitution to elect one of us as the Speaker of this Parliament. In that vein, he has also given responsibilities to young people in this Parliament. He has helped his party in terms of electing a young man as Deputy Speaker of this House. One must say thanks to His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. He feels that Parliament is an Arm of his government which has to take its own responsibilities without interference. Therefore, posterity may judge us if we fail to do what is right for this nation. I thank him for his initiative.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today, we have a Member of Parliament as the Speaker of this House. This is a step in the right direction. I believe that Members of Parliament will live up to expectations of the people. We have a duty to perform as Members of Parliament. We have to ensure that proper allocations are made to Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) for the wellbeing of our people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one must say thanks to His Excellency the President, for extending some of the facilities to this Honourable House. Today, Honourable S. B. B. Dumbuya, a former Member of this Parliament, representing the All People's Congress (APC) party, is no longer representing the APC in this House, because he is

now the Speaker of this House. And as the Speaker of this Parliament, he is expected to be neutral and impartial in the exercise of his constitutional duties.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, few years ago, the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) was in power; but today, the APC is directing the affairs of this country. I want to clarify an issue that has been going on in this country. I am referring to the issue of "pa-o-pa" as a faction of the SLPP. Few years back, we were here and when we wanted to talk about yesterday was better than today, I heard people murmuring about the issue of 'pa o pa'. When we want to talk about the ideology of 'pa-o-pa', it came from APC. This is because in 2007, the APC swore that if they lose the 2007 elections, when they knew they were going to win, they promised to go all out to get power. Therefore, I can say without any scintilla of doubt that the ideology of 'pa-o-pa' came from members of the APC. The SLPP is only imitating what the APC had wanted to do.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am saying this because I want to remind all of you about what happened yesterday. I only want to tell you that there is a tomorrow; and if we are here today to talk about the President's Speech, he has given us the privileges to thank him. But what we are supposed to do, as a Parliament, is to look at the problems of our people and suggest solutions so that they can benefit from the resources of this country. Each time I go to the provinces and look at the faces of our people, I see hunger on their faces. I really feel bad for them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, street trading in Freetown is now seen as part of our social system. Abacha Street has been left in the hands of traders. Those traders campaigned for the APC and voted for the party overwhelmingly, but yet, they cannot be provided with a market. As Members of Parliament, we have not done much in that regard.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to make reference to the report laid on this Table by Honourable Sulaiman Muluku Sisay on the issue of education in this country. Mr Speaker, if you look at the Committee report on education, you won't be happy at all. With your permission, Mr Speaker, the title of the report is: "*Committee report on a*

Committee visit around the country on Education.” The report states that there are 40% of untrained and unqualified teachers in areas like Moyamba and Bombali Districts.

The report also records low percentage of female teachers as against their male counterparts in the schools. According to the report, there are trained and qualified teachers languishing in the streets of this country without schools to teach because of none approval of teachers on time.” The Minister of Education, Science and Technology has been in that office for six years without much achievement. He has been busy chasing ghost teachers for six years.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is somebody I have respect for in this country. He is a reverend from Koinadugu District. He said that Koinadugu District is doing well. Mr Speaker, how can Koinadugu District do, when they are still using boats to cross rivers? The Reverend does not know what is happening in the Koinadugu District at all. Mr Speaker, I want to refer you to Page 14... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable J. B. Mansaray, please take your seat. Mr Majority Leader, what is the position with regards to the presence of the officials from the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in these discussions? I understood they were summoned by you to be present in Parliament today at 9:00 a. m. I am only seeing few of them here. Mr Majority Leader, I would like to know. You were not here yesterday, and very good points were made by those who contributed on both sides, particularly issues raised by Honourable Sualiho Koroma and Honourable Komba Koedoyoma. Presently, Honourable Member, J. B. Mansaray is making a point which I must say is a sore problem. The question of ‘approval’ of teachers is a sore problem. So, I wonder whether any representative from the Ministry of Education is here. This is not only my concern as Speaker of this House, but it is the concern of everybody. I am sure the Minority Leader will like to know what is happening on this.

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I need not to emphasize the importance of the meeting I had this morning with the MDAs, but I want to reserve my comment for now.

THE SPEAKER: Granted Honourable Member. Honourable J. B. Mansaray, please continue.

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: Mr Speaker, according to this Committee report, 1,255 male teachers exist and 228 female teachers in Koinadugu District; and only 10 of them are trained and qualified teachers. Mr Speaker, 30% of 1,255 and 44 private teachers, representing 3% of the teaching population of the district. I believe that this problem is not only endemic in Koinadugu District, but the country as a whole. If every citizen in this country wants the development of this country, what will be our first priority? I think our first priority should be our children. This is because the best thing to do for our children is to secure their future by ensuring sound education for them. Mr Speaker, if 1,255 teachers do exist and only 347 (30%) of them are trained and qualified teachers, it means we are not serious as a people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the SLPP was in power, we built schools in every district. We also paid every Sierra Leonean. But today, the present government is giving grants to the Kamaras, the Sesays, the Kanus, the Banguras, the Bundus etc. I want to tell this government that the SLPP left the sum of Le500bln. Mr Speaker, the Deputy Speaker is trying to sway my attention from what I am telling the people of this nation. And Mr Speaker, what I am saying is for the good of this nation. I want to crave his indulgence to sit and listen to the problems of this nation. We are trying to help the President by highlighting some of these problems and find solutions to them. These are glitches that are hindering the progress of this nation. I am indirectly trying to help the APC government by identifying these anomalies in this country. Honourable Members on the other side have been casting blames on us, that the SLPP Members of Parliament are known for their criticisms. But what I am doing now is not criticism at all (*Undertones*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I pity the President of this nation in many ways because he has put people into positions of trust and have failed him and the people of this nation woefully. They cannot perform as expected. We have to stop praising the

President all the time. People should be going to him and tell him what is wrong and what is right.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank Honourable Muluku Sulaiman Sisay for this report. This is a very good report; and it exposes the fallen standards of our educational system in this country. The sum of Le9bIn is in now in the budget for boarding schools. In fact, Bo School has taken years without government subventions. And Mr Speaker, the Leader of this House and Leader of Government Business attended the Bo School. He knows that Bo School has not been getting subventions for years. We do pity some of these Honourable Members because they do not want to say the truth. They are afraid that they might not get party symbols if they say the truth. Mr Speaker, if you go to Jimmy Gbagbo, where Victor Foh, the former Secretary-General of the APC came from, you will find out that the school in that place has not been funded for a very long time. Do we say we are progressing as a nation?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the hullabaloo about the 'prosperity' of this nation will not come to fruition if we fail to say the truth. We are tired of hearing about the Wilkinson Road, King Harman Road, Spur Road etc. In fact, those roads are meant for the rich and powerful people in the society. The poor people are found at Kissy Dockyard, Kroo Bay etc. Mr Speaker, if we want to talk about issues, we have to talk about Sierra Leone as a whole. I say kudos to Honourable Muluku Sulaiman Sisay for this report. The report has exposed the weaknesses of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the reasons for the falling standards of our educational system. Mr Speaker, although Honourable Muluku Sulaiman Sisay is an APC Member of Parliament, he has done a very good job. Mr Speaker, if this report is shown to President, he will be looking at the Minister of Education, Science and Technology differently.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the health sector. I was privileged to be part of the Finance Committee that went on Oversight with Health Alert. When we went there, I came to realise that our health sector is in shamble.

According to the Abuja Declaration, we were made to understand that Sierra Leone has made 10% progress, whilst we are looking for 15% increase in our budget.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, why are we boasting of a buoyant economy when our nurses cannot go to the remote villages to administer medication. This is happening because they do not have the facilities to take them there. It is shameful to talk about a resilient economy when our nurses cannot be provided with quarters in some of these hospitals. We have hospitals in Maboma and Koribondo that have not been refurbished for years. The Maboma Hospital was built many years ago, under the SLPP, through the ADB fund; and it has not been upgraded. I am talking from a point of authority. Mr Speaker, even the money allocated for the construction of a peripheral fence was not done. We do not have some of the basic social facilities needed in that hospital. In fact, the building is not completed and we do not even have qualified nurses to go there because they consider the place as a suburb.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have come to the conclusion that much attention has been concentrated on the urban cities, in terms of basic social facilities. The urban cities are tarred with street lights. And Mr Speaker, this is why we are experiencing massive urbanisation in this country. And that pressure is on every Member of Parliament. Our youth are leaving the villages for the urban cities. Farming activities are not in progress as they used to be. The question is, what are these youth doing in Freetown? They are here to cause havoc in the cities. Today, Freetown is overcrowded with idlers. What are they doing here, Mr Speaker? They have no business in Freetown. But because they are not properly catered for, they had to move to the cities, where they can find solace. Therefore, the rural areas are abandoned; and only the feeble sector of the population is left there. These are some of the problems we are facing in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the roads, under infrastructure. I want to say Kudos to the Chairman of Works Committee for that bold venture he took. I am a member of the Committee. Mr Speaker, when you leave Freetown to Bo, the

road is paved. But the roads leading to Kailahun District are extremely bad. These are some of the issues we should be bringing to the attention of the President, instead of showering praises on him. A very young man, with a bright future, was blaspheming in this Well yesterday, when he was making his presentation. Mr Speaker, I got sick because of the untrue statements he was making. I had to go out of the Well, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about the Councils. Mr Speaker, how many Councils have received their first quarter allocations? If any allocation has been given to these Councils, not all have received their first quarter allocations. I have visited all the Councils in this country, through our Oversight function. I am doing my functions as a Member of Parliament. Some Honourable Members do not even go to their constituencies to see how their people are faring. But I want to tell you that you are not elected, as Members of Parliament, to stay in Freetown and enjoy the comfort of the city. There are needs you have to address as an elected Member of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to tell Honourable Isata Kabia that Port Loko District is gradually degenerating. The Honourable Member who was talking about the army kept on praising and failed to even talk for his constituents that elected him as Member of Parliament to represent them. In fact, when we went to Kono District, we discovered that the blast, as a result of the mining activities in that district is killing our people. The environment is being depleted in Kono. The SLPP Government brought in these mining companies for the good of this country. But today, they are a total disadvantage to the nation.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please allow the Honourable Member to make his presentation.

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: Honourable Members, the Speaker of this House is now an independent person. But I wonder what the Deputy Speaker would want to hear about this country. The road leading to the interior of Moyamba is very terrible and Honourable Amadu Kanu could not say anything as far as that road is concerned.

