



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

*ON THE:*

*PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, DELIVERED BY THE PRESIDENT, DR ERNEST BAI KOROMA, ON THE OCCASION OF STATE OPENING OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE, IN THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT, ON FRIDAY, 14<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2012.*

**FIRST ALLOTTED DAY**

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT  
FIRST SESSION-FIRST MEETING  
MONDAY, 4<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY, 2013**

*SESSION – 2012/2013*



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

*ON THE:*

*PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, DELIVERED BY THE PRESIDENT, DR ERNEST BAI KOROMA, ON THE OCCASION OF STATE OPENING OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE, IN THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT, ON FRIDAY, 14<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2012.*

**FIRST ALLOTTED DAY**

---

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**VOLUME: I**

**11<sup>TH</sup> SITTING OF PARLIAMENT**

---

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House  
Held on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2013.

---

## **C O N T E N T S**

### **I. PRAYERS**

### **II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THURSDAY, 31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY, 2013.**

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

PROPOSER: HONOURABLE IBRAHIM BUNDU

SECONDER: HONOURABLE ISATTA KABIA

*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 State Opening of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone in the Chamber of Parliament on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2012."*



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

## OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE

---

### FIRST SESSION-FIRST MEETING OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

---

**Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2013.**

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

#### **I. PRAYERS**

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

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

*The House was called to Order.*

**II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THURSDAY, 31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY, 2013.**

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2013. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? Can somebody move that the record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2013 be adopted as presented?

**HON. MUSTAPHA BRAIMA:** I so move Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

**HON. KEMOKOH CONTEH:** Mr Speaker I so second.

*(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)*

Record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2013

was Unanimously Accepted as Presented.

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

PROPOSER: HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU

SECONDER: HON. ISATTA KABIA

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 State

Opening of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone in the Chamber of Parliament on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2012”

**HON. IBRAHIM BUNDU (Deputy Majority Leader of the House):** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, 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 State Opening of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone in the Chamber of Parliament on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2012,”*

**HON. ISATA KABIA:** Mr Speaker, I second the motion so ably put by the Honourable Member.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any counter motion?

*(Question Proposed)*

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are here this morning to thank His Excellency the President for the Speech he so graciously delivered in this Chamber on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2012. Mr Speaker, those of us that have been in this Honourable House would recall that this is an annual event for us in this Parliament. For the new Members of Parliament, this is an opportunity for them to watch and listen attentively so that they know what State Opening or Presidential Address debate is all about. I guess most of them have been coming to this Parliament to witness the proceedings of this House. This is going to be an added advantage for all new Members of Parliament. Mercifully Mr Speaker, they were oppoertuned to have a pre-legislative hearing with two political scholars, a former Clerk of this Parliament, Mr Carpenter, who has the greatest and persuasive eloquence to tell them what and how to debate a Presidential Speech and a former Honourable Member of Parliament, Honourable Ibrahim Sorie. He was a very good debater in this Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to remind Honourable Members not to forget the notes they took during that legislative hearing in Committee Room 1. This is very important for us as the representatives of the people of this country. Let me hasten to

tell you that this debate is live on television. Therefore, we have to be very cautious about what we say and what we do here. I can tell you without equivocation here that we have to say thanks to His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. If you have read the Speech, I will only encourage you all to say thank you Mr President; and please give us more. This is because all what is contained in this Speech is nothing but the truth. Say thank you Mr President; and please do more for this Nation. He has highlighted all that he has done and what he has planned to do in the next five years. Mr Speaker, the President even challenged us: "who can look at me in my eyes and say I have not done this or I did not do this?"

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want Honourable Members to be themselves. Please Honourable Members, be what you are. Don't be misled by some people from Wallace Johnson Street. Don't boycott the truth. In the last Parliament, the President did advise some of our colleagues who were in the habit of boycotting the proceedings of Parliament. The warning was for colleague Members of Parliament on the opposition. He said that even though he enjoyed the boycotts and the walk-outs, but he did warned that you should not give the people the option to boycott you in the future. And indeed when he came back, he told us that he did not see some of those who were in the habit of boycotting parliamentary proceedings. Honourable Members, if you boycott the truth, your people will boycott you when the time comes.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, since I would be coming back at the end of the debate to wrap up, I want to admonish the new Members of this Parliament to please be themselves. I wish everybody the best of luck in his or her debate. Thank you very much.

**HON. ALHAJI ANSU KAIKAI:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to thank His Excellency the President for delivering his annual speech in this Honourable House and to this Nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have listened carefully to such policy statements coming from Presidents since 1996. So, I am used to them. And as far as I am

concerned, policy statements delivered by Presidents, like those delivered by His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma are policy statements. He delivered them from the bottom of his heart. If I have to be kind to him for him being who he is to me and a former colleague of mine, I will say it comes from the bottom of my heart. Mr Speaker, when he was delivering his Address in this Well and to the Nation, I watched his face very closely. In the process, I saw his body language and even that of his wife when he said: "demias and komanes," with your permission Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to me, this Speech emphasized on lot of issues and programmes that had started sometime ago. Let me hasten to let my colleagues know that what we have today, the programmes that are going on today started as a result of the commitment of this country to the Millennium Development Goals and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). We are bound by time and the wishes of the people of this country to do that which we are elected to do, including my "de-mia," His Excellency.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Parliament is the heartbeat of this Nation. Parliament is the institution that must do that which has to be done by way of ratification or passing laws that will guide us all. We as Members of Parliament are elected by the people of this Nation to ensure that the President delivers his promises that are encapsulated in his Address to this Honourable House. This is an annual Address, but it will be implemented over a five year period. We must look at this Address with seriousness. We have to agree or disagree with him where we find him wanting. If we fail do that, history will not be kind to us and the people of this country will not forgive us. I am sure we would not want that to happen at all. All of us are praying that our grandchildren and those that would come after them must remember us as those Sierra Leoneans who participated in creating the enabling environment that made this country a better place for mankind to live in. This country is only 51 years old from Independence in 1961 to date. This means that Sierra Leone is a young country. We are lucky that we are presently participating at this time in the formation of a country that will last forever.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, after I have listened and later read this Address, I looked at all of the speeches I have heard and read in the past. I decided that the only one that I should really look at as far as rekindling my mind is concerned is the former President, Dr Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabba's valedictory Speech in this House and to the people of this great Nation. Mr Speaker, with your permission Sir, I will quote just a paragraph from that Speech.

**THE SPEAKER:** Do you have a copy of that Speech with you here?

**HON. ALHAJI ANSU KAIKAI:** I do Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Just raise it up for me to see please.

**HON. ALHAJI ANSU KAIKAI:** (He raised the Speech up). Mr Speaker, the caption of that Speech reads: *"Defining Moments of my Presidential Journey."* In his opening statement, this was what that noble statesman said to this House: *"I am addressing you today at this special session of Parliament as in a matter of which I would be retiring as President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, after 11 rewarding but sometimes difficult years. I would like, once more to express my gratitude to all those that have provided close and valuable support to me and my Government. Thanks to your cooperation, under-standing and resilience. The dark days of our country's tragic history are over and together we have courageously brought back peace, security and hope to ourselves."*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the reason why I decided to quote that portion of the Address in this House is because it is in tandem with Paragraph 101, the 10<sup>th</sup> sentence of President Ernest Bai Koroma's Address to this House. It can be found on Page 23. He said; *"I call upon you all from both the A. P. C. and the S. L. P. P. to be faithful to the aspirations of our people for good laws, fair representation, peace, development and for dialogue with the holders of the executive power. No Member of Parliament succeeds without dialogue with the executive and I know my success as*

*President depends on the collaboration and dialogue with the esteemed representatives of the people.”*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, history repeats itself. And Mr Speaker when history repeats itself in a positive manner, it makes you proud. Two gentle state men of this country (one of them currently occupying the Presidential Chair, whilst the other has retired and is currently living peacefully in his private villa at Juba Hills, Freetown), have at one time or the other said almost the same thing with regard to Parliament and the aspirations of the people of this country. Therefore, this week will be one of those periods when we, as a people and as Members of Parliament should be truthful and honest with ourselves and our country men and women by telling the whole world that Sierra Leone is now where it is because of its past history.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during the course of my research, I discovered a lot in this Speech. But I will rather urge my colleague Members of Parliament to delve into them thoroughly. I am giving them chance to delve into them and to let them come out with the gist of what this country needs. I want them to bring out the gist that would make this country a great country. They will tell this Honourable House what is really wrong or right with us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all of us know that one of the problems we have in this country is corruption. Corruption is a very big problem in Sierra Leone. We all know that the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) is being set up for years now. Are we satisfied with the amount of achievements we have had so far as far as fighting corruption is concerned? If the answer is yes, then, we should be pleased with the Auditor-General's report. The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) will look at that Report critically. The Auditor-General's Report, as far as I am concerned, the people of this country are watching and listening. The Public Accounts Committee must carry out its work assiduously. We cannot afford to let the people of this country down. If we do, the blames are going to be ascribed to us. We should not suffer the consequences of what others have done. We neither sign nor see vouchers, but it is only

parliamentarians that take the wrath from the angry and aggrieved people in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, President Ernest Bai Koroma is retiring in 2017. When he retires, he is going to live in his house at Goderich. There are some Members of Parliament who are in their early thirties. They are youthful Members of this Honourable House. They will still be around and during the course of your stay in this country, you will be accountable to the people of this country. They will be pointing fingers at you for your past deeds. Therefore, we have to be very careful.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the role we have to play must be crystal clear to the people. And Mr Speaker, that takes me to one of the topics that His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma dilated on. And that has to do with constitutional amendments. As far as I am concerned, constitutional amendments are welcome. The Constitution is the working document of a state. Mr Speaker, what I want to say here is that, the amendments must be in the best interest of the people of this country. The amendment should not be an amendment that would lead this country into the dark days of the past. When that happens, you would end up suffering as politicians. We have to move forward. There are various captions in this Speech. My colleagues on both sides of this House will be looking at those captions individually.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the word youth is mentioned in this Speech in over 40 paragraphs. Youths, this is the bonanza time for all of you. Mr Speaker, as far as I am concerned, both sides of this Honourable House should work together in helping President Koroma's drive towards achieving the 'Agenda for Prosperity.' This House should enact a law that would ensure that before we sign more contracts, we have to ensure that those that have been signed are financed and completed. This is because we have a lot of uncompleted programmes all over this country. I agree with the aspirations of the President that we are in a hurry to develop this country. But as the Majority Leader has been saying: "*you can only spend that which you have, you can*

*only afford to do that which you can."* we have many contracts that are not yet financed. They may end up dwarfing in the ground.

**THE SPEAKER:** If my suspicion is right, I would advice that you don't proceed on the lines you want to go. I anticipate what you were going to say.

**HON. ANSU KAIKAI:** I have read your mind Mr Speaker. I take your advice Sir. As far as I am concerned Mr Speaker, let us do what we have to do. On this side of the House, we are ready to cooperate. We would cooperate where cooperation is necessary. Mr Speaker, I don't want people to take our criticism with disdain. This is because those criticisms may be good for the Government. As far as I am concerned, my critics are sometimes my silent friends. I like what they say about me Mr Speaker. Criticisms create the opportunity for me to correct myself, especially where I have gone wrong. On the basis of that, I am calling on both sides of the ayes that we spend the next five days in saying things that will better this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank you for listening to me (*Applause*).

**HON. CLAUDE KAMANDA:** Thank you Mr Speaker.

**HON. ALPHA. B. LEWALLY:** Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O.34, also taking into consideration S. O. 27 (1&2).

**THE SPEAKER:** You stood on S.O 34 and S. O. 27 (1&2)?

**HON. ALPHA B. LEWALLY:** Mr Speaker, S. O. 34 is an observation, whilst S. O. 27 (1&2) is ...-(*Interruption*).

**THE SPEAKER:** Are you abandoning S. O. 34 Honourable Member?

**HON. ALPHA B. LAWALLY:** Observation on Section 27 (1&2) of the Standing Orders.

**THE SPEAKER:** What is your point Honourable Member?

**HON. ALPHA B. LEWALLY:** Mr Speaker, I would like to move a motion that we insert the word 'prayers' and thanks to His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma for the Speech he so graciously delivered.

**THE SPEAKER:** Let me get you right Honourable Member. Which word do you want us to insert?

**HON. ALPHA B. LEWALLY:** 'Prayers' Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Prayers?

**HON. ALPHA B. LEWALLY:** Yes Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** You want prayers and thanks to be inserted?

