



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMEN TARY DEBATES**

**(HANSARD)**

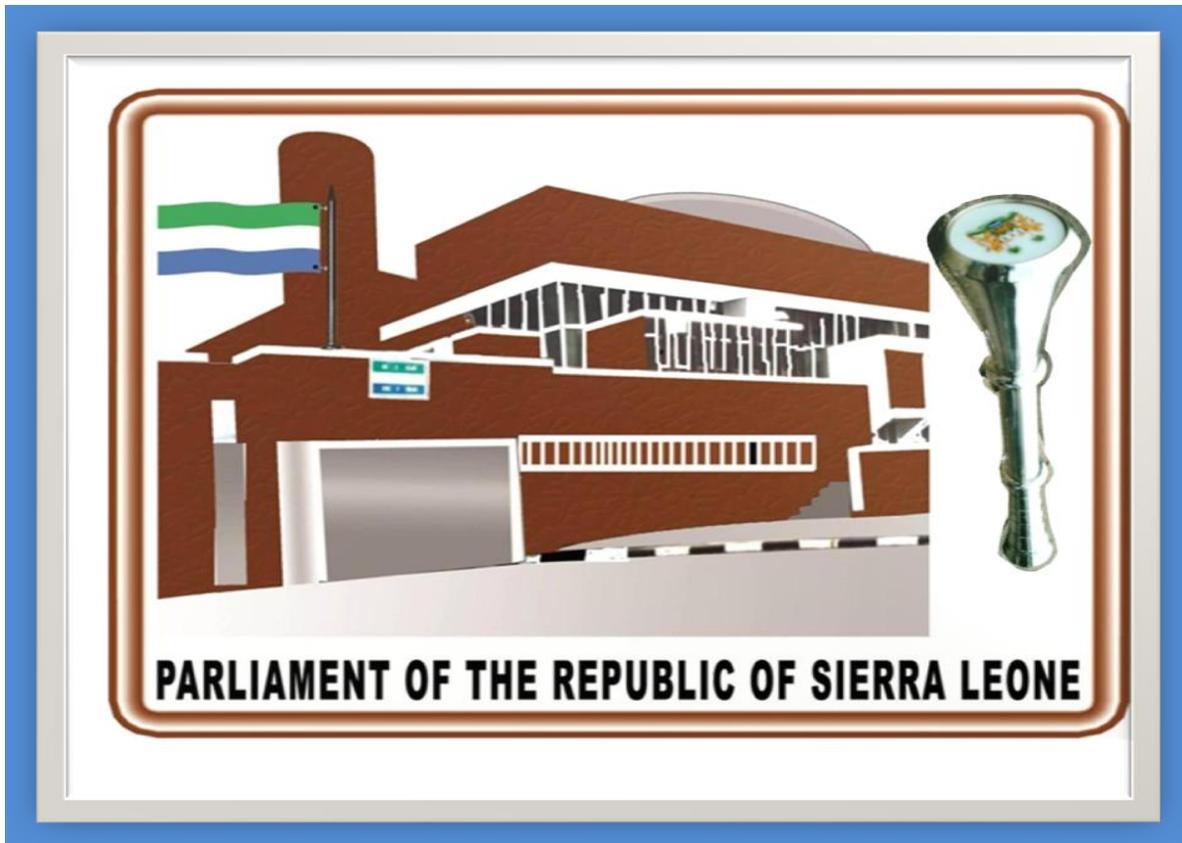
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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**THIRD SESSION - THIRD MEETING**

**TUESDAY, 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH, 2015**

*SESSION – 2014/2015*



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**(HANSARD)**

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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**VOLUME: I**

**NUMBER: 17**

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House  
Held on Tuesday, 31<sup>ST</sup> March, 2015.

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

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

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

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**Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2015.**

*The House met at 10:15 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown.*

#### **I. PRAYERS**

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

*[The Deputy Speaker, Hon. Chernor R. M. Bah, in the Chair].*

The House was called to Order

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

**II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 25<sup>ST</sup> MARCH, 2015.**

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2015. As usual, we go page by page. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5?

**HON. LEONARD S. FOFAHAH:** Mr Speaker, page 5, item 2. It reads, "that the First Report of the Parliamentary Committee...." In the second and last sentences, it should be Northern and Southern, instead of 'North and South.'

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Clerk, please take note of that. Is there any more on Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? There being no amendment, can someone move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2015, has been adopted as amended?