In Fact, a younger Honourable Member, Honourable Dickson Rogers was crying when looking for a vehicle to take his people from Pujehun town to nearby villages because vehicles cannot ply those roads. The motorbike riders are charging exorbitantly. This means that due attention has not been given to these roads in the rural areas. It behooves all of us to be bringing these issues to the attention of the President instead of being sycophants.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if Honourable Members on the other side want to help this country, the best they can do is to listen to some of us that talk about issues so that they can take what we are saying here to the President for future action. Mr Speaker, it is high time we stopped being hypocrites and charlatans. Mr Speaker, the Honourable Members on other side should stop bamboozling those of us trying to talk on issues. And I want to tell Honourable Members that the success of the President's dreams for prospering the people of this nation, depends on the seriousness of this Parliament. We have to be serious if this nation is to develop. We have to be serious, if this nation is to realise prosperity. This Parliament should not be seen as a rubber stamp Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we allow the Executive to fail the people of this nation, the people would not chase them because they have enough in their pockets to leave this country. Today, the issue of boycotting parliamentary proceedings is no longer visible. The attendance is encouraging.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want the Leader of this House and Leader of Government Business, to tell the Minister of Finance and Economic Development and the Minister of Local Government to take responsibility of our Local Councils, so that we can see positive results in these Councils. These Councils should be adequately funded, in terms of providing their allocations on time. We have to say the truth for the furtherance of this nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, much has been said about water. I want to say here that Bo District has not been enjoying pipe borne water for a very long time. I have always pleaded for Koribondo to be provided with safe drinking water.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you will agree with me that the roads are not hundred percent okay, especially those in Bo District. People are here talking about paved roads. We have to help the President to achieve his dreams, in terms of prosperity for the people of this nation. We have to help him by saying the truth and take our Oversight function very seriously. We have to take our Committee works very seriously, so that we expose those who are squandering state funds, meant for the development of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the Labour Committee went for an Oversight, we discovered that there are companies coming to this country that are not been properly registered, and as a result, they are not paying dues to the government. There are series of fines to be paid by these defaulters. In fact, when you go to the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations, there are stockpiles of labour issues in that Ministry. This country does not have labour supervisors to oversee some of these inadequacies. They do not even have vehicles to go and check on the welfare of our citizens in this country. This is very pitiful for this nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the policemen in Koribondo do not also have patrol vehicles to ease their work. I have pleaded with the Inspector-General of police times without number to give attention to some of these areas. I know of a police officer who has served in the police force for 37 years, but he has not been promoted. Are we really doing our functions, as the representatives of the people of this country? Are we taking our Oversight functions seriously? The policemen are being exposed to danger in the villages they are serving.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is no proper decentralisation process taking place as far as the rural areas are concerned. We should not be sitting here and assuming that everything is okay for our people in the provinces. Let us look at the

faces of our brothers and sisters, who are languishing out there and find solutions to their problems. We have to be thinking of the aged in this country, in terms of providing them with some of the basic social amenities. Our hospitals in the provinces do not have doctors and nurses.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, by 2017, we shall take some of these responsibilities this government is neglecting now. Most of the long term loans we approved in this House, shall be paid by the SLPP government, when we shall have taken over the governance of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to give a final warning to the APC government that they should not take advantage of what is happening within the ranks and file of the SLPP. It will be fine for the SLPP. What we are experiencing today as a party is part of human struggle. It will soon finish.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you for the time you have given me (*Applause*).

HON. DR ROLAND KARGBO: Thank you Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity to make my contribution to the motion of thanks to His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma for his Address to the people of this nation. This Presidential Address is well written and clearly expressed policies of His Excellency, for the development of this country. The Address is centred on eight pillars. And these pillars are considered as the pillars that will ensure the Prosperity of this nation. These pillars are very important for the success of the '*Agenda for Prosperity*.' Normally, Mr Speaker, an agenda is made of items. But this particular agenda is made of pillars, indicative of the fact that it is an agenda for a building or a plan for a building. It is a plan that has to go through stages. Nobody has ever built a house in one day.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in our haste towards the development of this country, we forget that we have to move step by step and the President has taken a giant step, in terms of highlighting these pillars that will help the Agenda for Prosperity to succeed. We can appreciate the size of this systematic move when we look at where

we are coming from. The President is trying to rebuild and repair the destruction caused by eleven years of civil war. He is trying to put together the pieces of destruction done through eleven years of economic mismanagement in this country. When we look at the whole issue from that point of view, we will understand that the President is making tremendous progress. And if people do not appreciate what this President is doing, but equate his efforts to little or nothing, he owes no apologies to anyone. Mr Speaker, if people appreciate the Wilkinson Road, the Free Health Care Programmes and other vital developmental projects undertaken by this President, we believe that today is far better than yesterday. Mr Speaker, if people feel today is worse than yesterday, the President owes no apologies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have looked at the Presidential Address and the national budget with philosophical mind. Mr Speaker, both the national budget and the Presidential Address are compatible. This means that there are provisions made in the national budget for every pillar mentioned by the President for its implementation. I entreat each Honourable Member to go through the Presidential Address and the national budget. The President meant well for the people of this country. He has done extremely well during the last six years. He will do it again for more years to come. He has upgraded the lives of Honourable Members of this country. He has ensured the dignity of Members of Parliament than any other President in this country. I want to personally thank the efforts of the Minister of Finance and Economic Development for this budget.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when you have a beautiful work plan like what we have now, I believe there are several other things that need to be put in place. The President has expressed his good will in this Address to the nation through the people's representatives. And Mr Speaker, the Minister of Finance and Economic Development has put these plans into action by providing a complete picture of what is going to happen. The Minister of Finance also spells out the commitment of the implementing Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). I must commend the Speaker of this House and the Majority Leader for insisting that the Vote Controllers from the various

MDAs should be here to listen to Members of Parliament. They are the implementers of what have been put together in these Speeches. If we are talking about saboteurs in terms of the implementation of the 'Agenda for Prosperity,' we have to look at those MDAs. We must make sure that they do their work to translate the good will of the President into real development.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to tell this Honourable House that the President has delivered his Speech to this nation. He has made a very good plan for the development of this country. This Ministry of Finance and Economic Development has also done its work in terms of the financial provisions for the implementation of what the President has said. The various MDAs have a responsibility to ensure the implementation of what has been proposed. As a Parliament, we have the responsibility to oversee the implementation of the President's Speech and the national budget. Mr Speaker, if anything goes wrong, we are equally responsible. Our responsibility is not limited to sit here and criticize, but contribute positively to the realisation of the 'Agenda for Prosperity.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to limit my presentation to education. Honourable J. B. Mansaray took the Minister of Education, Science and Technology to task quite severely. When I started my presentation, I did say that whatever little we do in terms of realising the developmental aspirations of our people, should first of all be aggregated and then move to what we want. This is what we call development. Development is a process. We all know that the Ministry Education, Science and Technology is confronted with profusion of challenges. We do accept the fact that the educational standard of this country has fallen considerably. But I want to tell this Honourable House that the President is ready to raise our educational standards.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our educational standards were battered by the 11 year civil war, coupled with economic mismanagement. We are not oblivious of the fact that there are untrained and unqualified teachers in the country. We are also aware that there are teachers who have been teaching without salaries for a long time. But that is not a problem that started during the Ernest Bai Koroma's presidency. It has

been perennial problem inherited from the previous government. This problem has been in existence for many years. So, if we are accused of an offence that is not our making, we owe no apology.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to look at some of the elements of the Education Department, which His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma has started addressing in concrete terms. That is, provisions have been made in the budget to address most of these educational problems. The Education Sector Plan is one of the elements of the Education Department. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has drafted a new Education Sector Plan with an accompanying implementation plan. An ordinary Education Sector Plan without an accompanying implementation plan would be nothing. But this is real, because the implementation plan tells you the steps that would be taken to bring this Plan to reality and there is an accompanying budget line for that purpose.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Paragraph 45 talks about the creation of a University of Creative Technology. This is something that Honourable Jusufu B. Mansaray should have brought up during his presentation. Mr Speaker, the problem we have in this country is that we are always putting new wine in old bottles, especially in the educational sector to which I am limiting myself. We can only implement the new change in education if we change the thinking pattern of our people. The reason for the fall of our educational system is because we have been struggling with the old methods of education. We have trained Catechists, Pastors, Lawyers and orators in this country. Now, we want people with independent minds to think away from traditional pattern; that is the tradition we are breaking. With regard to that we need to learn to be creative and our children need to learn to be creative. This brings me to the question of where we should start as a nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the Gbamanja Commission completed its report, recommendations were proffered. One of the recommendations was the addition of one year to the school curriculum. But the question that was not properly

explored and addressed was where this question should be put. And because the issue was related to poor performance of pupils in the national exams, they decided that it should be put at the top. When you add one more year into the school calendar, you are building on a weak foundation for excellent performance. The question that should be asked, which was also included in that report, is that do we have to reconsider where to place this one year. Should it be at the beginning or at the end of the school curriculum?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this brings me to the justification for that recommendation. The justification came from the understanding that in the 60s and 70s, children used to go to primary One (1) or infant One (1), infant two (2) and then start standard One (1) to standard six (6) before they entered secondary schools. But we dropped the first two years, i.e. infant 1 and 2. In the 6-3-3-4 System of education, we also deducted two years from the secondary school system, i.e., the sixth form. Therefore, four years were lost from the school calendar. Mr Speaker, the Gbamanja Commission thought it wise to add one more year to the school calendar. However, the cost should also be considered if a year is to be added to our school system. It is expensive in terms of recruiting teachers, adding classrooms, purchasing desks and benches, etc. These are areas that should be re-examined and this is why I say this is an appraisal.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we want to commend His Excellency the President for his efforts in bringing about the effectiveness of the Teaching Service Commission. This Commission has been suggested several years ago but nothing was done to set it up. Presently, Mr Speaker, a budget line has been drawn to fund the activities of the Teaching Service Commission. This Commission is charged with the responsibility of solving teachers' dissatisfaction. Mr Speaker, when it comes to the issue of posting or transferring teachers from one school to another, this Commission is going to address such issues. This is very important because we have realised that trained and qualified teachers are concentrated in the cities instead of the villages. Therefore, this Address