**HON. ALPHA B. LEWALLY:** Yes Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Where do you want us to insert the word 'prayers' Honourable Member?

**HON. ALPHA B. LEWALLY:** Mr Speaker, I want the Order Paper to read: 'Motion of Prayers and Thanks to His Excellency the President...'

**THE SPEAKER:** Where can we find that?

**HON. ALPHA B. LEWALLY:** Mr Speaker, we will do that in item III on the Order Paper. We insert 'Prayers' and thanks. I am saying this because we have to be prayerful Sir. This document is very spiritual Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, are you referring to this document as being spiritual?

**HON. ALPHA B. LEWALLY:** Yes Mr Speaker. The Presidential Address is very spiritual. In this address, the President said: "I once again with faith in God commit the Speech (the entire document) to the Almighty God.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, does that make this document spiritual?

**HON. ALPHA B. LEWALLY:** Yes Mr Speaker. And therefore, we must insert the word prayers Sir. Mr Speaker, maybe some of us will be offering prayers for the President. I want him to guide this Nation in the fear of God.

**THE SPEAKER:** Alright Honourable Member, please sit down.

**HON. CLAUDE KAMANDA:** Mr Speaker, with your leave...-(*Interruption*).

**THE SPEAKER:** I hope the leave you were about to ask for has nothing to do with the proposed amendments by Honourable Lewally.

**HON. CLAUDE KAMANDA:** No Mr Speaker. Motion of thanks to His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma says; 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 State Opening of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone in the Chamber of Parliament on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2012.*" Mr Speaker, I want to emphasize on the phrase "*wish to thank.*"

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the last Parliament, especially in the last three sessions, I hardly comprehend the motion and that of its deliberation in tandem with S. O. 32(5) and S. O. 31(6). That urges me to do some research on the word thanks. What do thanks mean? I consulted three dictionaries: the Oxford, Webster and Universal Dictionaries. I also consulted the English Learners Dictionary. After those consultations, I came out with three phrases on the meaning of the term thanks. Thanks means to express gratitude, acknowledgement and appreciation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in tandem with S. O 32(5) and S. O 36(1), with your leave Mr Speaker I read S. O 32(5). It says: "A Member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto. Mr Speaker, S. O 36(1) says: "Debate upon any Motion, Bill or Amendment shall be relevant to such Motion, Bill or Amendment, except in the case of a substantive Motion

for the adjournment of Parliament. I think when the Deputy Minority Leader was making some remarks through undertones, he was saying that I should go to the Motion. Well, the motion is thanks. And my interpretation of my research means a Motion of appreciation, a motion to share and express gratitude, and a motion to acknowledge Mr President for what he has done for this Nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members...-(*Interruption*).

**THE SPEAKER:** Excuse me Honourable Member; did I hear halleluiah just now? Today is the day after Sunday; it is a spillover from Sunday.

**HON. CLAUDE KAMANDA:** Mr Speaker I have a document titled: All Peoples Congress Manifesto for elections 2007, '*An Agenda for Change.*' Added to that, I also have with me the 2012 Manifesto of the APC with the caption: '*Transformation for National Prosperity.*' Mr Speaker, as a party, we presented this manifesto to the people of Sierra Leone in 2007. It was on this platform we were voted to office. Mr Speaker, contained in this document are the core principles of this great party. Mr Speaker, permit me to read the preface of these principles. It reads: "*faced with the tragic state despair and desperation in the nation as a result of corruption, nepotism and mismanagement of our human and material resources, the All Peoples Congress (APC) Party is committed to reversing this trend and move this country forward to its rightful position in the community of nations.*" I want to stress on the word 'committed.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the Deputy Minority Leader was making his contribution, he mentioned the word commitment. I want to centre my contribution on that word. Mr Speaker, it is because of the commitment that President Ernest Bai Koroma showed to this nation that made the people of this country elected him for the second term. If we go down memory lane, (when the President was in this House from 2007-2011), each time he came to present his Addresses to the Nation, he must mention the word commitment. He has always been asking for the commitment of Members of Parliament and the commitment of all Sierra Leoneans. President Koroma has demonstrated that commitment. That is why as Members of Parliament on behalf of

my constituency, I am proud to associate myself with Mr President. I am proud to acknowledge Mr President as being a committed leader. I am proud to express my gratitude to him.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, permit me to go through the specifics. I start with the commitment he made on the health sector over the years. And Mr Speaker, that is why as a Member of Parliament I need to express my gratitude to Mr President for his commitment on health. Let me look at the Free Health Care Programme. Notwithstanding saboteurs who have been undermining this initiative, we thank God for His grace. Institutional delivery has increased immensely. Mr Speaker, maternal mortality has drastically declined to the lowest level. Child mortality has also reduced to the barest minimum. We must commend Mr President and pray that God gives him the courage to do more as requested by the Deputy Majority Leader of this Honourable House. On the area of HIV/AIDS, before 2007, the prevalence rate was 4.9 %. Mr Speaker as we speak now, the prevalence rate is 1 %. Today, we can talk of telemedicine in Sierra Leone and we can talk of dilatory machine in this country. In my constituency, before 2007, all surgical cases were taken to Freetown. During the process of transporting patients to Freetown, women, children and the aged died on their way due to traffic and other factors. But today, we say thanks to God for sending such a saviour. All surgical operations are been done in my constituency today. I must commend the President for that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before 2007, medical personnel hardly go to remote places. But today, because of the heavy pay package to health workers in this country, including remote allowances for nurses, nurses are all over the country, including Koriboya. If you go to Koriboya, you will find nurses there. Mr President Sir, we appreciate your courage and hard work. His commitment in ensuring the dignity of Sierra Leone is superb. Mr Speaker, before 2007, Sierra Leoneans serving outside this country were hardly recognised and even if they were recognised, they were termed as people that were maiming people. Today, people are proud of us internationally

because of the dignity the President has restored. Mr President Sir, I acknowledge and appreciate your courage and commitment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today, our national ID cards have gone biometric. Sierra Leoneans are proud of the ECOWAS passports, especially Members of Parliament. Members of Parliament are now carrying Diplomatic Passports. Before 2007, Members of Parliament carried Service Passports. Again, before 2007, there was nothing to write home about our National Airport. Today, if you take a visit to the Lungi International Airport, you will see that a great change has taken place in that Airport. As I speak Mr Speaker, people are seeing me all over the world because we have transformed the S. L. B. S. then into a National Broadcaster (S. L. B. C). This debate is live not only in Sierra Leone but all over the cosmos. And Mr Speaker, to add to the dignity of this country, the outdated General Orders in the Civil Service has been replaced with a New Service Code of Conduct, Rules and Regulations. And because of that, we must express our gratitude to Mr President for his commitment in rebranding this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before 2007, Freetown was regarded as the darkest city in the world. Today, we must appreciate the amount of light we receive all over the country. I know that we have challenges, but we are gradually getting there. We must appreciate Mr President because there is light, notwithstanding the mega watts we have. I want to emphasize that before 2007, this country was run on a cash flow budget because of the fact that all our development partners went away. But because of the commitment of Mr President, our development partners are with us today. Mr Speaker, it will interest you to know that revenue generated by this Government is now used judiciously to run our own business. A manifestation of that is the just concluded 2012 Elections. Those elections were almost financed by ourselves.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the past, Sierra Leone was considered as the worst country to do business. But today, Sierra Leone is the safest and most peaceful society in the world to do business. We have to express our profound gratitude to Mr President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the past, Sierra Leone was termed as the least developed country in the world; but today, Sierra Leone is the second hottest economy. We must commend Mr President and we must acknowledge him sincerely.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before 2007, people from my constituency used to come to Freetown where all banking operations were located. Presently, we can count banks not only in my constituency but other constituencies as well. We have to thank Mr President.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, I feel compelled to intervene at this stage. S. O. 32 (5) says: "A member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto." With respect to you and the Speech of His Excellency the President. But if you think you are on the right track you may continue.

**HON. CLAUDE KAMANDA:** The motion before us is to appreciate the President.

**THE SPEAKER:** Where do you see appreciation here? Read the motion and tell me where you see appreciation.

**HON. CLAUDE KAMANDA:** Mr Speaker, the motion before us reads: "Motion of Thanks; and in my earlier intervention..."-(*Interruption*).

**THE SPEAKER:** Oh yes. In your earlier intervention, you read the several definitions. You are quite right Honourable Member. Please proceed.

**HON. CLAUDE KAMANDA:** Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, because of the commitment of Mr President, he took the bold step in rebranding this Nation. Today, we are getting there notwithstanding the challenges we are facing. And because of that, we must say thanks to Mr President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk on the President's commitment on education. Mr Speaker, we must appreciate Mr President because the Civil Service Training College is being reestablished. In that that college, training modules that will target the needs of this Nation have been put in place. This is because we want to put

people in the right places. We also want to cater for what is required of this nation. The Civil Service Training College and other related colleges are back. Mr Speaker, when Njala was in Freetown, people suffered greatly. This was because the environment was not conducive at all. But because of the commitment of Mr President on education, Njala and other institutions are back to their rightful places. I say thank you Mr President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when students took the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in the past, the successful candidates went to the next stage, i.e., SSS1, but pupils hardly went to school during First Term because the BECE results were not released on time. This means that schooling started during Second Term; and by interpretation, First Term has already gone. And in the third year of their schooling, they were at SSS III. During this stage, classes were only taken during First Term and by the time pupils proceeded to Second Term of their third year, the West African Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) has begun. And by interpretation Mr Speaker, two terms have already gone; and the pupils have only two academic years instead of three. Therefore, with the wisdom of this President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, he thought it fit to compliment for the lost terms by adding one academic year as recommended by the Gbamanja Commission of Enquiry. Mr Speaker, because of that, we must commend Mr President for his wisdom. This would prepare our children and our wards to be well grounded for the exams. We want to call on teachers to serve this Nation with sincerity. I say thanks you Mr President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to draw the attention of this Honourable House to His Excellency the President's commitment to the youth of this country. Mr Speaker, I am proud of Mr President. I and my constituents appreciate him. Today, my constituents are proud of having a National Youth Training Centre. Few days ago, over hundreds of youth graduated from that institution in various fields of study like small business enterprise, IT etc. We believe that democracy and development cannot thrive or sustain in the absence of the active participation of the youth. And if our youth are to participate in nation building, then, we must give them the requisite skills. And with

that, we pledge our total support to Mr President. In fact, before 2007, we were talking about Youth Policy. Today, with the commitment of this President, we now talk about the National Youth Commission. We must be grateful to this President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we turn to Page 3 and line 3 of this Speech, you would find the package given to the youth of this Nation by Mr President. He has committed himself to the welfare of the youth. Let us look at Paragraph 7, Page 3. With the leave of Mr Speaker, I read: *"I have listened to the youth; I am this day reaffirming the covenant I made with the youth during the campaign. I dedicate my life to your service, I submit my administration to your participation, I commit my economy to your employment, I pledge the resource of this country to your education, your acquisition of appropriate skills and your advancement."* Mr Speaker, we appreciate the commitment of Mr President to the youth of this country. And if we as youths are to realise this package, then, we should be ready to answer when we are called to any of the established state institutions, no matter what.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me conclude with the commitment of Mr President on the security forces of this Nation. Today, our gallant men and women are being respected in their peace keeping missions in foreign countries. This is due to their outstanding performances. I say thank you Mr President. Today, the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) can boast of an Industrial Tailoring Complex, making our force men and women smart as they move around the cosmos. This boils down to commitment of this President. The RSLAF do not train foreign cadets in the past. Sierra Leoneans had to travel to foreign countries to train our cadet officers. But today, with the commitment of Mr President, countries are now asking for our services to train their cadet officers. We have also restored the authority of the police. After 40 years, we have recently trained and equipped chieftdom police to enable our Paramount Chiefs carry out their functions efficiently and effectively. And added to that Mr Speaker, the staff and regalia of our Paramount Chiefs are now carrying the Sierra Leone Coat of Arms; depicting the sovereignty of our Nation. We must commend Mr President for

that. As we speak, this Government has introduced the rice quota for the forces of this Nation.