**HON. ALIE KALOKO:** Mr Speaker, I so move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

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

*(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)*

*[The record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2015, has been adopted as amended]*

**III. PAPER LAID**

HON. PATRICK FOYAH

REPORT ON THE OVERSIGHT VISIT TO KONAKRIDEE, BAILOR, PEPPEL (PORT LOKO, NORTHERN PROVINCE) AND SOME FISHING COMPANIES IN THE WESTERN AREA AND EASTERN PROVINCE, 9<sup>TH</sup> TO 14<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2014

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

PROPOER: HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU

SECONDER: HON. KOMBA .E. KOEDOYOMA

### *1. Introduction*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I present to you the Ninth Report of the Third Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service on parliamentary vetting of presidential nominations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service met on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2015 and interviewed Seven Presidential nominees for appointment as follows:

- High Court Judge;
- National Security Coordinator;
- Two Members, National Commission for Privatization (NCP);
- Two Board Members, Sierra Leone Roads Authority (SLRA); and
- Board Member, Sierra Leone State Lottery.

### *2. Procedure*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee conducted the hearings within its set framework of procedures. The nominees were interviewed on issues pertaining to their educational background to ensure that they have the relevant education and necessary backup experience to man such important offices of state. Further probing questions put to the nominees covered wide ranging issues relating to their track records in pertinent work situations, declared assets, tax obligations and their vision for a nationally productive tenure. Mr Speaker, the following nominees were interviewed on oath:

#### *i. Mr Sengu Mohamed Koroma, Proposed High Court Judge*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Sengu Mohamed Koroma is a private legal practitioner, a specialist in Corporate and Commercial Law, who has acted as legal adviser to a number of corporate institutions. He served as Legal Counsel / Company Secretary and Acting Director of Administration National Development Bank Limited 1997- 2000 and Solicitor/Secretary, Director of Legal Affairs & Board Secretary, National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT) 2002-2013. In 2013, he voluntarily resigned from NASSIT to establish a Law Firm called 'Sengu Koroma & Co'. 2012 to date, Mr Sengu Koroma has been a part-time Lecturer, Department of Law, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone.

Responding to questions on what he would do about the huge backlog of cases, particularly in the High Court of Sierra Leone, Mr Sengu Mohamed Koroma said that the increase in the backlog of cases is not necessarily caused by the Judiciary. The lawyers, he said, also contribute significantly in that direction. He further said, *"From my experience as a Practitioner, I will say that there are two types of lawyers. Firstly, there are those professional lawyers who do not only look for remuneration, but also want to make a name for themselves. Then there are those lawyers who believe that success is synonymous with wealth, therefore, their attention is geared towards making money at the detriment of their clients. These are the lawyers who do not go to court. They would receive money from their clients, but fail to show up in court, so that their matters are adjourned sine die. Once they receive another trench of payment, they would appear in court to resuscitate the matter. If lawyers regularly attend court and do so with their witnesses, the case-load will naturally be reduced. My view on the matter of adjournment is that, though it is the discretion of the judge, that discretion must be jealously guided."*

ii. Mr Ismail Sheriff Tarasid Tarawalie, Proposed National Security Coordinator

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Tarasid Tarawalie has had a long sojourn in the Office of National Security (ONS). He joined the ONS in 2002 as an Assistant Team

Leader, Monitoring and Oversight Department (ONS). Through hard work, he rose through the ranks to the position of Deputy National Security Coordinator in 2013. He is now being promoted to the position of National Security Coordinator.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, responding to questions on the participation of Members of Parliament in ONS meetings at the constituency level, Mr Tarawally said, *"I think you have a role to play. You are very important stakeholders and we expect Members to visit us at our offices nationwide to ask questions, give information and make suggestions because you are key players within your constituencies and your role is very important in what we do as a sector. Our meetings are open to key stakeholders."*

*iii. Mrs Hasiatu Gbassa Jalloh-Agbaje, Proposed Member, National Commission for Privatisation*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mrs Jalloh-Agbaje is the Managing Director/CEO of the First International Bank (SL) Ltd. She joined the Bank in 2006 as General Manager, Credit and Marketing (2006-2010). Responding to questions on privatisation, Mrs Hasiatu Agbaje pledged herself to support the privatisation Commission achieves its set objectives. Once her terms of reference are known, she said, she would be able to participate in all meetings and would give her honest and objective opinions.