was deliberately planned to develop sectors contained in the eight pillars of the 'Agenda for Prosperity.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk on two important issues which His Excellency the President, spoke about. That is the President urged the universities to produce graduates with the appropriate skills. The President is aware of the problems when it comes to education and its relation with employment. We have thousands of students graduating from the secondary schools and the universities of this country, but with the wrong skills. The President is urging the universities to reconsider their curricular to see how they could address the employment issues in this country. There are many companies operating in this country who could have been employing hundreds of Sierra Leoneans. But Mr Speaker, our graduates do not have the appropriate skills to be employed. Consequently, the foreigners dominate those companies. Our youth lack the requisite skills to take those jobs. Even a cook, has to be imported from India or the Philippines because the type of cooking is out of what our people acquire from the training colleges and vocational institutions. These are areas of great concern.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President also spoke about the need for the youth to opt for trainings that will increase their chances of being employed. He embellished this statement with a call that: *"all education is good, but relevant education is better."* Mr Speaker, we need relevant education in this country. This implies that the President is aware of the problems as far as education and unemployment are concerned. What are we doing as a Parliament? What the planners in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, doing to make sure that quality education is provided? What are we doing in terms of ensuring that relevant guidance for our youth is provided to opt for this type of education? What are the primary and secondary school authorities doing in terms of preparing our youth with the relevant education to access training facilities so that they will be employable?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to make reference to my constituency, Constituency 036, in the Sella Limba Chiefdom, Bombali District. There are two things which stand out at the moment, when we talk about development with regard to my constituency. Makeni, Kamakwei, Madina Wula Highway and the Utamba Kalamy need national parks. I want to thank His Excellency on behalf of my constituents for the construction of roads in that part of the country. Though the work is very slow, but when those roads must have been completed, that part of the country will boast of good roads.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the 'Agenda for Prosperity' will not succeed if there are no good roads; and we believe in the construction of good roads. I want the Ministry of Works to urge the CSE Company to do a good job in terms of roads construction. We are appealing to this House to put pressure on the authorities to make sure that those roads are completed within the shortest possible time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, nothing is mentioned in both the Presidential Address and the budget projections about the Utamba Kalamy National Park. I want to appeal to the Chairman of Tourism and Cultural Affairs to take note and follow this issue accordingly. Mr Speaker, I thank you for giving me this opportunity.

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am pleased to talk on the presidential Speech that was delivered by His Excellency the President, on Friday, 20th December, 2013, on the occasion of State Opening of Parliament. Mr Speaker, I want to refer the House to Page 3, Paragraph 13, under Economic Diversification. We have had a lot of explanations with regards to how our economy is growing. In fact, it has been reported that it is one of the fastest growing economy in the world. If that is true, the realities are there. But there is a stark contrast between this country's economic growth and the reality on the ground. The economic growth that has been acclaimed for this country is not visible on our people. For instance, if we are saying that the economy is growing at certain percentage, it should reflect on the lives of the ordinary Sierra Leoneans. But this is not reflected on the lives of our people

at all. Therefore, I am asking this government to make it a point of duty to better the lives of its people of this nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the economic growth should be felt by every Sierra Leonean. I want to ask the government to ensure that this economic growth impacts the lives of the people of this country. The economic growth should not only be written on paper, but should tell on the lives of our people. If what is acclaimed is reflected on the lives of Sierra Leoneans, we will boastfully say this country is experiencing economic growth. We have to work on realities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to take the House to Page 12, Paragraph 71. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President made mention of Energy in his Address. Mr Speaker, I heard that before the SLPP government left power in 2007, Bumbuna was 95% completed. We all know what happened in the INCOM Electric saga. The 100 days supply of electricity to the capital, for which we spent millions of dollars, was a futile endeavour. This means that nothing was realised at the end of the day. Therefore, energy is still a challenge in this country. The promise made by the President was simply a campaign strategy to win votes. We want to ask the President and his government to provide electricity to the people of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to refer you to Page 15, Paragraph 95. Here the President spoke about labour and employment. Of course, labour issues are very important issues in any country. We have more mining companies today than ever in the history of this country. But most of the foreigners they bring in as workers do not have work permit. Some do not even have residential permit at all Mr Speaker. These are very serious issues and these are areas we generate funds for the running of the State. They must be properly monitored. If these foreigners are left unchecked, we might be losing lots of funds. This is not good for the development of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, employment is one of the main problems confronting this nation. There are thousands of graduates roaming the streets of this country looking for jobs. Government should pay more attention to some of these

issues and try to address them urgently. Mr Speaker, if jobs are not made available to the youth, the security of this nation is under security threat. And Mr Speaker, if the issue of unemployment is not addressed, it is a recipe for instability, insecurity and pandemonium. So, I want to urge the President and this government to look into these issues.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in his Speech, the President asked a lot of questions but failed to provide answers to those questions. I will attempt to answer some of these questions based on what history has taught us in this country. For example, the President said: *"how come, with so many of our excelling students all over the world from medicine to languages, to computer to engineering and international administration that our country got stuck for so long at the bottom rock of the human development."*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will attempt to answer that question. Historically, Sierra Leone gained independence in 1961. We are also told that the country's independence was brought by the SLPP, under the leadership of Sir Milton Margai. Sierra Leone was governed under the SLPP from 1961 to 1967. Mr Speaker, from 1967 to 1992, Sierra Leone was ruled by the APC. This implies that the APC governed this country for approximately 24 years. During that time, the population of this country was very small and our mineral resources were in abundance. The APC had the opportunity to develop this country, but did not because of bad governance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President also asked another question thus: *"how come that a people so tolerant and peaceful, a people famed for their hospitality and their will to happiness, could have a war that shock the World?"* Mr Speaker, the answer to this question is bad governance and injustice. Mr Speaker, under the one party rule of Siaka Stevens and Joseph Saidu Momoh, there was nothing like good governance, democracy, freedom of the Press etc. Bad governance, injustice and intolerance were the order of the day. In those days, the APC used to win all the elections through rigging. Eventually, some people got fed up and they went to the

bush and became rebels that brought war in this country. We were unable to control the war and it lasted for over 11 years. The TRC recommended that we should desist from injustice in this country. This means that injustice was one of the major causes of the war, perpetrated by the then APC government. Therefore, the APC government should be careful. The SLPP government ended the war.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President also asked another very important question. He said: *"How comes a nation blessed with natural resources has so many poor people?"* Mr Speaker, from 1961 to 1964, there was no bad governance in this country. And from 1964 to 1967, Sir Milton Margai ruled this country in the most democratic manner. But Mr Speaker, when the APC took over power, that was where the problems of this nation started. Mr Speaker, if we are here today enjoying democracy and peace, I am sure we have to be grateful to the SLPP government. We have to be grateful and we are here as a formidable opposition to work with the government. We are here to checkmate the activities of the government.

I thank you very much Mr Speaker for giving me the opportunity to make my contribution on the Presidential Address.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Francis A. Kaisamba, let us all pray in this country that we do not have any other war. It is always good to advocate or agitate for a revolution, but when it comes, it can even devour its own children. That was how so many people suffered in this country. Even those who wanted it, they perished along the line.

HON. SHEKU A. SANNOH: Thank you very much Honourable Speaker. I always call you Honourable Speaker because you went through two successive elections before you assumed that seat. I want to call on Members of Parliament to be calling him Honourable Speaker because of the aforesaid reason. There is a difference between Mr Speaker and Honourable Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on behalf of the people of Constituency 112, I want to lend my voice to the Presidential Address that was graciously delivered by the legend

of youth transformation in this country, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. He is an example of a true state man. He is also the apex of unification and an epitome of reconciliation for the people of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my contributions would be premised from a quotation by an illustrious Philosopher, Henry Frederick Hanniel. With the leave of Mr Speaker, it says: *"Thankfulness is the beginning of gratitude; gratitude is the completion of thankfulness; thankfulness can be merely words whilst gratitudes are shown in acts."* Mr Speaker, I listened keenly when Members of Parliament were debating the Presidential Address yesterday, especially when reference was made to the youth, which in simple terms sounded ludicrous. I am saying this because the youth of this country were described as irresponsible and lawless. This is rather unfortunate Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am a representative of Constituency 112 in Juba and Lumley. And in that constituency, I have a battery of sober minded youth. Mr Speaker, I ... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Komba E. Koedoyoma was saying that the youth in the constituency you represent are lawless.

HON. SHEKU A. SANNOH: Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member from Kono, Honourable Komba E. Koedoyoma did mention that the youth of this country are lawless. I just want to preface by saying that I have a battery of sober minded youth in my constituency that have contributed so much in rebranding the image of this nation. The contribution of the youth in this country cannot be underestimated. In some quarters, the youth have been seen as law abiding citizens. However, I am of the opinion that the youth where the Honourable Member is coming from, are the lawless youth. I want to personally ask him to bring them to Constituency 112 for them to be transformed *(Laughter)*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during the budget debates, I lectured Members of Parliament on the issue of 'we laid the foundation' came up. From an authoritative point of view, I will go further to explain what foundation is all about. I want to relate that to the agreement between tenants and landlords. Mr Speaker, in the lease agreement, we are made to understand that there was a lease agreement from 1996 to 2007 in terms of constructing a building. As I said in the budget speech, this agreement was made in pipe line. There was another agreement for the same piece of land where the landlord and the tenant agreed to construct four story building and yet, after constructing the four story-building, there came Mr One Story Building, claiming that he laid the foundation for the four story building. There is difference between a pipeline and that of an action street.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in an action street, it is possible you have a pipe line along the right path of the action street or the left path of the action street, but I will tell you the agreement that was signed on the pipe line. Of course, on the left hand side of the action street, there is no way you could call that a better agreement or trying to relate that to what we are talking about. Mr Speaker, because of that the people of Sierra Leone thought it wise to re-elect Dr Ernest Bai Koroma as President for a second term.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take this Honourable House to Page 14, Paragraph 81 to 84, under Information and Communications. With your leave, Mr Speaker, I read: "*A dedicated security network that covers the entire country has been developed for the government of Sierra Leone. The security sector can now use a secured voice communication network to perform their duties*". Mr Speaker, because of the technicality of this statement, I would like to explain it. ... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I don't like Honourable Members using the word 'lecture.' You can still be lecturing without mentioning the word itself. I want to remind Honourable Members that this is a Parliament. Under my speakership, I want people to

avoid that word here. We are all Members of Parliament. You may be educated, but there may be others that are more educated than you.