Finally Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is time for us to see how best we could sustain all these achievements as we move on the path of the 'Agenda for Prosperity.' With your leave Mr Speaker, I now turn to Page 23, Paragraph 104, line 2; in tandem with Paragraph 8. Paragraph 104, line 2 says: "*Let us take pride in our achievements; but let us commit ourselves to building on this achievement, it is not enough for us to rest on these achievements, rather we must work harder on the challenges that we still face.*" This is in tandem with Paragraph 1 and its reads: "*the job of transforming this country is as much in your hands as it is in our hands and I believe that together with discipline, commitment to our endeavours, and respect for laws and regulations we would definitely bring prosperity to this nation.*"

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is why I am commending Mr President for the bold steps he has taken in instituting discipline and respect for the rule of law. No nation can thrive in the presence of indiscipline. No development can take place in the absence of the rule of law. If we want to enjoy the beauty of this country, and we want to be on the foundation of development, we must respect the rule of law and assert discipline to our Nation. Mr President, count on our support as a constituency in the area of the rule of law and discipline. We must preserve this Nation for the children yet unborn.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with these few words, I thank you all for listening to me (*Applause*).

**HON. BRIMAH CONTEH:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to express felicitations and thanks to His Excellency the President, for the Address he so graciously delivered to this House on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2013. It was a very bullish address, touching on what should be near to the heart of every good citizen of this country. The President focuses on unity and cohesion in our governance structures. He advised and indeed expressed the opinion that without these fundamentals, the political

management of this country will be in jeopardy. I thank the President on this side of the House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, unity and cohesion go beyond mere expressions. Our President, being a former Member of this Honourable House is an Honourable man. And I am sure he meant what he said about this unity and cohesion and I know that such statement came from the bottom of his heart. But we have certain concerns that expressions of unity and cohesion (the things that we want to do that should bind us together) are sometimes undermined by actions which do not co-exist with these fine sentiments. It saddens us that policies have been implemented which have tended to polarise the body politic of this Nation. It saddens us to have seen Sierra Leoneans who have lost their jobs because they came from a particular region. Their jobs have been given to other people. It saddens us to say that this has been based on geographic origins. It would appear that the President is aware or have been informed of some of these happenings to the extent that somewhere in this very Address the President talks about Constitutional Review and Amendments.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us look at Paragraph 12, Page 4. There the President is telling us that he would be putting in place constitutional guarantees for overcoming the challenges of ethnic divide in the political life of the country. Surely, if these things are evident in this Nation, the President would not have had this included in his Speech. We thank him for that. It is a bold and courageous move by the President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a country of 6 million people. It is about 28,000 square miles. It is a country that draws its population from the North, South, East and West. Sierra Leone has had geographic movements over the years. Therefore, Sierra Leone cannot afford to be polarised. It is a country that has its "demias and komanes" all over the country and therefore cannot afford to be polarised. I am happy that the President would be taking actions towards this unhealthy polarisation of the

country. He would be taking actions that would guarantee or 'overcome the challenges of ethnic divide.' We ought not to have ethnic divide in this Republic.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the justice system has been under scrutiny. The justice system is failing us gradually. It is sometimes very slow and sometimes non-functional. Sometimes the justice system doesn't just care at all. Recently Mr Speaker, we had an election in this country. There was a petition to the High Court. The elections took place weeks after the Ghanaian elections. Mr Speaker, as you may well know, the petition by the losing party in Ghana is presently before the Ghanaian High Court. In Sierra Leone, (where a petition was filed-in long before that of the Ghanians), no action is being taken. Nothing is happening Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, in spite of the applauses, I believe I heard you spoke about a petition that was presented to the High Court of Sierra Leone. I want you to clarify that point for the records.

**HON. BRIMAH CONTEH:** Mr Speaker, I thought the Supreme Court is part of that system. I thought they all belong to the High Court Sir. I am sorry Mr Speaker. I thank you for the correction.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, we have the Local Court, the Magistrates Court, the High Court, Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court.

**HON. BRIMAH CONTEH:** Thank you Mr Speaker. These are the things that do happen in the justice system in Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take another example. Petitions are made for injunctions. But by their very nature, you want an injunction to be disposed of. Here we face interminable adjournments and they are never heard or thrown out at the very last minute. We want our judicial system to be effective and efficient. Mr Speaker, "justice delayed is justice denied," they say.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to move quickly to the educational system in this country. The most frequent cry in this country is that the educational system is in disarray; and I believe that the President in his wisdom will leave no stone unturned. In this Speech, the President makes a commitment for reform of the educational system. In this context, I would want to comment on the University system in our country. Fourah Bay College used to be the *"Athens of Africa."* It was the citadel of learning in West Africa in particular. But today, Fourah Bay College is now at the bottom. We heard the Deputy Minister of Education before the Committee on Appointment and the Public Service. He was also on a radio discussion programme, 98.1 FM Radio Station affirming that Fourah Bay College is not among the first 800 universities in the world. He said Fourah Bay College is now occupying the 5<sup>th</sup> position from the bottom.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, where is that visionary dream? Where is the glory that made Sierra Leone the Athens of Africa? The Minister went as far as telling us that Fourah Bay College is no longer the Athens of Africa, but "Ashes of Africa." This is very disturbing Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, if the educational system in this country is to take its proper place, Fourah Bay College, Njala and all other tertiary institutions have to be reformed. That reform could take the place of support; improve the conditions of service for tutors, make the environment conducive for pupils, students or researchers etc. Some of you are aware that universities are supposed to be seats of learning. A university is the power house of research. It is a place where industrious bees move about to sup intellectual honey. How can we reconcile ourselves to this idea of the university? This should concern both sides of this Honourable House. It should concern us as law makers of this Nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President is concerned about skills formation. He is concerned that the youth must be employed and I am sure the President would take action towards that. We thank him for that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the economy in the context of this Address before us. We are told from the economic indicators that the economy is now stabilised. This implies that inflation is being held down. We were also informed that foreign exchange situation has been improved greatly. Mr Speaker, we were also told that the Bank of Sierra Leone has in its coffer several months foreign exchange, equivalent to 4 months of imports. That is very great and beautiful. The statistics are very good. We are also told that there has been massive influx of foreign exchange generated from the new mining companies or mining sector. That is also wonderful. But the man in the street, who is concerned about his daily living, is not affected by these statistics. If I may ask, have we translated this upward trend in our economy? Have we translated it into the welfare and the living standards of the masses? Have we Mr Speaker? Those are rhetorical questions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in 2007, the cost of a cup of rice, which is our staple food, was Le 500. Today, a cup of rice is over Le1, 000. Judging from these statistics, the indicators are very good. But how does this translate to the ordinary man in the street? Mr Speaker, we have to be very careful.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us look at Paragraph 19 of this Speech. The President says: *"And we will continue to attract more investments that will create thousands of jobs for our youth, improve basic facilities and services for the host communities of private investments."* This is good. But Mr Speaker, two weeks ago, the people of Lunsar were complaining about these mining companies that their lands have been flooded and farming is now becoming difficult for them. Therefore, improving basic facilities and services for the host communities could only come to reality if we make sure that these mining companies are called to book. The lives of our people are at risk. In the case of the Rutile and Bauxite mining areas, it is a sorrowful spectacle if you were to visit those areas. We asked our newly appointed Commissioner of mines when he appeared before the Appointment Committee. We did ask him if our people have actually benefitted from those years of mining. He was quite hesitant and tried to give us an answer that was unbalanced. He said that mining has been beneficial; not

that the people have benefitted, but the host communities have benefitted. This is where the President has been emphasising; and this is what this Honourable House should emphasize along with the President to ensure that mining companies and private investments provide for the host communities. This is our responsibility and this is what we should be doing so that the people in Lunsar, Rutile, Mile 91, and Pujehun will feel at ease.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we do not want to create a Niger Delta situation in this country. We have had lots of problems in the past; and we do not want to add to our past experiences. We have pointed out that our cities are being congested. We have also suggested that the capital city should be relocated. We have said that Freetown should be the economic heart land of this country. I don't know where, but the President indicates in this Speech that Mamamah on the highway would have an airport. Maybe, that is going to be the beginning of a new capital city. He is being very cunning here. He did not say Mamamah is going to be another capital city, but I suspect that ministries and departments may be moved to Mamamah. It may not be a bad thing at all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I turn again to issues affecting the youth of this Nation. The President dedicated himself to the youth of this country. Therefore, he wants to create a National Youth Service Scheme. I hope that National Youth Scheme will be a Scheme that will cater for the employment of youth in this country. We want to see a Scheme that will allow products from universities go round this country and live with other communities and tribes, so that they understand each other's culture and tradition.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, long ago, when there were very few schools in the country, girls from the South would move to other places like Magburaka; and most boys from the Northern schools were moving to Koyeima and Bo school. Pupils from other area would move from Koinadugu to other places. Therefore, there were interactions. Such interactions have ceased to exist, despite the plethora of schools

everywhere in the country. Mr Speaker, university graduates or graduates from tertiary institutions should be included in the Youth Service Scheme to enable them move around the country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President says in this Address that he is going to have Youth Centres in every village, district, town etc. This is very good. It may not be during this five year term, because it is a huge undertaking.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am not quite sure, with respect to the consolidation of democracy to create regional Parliaments. But this is indicated somewhere in this Speech. He said we should have regional assemblies. I questioned that statement. Mr Speaker, if regional assemblies are created, power would be drawn closer to the people, our people would become part of the decision making process and ensures people's participation in the governance of this country. This will also ensure the promotion of democracy in this country. I appreciate and thank Mr President for that. We need to deepen our democracy.

Finally Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me once again say that I appreciated the Address. This Address touched on several facets of our society. Let me say again that there are questionable areas that would require our attention, or the attention of this Honourable House and the executive. On the whole, we will move forward; and we on this side of this Honourable House will cooperate in moving this country forward. The Government always has an agenda and the Government is duty bound to implement that agenda. Mr Speaker, I want our colleagues to know that prosperity demands taking a new direction. Mr Speaker, I want to emphasize that this side of the House will always work with our colleagues on the other side. We want to say that the match to prosperity requires a new direction. The Leader of this House will recalled that even when they were 27 in number, they were working together. He would recall that when it came to the matter of Bonthe, we consulted them. We stopped Government in its strides from taking certain actions and we maintained the municipality of Bonthe, the City of Cartage.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this brings me back to Bonthe. Bonthe Sherbro Island is now a forgotten place. It has been neglected for a very long time. It is not even mentioned in any part of this Address. Mr Speaker, Bonthe is crying for help. Bonthe has been the second city to Freetown. In all aspects, Bonthe has been a municipal Island. That Island has been left in the doldrums. Bonthe needs attention. Mr Speaker, I want Bonthe to be included in the paragraph that talks about tourism, Bonthe should be the centre piece of our tourism. I want the Minister of Tourism to be brought in this House so that he gives us his programmes for tourism.

Incidentally Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Bonthe is also a dark city. As we speak, Bonthe is without electricity. But interestingly Mr Speaker, there are street lighting on 'Kabai.' Those of you who know kabai, the street lights were fuelled by Kabai. It was so beautiful to take a walk along the 'water fronts' which is now breaking down. We have to do something about Bonthe Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with these few words, I thank you.