*iv. Mr Henry Yamba Kamara, Proposed Member, National Commission for Privatisation*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Henry Yamba Kamara has over 15 years experience in Corporate Governance, Quality Management, Investment Promotion and International Trade. He was the Director of Export Development of the Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA), where he rose to the position of Chief Executive Officer (Acting). Mr Kamara is currently the Managing Director of the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Company (SLPMC). Answering to questions on his role as a member of the Privatisation Commission, he said, *"I will do my best in ensuring*

*that Government owned companies that are no longer viable are privatised to stop them being a liability to government."*

v. *Mr Mohamed Moiwo Makaya, Proposed Board Member, Sierra Leone Roads Authority*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Mohamed Moiwa Makaya is a former Member of Parliament. While in Parliament, he was a vibrant debater and an active Committee Member who served on several committees. Answering to questions about the performance of road contractors, Mr Makaya opined that some contractors do not give value for money. He said, *"That is one of the challenges we are going to face as a Board. I will ensure that Board members work as a team to go after such contractors, monitor their performance to ensure that they keep to the terms of their contracts, and only approve final payments after satisfactory completion of the contracts."*

vi. *Dr Lawrence R. Sesay, Proposed Board Member, Sierra Leone Roads Authority*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Dr Lawrence R. Sesay is a retired Civil Servant who served for more than ten years in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning. Reacting to questions about his record of Work in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning, Dr Lawrence Sesay said, *"I do not want to sing my own praises, but I am sure I served the Ministry and my country to the best of my ability and I exhibited discipline and obedience to my superiors who were the Minister and the Director."*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, answering to further questions, Dr Lawrence Sesay opined that indiscipline and disregard for the law were the root causes for non-adherence to town planning regulations and the putting up of structures in the right of way. The laws pertaining to the Right-of Way, he said, are there from colonial times, but they are not adhered to. Dr Sesay called on the authorities to put measures in place for the rigid enforcement of the law.

vii. Mrs Joan S. Benya, Proposed Board Member, Sierra Leone State Lottery

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mrs Joan Benya is a Social worker and a successful business woman with a wealth of experience in either fields of endeavour. From 2003-2005, she was the Field Supervisor at Lutheran World Foundation, Tobanda Refugee Camp, Small Bo Chiefdom. She also served in the following capacities:

2005 – 2011, Teacher, Holy Rosary Primary School, Blama;

2006 – 2008, Treasurer, Small Bo Chiefdom Community Development Project;

2008 – 2010, Project Coordinator, Gbortima Women’s Group; and

2010 – Date, Diocesan Financial Secretary, Catholic Women’s Association) Blama.

In her interview, Mrs Joan S. Benya promised to draw on her business acumen for the success of the Sierra Leone State Lottery.

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

(i) Mr Sengu Mohamed Koroma, High Court Judge;

(ii) Mr Ismail Sheriff Tarasid Tarawalie, National Security Coordinator;

(iii) Mrs Hasiatu Gbassa Jalloh-Agbaje, Member, National Commission for Privatisation;

(iv) Mr Henry Yamba Kamara, Member, National Commission for Privatisation;

(v) Mr Mohamed Moiwo Makaya, Board Member, Sierra Leone Roads Authority (SLRA);

(vi) Dr Lawrence R. Sesay, Board Member, Sierra Leone Roads Authority (SLRA); and

(vii) Mrs Joan S. Benya, Board Member, Sierra Lottery State Lottery Ltd.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Ninth Report is the unanimous view of the Committee. I therefore move that the Ninth Report of the Third Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations contained therein be approved.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I second the motion.

*(Question Proposed)*

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the nominees before us this morning have been selected based on their work performances they have been doing in their respective work places. They have gone through the Committee on Appointments and the Public and they performed exceptionally well in the interview.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start with Mr Sengu Mohamed Koroma. He is a dedicated, hardworking and qualified legal personality in this country. He has proven his mettle in the various areas he has worked and I am sure the President or the Judicial Council did not make any mistake in nominating him to be on the Bench. We already know that our Bench has yearned for good people to be able to dispense justice in this country. So, it is a welcome idea to have a young man who did not follow the footsteps of those who collect money at the expense of their clients. I am sure, if he wanted to get himself rich, he would have stayed in the Private Legal Practice, but he decided to come to the Bench to be able to serve his people in dispensing justice. I must say that at this point, I have great respect for him. He has said it all and we hope that if this House approves his nomination, he will do all what he told the Committee.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Yamba Kamara has more than enough qualifications and experience to be on the Board to which he has been nominated. We hope that the promises he made to the Committee will be realised. I want him to know that failure is not an option in that regard. We only hope that with the vast experience he had acquired and what he said he would do, particularly with those defunct State Institutions, he will do his best to make sure that those institutions are sold out so that they do not become conduits for government wastage.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, normally, teachers do what they say and I have no doubt that Mrs Benya will help to resuscitate the Sierra Leone State Lottery because it