HON. SHEKU A. SANNOH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I am still trying to explain the technicalities of the aforesaid statement; and I would relate that statement to the advanced world. In the first world, they have what is known as Lawful Intersection Switches. A lawful intersection switch is very important, especially so when it comes to do with security. This is the switch they use to intersect communications that will threaten the security of the country. Today, we are talking about a dedicated security network that will help in that trend in order to increase on the level of security of this country. Therefore, we owe the President many thanks for bringing forward security to the door steps of Sierra Leoneans. Personally, I want to thank him for securing the lives of the people of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President also said: *"we are also dedicated to fully utilising electromagnetic spectrum which has been classified as the new oil for Africa to generate revenue for government, license fees for use of our electromagnetic spectrum will be reviewed and its use properly monitor to benefit its end users. We also intend to review our current Telecommunications Act, 2006 to cover all aspects of communications. The revised Bill, when enacted by Parliament, will be renamed 'The Electronic Communication Law'".* This is also important for the Committee on Communications. It is important because when you talk about electromagnetic spectrum, this is how we have to define our frequencies; this is how we allot our frequencies to the users in our country etc.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is true that if for any reason, we put the actual technicalities involved in place, then we would benefit more from the electromagnetic spectrum. So, if the President intends to bring that Bill to Parliament for a review, he means good for this country. I want to thank the President for this good proposal and the Committee on Information and Communications is looking forward to seeing the Act. I thank you very much Mr President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to refer the House to Page 11, Paragraphs 65 to 70, under Road Construction. Mr Speaker, 4 days before the 2012 elections, the President launched the reconstruction of the Lumley Beach Road, leading to Aberdeen. And if you go to Lumley Beach Road now, you will see exactly what the President was talking about in this Speech. For that reason, the people of Constituency 112 have humbly asked me to extend their gratitudes and thanks to the President for bringing to light what exactly he mentioned in his speech.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was opportuned (under the leadership of the Chairman of the Committee on Works, Honourable Kombor Kamara), to go on an Oversight function as far as Daru Bridge. Mr Speaker, I was surprised to see the wonderful work that has been done on that bridge. In fact, that bridge is better than what people call 'flyovers.' It will be good if people could go there and see things for themselves. The bridges constructed by ISU are superb. In fact, people would be tempted to say Daru is the Miami of West Africa. Mr Speaker, the President is at work; and let nobody stand his way. If you go to Pepel and the Regent-Grafton Road, you will also see flyover. For such reason, we owe the President thanks for what he has done and what he is doing now. Mr President, on behalf of the people of Sierra Leone, I want to say thanks for making Sierra Leone a better nation for human existence.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we were opportuned to see the kind of Astatic and bituminous substance they used in constructing the road leading to Pendembu. Mr Speaker, if you look at the kind of substance being used, you would be tempted to thank the President of this nation. I am surprised at Members of Parliament who are criticising everything this President has done for this nation. They are not even mentioning the good works of His Excellency the President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Fibre Optic is very important to Members of Parliament, especially those in the habit of boycotting State functions. I will tell you how. The importance of Fibre Optic cannot be underestimated because it will ease video conferencing. If the Fibre Optic was in full operation, most of those boycotting State functions would have seen the facial expression of His Excellency the President

when he was delivering this Speech in the Well of Parliament. The Fibre Optic is in my constituency because the landing site is in constituency 112. With Fibre Optic, communications will be easier than ever. With Fibre Optic, video conferencing and Tango communication will be very easy. The President did mention Whats App and other social media. Of course, when we are using Whats App, we are finding some itches. This is because we don't have the proper boundary to eliminate any problem. So, bringing the Fibre Optic to this country is a welcome venture. The people of Sierra Leone are experiencing a sort of territorial connections everywhere in the city of Freetown and even in the rural areas.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, We need to say thanks as people's representatives. In fact, with the advent of this Fibre Optic, an e-learning environment will be created. There will also be an e-commerce opportunity. Therefore, if we are true representatives of the people, we owe the President thanks. For that reason, I want to say thanks to His Excellency the President for these developments in this country. I equally want to thank him on behalf of the pupils of Services Secondary School for bringing forward the Sierra Wi-Fi Connection. The pupils of Services Secondary school are now benefiting from e-learning from South Africa. The President mentioned that in his Address; and for that reason, I want to say thanks. I have seen it working.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will take you to something very unique in my constituency. Over the weekend, I went round my constituency on outreach meetings. I first visited Lumley Police Station; and what I heard was 'na dɔbul,' S.O. 2 Mr Speaker. When I went to Juba Barracks, what I heard was 'na dɔbul. I asked myself the question; what is this 'dɔbul' talking about. It was not until when I used the concept of physics to relate the President's Speech to that of the budget speech with particular reference to the Chinese Law I really understood what they meant. It says: *"the angle of incidence is equal to that of the angle of reflection."* When the Minister of Finance and Economic Development came to deliver his budget speech in this Chamber, he brought forward the angle of incidence. And when the President came to deliver his

Address in this House, he brought the angle of reflection. Mr President, I want to thank you because I saw the reflection in my account at FI Bank (*Applause*).

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Sheku Sannoh, have you heard of the song 'εvritin na dɔbul, dɔbul?

HON. SHEKU A. SANNOH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, we have seen the tarmac in the first phase of the Regent Road construction. For that reason, we want to thank the President for a work well done. We hope that he will continue.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, statements have been made by Honourable Members with regard to the Guma Valley Water Company. As the representatives of the people, I was part of the Committee that was set up to review some aspect of Guma Valley Water Company. During the exercise, we learnt that Guma Valley has got the will power to carry out their functions. When I took the message to my constituents, they promised to meet the obligations of Guma Valley Water Company. We also learnt that the Company was in need of funds to execute its plans. Therefore, I want to crave the indulgence of this House and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development to ensure the provision of a supplementary budget for the Company. Mr Speaker, if this is done, it will reduce the proliferation of sachet water in this country. We have to make sure that we capacitate Guma Valley for it to regain its strength. Mr Speaker, if we fail to do this, the Company will continue to be in limbo. Members of Parliament should inform their constituents about Guma Valley's to ensure safe drinking water in the country. My constituents are ready to meet the obligations of Guma Valley. I want Guma Valley Water Company to consider my constituents. We are ready at all times to meet the obligations of Guma.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it bothers me when Members of Parliament are unable to commend the President for ensuring the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). If this fund is provided for Members of Parliament, it will bring respect to Members of Parliament. I have no doubt the CDF will be provided to Members of

Parliament. For that reason, we owe the President many thanks for adding credence to Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Speech of the President manifests the important fact that he wants this country to move forward. We have to be united, if this country is to progress. For Sierra Leone to move forward, Members of Parliament have to be in the forefront of every development. So, I want to implore Members of Parliament to do our Oversight function in a very decent manner, in order to help the President in his transformative stride. Let us help the President in bringing Sierra Leone to what exactly we are looking forward to.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have our responsibilities as Members of Parliament. As the representatives of the people, we have to reciprocate the confidence bestowed on us by doing good work. We have to forget about idiosyncrasies we have learnt from many speeches. With these few words, I want to thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Bliss Osho-Williams, please take note of the contribution made by the last speaker, particularly the issue relating to Guma Valley Water Company. You have always said that you are the oldest Member of Parliament in terms of age. You could recalled that there was a programme that used to be moderated by late Edward Aka known as "*My Guest*" Edward Aka used to say most of his guests were foreigners; and at a certain point in the discussion, he would ask for a glass of water from Guma. It was said that water from Guma was the best drinking water in the world. This is what Honourable Sheku A. Sannoh is calling for. That is, if Guma is providing enough and good drinking water, there would be no need for these sachets water.

Honourable Ammany, don't you think that all of us must join hands to tackle the problem of lawlessness among the youth of this country, as Honourable Komba E. Koedoyoma was saying yesterday? You would like to know that the President is also emphasizing on the issue of lawlessness as a perennial problem in this country. Lawlessness is a menace in this nation. What Honourable Komba E. Koedoyoma was

saying yesterday is a wakeup call for the representatives of the people, for us to talk to the youth in their respective constituencies, in order to become law abiding citizens.

Honourable Patricia Brown, you have an option to speak for just about 15 minute or you wait after lunch. If you want to make your presentation before we go for lunch, you can take the Floor.

HON. PATRICIA BROWN: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the first thing that caught my attention in the presidential Address that was graciously delivered in this House on Friday, 20th December, 2013, was the opening statement the President made. The President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, opened his Speech when he said that 'it is by divine providence that I stood before this House to deliver my Speech for the 8th time and by the grace of God, I will do so a few more times during my second term of office.' That is the statement that caught my attention. The reason is because the President is a man of God. Mr Speaker, everything he says is by the grace of God. No wonder, this country is going in a positive direction. We have been led by a man of faith, a man who believes and puts God first in everything he does.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am not going to talk much about this Parliament because a lot has already been said about it. But what I want to say here is that the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, was Member of Parliament and Leader of the opposition in this Parliament. He knows exactly what it means to be a parliamentarian. He knows what the parliamentarians are yearning for. Mr Speaker, whatever the President has done for this Parliament was not done for the parliamentarians on this government side alone, but he did it for all parliamentarians in this House. Consequently, the President is a man who cares about Members of Parliament and he knows exactly what we need. He also knows what we have to do as a Parliament. He understands our people because he has been a parliamentarian. In fact, a lot has been said about the Constituency Development Fund.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to assure this Honourable House that we are going to have it, because whenever our President says something, he makes follow-ups. I have no doubt about it Mr Speaker. Dr Ernest Bai Koroma knows exactly how

parliamentarians feel and that is why he is taking us along with him. He is not leaving us behind at all. He is doing what is supposed to be done for us as a Parliament. Therefore, it is our responsibility, as a Parliament to do the right thing. We have to live up to expectations, so that he takes us along with him.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as people's representatives, we have to take our parliamentary jobs more seriously. One of the most important jobs for parliamentarians is Oversight. As parliamentarians, we have to be more serious and diligent in our Oversight work. As long as funds are available, we have to do our work. However, there are some Committees that have not been able to do their Oversight work for 2013 because of financial constraints. Nevertheless, we have to do whatever we can to make sure that we utilise whatever we have. As parliamentarians, we have to make personal sacrifices by taking from our pockets for the furtherance of our work. We have to do that if this country is to move forward and get things done. We should have passion and love for our job. We must also ensure that the right thing is done for the people of this country. We are representing our people; therefore, we have to do what is right for them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about economic diversity, as mentioned in the presidential Address. We all know that this country has come a long way. Mr Speaker, as the saying goes: *"leave me, today is better than yesterday."* I think Sierra Leone has moved up, according to the World Bank Report. We have been rated among the fastest growing economies in the last 6 years. We are the best in terms of protecting investors. This country has moved up places in the Human Development Index (HDI). Mr Speaker, when the APC took over the governance of this country, the position of this country in terms of the HDI was nothing to write home about as compared to our present position.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about infrastructure. I am not going to talk about all the roads because most of the speakers have already spoken about them. As a result, I am only going to thank the President and this government for the construction of the Freetown–Guinea Highway. The Freetown-Guinea Highway is where