**HON. P. C. MOHAMED SAMA-KAILONDO BANYA IV:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to contribute to the Motion of Thanks, with respect to His Excellency the President of Sierra Leone for a Speech he so graciously delivered in the Well of Parliament on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2012.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would start my contribution from a caption, "Strengthening Chiefdom Governance." Mr Speaker, since the departure of the white man in the 60s, the affairs of Sierra Leone were left in the hands of Sierra Leoneans. Since then, the chieftaincies of this country began to decline systematically. Mr Speaker, from the 60s to 2007, the chiefs were used as tools in terms of politics and other aspects of life. Fortunately for the chiefs, a saviour came in 2007. If my memory could serve me well, I have only worked with two Presidents, Dr Ahmad Tejan Kabba and Dr Ernest Bai Koroma since I became paramount chief in 2003.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, after a thorough research, I came to the conclusion that President Ernest Bai Koroma has done very well for the chiefs of this country. In fact, any time we pay him a visit, he always gives us the full respect as paramount chiefs of this country. So, I think as far as the chiefs of this country are concerned, I want to declare here today that President Ernest Bai Koroma is a good President. He is a good President Mr Speaker. I am not talking politics here Mr Speaker. I am saying nothing but the truth. Mr Speaker, sometime ago, the President ordered six months payment of salary for paramount chiefs. This is a clear manifestation of his commitment for the chiefs of this country. Although most of us did not get the full benefit of that payment because (maybe the money got stock on the way), but some chiefs got their full payment. Those of us in Kailahun District got half of the amount. This is where the whole exercise saddens my heart.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your leave I would like to read the statement made by the President in his Speech. I am quoting from Page 20, the last paragraph says: *"we will build the capacities of key functionaries of the chiefdom administrative units to effectively perform their sacred functions of ensuring the people of Sierra Leone live in an environment of peace, stability and development"* Mr Speaker, I believe the President has already started building the capacity of these key functionaries of chiefdom administration.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during the rule of President Tejan Kabba, paramount chiefs were responsible for their own fare each time they were invited to Freetown. Mr Speaker, that situation has changed during the reign of President Ernest Bai Koroma. From what he has said in this Speech, chiefs will continue to enjoy as chiefs of this country. This is why I think we should pray for our President so that he continues to do the good work. I pray that God grants him long life, wisdom and understanding so that he continues to handle the affairs of this country effectively. We want this country to be a country to be reckoned with in world politics. What we need here as chiefs is protection. We have suffered a lot from political victimisation, negative challenges and confrontation from our sub-chiefs. Funnily Mr Speaker, when a sub-chief challenges a

paramount chief for too long to save himself, he joins a political party so that he would be well covered to continue to challenge the paramount chief.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to suggest to Mr President and his Government that the chiefs should be removed from politics. All the category of chiefs should be divorced from politics. This is because if chiefs stay in politics or if they come very close to corridors of national politics, their respect and dignity will go down. It has happened in many places and or in many chiefdoms. As we speak, I have a problem in my chiefdom, Kailahun District. The sub-chiefs in that district are challenging the authority of paramount chiefs. Most of them were candidates for the ruling party in the last general elections. One of them failed woefully. He was woefully defeated by Honourable Mustapha Braima. Now, politicians are trying to reinstate him because he had joined the ruling party. Mr Speaker, if he is reinstated, what would you think will happen? He would be on my throat. This was why I said we need protection; otherwise the chieftaincy would go down the drain. But the President had promised to strengthen us. I think one way of strengthening chieftaincy and the positions of chiefs is to protect them from those politicians who when they failed to win elections falsely blamed paramount chiefs for their failure. In most cases, when the blame comes, we do not have the opportunity to defend ourselves. They take it for granted that chiefs are politicians.

Honestly Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know that we have a very good leader who is supporting us financially and otherwise in terms of salary. But in terms of protection, we are still exposed. We want to appeal to the President to protect us.

**THE SPEAKER:** Order! Order!

**HON. P. C. MOHAMED SAMA-KAILONDO BANYA IV:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, another way to protect Paramount Chiefs is to have them get a living wage. Mr Speaker, without this living wage, paramount chiefs would run after Members of Parliament. For instance, my chiefdom is divided between two Members of Parliament. If I were not here as a Paramount Chief, I would have been running after those

Members of Parliament for a bag of rice. This wouldn't have earned me any respect. I have six Wards in Luawa Chiefdom with six Councilors. Mr Speaker, I want to emphasize that if I was not a Member of Parliament, I would have been running after these Councilors for help. Those Councilors wouldn't have respected me. So, I am of the opinion that chiefs should have good salaries to ensure their protection.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have always said in this Well that in other countries like Nigeria, Ghana and the Gambia, Chiefs are well protected and respected. They are not politicians in those countries. They are not part and parcel of the politics of their countries; but they are living in luxury. We should not forget the fact that the chiefs handle more cases than even the English Courts through the Alternative Dispute Resolutions (ADR) system. This makes us a special people in the sense that our forefathers laid their lives for this country so that we live with the largest number of people. We provide leadership for our people; but yet, our welfare is neglected.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to appeal to President Koroma and his Government to continue improving the welfare of the chiefs of this country. Chiefs are agents of peace. We are the people who sleep and wake with the local or indigenous people. So, we have 24 hours a day to work for our people. In most cases Mr Speaker, people do knock at our doors around 1:00 a.m or even 2:00 a.m for help. We have no security around us. We have to get up at whatever time to serve that person. This is because the Government and the people rely on us for help. Therefore, once there is peace in our chiefdoms, it would be very easy for the President and his cabinet to rule the country. Mr Speaker, chiefs are very important in their communities. I want to bring this to your notice and Sierra Leoneans that paramount chiefs are very important people in this country. They should be catered for so that they command the respect of the people. That is one area of my intervention Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will now go to agriculture. I want to thank the President for the great attention he has given to agriculture, particularly in the area of food production. But I personally believe that individual production of food will not help

us much. As I speak, we all know that we still have large amount of rice been imported into this country. If we continue this importation, this would throw our balance of payment into deficit every year. Therefore, we have to make sure that we produce enough food for us to live on and even to export. But how will this happen, in my opinion Sir, the Government should go all out to encourage experts in other countries to come and make state farms in Sierra Leone as it was in the case of Tormabom. This will enable us get enough food to eat and consequently begin to export to other countries. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, even if the Government bring thousands of tractors and give them to individuals for farming, it would not be enough for us. Accordingly, I want to urge and appeal to the President to try these suggestions I am giving. Food is paramount in the life of everybody.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us look briefly at our cash crops. Our people in the South and East, particularly those who rely heavily on cash crops are suffering. We have left the trade of cash crops to the Lebanese and other foreigners. They care very little for the producers. I have said this over and again in this Well that we have to do something to salvage our people. I was very pleased when I saw the Government trying to put in place a company known as the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Company (SLPMC) to replace the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board (SLPMB). I think that's the answer to this problem. The Government is taking this bold initiative in reconstructing this organisation to go into the interior and buy the product of our people. The Government wants to give them assistance to maintain their farms. This Government also wants to give them assistance so that our people live in good houses and educate their children. I think this is a good venture by the Government.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have a situation that is very funny. We are relying on foreigners to buy our produce and export them. They take the foreign exchange and exploit the country. They pay pittance to us. For instance, when they take the cocoa and coffee to overseas countries, they sell such produce without bringing the foreign exchange to this country. Mr Speaker, what they normally do is

that they buy the rice and bring to Sierra Leone for us to buy. These foreigners are getting richer everyday; while we get poorer.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to appeal to the Government to encourage the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Company (SLPMC). I am not a shareholder of that Company; but I think it is in the interest of our people for the Government to support the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Company as it used to do for Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, towards the end of the last Session of the last Parliament, a Bill was in place to be brought before Parliament to bring that company into existence. Somebody who felt he could handle that Bill stopped it from coming. He claimed that the Government owes a Lebanese man huge amount of money under Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board. That Bill never came to the Well of this Parliament. Mr Speaker, we have to do something about this situation. Let us have that company in operation. We have qualified people in that company. The Finance Director is a Chartered Accountant; and the Managing Director is a PhD student. They are suffering there Mr Speaker.

So we want to encourage the Government to finance the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Company to help our people. They have no funds at all. If our local professionals are handling that Company, I think our people would get more than they use to get when the Lebanese are handling it. That is my contention here Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, something happened last year. Some Russians came into this country to buy produce. They used one of our Kono brothers as a middle man. They went to Kailahun District and presented a very good package to the people, enticing them into believing them. They got all their produce which they never paid for. They went with the produce without paying for them. I complained to the Commodity Market Monitoring Unit (CMMU) and we later took the complaint to the Trade and Industry Ministry. When we invited them, they promised to pay. Mr Speaker, no payment had been made as we speak. I later went to the President himself and

complained to him. I was there when President Koroma called them and ordered them to pay our money. Mr Speaker, these same people want to come to this country for the oil exploration. They want to come and cheat this country again. This is very serious Mr Speaker. We should help those people who bring cash crops in this country. This is why I had wanted to speak from the beginning of this debate. It is not good for us and is not good for us as a nation. I think we have to help these poor people. This MERIS Company came and took the produce of our people. They have refused to pay our people; and the money is still with them. They are changing their identities. The Company itself was never registered and the Company is still in operation. This is very serious Mr Speaker. I think we should help our people.

**THE SPEAKER:** Order! Order!.

**HON. P. C. MOHAMED SAMA-KAILONDO BANYA IV:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the President very much for the road construction work going on from Kenema to Pendembu and eventually to Kailahun. It is very impressive. I am totally in agreement with those who are saying that the last Government started the project. But I think we have to be grateful to the present Government. This is because if we have had a bad leader, he would have abandoned that project. But it is because we have a good leader that he has decided to continue with it. If you take a drive along that road and see the kinds of bridges they are constructing, oh my God, so wonderful and fantastic to see. That road will be one of the best roads in this country (*Applause*). This is why perhaps I want to tell you that in 2007, the presidential vote from Kailahun District was about 5% for President Ernest Bai Koroma. But during the just concluded 2012 General Elections, President Koroma's percentage rose to 22% from Kailahun District. Therefore, if the Government completes that road (from 5% in 2007 to 22% in 2012), the people of Kailahun District will give four times that percentage. The people of Kailahun District will multiply that 22% by 4 if that road is completed. It will go on like that till 2017. I am saying the truth Mr Speaker. I am not a politician at all. We are encouraged by this Government and we are happy about the road. Mr Speaker, if you go to Kailahun Town, the township roads are under construction. The water works are

also going on. I think we have to appeal to the President and his Government to continue to help us, because Kailahun needs improvement. Kailahun needs development Mr Speaker. I also want to tell you that we are not fanatics at all. We want development. We want help in our district. I am not concerned about payment of salary to workers. I am only saying that the work is going on very well (*Undertone*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we know...-(*Interruption*).

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Paramount Chief?

**HON. P.C. BANYA:** Yes Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I am gratified that Honourable Members greatly appreciate your contribution. I agreed this morning with the leadership of Parliament that we have two sessions everyday during this week. Therefore, you will continue when we come back after lunch.

*(The House was adjourned for lunch at 11:55 a.m. and resumed at 2:00 p. m.)*

**HON. P. C. MOHAMED SAMA-KAILONDO BANYA IV:** I want to thank the President and his Government for the prompt attention they gave to the Kailahun-Pendembu Road after the rains. That road was very dangerous, especially during the rains. It was so terrible that I had to change the rear tyres of my vehicle. This was due to the ditches that were dug during the rainy season.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other thing I want to talk about is the feeder road system in my district. Some feeder roads constructions are going on in the country. I want the Government to continue; but Mr Speaker, there is lack of monitoring system. I want to appeal to the Government to be monitoring these works I order to get the acclamation from the people for good work.

Lastly Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank this Government for providing electricity supply in the country. But I also believe that water is very important. Lack of good water will severely affect the people of this country. Most of us know that very recently there was a cholera outbreak which claimed about 200 lives because of bad water. Honestly Mr Speaker, the cholera did not reach Kailahun District. As we speak we in the east end of this town; Kissy, Wellington and Kalaba town are suffering from serious shortage of water. The water wells are almost dried up and people are using stream water which is not very good. So, I want to say here that there was cholera in my district. We are alright because we have very clean streams and water wells that were dug by the NGO's. But I am staying in Freetown.

**THE SPEAKER:** Sorry Honourable Paramount Chief. I am appealing to the Honourable Members who are coming in late to conduct themselves quietly. Please proceed Sir.

**HON. P. C. MOHAMED SAMA-KAILONDO BANYA IV:** Seriously Mr Speaker Sir, Calaba Town is affected by water shortage. So, I want to appeal to the President and the Government to assist us. More people need water than light. Most people prefer water to electricity. I want us to look at these things so that we have clean water supply in Calaba Town, Wellington and Kissy. I am just helping the Member of Parliament from that area to talk about it.

Thank you Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Let me say this again. I spoke to the Leaders and Whips of the two parties in Parliament to indicate certain things to me which I don't want to spell out now. I think they did that. But I insisted that the people concern must stand up. If they do not stand, I will not call on them to speak.

**HON. NICHOLAS KAMARA:** Mr Speaker, I rise to thank His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma for his excellent and wonderful Speech presented to this noble House and especially Page 6, Paragraph 23, where he mentioned that he has signed an agreement with the China Railway International Ltd. for the construction of a new main

land airport at Mamamah. This is wonderful. We need to commend His Excellency the President for that. I say many thanks to him. Mr Speaker, as the Lungi International Airport is located in the Port Loko District and Mamamah also is located in the same District, we need to appreciate and say thanks to Mr President.