is almost on a deathbed. We hope that he will use her vast experience in making sure that that institution is revived.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk briefly about Honourable Mohamed Makaya. He was here with us from 2002 to 2007; and he proved to be a very hard working man. I am sure he will use his experience to ensure that our roads are properly maintained. I want to appeal to him to help in the maintenance culture of that institution. It has been discovered that the SLRA has not been doing what it has been constituted to do, i.e., the maintenance of our roads, both in the rural and urban areas. Please, go there and ensure that our roads are maintained, so that our aging vehicles could have more time on the road. You should ensure also that the accidents which are so frequent are reduced.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I do not know much about Mrs Jalloh-Agbaje, but I know her husband. I taught her husband and he was one of my good students. I am sure he will help you to do what you have said on that Board, so that our privatisation process could be fast-tracked to bring in more accolades to that institution.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was very much impressed with the response of Dr Lawrence Sesay during his interview. I found him to be disciplined and a contented individual. He was not attracted by the side effect of enriching himself. He was in a position to have enriched himself, but he chose not to because he was not attracted by the wealth that was coming the wrong way. I am sure he will do something positive if this House approves his nomination. I want him to use his discipline he exhibited when he was working at the Ministry of Lands. Our major highways have all been taken by people building illegal structures. Please ensure that the Roads Authority takes immediate action, after your approval, to clear off our major highways. I hope you will implement what you said in that interview. With these few words, I want to appeal to this Honourable House to speedily approve these nominees. I thank you.

**HON. SHEKU SANNOH:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to first of all thank the President for fulfilling another constitutional mandate. I am very happy today and I want to thank the President for these nominees.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start with Mrs Hasiatu Gbassa Jalloh-Agbaje. In our local dialect, Gbassa means nothing, but greatness. Gbassa in this context means a woman of standards and a disciplinarian. Prominent Sierra Leoneans have been approved by this House, but most of them have disappointed the President and this Honourable House. This Honourable House can testify to the fact that the citizens of this country normally blame parliamentarians for the non-performance of some of you who have been approved by this House. In line with that, a great scholar once said, *"The best price that life can offer is the chance to work hard at work or doing."* Today, we have Sierra Leoneans who are determined to work for Sierra Leone; we have Sierra Leoneans who are determined to push the 'Agenda for Prosperity' forward. In the banking world, Mrs Jalloh-Agbaje is normally referred to as the Iron Lady of financial arrangement in Sierra Leone. We are looking forward to your support in that Commission, so that the Commission succeeds.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move to Mr Ismail Sheriff Tarasid Tarawalie. He is one of my constituents and we were together for the first three days of Ebola lockdown. He was very active in moving the sick from one point to the other. On behalf of the people of Constituency 112, I want to thank the President for nominating him. I want to remind him that the President made special reference to the ONS, especially the regulations and policies that will ensure that our security sector is held in high esteem. You are going to be the National Security Coordinator, a responsibility you will handle well because you have the necessary expertise to do so.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have seen nominees going to SLRA and interestingly, I am a member of the Committee on Works, Housing and Infrastructure. We have been doing our Oversight function very well, and you can agree with me that this government has done well in road construction. In as much as we are fighting the dreadful disease, we have vowed to the people of this country to improve on the infrastructural developments of this country. As a Member of the Board, you have a very good Committee in Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Sengu Koroma, Proposed High Court Judge has got all what it takes to handle the affairs of the High Court in Sierra Leone. In your statement, you talked about backlogs of court cases in this country. I want you to ensure that the stockpiles of court cases in our courts are reduced to the barest minimum. I am saying this because it is posing a very big challenge in our justice system. I want to thank the President for taking cognizance of the quota that the women of this country are yearning for. We have two strong women this morning for parliamentary approval; and I want to urge this House to speedily approve these nominees. I thank you very much (*Applause*).