my constituency is located. The people of Kambia District do appreciate and thank the President for that road. Today, the people of neighbouring Guinea are also thanking the President of this country for the Freetown-Guinea Highway. The people of Sierra Leone appreciate the fact that they can now transport their goods with ease. They can transport people from Freetown to Guinea within a day. This has not been possible at all Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in as much as a lot has been said about the youth in this country does not stop me from saying something about them. It is a fact that we have a problem with high teenage pregnancy with our female youth. However, this government has already addressed that issue in the President's Speech. He has made allocation to address teenage pregnancy in this country. What we are looking forward to do is for this Parliament and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs to enact the Gender Equality Bill, which will soon come to this House for consideration. I only have one question for the rest of the male parliamentarians in this House. The question is, are they ready to support this Bill? We are going to lobby to ensure the passage of that Bill into an Act of Parliament. Male Members of Parliament have to wish well for your mothers, sisters and their women by supporting this Bill.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, youth employment is a serious issue in this country. A lot has been said in that regard, but I want to encourage this government and the private sector to ensure that new graduates from the universities and other tertiary institutions are employed. Our kids are graduating from the various colleges without jobs. Mr Speaker, I have a few youth in the Kambia Township who have graduated since 2010 and they are still looking for jobs. I am therefore craving the indulgence of the private sector to extend a helping hand to government. I am pleading with the private sector because government alone cannot do everything. The private sector needs to assist the government in terms of employing these jobless youth. The Private Public Partnership should come in and assist the government.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Cooperations, I want to tell this Honourable House that the President is

doing all he can to make sure that we are proud of our Missions and Embassies abroad. From the few travels I have made, I have seen great improvement in that regard. Mr Speaker, it would have been prudent for this Committee to extend its Oversight function to these Missions and Embassies abroad; but because of the financial difficulties we facing as a nation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperations should oversee these Missions and Embassies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as the President of the Female Caucus in this Parliament, I cannot conclude my contribution without asking for the Speaker's indulgence and the membership of this House to talk about pillar 8 in the 'Agenda for Prosperity.'

(Suspension of S.O. 5(2) being 12: noon)

HON. PATRICIA BROWN: Mr Speaker, I would like to thank and praise the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, for what he has done for the women of this country (*Applause*). Within his party, the President made sure that more females were elected as Members of Parliament. And Mr Speaker, it will interest you to know that more female representatives were elected to this present Parliament than in 2007. We appreciate the President for that gesture. The women of this country are looking forward to the passage of the Gender Equality Bill into law. The President mentioned in his Speech that once the Bill comes to this House and is ratified, he would sign it. Therefore, it is up to us, as parliamentarians to do justice to that Bill. We praise and thank the President for the numerous positions he assigned to women in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the President was re-elected for his second term in 2012, most of the women in executive positions retained their positions and we have new positions that were created for more women. In fact, the position of a 'Chief of Protocol' has been assigned to a female. We thank the President for that and we praise him for putting the women of this country first.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have three minutes left.

HON. PATRICIA BROWN: We thank you Mr President for making us the agents of change. I want to conclude by the saying: "*all men are created equal and so are women*". Thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Before we adjourn for lunch, the Leader of the House and Leader of Government Business wants to make an announcement.

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU: Thank you Mr Speaker. Honourable Members, I would like to see the following:

- all MDAs present;
- the Minority Leadership of the SLPP;
- the Majority Leadership of the APC; and
- members of the Press.

The meeting will take place in Room 1, immediately when the sitting is adjourned.

(The House was adjourned for lunch at 12:06 noon; and resumed at 1:15 p. m.)

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand here this afternoon to say thanks to His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma for an Address he delivered on Friday, 20th December, 2013. The President deserves respect and deserves to receive thanks from us. He is indeed, an Honourable man.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my reason for referring to the President as an Honourable Man is contained in his Speech. If you go through the first page, the second paragraph, he said: "*I like Parliament.*" He further said: "*once a parliamentarian is always a Parliamentarian.*" In tandem with the aforestated statement, we have seen what the President has done for Members of Parliament. I think this is why the President is excelling in governing his people. He was once a parliamentarian, representing a constituency. He has ensured the increment of our salaries and the provision of a special fund commonly called the Constituency Development Fund.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President, being an Honourable man, likes Parliament. And I think this is the reason why he signed the Bill that brought an Honourable Member of Parliament to assume the position of Speakership of this House. He despised all criticisms that were coming from the media and civil society groups in guaranteeing the autonomy of Parliament. Both the civil society organisations and the media failed to understand the need for Members of Parliament to have a Speaker from among themselves. Therefore, we have to show gratitude by simply saying thanks to the President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take you to Paragraph 5, Page 2. Mr Speaker, I want to remind Honourable Members on the other side that today is far better than yesterday. Today, we have more money in our pockets than yesterday; today, we have more infrastructural development than yesterday; today, we have the Free Health Care Programme, which was absent yesterday; today, we have more employment opportunities for the youths than yesterday; today, we have more young people in governance than yesterday; today, we have more women in governance than yesterday; today, we have more universities than yesterday; and today, we have more new roads than ever in the history of this country. I want to see any Honourable Member who would deny the fact that today is not better than yesterday.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one of my lecturers at Njala University, Mr Finnoh, asked us thus: "are we growing today?" Some students were saying yes while others were saying no. He also asked: "can this growth be expressed on the faces of the ordinary Sierra Leoneans?" Majority of the students said yes; and few said no. Mr Finnoh concluded by saying: "We are far much better today than yesterday." I told Mr Finnoh that he was correct, because of the fact that we have the minimum wage of 480,000 today. Therefore, Mr Speaker, we cannot deny that fact that today is far better than yesterday.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I used to represent Constituency 045, a stronghold of the opposition party. Mr Speaker, Constituency 045 is one of the constituencies in Koinadugu District that the late S. B. Marah used to represent in this House. In 2007,

the Honourable Member elected to represent that constituency was an SLPP. In 2012, the people of Constituency 045 voted an APC Member of Parliament to represent them in Parliament. This is a clear manifestation that the politics of today is not about party colour or a business of "pa-o-pa," but about the reality. Therefore, they voted this government 85% as opposed to 14% on that side. Is that not the fact that today is far better than yesterday?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me refer you to Page 9, Paragraph 52, under the Youth. In his last Address, the President said that he was going to lay his life for the youth of this country. The youth must also say thanks to Mr President for promising to lay his life for the youth. We have to give thanks to the President. He has done a lot for the youth. In fact, most programmes in this Address are mostly meant for the youth.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague Honourable Member from Koinadugu District was saying to this Honourable House that the President's programmes are not only limited to Freetown, but they are everywhere in the country. Mr Speaker, Koinadugu District has been a neglected district in terms of development in this country. He also said that past Presidents have not been visiting that district. So, why can't we say thanks to this caring President? He has proposed 30 million dollar project to construct schools and provide other facilities in Koinadugu District. Is that not enough to say thanks to a man that thinks about the poor? This is a President that thinks about Kailahun and all other districts in this country. The road from Kenema to Kailahun is superb. Therefore, it behooves each and every Member of Parliament to show gratitude and appreciation to Mr President. Please join me in extending thanks and appreciations to His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma for what he has done and planned to do for the people of this nation. He is going to do more than what he has done for this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President deserves thanks because has ensured that young people are elected to serve as the representatives of the people. On the APC side, we have young people in this House, like Honourable Alhassan Kamara,

Honourable Jero Kamara, Honourable Aaron Koroma, Honourable Isata Kabia etc. These Honourable Members were given party symbols not because of their influence, neither because of their wealth, but because of their youthfulness; coupled with President's commitment to ensure the active participation of the youths of this country in governance. Therefore, the President deserves thanks from all Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take the House to Page 8, Paragraph 43, under Education. Everything about the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is done out of sympathy. Mr Speaker, when the 6-3-3-4 system of education was introduced by the National Provincial Ruling Council (NPRC) regime in this country, we did see the impact. After the war, a lot of young people failed to enjoy the luxury of going to school at a very early age. If it were not for this 6-3-3-4, a lot of them should have been dropped out of school. During the SLPP regime, the popular slogan was 'let my people go.' This means that even if you fail BECE or NPSE, you are sure of going to the next level. The last SLPP regime introduced Access Programmes in the universities in order to accept and accommodate those that fail WASCE. Today, we have graduates who cannot speak nor write good English. It was not done out of malice, it was done out of sympathy. Therefore, the current Minister of Education, Science and Technology, took a bold step in making sure that we renew our educational policies. Today, if you fail BECE, the government will not continue to pay for that candidate.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the failure of education in this country is the responsibility of all of us. In Koinadugu District, the Deputy Director of Education is always on the media talking about the poor state of education in Koinadugu District, but what has he done? In my own constituency, we have somebody who happens to be the Head Teacher and acting as the Principal of Krubola Secondary School since the school was founded. He is there simply because he is a nephew to the Deputy Director of Education in the district. Mr Speaker, it would interest you to know that out of seven WASSCE candidates in the school, six of them were impregnated by this 'useless' man. When he was confronted, he said: *"a de go put kola fɔ dem."* This is very sad

Honourable Members. Mr Speaker, a single man has derailed the future of those young girls. He has destroyed the future of our young girls from becoming like Honourable Isata Kabia, Honourable Dr Bernadette Lahai etc. The future of those girls has been cascaded into the ditch.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the military. As mentioned by an Honourable Member, the military men we are seeing today were frustrated by the SLPP regime. The last SLPP regime was with the opinion that the military men do not deserve anything good. Today, our military are contributing to world peace. Our military is being internationally recognised. The Ernest Bai Koroma's led government should be respected, even if you are nothing, you will be transformed to somebody else. We have been describing the military as a ferocious organisation in this country. Today, it has been transformed and recognised as a peace keeping and enforcement organisation. Therefore, we want to see their barracks being reconstructed again. We want to see better lives for our military. We want to see stolen opportunities being restored. Mr Speaker, I attended the Services Secondary School, Juba Barracks. The school used to be for the military, but it was taken from them by the APC government. I am appealing to His Excellency the President, to return that school to the military. If not for that school, some of us would not have been here today. We want Services Secondary School and other schools in the Barracks to be returned to the military. Mr Speaker, I want to once again thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

HON. ABU JAJUA: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I wish to lend my voice to the motion of thanks to His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. I want to thank him for delivering that gracious Speech in this Well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am thanking His Excellency because of a... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Deputy Speaker, has the Honourable Fatorma told you that he is not going to say thanks?