I want to also humbly highlight to this Honourable House that our country is now moving towards industrial development. This shows that we are in place to have at least two airports. It is a very big development in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to thank the Almighty God for giving us a godly leader. God has indeed given us a caring and progressive leadership. Members of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) will bear me witness that the development you have seen today in this country is under the leadership of His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma who is a God-fearing man. We need to appreciate Mr President for that.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, I suggest you use the phrase *'my colleagues on the other side'*, instead of referring to a particular political party.

**HON. NICHOLAS KAMARA:** I am very sorry Mr Speaker. I want to say here that the Lungi International Airport has been improved to international standard. Mr Speaker, please intervene Sir. I need your protection Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, please don't allow yourself to be distracted. It's part of human nature that when people are jealous, perhaps they try to distract you. Please proceed. Sometimes you ignore people.

**HON. NICHOLAS KAMARA:** Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, big development has taken place at the Lungi International Airport, under the leadership of His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. If you go there now you would really see the type of improvement the Airport has gone through. The terminal at the Airport has been rehabilitated. The runway has also been rehabilitated, and a new helipad has been put in place. Mr Speaker, even the security sector of the Airport today is greatly improved.

The Airport is now up to standard, under the leadership of His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. These developments must be appreciated by all of us. And for that reason Mr Speaker, we must say thanks to His Excellency the President. He has done a lot in this country. I am appealing to this Honourable House to give him 20 years so that he takes this country to prosperity. I am appealing that we give him more time. Although there are constitutional limitations to this appeal, but I want us to allow him take this country to prosperity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to tell my colleague that the Lungi International Airport (which is the gateway to this country) is almost completed. This is a pride to this country. This has made the means of transportation so easy for us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank this noble House once more for giving me the chance to stand in front of Honourable Members to present my noble thanks and contribution to this House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to draw the attention of this House to the International Aviation Unit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Order! I understand and appreciate that Honourable Members are back from lunch. They are now livelier than before. Proceed Honourable Member.

**HON. NICHOLAS KAMARA:** Thank you Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** But Honourable Member let me say this to you that you should not allow your detractors to overcome you.

**HON. NICHOLAS KAMARA:** I am no longer distracted Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much.

**HON. NICHOLAS KAMARA:** Thank you too Sir.

**HON. ALICE FOYAH:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your leave Sir, greetings from Kailahun Luawa, Constituency 001. Congratulations to you all for fighting the good fight to be here today.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to lend my voice to the Presidential Address, delivered by His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma on the occasion of the State Opening of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Second Republic, held on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2012.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a tradition that we Members of this Honourable House and also the people of Sierra Leone should respect. Why am I saying this Sir? I am saying this because it is a tradition that the leader of this country, through this Parliament links up with our people whom we represent here. As such, all of us (since we are the representatives of the people) should focus on their wellbeing. Mr Speaker, this is the time and opportunity we have now to say the truth on behalf of our people. We should not be saying things to please somebody. We should be saying things on behalf of our people. And this is why we have to make vigorous examinations, analyses and offer patriotic suggestions in order to help the President for a better Government to govern the State well. We should not be making lip-service at all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will go straight to the Speech. I will protect you and I will go straight to the Speech.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member please don't forget that this document is a spiritual document.

**HON. ALICE FOYAH:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will go straight to the Presidential Address.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the status of the economy of this country. With your leave Mr Speaker, I want to look at Page 4, Paragraph 16, the first sentence. It says: "*our economy continues to show positive signs of growth. Our GDP looks set to grow significantly in 2012 projected at 21%.*" Projected 21%, and in

some areas the President is saying our economy is showing positive signs of growth. It is only showing signs. Mr Speaker, what the President is telling us is that our economy is growing. He says the economy is the second hottest in world. He mentions that inflation is under control; and the foreign currency exchange is under control as well. That is very fine. But Mr Speaker, those statements are only on paper. Therefore, it is theoretical and cosmetic. I will say that Mr Speaker. Let me tell you why Mr Speaker. If you go out there and ask any Sierra Leonean, he/she will tell you that since 2007, our economy in this country has worsened and prices have sky-rocketed. I want someone to challenge me on that. Prices of basic commodities have sky-rocketed. Honourable Members know why this is happening now. This is happening because there has no plan, or strategic plan that will increase domestic production to reduce prices of commodities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, since we are the opposition Members of Parliament, our duty is to caution the Government on spending. The Government is spending above its budgeted figures. The Government has to be careful in the way they spend the people's moneys. This Government has been spending on projects that are not planned at all. Unplanned expenditures Mr Speaker will ruin the economy of a state. This is what this Government is failing to realise. On the area of infrastructures for instance, the Government has been awarding contracts to contractors that are not qualified to do the work. And at the end of the day, the constructions are cosmetic. The Hill-Cot Road is a tangible example to support my argument.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am not going to say much on the economy. I want to go straight to infrastructure. The reason why am not saying much on the economy is because we have technocrats who would analyse the economy for us. I was only prefacing my contribution on the economy. I am just saying it so that my people will understand. This is because when people come in, they start using economic terms. When they use those terms, our people will not understand them. This is why I have simplified it for my people to understand.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move to Infrastructure. I am well prepared Mr Speaker. In 2007, my maiden speech was on the status of the Pendembu-Kenema Road. I am so disappointed that the work is still going on. They have not even completed 1/3 of that road. Fund for that road was secured by the SLPP Government; and in 2008, the contract was ratified and signed. In 2010, the launching was done for that road.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me inform you that after the launching of that road, it took the company that won the contract another two years to start the construction. They are still crawling Mr Speaker. They are very slow. Why is this happening? It is happening because the Government gives award contract to those they know. They don't award contract to people that are qualified. The contract was awarded to a Korean Company called ISU. I have done my research on this Mr Speaker. This Company has no knowledge of road construction at all. This is why ISU could not move faster. But again, I took upon myself to visit the Minister sometimes in the early part of 2012, regarding the road. This is because we were panicking that the Government will not do half of our road in five years, even though the funds were already there. And the Minister promised me that they would complete the road. He knew he was not right. He only wanted to take me out of his office. How is that road worked upon? They are doing the work in segments. At one point they are in Kenema District fooling the people of this country. When I went to the Minister and complained about the slow pace at which the construction work was going on, he said on TV that they are working. Yes, they are working; but at what pace are they working? The work is very slow Mr Speaker. They are currently operating at the vicinity of Segbwema. Segbwema is in the middle of Kailahun District.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, unless the Infrastructural Committee, which is headed by the President himself interferes to check why these companies are very slow. But I can bet you if that is not done, the Government will not be able to complete that Kenema-Pendembu Road within five years as planned. I have already told you why.

Don't mind what the Honourable Paramount Chief has said. I am telling you...-  
(*Interruption*).

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, don't allow your detractors to get you into any confrontation with anybody.

**HON. ALICE FOYAH:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President is now talking about the '*Agenda for Prosperity*' which means he has exhausted the '*Agenda for Change*.' But I want to tell this Honourable House that the Agenda for Change was abandoned. It was not accomplished in the first five years. The President kept telling us that the Agenda for Change has accomplished its purpose. Mr Speaker, if the Agenda for Change succeeded, then, I am telling you as a representative of the people of Kailahun District that we did not realise any benefit, especially my constituency, Constituency 001. My people did not get any benefit because our roads in that constituency are not good. The roads are not tarred at all. Mr Speaker, in terms of the water system, I had to step in. Those who can say the truth can testify to that. I want to let you know that I am now a happy woman because I received a call from the new Minister of Water, Mr Momodu Maligi and told me that my constituency is now equipped with good drinking water. I was so excited when the Minister told me. The Minister himself knew how we were suffering. I have suffered a lot to get good drinking water for my people. These are the types of people we need in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, water was gushing out few weeks to the campaign. Mr Speaker, after the campaign period, the taps got dry again. I am telling you. And as far as tarring the district headquarter towns are concerned, Kailahun District did not get that benefit. Those who have recently been to Kailahun District can attest to that. I have never seen Kailahun Town in such a deplorable condition until when the rains started coming. When the President went there, his vehicles got stuck in the middle of the town because of the bad works they were doing. They call this infrastructure?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, where is the electricity these people are making noise for? There is nothing Mr Speaker. The President had promised that he would give

us electricity in his first five years in office. To me, the Agenda for Change did not affect the people of Kailahun District at all. They did not gain from the Agenda for Change. We are waiting Mr Speaker. We are anxiously waiting to see how he is going to handle us since he has decided to abandon the Agenda for Change for the Agenda for Prosperity. We are ready to prosper. But in as much as we are ready to prosper the President should prepare us to get to that prosperity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me bring your attention that whatever speech the President delivers to his people, especially in this Honourable House is a policy statement. And because it is a policy statement, it should be fulfilled and implemented. Why am I saying this? I am saying this because the President (on the two occasions that he has visited Kailahun District) told my people that he had secured funding for the 17 miles road from Pendembu to Kailahun town. There is somebody here who can attest to that. That road has never been touched Mr Speaker. There are people in this House who can attest to this fact. This is because they have visited Kailahun District during the campaign periods. I know that they must have felt the pinch my people go through to enter Kailahun District, Luawa Chiefdom, Constituency 001. We don't deserve such punishment at all Mr Speaker. I want to tell the President that whatever he says should be proven. There are times when people will come and tell him the wrong thing. But I am glad that he visited Kailahun District and he saw the condition of the road. I am so happy and I expect him to do something better. I expect him to abide by his policy statement to my people that he had already secured the funds for that road. How many weeks do we have for the rains? It is just a couple of weeks Mr Speaker. I have been told that they are rehabilitating the road. But the question is, how? The people are falling in the mud that was created during the rains. The pot-holes are everywhere. Mr Speaker, once the rain starts there would be more pot-holes. Therefore, it is very important that we say the truth.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me call your attention to Page 23, Paragraph 102, the second sentence. With your leave Mr Speaker I read: *"Our two great political parties have been put together in this House by the people of this country so that we*

*can work together as mandated by Constitutional and legal distinction of the role of President on Parliament, Government and Opposition...*" He did not say the Central Government and Local Councils. He did not say *only people in the ruling party*. Why am I bringing this? I am this because on many occasions we have been left out in terms of development. I don't know about my colleagues, but I have to personally force myself to get into that Water Project. The President is talking about unity when developments are not reaching certain corners of this country. We have to work together Mr Speaker. If we work together, his job would be easier and our job will be easier as well. This is very important because when the President goes to our people, they tell him something different from what they are telling me. We should not forget the fact that they tell me the truth because I am representing them. They elected me to represent them. Therefore, whatever they tell him is what they think the President wants to hear. It is not right at all. We should be working together as a people. Whenever a Minister of the ruling party is visiting my constituency, I should be informed. I should be part of the delegation Mr Speaker. It should be a matter of must that am included. But this was not happening during the last five years. This is why I am bringing this today so that we can alert our Ministers that it is a matter of must that Members of Parliament should be involved. We on the opposition bench should be involved in any goodness that the Government is taking to our different constituencies. This is no longer the time for campaigning. This is the time to work; and all of us should join together and work on behalf of our people. Let us look at Paragraph 103. It says: *"the two great parties are in Parliament."* Mr Speaker, this particular statement makes me smile; *"the two great parties."* How many parties did we have during the last Parliament? The people decided that we are the two great parties in this country. The two great parties have been mandated to run the local governments in the country. Mr Speaker, the reading continues: *"I hereby vow to respect this inclusion as regulated by law and as mandated by the assertions of our people."* The time for action has come; the time for working together is upon us. Here the President is talking to all of us. This message is also for our Ministers. The President wants us to work together. This is a very small country. We should be seen working together. When the time for politics comes, we pick up our

party colours and flags. But for the next five years, we have to work together as a nation. We should not be talking about boycotting the proceedings of the House; but if the need arises, we will do that for the betterment of this nation. Don't give us the cause to boycott parliamentary proceedings. We expect that we listen to each other as the President mentions: "*I hereby vow to respect this inclusion.*" I want the President and his Ministers to know that we as opposition Members of Parliament are watching them with eagle eyes. That is what we will be doing for the next five years. This is because we want to have a piece of the national cake. Kailahun District is part of Sierra Leone. Kailahun should always be remembered. Kailahun District should not only be remembered during election period. Government officials should be visiting that district frequently. We should note that the people of Kailahun have a representative in this Parliament. I am talking about Constituency 001. We want to be honest with each other this time around. We want to work together as colleagues. Mr Speaker...-  
*(Interruption).*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, please don't shorten your contribution. You have time to win your detractors over by your charm.