**HON. PATRICK FOYAH:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it has again pleased the President to present to this House seven prominent Sierra Leoneans for parliamentary approval. I am going to focus my contribution on three nominees.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start with the nominee for the post of Coordinator in the Office of National Security, Mr Tarawally. It may interest this Honourable House to know that I was among the three people who played pivotal role in the establishment of the ONS in 1998. The other two gentlemen were Dr Ramadan Dumbuya and Mr Shaka Mansaray. The ONS is one of the many institutions the former the President, Dr Alhaji Amed Tejan Kabba established in this country because of its importance. Over the years, we have seen the work been done by the Office of National Security, but I must confess that more work needs to be done. He has risen through the ranks and he knows everything about the Office of National Security. All he needs at this point in time is support from the government. He will also need independence to enable him perform his job. You can have good institutions, but if they are not independent, they will not work effectively and efficiently. I want him to know that if this House approves his nomination, he is going to hold a very important office that has to do with the security of the state and the people of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to talk about Mrs Jalloh-Agbaje. I have known her since 1997, when she was working at the Union Trust Bank. I have found her to be a woman of substance and a woman of integrity. I have no doubt that she

will make a big difference in the institution she has been nominated to serve. I must mention here that when I returned from the United States in 1996, she was the first person who gave me a loan from the UT Bank. As you have read from the Report, she is now the head of a very important bank in this country, the First Investment Bank. I want to appeal to you to ensure that your bank opens from Monday to Friday because Kailahun has had no new Ebola case for the past ten days.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to conclude with Honourable Makaya. Honourable Makaya is my mentor and an elder brother. We fought the war together in 1996 and after the war, he became my political mentor. He is a very experienced man and I have no doubt that with his level of experience, dedication and commitment, he will make a difference at the SLRA. When the President went to Kailahun few days ago, we told him about the conditions of our feeder roads. You all know that Kailahun District is an Agricultural District. Our local traders are being exorbitantly charged to transport their produce because our roads are very bad. Mr Makaya, please make sure that the road maintenance fund is equitably distributed. With these few words, I want to ask this Honourable House to speedily approve these nominees. I thank you very much *(Applause)*.

**HON. PC MOHAMED SAMA KAILONDO BANYA IV:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, from what we have heard from the Report, all the presidential nominees are very experienced in their areas of expertise. They have worked for this country for a very long time. I have no doubt that they will continue to perform their duties as citizens of this country, so that we can move forward as a nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start with Mr Henry Yamba Kamara. I worked with him for few years and he proved to be very hard working individual. His nomination is in place; and I have no doubt that he will do well in that institution, if this Honourable House approves his nomination, to do good things. I am saying this because he has proven himself to me on many occasions. He is very sincere, articulate and forthright. However, I want to admonish him to prove himself again. Please, prove

yourself to this Honourable House that you can perform exceptionally well. You have done it in the past and I know you will do it again for this nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one very striking thing that I want to say to all the nominees before us this morning is that there is a price for every bit of work people do. There is a price for improving the status of the institution you find yourself; and there is also a price for not improving the status of a particular institution. You have to choose which of the prices you may want. Nevertheless, I believe that any sincere Sierra Leonean will want to leave a very good legacy; and I believe that the nominees before us would not be exemptions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, according to the Report, the nominee for the High Court displayed sincerity by highlighting certain issues bothering on the behaviours of certain Lawyers in this country. Mr Speaker, to buttress his presentation, I want to state here that the people of this country are suffering because of the behaviours of some Lawyers. It will be of help if certain disciplinary actions are put in place against those Lawyers who normally abandon their clients in courts because of money. Our people are suffering because some of them normally come from the provinces to attend court cases in Freetown, but when they get here, their Lawyers are not available to represent them. Therefore, I want to suggest that certain disciplinary actions are put in place against Lawyers who abandon their cases for a very long time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also know Madam Benya very well. She is the wife of a Paramount Chief; and I have met her for a number of times in her home with my colleague. I appreciate the way she normally receives strangers. Her human relationship is good; and I want to encourage her to continue in that direction. If this House approves her nomination to serve in the Sierra Leone State Lottery, I want her to make sure that the status of that institution improves for the better. I want her to know that the President nominated her for the approval of this House because of the way she handles issues. I want to reiterate here that there is always a price for hard work. Please make sure that you leave enviable legacies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Mohamed Moiwo Makaya is a man I have known for a very long time. I know he has the ability to perform in every situation. Please, I don't want you to disappoint the President of this nation and this Honourable House. Like what my colleague was saying, we have a lot of problems in the area of road maintenance, particularly the road between Pendembu and Kailahun. I want you to pay attention to that road because it is not normally user friendly during the rainy seasons. This is affecting our people, especially the local traders. Now that we have you on the Road Maintenance Board, I want to assure our people the road problem will soon be over. With these few remarks, I want to ask this Honourable House to quickly approve these nominees. I thank you very much (*Applause*).