HON. ABU JAJUA: Thank you Mr Speaker. I will say thanks to His Excellency the President, because of the sincere speech he delivered to this Honourable House. The Speech is sincere because he said that with all the achievements his government has realised, there are still challenges. So, as a technocrat, I tried to recall those issues that have not been solved yet. The President has already highlighted them and we need to find solutions to these challenges. I realise that governance is a teamwork; a teamwork in terms of cooperation between the ruling and opposition parties.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, from the little research I did, a Scottish American billionaire, Andrew Kanauji, in 1889 defined what teamwork thus: *"as a fuel that allows common people to attain a common goal."* Therefore, I want to premise my contribution to Pillars 3 in the 'Agenda for Prosperity.' This is found on Pages 6 and 7. My analysis shows that 36% of our landscape and 65% of our poor population are found in places where companies are located in this country. I am trying to drive our attention now to an ideology of how to distribute our wealth from the rich organisations to the poorer people. I would like this Honourable House to build up a mechanism where the principle of Andrew Kanauji can prevail in Sierra Leone. He wrote in his book, 'Gospel of Wealth' that *"the problem of our age is the proper administration of wealth so that the ties of brotherhood may still bind together, the rich and the poor in harmonious relationship."* Mr Speaker, the current President of the United States of America, Barrack Obama said: "Africans need strong institutions and not strong leaders." In Sierra Leone, we have strong institutions like National Revenue Authority (NRA), National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT), Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) etc.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, NASSIT was created by the SLPP; recently, we have the Mineral and Environmental Agencies that were created by the APC government. Indeed, the Environmental Protection Agency is doing a great job in this country. The Mineral Agency is compelling companies to pay their licenses and conduct a social study of the needed amenities of every locality in this country. The problem is that most of these companies do not want to comply with their corporate social responsibilities. And

Mr Speaker, it is our responsibility to ensure that companies comply with our local content policies. When this is being put in operationalised, we can help the government to achieve the 'Agenda for Prosperity.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President did not mention anything about land management in this Speech, but in his previous Speech, he spoke about land management. With the leave of Mr Speaker, I will read: "*Mr Speaker, we have developed land use planning and mapping system, based on agro-economy and economy potential and social requirement*". A lot of important issues were raised and those issues have not been solved. So, I have a concern that is not mentioned in this Speech. I don't know how we are going to solve those problems that have not been solved. My question is that, is the government overlooking the technical support of the Ministry of Lands? That should not be the case at all Mr Speaker. The Ministry of Lands and Country Planning is a very strong Ministry that the government needs to empower and improve on their technical knowledge, so that the 'Agenda for Prosperity' can be achieved.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the management team of Sierra Rutile is not here today to defend the allegations levied against them but I was lucky to be in a team that started Sierra Rutile after the war. At that time, Sierra Rutile environment did not have any medical facilities; but the company built their health care facility. Hence, the health care facility provided free medical facilities to the community people. Also, Sierra Rutile did a lot of support to technical institutions available in the community in terms of training the technical people so that they employ them later. I am of the opinion that with the support and guidance of the Environmental Protection Agency, our local communities should be enjoying some basic social amenities in their communities. There are documents the authorities of our respective mining companies have agreed upon to see that the community people benefit from their natural resources.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just want to correct the Honourable Member who was misleading this House about the operations of Sierra Rutile... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Jajua, in the options of engineering, we have mechanical, civil and electrical engineering. You are what?

HON. ABU JAJUA: Mr Speaker, I am Survey Engineer, which is the backbone of engineering in construction. I am just trying to correct a misleading statement of the young Electrical Engineer. He said that there are overhead bridges in Sierra Leone. It is a misleading statement. The only place for us to have an overhead bridge at cheaper rate is in Freetown.

THE SPEAKER: He did not say so, Honourable Member. I do not think he said so. He was making a comparison to that, but he did not categorically say what you are now talking about now.

HON. ABU JAJUA: Thank you Mr Speaker. He made mention of one overhead bridge in this country. Those bridges are of a very high standard Mr Speaker. I appreciate the government for that progress.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, much has been said about the Free Health Facilities in this country. In his own wisdom, the President... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Chief Whip, I see you are always referring to Honourable Fatorma. And let me tell you that I have never seen him so happy than today. I do not know whether the explanation is partly because he has more money in his pocket now *(Laughter)*.

HON. ABU JAJUA: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was talking about the health sector. The President, in his wisdom went out of his way to provide some funding for the rehabilitation of the Nixon Memorial Hospital in Segbwema. So, from our investigation, we came to realise that about 65% to 70% of the funding has been paid to the Contractors. My investigation revealed that only 45% to 50% of the job has been completed. Therefore, I want this Honourable House to investigate this issue on the Nixon Memorial Hospital. I want the Chairman of the Local Government to help investigate that issue. A huge sum of money has been disbursed

for the rehabilitation of Nixon Memorial Hospital and about 65% of that money has been given to four Contractors. The job has been put in abeyance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the constituents in 007, Kailahun district, Segbwema have decided to relinquish their natural resources for the construction of the Kenema-Pendembu Road. The agreement was that royalties must be paid to the beneficiaries. But for the past four years, they have not paid those royalties. As stakeholders of that particular part of this country, we are seeking the assistance of the President to help us pave some of the township roads. At this point, I wish to thank the Speaker for giving me this opportunity to clarify some of these issues. Thank you very much.

HON. DR THOMAS MARK TURAY: Thank you Mr Speaker. I want to continue the tradition that has been started by taking this opportunity to thank God for this opportunity. I also want to thank this Honourable House for the 100 votes cast in favour of the new Speaker of this House, who is also one of us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to lend my voice to the debates on the Presidential Address, delivered by His Excellency the President, on Friday, 20th December, 2013. In doing so, I am going to limit my contribution to Pillar Seven (7). I want to focus my contribution on the internal affairs of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to first of all talk about the internal security of this country, with particular reference to the Sierra Leone Police. But I want to forewarn those who are expecting me to say negative things that those negative things will not come from my mouth. The police force is on the move, as already said by the President; so, let nobody stand on their way.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before delving into the specifics of my contribution, regarding the Sierra Leone Police Force, I want to take this unique opportunity to say thanks to King Solomon of the 21st Century Sierra Leone, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. He is our King Solomon because my instinct tells me that in 2007, when he took over the leadership of this country, God asked him what he would want from Him. In response,

the President, as earlier mentioned by Honourable Patricia Brown, asked for wisdom divine wisdom to govern his people. So, I want to thank God for granting the President this divine wisdom and understanding heart to govern his subjects. Sierra Leone is a special country as history made us to understand. This is due to the fact that we have a President who is a God fearing ruler. He is a President that cares for his people. Mr Speaker, even though some of us did not thank him last year, particularly those of us on the other side, he did not neglect his children. He put more money into our pockets, irrespective of our party affiliation. I am very happy to hear many thanks from the other side of the 'ayes.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma is a knowledgeable President who knows the needs of his people. This is manifested in the government's Strategic Plan - the Agenda for Prosperity. There is a linkage between his Speech and the Agenda for Prosperity, which is the Strategic Plan. This is the most organised Speech I have ever opportuned to read. I want Honourable Members to read this Address. I will recommend this document to the university authorities, development practitioners and policy makers to take this as one of their reference materials.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want us to turn to Page 1. The President said: *"what we are doing to positively transform this nation is visible from wherever our people are."* I want to focus on our people, with particular reference to a set of people, the Sierra Leone Police Force. I want to take this opportunity to ask all of us to remember those who maintain law and order in the country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was brought up by an aunt, Princess Conteh, who served the police force diligently. I was also raised by an uncle who also served the police force for several years. Therefore, I am speaking from a position of experience. The police force has done a lot and I am going to cite the works they have done both locally and internationally. There is a adage that says: *"charity begins at home."* So, let me use this opportunity to thank the President for supporting the police force, through

the provision of logistical support. The President did acknowledge some of the challenges in the police force. Here is a sincere President who knows his limitations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, my experience with the Sierra Leone Police force towards the end of last year has been interesting. In my constituency, Constituency 030, a group of people who wanted to take the law into their own hands and went to one of the villages in my constituency called Petbana Massimo and burnt down everything they met there. When we reported to the police, the police went there and did some investigations. Mr Speaker, as the police were investigating, gangs went and burnt other two houses. They also burnt the 'Bondo Bush.' Following the report, I made a visit to the local police in Makeni, I went with one of my Paramount Chiefs, Honourable P. C. Bai Kurr Kanagbaro Sanka III to the Local Unit Commander (LUC), and the AIG, Mr Soloku Conteh. Mr Speaker, the response was immediate and in the midst of their limited resources in terms of vehicles to patrol that particular village, they gave up their time and organised patrol around this village and were able to halt the destruction that was going on.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the team and the police in Makeni, for their cooperation. They manifested high respect to the call of an Honourable Member and a Paramount Chief. They acted professionally by responding promptly to prevent mayhem and disorder in the village that could have caused a lot of problems in that village. The actions of the police contributed greatly in terms of ensuring peace and harmony in that community.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know that my colleagues on the other side have been talking about the foundation they have laid. They keep claiming that they ensured a strong foundation on which we are improving on. Of course, if you stay in power for eleven (11) years, you have to build a foundation that is a foregone conclusion. There were fissures, crevices or cracks on the foundation they are always claiming. Most of the foundations they are claiming to have laid were positioned on rocky grounds; and the mixtures were made up of sand, water and gravel. This tells you the weakness of