**HON. ALICE FOYAH:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have been watching this Government with curious eyes. I just want the President to have this message that the people of Kailahun are looking forward to seeing that they get part of whatever Makeni or Port Loko gets.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I listened to my colleagues when they were making their contributions. They were very much excited about the Airport at Mamamah. But I don't think it would be good enough for a small country like Sierra Leone to have two Airports. Though it is little bit late, but I want to give an advice that two Airports will not be necessary for this country. Mr Speaker, where is the money? How is it going to benefit the people of this country?

**THE SPEAKER:** Order!

**HON. ALICE FOYAH:** How is it going to benefit the country Mr Speaker? If there is any agreement as far as that is concerned, bringing an Airport to Mamamah, I would have asked that the \$1,099 be spent on road construction, to connect Sierra Leone to Liberia. That road is very bad Mr Speaker. I want us to consider ways that will benefit our business people. Mr Speaker, not everybody is opported to fly in an airplane; but almost all our business people will use that road if that road is reconstructed. The \$1,099 should have been used to rehabilitate the Sierra Leone-Liberia Road. Mr Speaker, that road is really deplorable. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rest my case.

**HON. KAIFALA SHEKU CONTEH:** Thank you very much. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am Honourable Kaifala Sheku Conteh, representing Constituency 98, Western-Urban, Wellington, Freetown.

**THE SPEAKER:** Is this your maiden speech?

**HON. KAIFALA SHEKU CONTEH:** Mr Speaker, I wish to say thanks to you for given me the golden opportunity to perform the fundamental function for which I was voted in from this relatively tight seat without a microphone. Mr Speaker with your leave, I rise to go by the Order Paper of the First Allotted Day, which is to shower praises on the Speech delivered here by our President, His Excellency Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, which marks the opening of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone on the 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2012.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am speaking on behalf of the people of Constituency 98, Wellington, Freetown. I was asked to deliver a message to this noble House. We wish to express our profound gratitude, thanks and appreciation to the President for his unprecedented development both at Constituency 98 and the country at large. Mr Speaker, I move the House to the Energy sector. Let us look at Page 6, paragraphs 24 – 27. I want to first of all look at Paragraph 24, Page 6.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Do you intend to read from Paragraph 24-27?

**HON. KAIFALA SHEKU CONTEH:** No Mr Speaker. I will just read Paragraph 24. The analysis will take care of the rest of the other paragraphs. With your leave Mr Speaker I read: *"We are determined to increase power generation. We will also continue with the identification and exploration of additional hydroelectricity power potentials across the country."* Mr Speaker, on this base, I choose to take energy first to at least improve on the understanding of the people of this country with respect to electricity. Secondly, I will be dealing with water.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is worth praising His Excellency the President. He deserves more praises and I will give this explanation for all to understand. I will be taking some aspect of the Agenda for Change, which is the basis of the very rigid foundation on the Agenda for Prosperity. I will take my premise from that point Mr Speaker. Prior to His Excellency's assumption of power of authority in this country, Freetown as was being operated by 5 mega watts power supply from the National Power Authority (NPA). This is very much important because it is the basis upon which we would be explaining the strides taken by His Excellency the President. And for people to understand exactly what length he has gone the President facilitated the installation of 10 mega watts Tama Plant at Kingtom.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for the people of the East end of Freetown, the President knew very well that because the support of the East end of Freetown...-  
*(Interruption).*

**THE SPEAKER:** Order!

**HON. KAIFALA SHEKU CONTEH:** At Fourah Bay College, we pay for knowledge; but it is free here. We just need to listen. Mr Speaker, because His Excellency is aware of the fact that the East of Freetown is the point where he had his support base, he facilitated the installation of 16.5 Tama Plant at Blackhall Road. And Mr Speaker, you may wish to know what the impact is. Listen to this. In 2011, when this 16.5 Tama Plant was installed at Blackhall Road, S. O. 2 Mr Speaker people the slogan: "kol wata de, kol wata de" was totally eliminated in the East end of Freetown. The reason why I

stated earlier on the basis of the power is for us all to understand that Dr Ernest Bai Koroma started at a point of 5 mega watts power generation in Freetown. He is at a point of having 31.5mw as a threshold which we are grumbling at now. In the whole world, he is the only President who has multiplied electricity by over 500%. This is because if you start with a data of over 5mw and later operated on a data of 31.5mw is a very big plus.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, because His Excellency is aware of the fact that energy is the basis of all developmental activities in this country, and he is aware that energy form the solvent from which all MDAs operates, he extended the provisions of power supply by the creation of mini-hydros like the Pakasoka (2mw), Charlotte (3mw), Makalie (150mw), and Yeleh (250mw) and Mr Speaker, with respect to my brother from Gbonkolenken, I wish to inform this House that the initiative of the President have already taken its effect because if you go to Yeleh, we are having 500 kilo watts of power as we speak. You praise your leader based on the fact that he considers your problem. It was an indisputable fact that prior to his assumption of power, characteristically we have accepted that we don't need to get more than 5 mega watts power supply. That was why the 'Kabbah Tiger' was the most popular product in this country. Mr Speaker, for our brothers on the other side, there is the need for them to understand that the President cares about them as well. He is concerned about everybody; whether they are in Bo, Kenema or Kailahun District. But Mr Speaker guess what? When we went to Fourah Bay College, we paid for education; but here is free. We only need to listen.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the installation of the Tama Plant at Blackhall, the B/K Power services, the Bo/Kenema Power services went on simultaneously. All Tama Plants within these services Mr Speaker have been renovated completely to expand their power generation. Interestingly, this is like a power record in the world. Mr Speaker, let me just deviate a little Sir. We are here to communicate to the people of this country and to our colleagues so that we understand the developmental strides the President is taking. Before you say thanks, you need to understand and acknowledge

the fact that the essence of listening is for you all to acknowledge the fact that the President has ensured that people in the South and East are satisfied with respect to electricity supply. He has renovated all Tama Plants within BKPS and presently at Dodo Dam, there are activities in place to ensure that we have 12mw power. It is for this reason we need to say thanks and we were here the last time when the Leader of the House explained the aspect of the 6mw Tama Plant for Kono and Lungi. Therefore, I presumed that that explanation was clearly understood by all of us.

Lastly Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one part of the energy sector I want us all to understand is that we are assured of energy, whether you being an illiterate or literate. The President created an avenue at Contour Line in the Project called the Beer-Foot Engineering Training Centre and the essence of this is for the illiterate Sierra Leoneans to at least be educated professionals. Presently Mr Speaker, we are having clean energy engineers who before the commencement of this Project were illiterates. They were trained out of this country and presently the training exercise is continuing for our women. Mr Speaker, only matured women were selected because if the younger ones were selected the knowledge will be exported to Freetown or other areas. Therefore, only women who cannot move from their locations were taken. They were trained out of this country and presently as we speak, it is like a ripple effect. The training is continuing Mr Speaker. Assuming that six illiterate women are being trained every year, by the end of five years, many people must have benefitted from this investment. And for those of us who live around the 91 Contour Line Axis, you begin to see proliferation of sub-light energy or solar energy around the areas in which you live. And this by virtue of this initiative I need not tell anyone here. It is imperative that we praise the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to move on to Communications. I will take you to Page 16, Paragraph 69. I will begin with the first two paragraphs. I will consider two instances with regards to Communication. The first instance is that of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation. I am very much happy that a colleague is here with me. Therefore, as I compare the activities of the SLBS to those of the SLBC he will

prove me right or wrong. We were there together. I used to work at the SLBC with a colleague from the other side of this Honourable House. I am very much convinced that our salaries were not above Le160, 000 per month. This was during the time of the SLPP Government, led by Dr Alhaji Tejan-Kabbah. Mr Speaker, I was fortunate to be the head of the Engineering Unit, responsible for monitoring, broadcasting and maintenance of satellite at the Leicester Peak.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sierra Leone is presently on satellite. This implies that the President is not only taking care of our domestic needs, he is not only giving us power, he is not only giving us transportation, he is not only making us becoming a dignified Members of Parliament, but he cares about our relatives who live far away from Freetown. And it is on that base he ensured that the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Cooperation (SLBC) should be on satellite which makes us internationally competitive as a condition for satisfying one of the pillars of the Agenda for Prosperity. We were broadcasting (along with my brother on the other side of this House) on one channel. Presently Mr Speaker, I am proud to say that people are now walking in the streets of Freetown with proud hearts. People are now proud to say they are a Sierra Leoneans. We now have a Sierra Leonean Channel on satellites. Some of us noticed the difference with the audio system. Initially, it was almost impossible to tune on 99.9. It was almost impossible; but when this President came to power, he thought it fit to buy two transmitters at five thousand watts each. They are presently here and are currently in operation. This means that we are now able to view what is happening in this Well simply by virtue of the initiative of the President. On that note Mr Speaker, I pause here to allow Members of Parliament to say thanks openly. As for me, I say thanks to His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. This is not a secret at all Mr Speaker. Sierra Leone is presently digitalised.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, prior to His Excellency the President's assumption of power, we were all analogists. It is wrong by our order to call your name. I don't expect you to answer in the open. But please tell your colleagues by your side that he is saying the truth and now it is not a secret that we are broadcasting 24 hours every day. This

has never happened in the history of this country. It has never happened Mr Speaker. The idea of 24 hours broadcasting is simply the initiative of His Excellency the President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I managed my time to reduce what I intended to say because I had wanted to deliberate on the theme: "when the leader is righteous, God blesses the nation." And if God blesses the nation, we Honourable Members are blessed because we belong to this nation. We are a subset of this nation. But again Mr Speaker, the President has provided two transmitters of 5000W each. These will serve this country even beyond his term of office. Except otherwise, but in his statement on the front page, he said this is his '*second and last term.*' We will be moving on Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am moving now to my area of specialty, the GSM System. Honestly Mr Speaker, we were losing millions of Leones had it not being for the intervention of the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. I was working as one of the GSM operators in this country. And it is no secret that there were no standardisations. The last time the Honourable Paramount Chief was talking about drop call. There was no standardisation in communication in this country. Initially, those who own companies in this country are mostly foreigners. We all know what it meant before Ernest Bai Koroma...-(*Interruption*).

**HON. CLAUDE KAMANDA (Deputy Majority Whip):** Mr Speaker, it is now 3 p.m. I move that S. O. 5 (2) be suspended so that the business of the House may continue.

**THE SPEAKER:** For the benefit of those of us who cannot appreciate the significance of 3 p. m., can you please explain? You said something not so Honourable Member?

**HON. CLAUDE KAMANDA:** Yes Mr Speaker. I rose on S. O. 5(2) Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** I know you rose on S. O. 5(2) Honourable Member.

**HON. CLAUDE KAMANDA:** Mr Speaker, we want to extend the time.

**THE SPEAKER:** By what means Honourable Member?

**HON. CLAUDE KAMANDA:** Through a motion Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** Well, proceed with your motion.

**HON. CLAUDE KAMANDA:** I move that S. O. 5(2) be suspended so that the business of the House may continue.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

**HON. ALPHA BABATUNDE LEWALLY:** I so second.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any counter motion?

*(S. O. 5(2) Suspended)*

**HON. KAIFALA SHEKU CONTEH:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, with His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, NATCOM was created and this specifically complements Government efforts in ensuring that we have standardisation in the Communication Industry. I will not be delving into the economy of this country. I will extract one fact from this to inform this House that indeed some of us bought Sim-Cards at \$54. Some of us bought them at \$ 20. Presently Mr Speaker, with the APC led Government a Sim-card is now Le 1,000.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want us to look at Page 16. I will not be reading Page 16. Let us look at Paragraph 70. I want to talk about the Fiber Optic on Paragraph 70. Mr Speaker, if you go through you will find out that the sum of 3.8 billion was allocated on the fiber optic project. This gives us a clear and common message that this is a very important project and irrespective of where you belong or where you come from. This fiber optic serves as a turning point for the development of Sierra Leone; and when once this is given the attention it requires, honestly Mr Speaker all of us will benefit. I will just explain a little for us to understand what is ahead of us all. Mr Speaker, I want to tell this Honourable House that there are two qualities of His Excellency the President. The first one is common to everybody here, and the second one is only known by me. Let me just share this with you Honourable Members. The first quality of His Excellency that is common to everybody here is the fact that whenever the President says he will do something, consider it done. It would be done.