**HON. ANSUMANA J. KAIKAI:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as a Member of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service, I participated in interviewing the nominees before us this morning. During the interview, I had a good time with the nominees because I found all of them to be suitably qualified. Among the nominees I found interesting was the nominee for the High Court, Mr Sengu Mohamed Koroma. Mr Speaker, when we interviewed one of his predecessors sometime back, we met at the Law Court Building and he said, "Honourable Ansumana J. Kaikai, though you are my brother, but you dealt with me during the interview." I said I did that because I wanted him to prove to others that he was qualified for the job. He was a Prosecutor; and he had worked in the office of the DPP for some time. I do not envy those that are going to the bench because for the next 3 years they will have to prove their mettle. They will have to prove that the Judiciary needs a real change. Mr Speaker, because this nominee is a legal luminary, you will agree with me that we need such people to sit on the Bench and come up with decisions that will be in the best interest of the people of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that the public is keenly watching the Judiciary. I did what I did because I wanted to make sure that Mr Sengu Koroma had the necessary qualification and experience to sit on the Bench. After the interview, I was convinced that he would perform exceptionally well if this House

approves his nomination. Therefore, I want to entreat this House to approve his nomination.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is a lady amongst the nominees, Hasiatu Gbassa Jalloh-Agbaje. I have known her for a long time, but I have never asked her for a loan. Mr Speaker, though I have known her very well, I made sure that the rules and regulations of Parliament were adhered to. During the interview, she proved herself as a professional in her own field. I am sure she will do very well in making sure that the Privatisation Commission works in the best interest of the people of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mrs Joan S. Benya was also interviewed and has been recommended to this Honourable House for approval. We have known each other from childhood. We lived in the same house during our college days in Massachusetts. After I have read the resume of this candidate, I became more convinced that she deserved being on the Sierra Leone State Lottery Board. The State Lottery has a problem because it has not proven as an institution that is capable of supervising the private Lottery Companies in this country. I did my undergraduate in the State of New Hampshire, where the entire budget was financed by the New York State Lottery proceeds. As we speak, unlike the Sierra Leone State Lottery, I am sure that New York State Lottery is still providing funds for New Hampshire. I am making this comparison because I want the nominee to go to that institution and reactivate it if this House approves her nomination. I know that it is not going to be easy for her, but she has to ensure the revitalisation of the Sierra Leone State Lottery.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to reemphasize that all the nominees are suitably qualified to manage the offices they have been nominated to serve. I am personally pleased with them; and I therefore urge this Honourable House to approve their nominations. I thank you (*Applause*).

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU (*Majority Leader of the House and Leader of Government Business*):** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the contributors for sanctioning the recommendations of the Committee on Appointments

and the Public Service. Mr Speaker, whenever this Committee's Report is showered with good sentiments and praises by Members of Parliament, we feel pleased and gratified.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start with Mr Sengu Mohamed Koroma, proposed High Court Judge. According to the Report, Mr Sengu Mohamed Koroma made a very serious confession on the issue of backlogs cases in all our courts. The question is, why the delays? I am sure this question always comes because 'justice delayed is justice denied.' As the representatives of the people of this country, we are more affected by these delays. I am saying this because our constituents are always at our doors for assistance whenever they have cases in courts. We are the ones being harassed by our constituents.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to allude to another confession made by Mr Sengu Mohamed Koroma, when he was asked about these delays in courts. He said, *"From my experience as a Lawyer, Lawyers contribute significantly in the delays in that action."* Mr Speaker, from what he has said, there are Lawyers who are always looking for money, instead of seeking the interest of their clients. This is very serious because it is undermining the democratic process of this country. When the Paramount Chief was making his contribution, he urged the nominee to institute penalty against defaulters. I want to refer this House to a statement made by a renowned Judge in the Voice Newspaper, dated 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2015. Its caption says, 'Le 5,000,000 fine for absent Lawyers.' With the leave of Mr Speaker, it reads, *"The President of the Industrial Court, Honourable Justice O. Hamilton, has strongly warned Legal Practitioners representing clients before the Industrial Court to endeavour to always present for court proceedings whenever matters involving their clients are called upon for hearing. He was speaking at the Industrial Court on Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2015. According to Dr Hamilton, any Lawyer who absent himself from court, either prosecuting or defending a client, will have to pay a fine of 5,000000 to the Sub-treasury of the Judiciary."* These are the kind of actions we want to see implemented in this country. Fortunately, Mr Sengu Koroma, a very senior Lawyer in this country, has committed himself to ensuring that defaulters