the foundations. Mr Speaker, when Dr Ernest Bai Koroma came to power in 2007, he noticed that the foundations people were making reference to were very weak. What he did was to improve some of them and undo others that cannot even tolerate improvement at all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your leave, I want us to go to Page 20, under Security and Defence. Paragraph 129 says: *"Mr Speaker, no country can prosper without a dedicated police force, though there are still challenges, we salute the police force for helping this country to ensure that the crime rate, especially violent crimes is one of the lowest in the sub-region. The police I salute you."*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to join the President in saluting the police. When the President spoke about the work the police have done in reducing the crime rate in the country. I have here with me the Sierra Leone Police Annual Crime Management Statistical Report for 2012. This was carried out by the Research Policy and Planning Unit, Cooperate Service Department and Police Headquarters in Freetown. It was published in February, 2013.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as of January to December, 2012, there were 528 recorded cases. These were categories of offences recorded between January and December 2012. Mr Speaker, offences against persons was rated high (44.74%); offences against property (29.90%); economic offences (15.87%); offences against women and children (5.46%); mischief and public order offences (2.8%); and miscellaneous offences (1.2%). This report confirms the fact that as the President noted in his Address, I also want to agree with him that the police are doing a lot in terms of mitigating the crime rate in the country. The police have also done a lot to support security locally and internationally. According to the Global Peace Index, which was conducted and the Global Peace Index measures both qualitatively and quantitatively data about the peacefulness of a state. And this is done every year at the international level.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for 2013, we were second to Ghana. That is, Sierra Leone was 59 over 162 countries as compared to other countries. For the benefit of all of us, this is very important to see how we have progressed as a nation. The first country in terms of peace is Iceland, the second is Denmark and the third is New Zealand. Sierra Leone attains 59th position, out of 169; whereas Ghana attains the 58th position. Let me tell you the extent to which we are located within the context of the Mano River Union. Liberia attains the 80th position; Guinea is 116th position; and Ivory Coast attains 151, out of 162; the United Kingdom is 44th position etc. This statistical analysis shows that Sierra Leone has achieved a lot. It will interest you to know that the United States of America occupies the 99th position.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the police have also done a lot and I want to highlight some of their successes. I spoke earlier about the foundation that did not have all the necessary ingredients for a sustainable foundation. The President has tried, since he came to power in 2007 to ensure a strong foundation. Mr Speaker, if you compare the police force from 2007 to its present status, you would agree with me that a lot has been done to improve the force. Mr Speaker, when the APC came to power in 2007, the numerical strength of the police force was about 7,500. From 2007 to date, that number has risen to 12,500 policemen. The Inspector General of police told me that the number is about 13,000. Thank you very much Mr President for strengthening the police force.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the gratitude of the police force. We have a President who is grateful and he gives credit to where credit is due. With your leave, Mr Speaker, I want to read from Page 20: "*The police force is the face of government in our streets and communities.*" The reason why he increased the salary, I believe, is to mitigate corruption in the country. That is why he has increased the salaries of the police force and other workers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to cite example on the issue of international assignments the police have accomplished. Mr Speaker, I am very grateful

to the United Nations Development Programme that has recently assigned Peter Cruss to the Sierra Leone Police Force to serve as a Security Reform Adviser. This project, as I was informed by Assistant Inspector General of police, has attracted 3 mln Pound Sterling. So, we can see that the international community is interested in supporting and strengthening the capacity of the police force in this country. There are many more things the police have done for the security of this country. Mr Speaker, with your leave, I want to refer to a letter written to the Director-General and Ambassador at Large in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. This letter was written by Richard Moigbeh on behalf of the Inspector-General of police. He cited some valuable information which I think is important for us to know as Members of Parliament. Mr Speaker, the Sierra Leone Police Force has contributed 512 personnel... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, are you citing examples or you are reading directly?

HON. DR THOMAS MARK TURAY: I am reading directly Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Make sure you read what you have.

HON. DR THOMAS MARK TURAY: Thank you Mr Speaker. So, I am reading what I have. It says: "*The Sierra Leone Police Force has contributed 512 personnel, comprising 146 females and 366 males to the United Nations Mission and African Union Peace Keeping missions, wherein they have served in various capacities and professional posts.*" I mentioned earlier about the foundation and I want to continue relating it to the police force.

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, the SLPP set up the peace keeping operations in 2004, but unfortunately, there was no policy document. In 2007, when the President took over power, a policy document for peace keeping operations was written and approved. I am mentioning this because the policy statement defines the principles,

core values and the responsibilities that are expected of our police force when they perform peace keeping operations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to conclude by thanking His Excellency the President, for strengthening the police force. On the front page of one of the dailies, it is clearly written that "Yenga liberated without the sound of a gun." This tells you that we have a President who has expertise in diplomacy and international negotiation. Yenga was reclaimed without the sound of a gun.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to tell you that our gallant men and women are in Somalia, Darfur and many other places. They have brought commendable praises for this country, to the extent that Sierra Leone is recognised in terms of peace keeping operations in the World. Mr Speaker, Sierra Leone hosts a high powered Somalia Police delegation on a study visit. This team came to look at the best practices of the Sierra Leone Police Force and their experiences in international peace keeping operations. They had loved to share with others who have also yearned to ensure the security of their country. So, the team came and learnt valuable lessons that they have taken to their various countries. Mr Speaker, I have remained positive and focused on the police, because we need to praise ourselves when we do something good. In most cases, we are too negative about ourselves. There are many a time when we do not give credit where it is due. Of course, having said this, the critics will say, I have not presented the police as none human organisation. They do have challenges which we must provide solutions to.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President acknowledged the fact that there are challenges. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one of the recommendations we made in one of the Committees of supply reads, with your permission: "*Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the committee observed that considering the security needs of this nation, the increasing incident of violent crimes and the government zero tolerance on lawlessness, the police need additional resources to be able to effectively and efficiently meet these challenges of the time.*" I want to plead that we provide the forces with

enough logistical support. So, I want to continue to plead to the government for more logistical support for our forces.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the President for everything he has done for this country. The security of a country is very important, because it is only when we are secured as a nation, we would have multitudes of investors coming to this country. We are enjoying peace at the moment because our forces are committed to maintain peace and security of the country. I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity to share my own wisdom. Thank you (*Applause*).

HON. HELEN KUYEMBEH: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by saying that change is very easy to follow.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand here to lend my voice to the President's Address, delivered to this noble House on Friday, 20th December, 2013. In doing so, I wish to thank the President for giving us an account of his stewardship for the past year; and what he intends to do in the future. In fact, he mentioned in his Speech that he was giving us an account of his stewardship. To me, I think it is very gratifying because this is an annual event. So, I am going to take it from this angle. I am looking at what the President presented to us in this Address, in terms of what he did from 2012 to 2013. I am going to look at the specific areas that were mentioned in the Address, and try to make some comments, recommendations and proffer solutions where necessary. I am also going to look at how far the President and his government has implemented the recommendations we made the last time. In other words, I will take a critical look and see whether any of those recommendations were actually taken into consideration or not. If they were, then, kudos to the President, but if they were not, for the reason being that development is a continuous process and there was not enough time to have completed those unfinished projects, his Address to this House will tell us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start with investment. The President mentioned that he has made tremendous effort in attracting investors into this country.

I do agree to a very large extent that this country has attracted a lot of investors, but my question is who has benefitted more from these investors? I am posing this question because many of the investors we have in this country are foreign investors. Many of us in this House, who have knowledge of what is happening in the developed countries, where most of these investors come from, will agree with me that the exchange rate we are giving to these investors is about 3% or 4%. If not all, but most of us know that attracting investors into a country or having effective investment is coming from the banking system. If that is so, then, do you think that is fair? Foreigners are only charged 3% or 4% in terms of securing a loan' whereas Sierra Leoneans are charged 20%.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this means that we don't stand a better chance as compared to our foreign competitors in terms of investment. This issue was mentioned in his Speech last year and I did make the same comment in this House. I did tell the President that I think our banking system is not doing us any good. We are asking the President and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and the Bank of Sierra Leone to have a collaborative meeting with the other banks to look at the interest rate charged against local investors. The local investors should be able to compete with the foreign investors coming into this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about Agriculture. Mr Speaker, the President did say that Sierra Leone has done a lot in terms of food production. We actually have exceeded the 2007 percent rate. I do agree with the President, Mr Speaker. He also indicated in his Speech that much of what he is alluding to come from government policies in the Agricultural sector. If that is so, I would not say much because we do have documents to the effect. But I want to reiterate here that development is a continuous process. There are lots of things going on in the Agricultural sector and in other sectors as well. I have already stated in this Well that you give credit where credit is due. Many things are happening in different sectors across the country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the Agriculture sector, the President is saying that much of development is coming from government policies. If you take a look at the southern and eastern parts of this country, you will find out that the people in that part of the country are using rudimentary tools, like cutlasses and hoes to do their farm work. Most of the farmers are not exposed or do not have the opportunity to acquire tractors and other modern farm tools that will help them. The government has to step in, in terms of supporting our local farmers with farm tools. But if you visit the Northern Region, you will find out that there are evidences of mechanised tractors. This implies that a lot of agricultural supports are given to the Northern part of the country than in the South-East.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when you refer to government policies as being the course of such problems, I would rather say it is an Adversity Theory; and this is what the adversity theory is all about. The adversity theory is saying that when one part of a community or a set of people find themselves in a situation, or facing a problem that they cannot solve, they revert to natural remedies, or natural coping mechanisms. That is what is happening in the South-East. These people cannot afford or they are not privileged to acquire what other farmers in the North could afford. So, they result to using coping mechanisms – rudimentary tools. Mr Speaker, what I am saying here is that, whether it is from government policies or not, what is meant for everybody is not evenly distributed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President also talked about mechanised Agriculture. This was also mentioned in his Speech last year. I come from an area where mechanised agriculture is being introduced. I am pretty sure that many Members of Parliament in this House have heard about SOFIN and how much pain it is causing to our people at the grass root level. We have heard how land is being sold; or how land is being grabbed by these mechanised farmers. What it does is that it is taking away the very fabric of what our people live on. You and I know that our people depend on their land. I am not against mechanised farming or mechanised Agriculture, but what I want to say here is that there should be other alternatives. We should not allow our people