Everybody knows that quality of the President. The second quality that is only known by me, Kaifala Conteh is that whenever His Excellency says I will do this, or I will look at this, he must have gone more than 30% in accomplishing that goal. He is a gentleman of high accomplishment. And Mr Speaker, the only way you can pay back is by complimenting and extending thanks and appreciation because there is no amount of money or dancing or rallying that one can give back except we say thanks to him. The people of Constituency 98, Wellington, are saying thank you Mr President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this fiber optic is meant for every single Sierra Leonean, whether you are at the back of Constituency 001, you have the right to access the high speed internet in this country. The essence is to ensure that Sierra Leone is connected. When once this is fully completed in this country, all of us can communicate freely. People can even communicate without spending a cent as we use to do presently with the internet. All internet facilities are embedded here. That is why the President, in his initiative thought it wise that my country should be among this level. This has been the biggest project Sierra Leone has ever had. It is very interesting and educative. It has a special economy on its own. If you look at the budget speech, you will realise that we have eight pillars in the Agenda for Prosperity. The first one is economic diversification. And Mr Speaker, the fiber optic project creates exactly that economic diversification. The second economy you will be dealing with is the E-communication. Mr Speaker, if this Project is successfully completed, we will have E-agriculture, E-education, E-governance, E-parliament etc.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, communication between and amongst ourselves would be very much simple and easy if this Project is completed successfully. It is cost effective Mr Speaker. People will no longer need to spend much of their money. Mr Speaker, presently, if you go to internet cafés, you pay huge sums of money. They will even tell you that server is down. But with this is high speed connectivity, people will be able to access internet with ease. The fiber optic has its own defense. That is, no amount of interference or interruption will take place in any way. We need to give attention to this Project. This is meant to elevate Sierra Leone or take us to another

level. That is the motive of this President. I am here thanking the President as a representative of the people of Constituency 98. We will benefit immensely from this Project. Our children will also benefit with the e-education this Project will bring. And this education will be almost free Mr Speaker. If you go to Fourah Bay College, there are on-line courses for Masters Degrees from India. But if this is fully completed and with your internet by yourself, obviously you don't even need a tutor at all. Our elders at Kailahun, Bo, Shegbwema, etc., will not need anybody to teach them. They only need to have power and get themselves connected.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should say thanks to this President for opening our eyes and also for opening the eyes of this country to see the reality of things. Again, with communication, there are evidences of communication. But the evidences are that, we have more Internet Cafes now. We do have more tele-centres. We do have internet on our own. To you, you can easily open your phone and get internet. But the measures for which the President mandates these operators to provide value added services for the betterment of the people of this country are not seen by any one of us here. And because people cannot see that, they will not know the importance of this fiber optic. But let me tell you that the President is thinking of how to move this country forward every day. For that reason, we have our responsibility. Our responsibility is to acknowledge the compliment. We have to say it publicly. Let us learn to say thanks. That is the best we can do because we were buying Sim-cards at \$54. Nobody will dispute that fact. Presently Mr Speaker, we are now buying a Sim-card at Le 500 to 1,000. That is a significant economic gain.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the successes as a result of this fiber optic are enormous. Mr Speaker, I want to say something about youth. Mr Speaker, on behalf of the people of Constituency 98, we wish to say more. But by virtue of authority, courtesy of leadership, I will rest my case at this juncture. I thank you.

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to make my contribution on His Excellency's Speech, delivered on the 14<sup>th</sup>

December, 2012. Before my intervention, I will first of all want to draw your attention to Paragraph 1, lines 1-5. I wouldn't want to bore you by reading it. You can read it in your quiet time.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, with respect to you, I have given you the floor.

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** I don't want to read it because of time. Mr Speaker, I took this document to my Constituency during the holiday. I took it there for deliberations. We discussed it and salient points and views came up from this document. I was very happy because they made their own input as far as this document is concerned. My constituents made their own contributions. They even asked me to come and express their feelings here.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would just want to highlight some of the views of my constituents. Mr Speaker, my constituents were not happy for the vows made by His Excellency because they said: "the President has been on this for the past five years. He has been promising or talking about electricity and infrastructures for the past five years. In fact, those things he kept mentioning for the past five years do not reflect in Constituency 85, my constituency. Mr Speaker, the road from Shenge to Moyamba is in a very deplorable condition. The people are paying Le 50,000 to bike riders to go to Shenge. How can they say thanks to Mr President? How can they allow me to come and say thanks on their behalf when they are not enjoying the benefit from the national cake? They are not happy at all Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the youths are there in my constituency to be employed. They are waiting to be employed Mr Speaker. They have graduated from various universities and other educational institutions. They have been waiting for the past five years Mr Speaker. They have been going up and down in search of jobs. Mr Speaker, if you don't have the traditional name like Conteh, Kamara, Bangura Koroma, Sesay etc., don't bother to take your application. S. O. 2 Mr Speaker. They will say: "ɔye ɔmeni," (this is a Mende). They will just file the application.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, you owe an obligation or a duty to speak in the language we can understand. What will they say to you?

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** S. O. 2 Mr Speaker. They will say: "ɔye ɔmeni."

**THE SPEAKER:** what does that mean?

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** Mr Speaker, after reading your resume, they will say this is a Mende applicant, especially when they see such names as Kpaka, Ndomahina or Lansana. Mr Speaker, as long as a Mende man applies, the job he/she applies for will not be given to him/her, even if he/she is qualified. They will lay the application aside for familiar surnames like Kamara, Sesay, Koroma etc. This is how it works. The people are now waiting. The youths are waiting out there to be employed. They don't want to be going around Abacha Street or wasting time in sending applications. Those university graduates have gone back to help their family members in the farms. They have gone back to take part in agriculture. Everyday Mr Speaker, the graduates from the South-East are going with all their experience, expertise and ideas they would have used to develop this country. They are waiting there Mr Speaker. Thank God that the President mentioned about employment for the youths. He did not specify the type of youths, whether the APC or SLPP youths. He only said youths. We believe that our own youths, especially those in my constituency will definitely benefit from the national cake.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I turn to the women of this country. The women in my district and those in my constituency are anxious to be incorporated into the Agenda for Prosperity. Women are partners in development. They are a powerful instrument for development. They are the bedrock upon which a nation develops. The 2012 elections is a clear manifestation that women like peace. When the women of this country said no to violence, there was no violence. The elections were free and fair, but incredible. The elections were free from violence. There was no violence, especially the area where I am coming from. But the elections were not credible at all Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am a bit disappointed at the nominations made by His Excellency the President, especially for the women. The President has been talking about the 30% quota. He has said that in Moyamba and Magburaka, and he has said that to us in his office. In fact, we were expecting 50% from his Cabinet. We were even expecting more women in his cabinet this time than the last Government. But to our dismay, two women after every ten men is a big disappointment for the women. It is even a shame for the 30% quota. Mr Speaker, the question is that, where, how and when are we going to achieve this 30% quota? That is a very big question. Maybe, we will do as Oliver Twist. We will ask for more because there are women with substance out there waiting. There are women who can even perform more than the men. There are women who are ready to work for this country. There are women who can even perform more than men. Woman can do better than men. We want the President to take note of the women of this country. We are ready to help him take this country to the higher height.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the fishing industry. This is the area where I came from. And this area is the reservoir that has been supplying fish for decades in this country. And that area is still doing well Mr Speaker. Areas like Kailahun, Kenema and Kono can attest to that. Trucks load of fish always come from my area. This is happening every week. But Mr Speaker, the people are now worried. The laws that have been passed for bad fishing and to change the nets are not working Mr Speaker. The beach scenes do not affect the industrial fishing. They are doing theirs in a very high scale. The artisanal fishermen are my people. They do their fishing on a very small scale. But Mr Speaker, the laws passed do not affect the industrial fishing. They only affect the artisanal fishing. Mr Speaker, this is where they get their livelihood. And the people have been complaining bitterly about this unfortunate development. They have been asking me to relay the message that they are not satisfied with this type of system at all. While they are waiting, they obeyed the rules and regulations laid down by the Ministry of Fisheries. This same Ministry do give licenses to the industrial fishermen to go and destroy the fishing nets. Mind you Mr Speaker, Shenge, where I

come from is a breeding ground. We have the breeding ground that is ready to supply this country for the rest of mankind. But since the industrial fishing, they have destroyed thousands of eggs. We complained this and the worst of it all when we asked these fishermen to go there and take down the names of these vessels, as soon as they drew closer; they threw hot water on them. They destroyed their nets and they came back to me to complain. I am fed up with this situation Mr Speaker. These are some of the reasons why the fishermen in my area are not happy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, another problem my people are facing is the rates levied. During my thank you tour, this document is discussed lengthily. During the discussion, an old man came and told me that until there is equal distribution of resources, these same problems will keep coming up. He also said that the road network is not good at all. Our roads can even be associated with the accidents that occurred in 2009, wherein more than 200 people lost their lives. The President in his own wisdom declared that day as national day of mourning. This tells you the importance of that road. We need good road system in Shenge. The Shenge Road is very important in this country. Instances have shown the importance of that road Mr Speaker. During the rebel incursion, the Shenge Road was the only road free from rebel domination. Shenge is a terminus for most of these trucks from the other areas. Vehicles from other provinces normally wait at Shenge to go to Tombo. The distance from Shenge to Tombo is just about 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hour. People do come there to collect their loads and go back to the provinces. This shows how important the Shenge road is. Therefore, my people have asked me to appeal to the President to pay attention to this road. In his last statement, I heard him saying "Komanε ɔ demia." We want him to consider that road very seriously. We are paying our taxes Mr Speaker. Our people are paying their taxes as well. Therefore, we want to enjoy from the national cake. We want to see the reality Mr Speaker. We also want to feel the impact of being a citizen of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to go to the youth. I enjoyed this Speech when the President was talking about youths from beginning to the end; Mr Speaker, S.

O. 2, from “pep to perep” (From start to finish) when he was talking about the youths. There is a good package awaits the youth of this country. In fact, when the President was addressing this Nation, I was going to declare myself to be a youth. This is because of what was in this package for the youths of this Nation. We are ready to take him by his words. He neither mentioned about PMDC youths nor the APC or SLPP youth. He said youths. And we believe that the youths of this country will benefit from this package. We have men and women in this category of people whom I believe would be employed. We are waiting to see the President creating employment for the youths of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this brings me to the Attitudinal and Behavioral Change concept. Attitudinal Change simply means self-disciplined. Something must be done to change our youth. But we have to talk to the youths of this country. We are now crying for our youths. They are even crying to be employed. We have to advise them as well. They need to change their attitude. Reckless dressing and reckless driving is no longer tolerated. I can't befriend with a reckless driver at all Mr Speaker. A friend of the dead should not be disturbing the peace of the living. The youth should not go and drink or smoke and later claim friendship with the dead. Let the drunkards leave the dead to rest in peace. The Okada riders don't have to be reckless. They have to be sober minded people. They have to be presentable if they want to be employed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if I am a Human Resource Manager, I will not employ any youth with a 'Balotele style of hair cut on the head. You cannot come to my office to be employed with your Balotele. You don't come to me recklessly dressed with a hipster. In those days, our people used to wear the hipster with the belt. We were admiring them Mr Speaker. But nowadays youth have this so-called 'Shaba.' You don't expect me to employ you with that kind of dressing. Again, Mr Speaker,...-  
*(Interruption).*

**THE SPEAKER:** Order!

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** Mr Speaker, the worst about these girls is that they now have a new dressing they call "Africell." Africell means ever ready.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member?

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** Yes Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Please explain for our own benefit. What is this Africell?

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** Thank you Mr Speaker.

**THE SEPAKER:** Don't demonstrate, just explain.

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** Thank you Mr Speaker. 'Africell' is a common dress that young ladies usually wear without pant underneath. They only have the trousers on.

**THE SPEAKER:** Is the trousers transparent?

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** Am I protected Mr Speaker? Mr Speaker, you want the explanation but Honourable Members are not giving me chance Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, please give the lady the opportunity to explain, but please don't demonstrate.

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** They wear this Africell with a Tatu. That is a recipe for cancer Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Order!

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** That is my advice to the youth.