are severely dealt with. As the representatives of the people, we are therefore urging him to ensure the implementation of his promise.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have to start by imposing fines against defaulting Lawyers who think money making should be their priority, if this method fails to work, let their cases be dismissed and ask their clients to go after them. I cannot pay for a service that is not forthcoming. Lawyers should not fail to appear after they have been paid to represent their clients in courts. I think we have to come up with a legislation wherein if a Lawyer failed to represent his/her clients in courts, he/she should be severely punished.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to comment on the Office of National Security. The Office of National Security is a very important office in this country, but it is not well known by many citizens. This is because if you compare the FBI of the USA, the KGB of Russia and the MY5 of India, you will notice huge difference with what we have in Sierra Leone. These institutions in those countries are well known to the public because they are not only investigating cases, but they also prosecute them. For example, an FBI Agent will investigate a particular case for over 5 years, and when he comes up with the evidences, the case would be prosecuted to the latter. This is why you don't even have to be in the USA to know about the FBI and other security institutions. The FBI's do not wear uniforms, but they investigate people. They normally go from place to place, displaying their ID cards to those to be investigated. I have never seen an ONS Official displaying his/her ID card to a suspect.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to know the number of cases the ONS has prosecuted in our courts. I am not sure if there is any. There are many issues the ONS should prosecute; like the massive tax evasion that is happening in this country. If this country is denied of its taxes, the government will not be able to function properly because it depends on these taxes to finance various developments in this country. There are so many other issues like the subversive publications in the Social Media and MDAs. How many defaulters are being quietly investigated, reported and prosecuted by the ONS Officials? It is high time we checked the qualifications of those ONS officials

who are going from village to village and chiefdom to chiefdom, claiming to be ONS officials. I want to mention here that ONS is not a social arrangement, but one of the institutions that determines the security of this country. It is expected to provide security not only for the cities, but also our villages. It is worth stating here that a village Head is an Agent of Government. If this is true, ONS officials are also charged with the responsibility of checking the backgrounds of visitors before they are allowed to reside in those villages.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the ONS officials should work closely with the Immigration Officials to check people who are coming in and out of their villages. The ONS has not been collaborating with the Immigration Department. I am saying this because immigration is a serious security issue. If you fail to check travellers/visitors, it means the security of the people in our villages is not assured. I want to crave the indulgence of the nominee for the ONS to go there and improve on the security situation in the villages and other places. A representative of the ONS in a chiefdom should not be somebody who does not know anything about security arrangements. We have retired Police Officers and Detectives in this country who could be employed as ONS Officers. These people should be used to maintain security in this country. Lawlessness is on the increase because there is no security apparatus to monitor the security situation in this country. I am sure, if visitors or travellers are monitored by the various security units we have in this country, like the ONS, lawlessness would be minimised to the barest minimum because people would be reported and prosecuted. Therefore, if this House approves the nominee for the ONS, he should take these issues very seriously. The parliamentary Committee responsible for supervising the ONS should arrange for a meeting to engage the ONS officials, so that they will be able to plan well in terms of the Security of this country. If there is no security, all the laws we have enacted would not be adhered to and the end result would be chaos. With these few remarks, I want to thank all those who have contributed this morning. I thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, based on your contribution, I want to suggest that we look at the Act that established the ONS to make sure that all what you have said is within their mandate. Secondly, as a Parliament, we are also obligated to make sure that they have enough resources. This is because security is very expensive. They spend a lot of money on the FBI and institutions in those countries you mentioned. If we want to have the same institutions, we must do the same.

Honourable Members, I noticed that many of you had wanted to contribute, but I want to assure you that it would be better for you to contribute on the next item on the Order Paper. What we are going to discuss concerns human right issues, which is core to the problems we are talking about now. This is because be it the Judiciary, State Lottery or the Road Authority, all are connected with human rights in this country. If you want to contribute, you should be prepared to talk on the Human Rights Report. Some of us have read the report, and I am happy to say that the Report is good.