to sell their land. What we can do, rather than taking lands away from people, is making them stakeholders in the business. The landowners should be made as the stakeholders in the business so that they can benefit directly, rather than losing their lands *(Applause)*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in last year's Address, what came up prominently was the issue of the youth. In my contribution, I did advise on a number of youth related issues to the President. He said he was giving up his life for the youths. He dedicated this term of his presidency to the youth and we were extremely happy. We were happy because most Honourable Members in this Well are youth and then we have lots of youth out there we represent. Indeed, efforts have been made in that regard. We have youth centres that have been established in urban areas. Now, I have a problem with that because much of our development in this country is mostly focused in the urban areas. And Mr Speaker, I don't think whether these urban areas are the only ones that make up Sierra Leone. This country has a greater percentage of rural population than the population in the urban areas. Therefore, our focus should also be directed to the rural areas.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will recommend to the President and to the Ministry of Youth Affairs to establish urban centres in Bo, Makeni and other areas. We are complaining that the streets in Freetown, Bo, Makeni etc. are overcrowded. But we need to ask ourselves why our urban centres are overcrowded. The reason is because the youth move from the rural areas into the urban areas in search of employment, good living and in search of good education. Therefore, if the President has dedicated his life, in terms of ensuring the wellbeing of the youth of this country, the President has to find out where most of these youth are living. Do not create mechanisms in urban areas and forget about the rural areas. You have to go and meet them where they live and set up the mechanisms that will enable them support themselves in their localities *(Applause)*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to talk about water. Last year, I made a plea, through the President that a task force should be established in his office to take care of street peddling. In the case of water, I would also recommend that the President set up a task force for the water situation in this country, especially Freetown. However, we are still faced with water problem, particularly in Freetown. I applaud the effort of the government for taking the initiative, as reflected in the budget to take care of the water crises in the urban areas. I thank the President for that move. However, I want to let the President know that the water situation in Freetown is horrible. Honestly, there are some areas in Freetown where people are still carrying these five-gallon containers on their heads to fetch water every day.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the water crisis at Dwarzak area is horrifying. Those of us who live in that part of the city are confronted with water problem. A good number of us either buy a bowser of water or we peddle for water every day. We have to revitalise those institutions, so that we would go back to where we were. We have abundant water in this country. There are countries in this world that do not even have water. But the authorities in those countries work hard to give their citizens good drinking water. I am asking the President again for a second time to look into the water situation in this country. We can start using boreholes water for the time being. We do not mind at all Mr Speaker. What we need is safe drinking water that would take care of our domestic needs. Therefore, even if we cannot revitalise the pipes borne water in the country, we will appreciate boreholes water in areas where people are struggling to get water.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the next thing we talked about last year was the roads. We are proud of the efforts made by this government as far as the roads are concerned. We have fantastic roads like the Wilkinson Road, Spur Road and many other roads in this country. I say kudos to the President for his efforts. But Honourable Members, we all know that the component of economic growth is the market. How do you access the market? You access the market through quality roads from production areas. We are doing these road networks, but in the budget speech, indications were

made that moneys were put aside to construct roads in the rural areas. I am talking about feeder roads, Mr Speaker. My constituency is an agrarian constituency, where a lot of agricultural produce come from. How do you get bags of gari, cassava and other produce on your head under the sun, or in the rain from Tamabom and passes through Sumbuya to Jimmy Gbagbo to Bo and finally to Freetown? The road from Tamabom to Sumbuya is very horrible. The Matru Jong Road is another example, Mr Speaker. If you look at the Matru Road and even Tiama and other areas in Moyamba District, you will find out that all of these areas are in bad conditions. Now, we keep clamoring for the Kailahun main road, which is the main road from Kenema to Kailahun or Segbwema or Pendembu. Where are the other feeder roads, where the agricultural produce are coming from?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members on my right, let us forget about what the SLPP did and concentrate on what the APC is doing.

HON. HELEN KUYEMBEH: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think the essence of what we are doing is to help the government. This is because, as far as I am concerned, when elections are over and a government is elected, the functioning of that government is the responsibility of both the governing party and the opposition party. Hence, I have every right, the same right as my colleagues on the other side have, to let the President know about the wrongs in this country. I am saying this because if we fail to let him know the wrongs in our society, we are not helping him and the people we claim to represent. I am not just criticizing. I am trying to pinpoint what is going on that is wrong in this country and proffer solutions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Kailahun Road is been pampered in every corner of this country. We are very grateful for that; but I want people to think about the coffee, cocoa and cacao producing villages in the interior. How these produce are to be transported from those villages to the main road we are talking about? Mr Speaker, if this does not happen, we will not get the advantage of that road. The essence of

making this road is for development and for the benefit of the people. You can lay a ten lane road, but if people do not benefit from that ten lane road, development is lost.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me take this opportunity to talk to His Excellency the President, about leadership, viz-a-vis management, coordination and implementation. One of the greatest problems we have in this country is that we all want to be bosses. Nobody wants to be subordinate to the other. We want to be implementers and controllers, but we don't want to be followers. For instance, we have issues with the education sector which were brought again to the President's notice. You would agree with me that the education sector is in a mess. Two days ago, students were on the radio, begging the Minister of Education, Science and Technology to allow them take their exams. Why is that happening, Mr Speaker? It is because we create policies, but we do not follow those policies. The present situation in the Ministry of Education is that the Minister has taken a decision that pupils who did not pass the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) will not be allowed to take the West African Senior Secondary School Examination (WASSSCE). Mr Speaker, it will interest you to know that these pupils have already paid their monies. Though the government is paying for these public exams, I was informed that these pupils have paid their monies.

THE SPEAKER: Order!

HON. HELEN KUYEMBEH: Mr Speaker, the pupils have paid monies to principals of their respective schools. These monies may be refunded, but my point here is that this policy we are talking about was adopted in 2009. From 2009 to 2013 is almost four years. My question is, why did it take so long from 2009 to now for the implementation of this policy?

HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA: Mr Speaker, I stand on S. O. 33(b).

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Helen Kuyembeh, are you willing?

HON. HELEN KUYEMBEH: I am not willing Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my problem is the implementers of our laws. All government officials are to

be blamed for the menace. Now, pupils are going to suffer because of our inadequacies. I am saying this because we failed to do what we were supposed to do. If this policy was proposed in 2009, why it took the implementers so long? We would not have been where we are now. Mr Speaker, only God knows what will happen to these girls. They would fall on the way side or become dropouts. If these pupils become dropouts, the implementers of laws and policies will be responsible and posterity will judge us all. Mr Speaker, this is where I am taking the President, in terms of leadership. The Executive, the Judiciary and the Legislature should provide the leadership that will ensure prompt implementation of our laws and policies. That is the implementation of our laws, rules and policies should be done on time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take this opportunity to inform the Minister of education, Science and Technology that we are not against the policy at all. We are in favour of it. What we are not in favour of is the fact that the affected pupils will suffer unnecessarily. This should have been a gradual process. Principals have taken bribes for school fees. In fact, those kids should not have entered secondary school in the first place. I am of the view that the children should not suffer at this time. If we intend to groom them to be the leaders of tomorrow, we should not allow them to suffer unnecessarily for our inadequacies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to pass this message to the President because he has the singular responsibility of living a legacy at the end of his term of office. I want to inform this House that legacies are not made out of concrete stones; they are not made out of cement blocks; and they are not made out of iron rods. Legacies are the things you do; the vision you have; and the willingness imbedded in the minds of the people. I do not want to be misunderstood or taken incorrectly here. I am not in any way saying that a visionary leader should not build roads. I am saying that legacies are built in the heart of people. For instance, Nelson Mandela's legacy was built in the heart of the people and by the time Nelson Mandela came to power, the roads have already been constructed. But he had built his legacy when he fought for his people. He cared for every South African, no matter the colour, race or where you live.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note, I want to state here that in this country, as we stand today, we are facing the greatest tribal divide ever this nation has seen. Honourable Members will not agree with what I am saying because we are in this Well. We are all educated to know exactly what I am saying. We are brothers and sisters and we are friends as well; and life is beyond these walls of Parliament. There is life behind these walls of Parliament; there is life in the rural areas. All of you know what I am saying is true. We have a serious political divide that is being embellished with tribal sentiments.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if what I have just said is not true, why do you think people are fighting against Dr Ernest Bai Koroma and the APC party? It is because of the tribal sentiments in our politics. We have political divide in this country as a result of our tribal difference. If we do not have political parties, we have no business in politics. Politics is a matter of choice; and people may either belong to party A or party B. However, when you are a leader, you are like a father. You should be the "komra" or a mother or father to everybody without any iota of discrimination or prejudice. Therefore, I am asking the President to try, as best as possible, to close this divide in this country.

THE SPEAKER: Order!

HON. HELEN KUYEMBEH: On that note Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank His Excellency the President, for giving us an account of his stewardship. I also want Members of Parliament and the nation at large to judge from what was said to have been done in 2012 to now. We have to decipher whether what have been said to the people of this nation have been done. Like the President said, we can still do more. So, we give him that platform to continue doing more for the people of this country. Thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, from what Honourable Helen Kuyembeh has said, and if you follow closely much of what she has said is closely related to what the Honourable Sualiho did say in his own contribution. In effect, they were saying that most of the structures are in place, but the problem is the implementation of our laws

and policies. There cannot be more truth than that. On the question of the shortage of water in the Western Area, particularly in Freetown, the Chairman of the Committee on Water Resources should take note of that. I want to assure Honourable members that any Minister that is found wanting in anything, should be brought before this House and put all your questions to him or her. On that note, I will ask the Majority Leader and Leader of Government Business to say something.

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Honourable Members, I am going to be very brief. I promise to read out a statement to you, regarding the attendance of MDAs. It is a very short statement and I would just read it out to you. I will also endeavor to photocopy it and put it into your pigeonholes.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in respect of the Appropriation Act, Vote Controllers are required to attend not only its presentation by the Minister of Finance, but also the five allotted days of debates by the House. Regarding the State of the Nations Address delivered annually by His Excellency the President, heads of MDAs are also required to attend and follow through the subsequent debate proceedings. Over the years, there has been a disappointing attendance on the part of MDAs, whose representation is an important complement to the proceedings. Vote Controllers and heads of MDAs provide direct oversight in the implementation mechanism for achieving the Agenda for Prosperity. Thus, you see the picture of complementarity between Parliament and the actors in public administration. We enact laws for good governance and they implement those laws. Therefore, their full attention to the debate process only twice a year is required so that government can function much more efficiently.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me cite a pattern of MDAs disregard for parliamentary proceedings by your systematic absence. No witch hunting is intended, but as we strive to do our part, they must do theirs. This is against the background of repeated warnings and exhortations to MDAs. Therefore, in the light of the above, we are now asking the MDAs to please explain within Seven (7) working days why disciplinary action should not be taken against them by this House. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

HON. BENNEH BANGURA: Mr Speaker, I stand on S. O. 23. This has to do with the way and manner the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) is reporting the parliamentary proceedings. Therefore, I want to urge SLBC as, Chairman of Information and Communications to do more. I thank you Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Benneh Bangura, you are the Chairman of Information and Communications in this House. In fact, there have been so many complaints about the mobile companies in this country. Perhaps, you need to investigate, not only through Oversight, but let the Ministers come to Parliament and explain to Members of Parliament.

ADJOURNMENT

(The House rose at 3.00 p. m. and was adjourned until Thursday, 30th January, 2014, at 10.00 a.m.)