**THE SEPAKER:** What is the injection for?

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** The injection is meant to project their breast. I cannot employ such youth Mr Speaker. A sober minded Manager will not employ a youth with a half naked dress. I will just put his/her application aside. Some of those dressings are

meant to attract the men. Therefore, we are advising the youth of this Nation to...-  
*(Interruption)*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, this is very serious. What the Honourable Member is trying to pass across is to caution the youth as to how they appear in public. This is of national concern.

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** Thank you Mr Speaker. We want to see more young ladies being the best drivers. I can assure you that the best driver in this country is a woman. We want to see young girls driving in this country. Driving is not only meant for the men. Mr Speaker, some of these drivers are so reckless that you see them driving with one hand on the steering and other hand is placed on the door. I will not take such reckless drivers to drive me at all. I will patiently wait until we arrive home. As soon as we reach, I will just collect my key. This is because I want to enjoy my pension. We must take all these things into consideration. The dice is cast by the President of this Nation. The choice is theirs. We want to see more youths in the offices. We are gradually fading away. This is very serious Mr Speaker. We don't want to see these young girls roaming about the streets or roaming about the beaches. Sometimes my heart bleeds when I come across some of these ladies half-naked. Sometimes you see them in this Parliament. I saw some of them yesterday in this Parliament Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, at whose invitation these girls come to this Parliament?

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** I don't want to call names Mr Speaker *(Laughter)*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Alright, I shall advise the Police Post not to allow "Africell" girls here anymore *(Laughter)*.

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** Mr Speaker, few days ago, we had to interrupt a lady who wore a very short skirt. When I saw her, my heart bleeds. I know that the men admire the mini-dress these girls put on.

**THE SPEAKER:** Order!

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** Though the men admire these girls, but it is a disappointment for us the women. We need to talk to our girls. We need to advise them seriously. The most important thing for any woman is her dress code. We the women should give chance to the men to debate within themselves what is hidden in that woman. We should not expose our womanhood to the public. If a woman exposes herself, she has reduced her pride. Women need to add to their values. I am very much impressed with the way my colleagues Members of Parliament dress. We are always well dressed Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, people admire the way we dress any time we go to other Parliaments. We are always presentable (*Applause*). The male Members of Parliament are also presentable. They appear neatly in public. I commend them for that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to conclude with unity that the President spoke about. He mentions dialogue. That is fine Mr Speaker. We totally agree with him. If we had not wanted unity, you should have seen the impact of disunity Mr Speaker. We in the SLPP are very peaceful. We have maintained our integrity and we have also maintained unity that the very President spoke about. Anybody that complains do not want problem at all. For example, in our homes, a child that complains do not want problem. This was why we complained to the International Community and our Local Court for injustice. The President is saying that we should not walk out from parliamentary proceedings. We should disagree to agree. That is fine Mr Speaker; but because Members of Parliament failed to agree in the last Parliament, that was why we were walking out to avoid palaver. We wanted to avoid a situation of sending blows. That was why we were boycotting parliamentary proceedings quietly. The President is now emphasizing that we should not boycott Parliamentary proceedings. That is fine, but our problem now is that the leadership of the Sierra Leone People's Party and supporters of this great party are not satisfied with the just concluded election results. We made a petition to the Supreme Court for justice. We want to see the justice in our court. We want to see the justice in the Judiciary Mr Speaker. We have reported this

matter to the highest court of this land, but nothing has been done. We held elections before Ghana. Few weeks ago, Ghana is now two steps ahead of us. Where is the justice Mr Speaker? We want to see justice prevails in this country. They say: "Justice delayed, is justice denied."

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will only say thanks to the President when my Shenge Road is being constructed. That road is a death trap. My brother from Mabang might want to say something about that road. We normally use the Mabang Bridge. It is a death trap. It is just two hours drive to Moyamba. It was in the last package but nothing happens. Mr Speaker, if Mr President wants Veronica Sesay to say thanks to him, let him start doing something on that road. It is only when the President fulfill that promise I say thanks to him.

**MR. SEPAKER:** Order!

**HON. VERONICA SESAY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about electricity briefly. Moyamba is without electricity. If there is electricity in Moyamba, my people in Shenge would have been feeling rays of the light. If you go to Moyamba, you will not even find ice there. This shows that there is no electricity in that district. How can I say thanks to His Excellency the President?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, thousands of Leones has been spent on the Jetty at Shenge. But the road is not good at all. How can we make use of that jetty Mr Speaker? But since I am the Chairman for the Committee of Marine Resources, I am going to change the system. I am going to revamp the fishing sector in this country. The fishes need to grow Mr Speaker. If you eat good fish, you will grow healthier.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with these few words, I want to draw the attention of His Excellency the President, to know that we are tired of using motor bikes to go to Shenge. I am tired of paying that Le 50, 000 for 40 kilometers road. It is a very serious situation Mr Speaker. Look at the accident that took place in 2008. Over 200 people lost their lives. Some were APC, PMDC and SLPP. Please pay attention to my road Mr

President. With these few words Mr Speaker, I want to thank the President for this wonderful Speech. I will say thanks because of the time and energy he spent to deliver this gracious Speech to the people of this Nation. There are so many ways to say thanks. The President spent more than two hours in delivering this Speech. For that alone he deserves thanks. I want to thank you all for listening to me and I want to thank Mr Speaker as well for giving me this opportunity to really blow my mind today (Applause).

**HON. KEMOKOH CONTEH:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just wanted to make an addendum on what my colleagues on this side have said. I want to extend my profound felicitation to His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. His Excellency has decided to dedicate the Agenda for Prosperity to the Youth because he thought it wise that the youths of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are so energetic and committed that he made a covenant with them. He reaffirmed this covenant through the electioneering process that has just been concluded. He promised during his campaign that if elected, he would ensure that the youth are provided with skills, employment and education. He promised to turn around the lives of the youth. And today, if you look at the present Legislature and the Executive Arm of Government, you will see the reality of things Mr Speaker. These are visible things. The youth are presently in positions of trust. Mr Speaker, I am a clear example. His Excellency the President indicated clearly in Page 3, Paragraph 8 that the Agenda for Prosperity needs commitment. That is the commitment that makes the Agenda for Prosperity. It is not a one-man show at all. The Agenda for Prosperity needs collective effort. We are seeing tangible evidences as you walk along the streets of Freetown that we are getting the heat of the Agenda for Change compared to the yester time when you walk along Freetown. There is no comfortability without struggle. We are now implementing most of the programmes that were under the Agenda for Change. The Agenda for Prosperity needs commitment, cooperation, and discipline for the youth, middle-aged and elders. It is a collective effort. It is diversified so that the elders and the youths have their own roles to play in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President reaffirmed his commitment with straight forwardness by establishing the National Youth Commission. There has been a Youth Policy. But that policy was not functional at all. Today, with the establishment of the National Youth Commission, existing factors that would make the youth boastful and enthusiastic are now in place. Most of the youth are doing their jobs out of their own creativity. For instance, if you go to the car-wash, you will see the youth in those areas. Most of them have tele-centers. They decided to take up those responsibilities in order not to engage in any rubbery activity. During and after the Civil War in the country, the youth are all around the Mercury centres. They engaged themselves in order to make their living. Today, the President has said it categorically clear that he is going to incorporate the youth of this country into the Agenda for Prosperity. In fact, the President has already created the avenue for the youth of this Nation to be incorporated in the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF), in the Police for them to serve in nation building.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Benguema Barracks is part of my Constituency. If you go to that place, you will find out that there is 24 hours of electricity, which has never happened in the history of this country. That place was completely destroyed during the interregnum. Before now, the Armed Forces training Centre was without electricity. They are now boasting of having electricity supply in that place. The khaki boys are boasting of having a modern training center.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our men and women will be going to serve the Somalia and Mogadishu operations. This is a plus to this country that Sierra Leone is among the other countries to serve in the United Nations Mission. I am talking about the 21<sup>st</sup> century of modern times military, not of the archaic times. The youth are creating avenues out of hard work. If people could look at the agricultural sector, the ABC centres are all over the country. If you go to my Constituency, Campbell Town to be specific, the youth there are having modern equipment and machines. That has improved the agricultural sector in this country. A jetty has been established at Tombo. There is a new jetty in that area Mr Speaker. A standard-type of Jetty has been erected

at Tombo. This has created an avenue for the youth of that place. There is also a Pilot Operation going on as we speak in my constituency. That Pilot Operation will enhance not only the youth of my constituency but even those at Shenge. People have benefited from that jetty a lot. There are many facilities you can think of with the establishment of that Jetty. This shows the healthiness of fishing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the youth have been classified (before the before and during the war) as I don't-care people. But today, they are comporting themselves. They are creating employment for themselves. They are contributing in their own ways towards nation-building through the blessings of the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. There is project going on presently. One of my colleagues has elaborated on the bear-footed Project at Contour Line. Majority of the people in that environ and even within my constituency are benefitting from that Project. They are there to ensure that people do not benefit from the general electricity supply, they will benefit from the solar panel. If you go to Waterloo and Koya, you will see tangible evidences that this nation is improving greatly. I believe, we should be able to realise things that are tangible. Development is not a one-man show. The development of this nation is for all of us. The transformation is taking place Mr Speaker. We are seeing things that are have never taken place in this country. We are enjoying these positive changes happening now. I remember when I was in the Local Council. I was in the Council before coming into this noble House. Mr Speaker, with all my experience in the local Council, I believe the President did what he promised me in particular. He thought it wise to give me the party's symbol to come to this Honourable House. He did this because of my outstanding performance. He said that he would not look at what a person from outside appearance, but what the person is capable of doing. Why are we here today? He is a President that does not do things by sentiments. He really wants to develop this Nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe the Agenda for Change is the foundation for the Agenda for Prosperity. Definitely, if we could see what the Agenda for Change is doing presently, it tells you that the President made it categorically clear in Page 3, Paragraph 9. With your leave Mr Speaker, I read: "the process has started, we have

established the National Youth Commission NAYCOM), we are attracting investments that create jobs, we are building, equipping and supporting Technical and Vocational Centres everywhere, we are appointing younger people to positions of authority in government and we will do more. With the Mr Speaker, we will move this country forward and transformation will be unstoppable.” Mr Speaker, this is an on-course process. The process has started. It is on course. It is presently going on. We have seen it happening for the youth of this country. This is not a political issue. It is a national issue. It is an issue of youth from the interior and urban cities. It is a national issue Mr Speaker. Therefore, we want to ensure that...-(*Inaudible*). Mr Speaker, this is a thanksgiving for what the President has done for this Nation and what he has said he would do for the people of this country. These are not parables at all. These are pragmatic things. They are things that are practical. If we could do things in unity and as patriotic Sierra Leoneans, this country will move forward. We have to be patriotic to serve this nation. If we do things as patriotic Sierra Leoneans, by 2017, Sierra Leone is going to be a paradise.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to elaborate on the Energy. Today, Waterloo is enjoying electricity supply. When the interregnum plunged this country, there was no movement from the Freetown to the provinces. This was because Waterloo, which is the gateway in and from Freetown was captured by the rebels. As a result, people could not leave or enter Freetown. Waterloo is a terminus point Mr Speaker. You have to pass through Waterloo to enter Freetown or to go to the provinces. Waterloo is the gateway to Kailahun. It is also the gateway to Bo, Moyamba and Pujehun Districts. Today, we are enjoying Waterloo due to the handiwork of the President. The people of Waterloo are enjoying that benefit. He has made it categorically clear that he is going to extend the electricity supply to Waterloo. If you cannot feel the development in Freetown, go to Waterloo. You will see visible signs of development in that place. I will tell you that he didn't only say things, but he makes things to happen. We must commend him for that. We must praise him and we should praise him at all times. We should say thanks to him for his handiwork. He will do more for this Nation. By 2017,

this country will take a different form. I want to appeal to the people of Waterloo not to look at party colours. There are many people from the North, South and Eastern part of this country. They always come out to join the Agenda for Prosperity. The foundation has been created by this Agenda for Prosperity. And we are seeing real things happening. We don't have much to do, but to consolidate this concept. We are going to ensure that the President succeeds. We are going to give him our full support. And we are going to follow him wherever he goes.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, by 2017, nobody will challenge the Agenda for Prosperity. I want to take this onus opportunity to express my thanks to His Excellency the President. May God bless him. I thank you all.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, you will all agree with me that we have had a rewarding day.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

*(The House rose at 4.25 p.m., and was adjourned until Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2013, at 10.00 a.m.).*