*(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)*

*[Motion of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service has been ratified]*

## **VII. GOVERNMENT MOTION**

PROPOSER: HON. KOMBA E.S BOYA

SECONDER: HON. DAN Y. SESAY

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Clerk, do we have representatives from the Prisons, the Sierra Leone Police and the Human Right Commission? Mr Clerk, if these people are absent, we cannot proceed with this item. Did you send a letter to them, Mr Clerk?

**HON. IBRAHIM S. SESAY (Clerk of Parliament):** Mr Speaker, with your permission, I want to read the letter that was sent to them. The letter was addressed to the following:

- the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs;
- the Inspector General of Police;
- the Minister, Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs;

- the Chair Person, Human Right Commission of Sierra Leone;
- the Director of Prisons Watch Sierra Leone;
- the Director-General, Sierra Leone Correctional Services;
- the Representative, UNDP Human Right Section;
- the Chief Justice of Sierra Leone;
- the Minister, Ministry of Internal Affairs; and
- the Executive Director, Children's Affairs Commission.

With the leave of Mr Speaker, the caption says:

'Summons to witness the Parliamentary Debates on the Human Right Committee, 2014; Sessional Report on institutions engaged in the administration of justice.' The letter reads: *"Pursuant to Section 79, I am directed to summon you and some relevant staff on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2015 at 10 a.m. prompts in the Chamber of Parliament Tower Hill, to witness a Parliamentary Debate on the above Human Right situation report. This Parliamentary Oversight Report on the Micro Monitoring of the administration of Justice covers Police Stations, Family Support Units, Correctional Centers, State Prisons and Provincial Magistrate Courts, and hence, made pertinent recommendations that would require the attention of Stake Holders and Institution. The Parliamentary Human Right Committee would therefore appreciate if you could witness this hearing that would necessitate collective response to findings and recommendations. Your usual cooperation is solicited."*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, Mr Clerk. I want you to announce the names of those who are here.

**HON. IBRAHIM S. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, we have the Minister and Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs; the Inspector-General of Police; the Chair Person, Human Right Commission Sierra Leone; the Director, Prisons Watch Sierra Leone; the Director-General, Sierra Leone Correctional Services; the Representative, UNDP Human Right Section; the Chief Justice of Sierra Leone; the Minister, Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Executive Director, Children's Commission.

**THE SPEAKER:** We need representatives from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Human Right Commission. Mr Chairman, we have heard the letter from the Clerk. Do you have anything to say?

**HON. KOMBA E.S. BOYA:** Mr Speaker, with the level of attendance, I want to humbly suggest that we proceed with the debate.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, the Chairman of the Committee has suggested that we proceed. Is there any dissenting view?

**HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, due to the absence of the Human Right Commission, which is key in this discussion, I move that we postpone this debate.

**HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to join the Majority Whip in asking that we postpone this debate. This is because the Human Right Commission is very vital in this exercise.

**HON. KOMBA E.S. BOYA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to add that human right business is everybody's business, so the absence of one institution should not hold us aback. I am still suggesting that we go ahead with this debate.

**HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Human Rights Commission is the prime institution responsible for human rights issues in this country. The Internal Affairs is also key for enforcing the laws of this country. These are the institutions that normally raise human right issues in this country, especially the Human Rights Commission. Therefore, I want to say here that we cannot proceed without the presence of the Human Rights Commission.

**HON. DR FODAY I. SUMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe this is a total disregard for Parliament because these institutions have been summoned to witness today's proceedings, but have failed to appear. If we don't take the necessary step against some of these MDAs, they will continue to disrespect Parliament.

**HON. ANSUMANA J. KAIKAI:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having heard my colleagues from both sides, I am sure we cannot proceed with this debate on the Human Rights Report because we cannot endorse the recommendations of this Report in the absence of the Human Right Commission. Their absence is a clear indication that they have delinked themselves from the Committee's Report. Therefore, I move that this debate be deferred.

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by Members of Parliament for the deferment of the debate on the Human Rights Report.

*(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)*

*[The debate on the Human Rights Report of the Committee on Human Rights has been deferred]*

### **ADJOURNMENT**

*(The House rose at 11.45 a.m., and was adjourned to Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2015, at 10.00 a.m.)*