



**HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT
OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL
FREETOWN**



**FOURTH SESSION OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC
OF SIERRA LEONE**

**SECOND REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS
AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE ON PARLIAMENTARY VETTING
OF PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATIONS**

1. INTRODUCTION

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service, alive and responsive to its constitutional duties, met on Monday 11th January 2016 and interviewed eight eminent Sierra Leoneans nominated by H. E. the President, for public appointments as follows:

- i. Chief Justice of the Republic of Sierra Leone
- ii. Minister of Agriculture, Forestry & Food Security
- iii. Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
- iv. Ministers of State I & II, Ministry of Foreign Affair & Intl. Cooperation
- v. Two High Court Judges
- vi. Board Member, Guma Valley Water Company Ltd

2. PROCEDURE

The Committee maintained strict adherence to its established procedure. The nominees were questioned on wide ranging issues relating particularly to their educational background, track records in pertinent work situations, declared assets, tax obligations and their visions for a successful and nationally productive tenure of office. Unsuitability in terms of character to hold such high offices of state were very closely scrutinized.

3. **SECOND SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON MONDAY 11TH JANUARY 2016**

3:1 The following nominees were interviewed on oath:

i. **Hon. Justice Abdulai Hamid Charm - Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Judicature of the Republic of Sierra Leone**

Hon. Justice Hamid Abdulai Charm is the First Locally trained lawyer to be appointed to the position of Chief Justice of the superior Court of Judicature of the Republic of Sierra Leone. After his initial legal education in Fourah Bay College and the Sierra Leone Law School, Hon. Justice Charm started his legal profession as a State Counsel in the Law Officers Department. (1999-2001) In 2002, he opted out of the Government Service and went into private practice. In 2011, he was appointed High Court Judge and in 2014 he was promoted Justice of the Court of Appeal.

In his interview, Hon. Justice Hamid Abdulai Charm acknowledged the enormity of the position for which he has been nominated and the tremendous responsibility that comes along with it. "I do appreciate the position as it is the highest Judicial Office in the land that goes with tremendous responsibility. I also appreciate the fact that I will be making history, if approved by this House, to be the first locally trained lawyer to assume the position of Chief Justice."

Reacting to further probing questions, Hon. Justice Hamid Abdulai Charm made bold to say that the judiciary has challenges but they were not insurmountable. "Our criminal system," he said, "needs some overhaul and that is why the criminal procedure bill is before Parliament for amendment. Some of our laws are very old and obsolete with some dating as far back as 1916. The colonial masters we inherited these laws from, have moved far ahead. I believe we will have to inform the Law Offices Department for certain changes to be made so that our procedures can be streamlined to enable us move fast with criminal procedures."

Addressing the issue of delay of cases in the courts, he said, "Cases were not unnecessarily delayed by the courts. The Judge and Magistrates," he said, "were inadequate and overloaded with work. The judiciary is under-staffed," he emphasized. "The case-load per judge ratio is too high. I believe that improving the remunerations and the terms and conditions of service of the judiciary will go a long way to attract and retain the right caliber of people on the Bench. If Parliament could help us along that line, you would have solved the enormous problem of man power shortage in the judiciary."

Questioned on the issue of succumbing to political pressure, Hon. Justice Humid Abdulla Charm had this to say, "if I go through this scrutiny and I am approved, I will be taking an oath. Like my earlier oaths as a judge, I will execute my duty in consonance with that oath and nothing else. I believe that subsection 3 of Section 120 of the Constitution tells us that our work shall be subject to only the Constitution and the law and that is what I intend to do."

ii. Professor Monty Patrick Jones - Proposed Minister of Agriculture, Forestry & Food Security

Professor Dr. Monty Patrick Jones is the Special Adviser to the President and Ambassador-At-Large. He was, until recently, the Executive Director of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and the Chairman for the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR). He was awarded the prestigious World Food Prize in 2004 in recognition of his discovery of the New Rice for Africa, (NERICA) which gives higher yields, shorter growth cycle and has more protein content than its Asian and African parents. In 2010, Professor. Dr. Monty Patrick Jones became the first recipient of the Niigata International Food Award. His celebrated work on NERICA has made it possible for countries in West, Central and East Africa to increase rice production thereby increasing their household food security and enabling them to cut back on expensive rice imports. Professor Dr. Monty Patrick Jones also has an endless list of scientific publications to his name.

Responding to the Committee inquiries, Prof. Dr. Monty Patrick Jones had this to say “as a world known scientist, I actually have had a lot of experience in the agricultural sector. So I will be going to the Ministry of Agriculture with a wealth of experience. I know the Ministry of Agriculture very well and I think that will be an advantage. Having said that, one of the key issues that I am going to try to implement very fast is to improve agricultural productivity in Sierra Leone. This time, we are no longer going to pay lip service to increasing agricultural productivity. We are going to look at total factor productivity which means that we will bring in everything it takes for our local farmers to benefit from working on their lands. For example we will not just be looking at tractors and combine harvesters but we will look at small machinery that will be suited to the farm sizes that we have – weeders, threshing machines, etc. These are the things we are going to bring as far as labour productivity is concerned.”

We are also going to look at land productivity and ensure that fertilizers, seeds and other inputs are available at the farm gate to increase production. This is something we need to do because agricultural productivity has been very low in Sierra Leone as in most African Countries...”

The Committee asked simple questions but they got a lecture on Professor Monty Jones lofty dreams for the agricultural sector in this country. He lectured on his dreams for commercial agriculture, gainful engagement of youths in agriculture, self-sufficiency in food production including oil, onions etc. He really did not see the need to import products that could be grown in Sierra Leone given our climate.

iii. Hon. Isata Kabia - Proposed Minister of State II Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

Hon. Isata Kabia is a Member of Parliament representing Constituency 50, Port Loko District. While in Parliament, she served on several Committees including

being the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. Hon. Isata Kabia is also a Member of the Pan-Africa Parliament.

Answering to the Committee's inquiries, Hon. Isata Kabia promised to work to the best of her ability for the success of the national foreign policy and for the good of the nation. "I hope, with God's grace, to make a difference. Having served as a Member of the Pan-African Parliament, I will endeavour to ensure that protocols passed by the Pan-African Parliament are speedily brought before our legislators for domestication."

iv. Mr. Patrick Saidu Conteh - Proposed Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

Mr. Patrick Saidu Conteh is a former Deputy Managing director/ Chief Operating Officer of the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank. Mr. Conteh is finance professional with over seventeen years of progressive work experience in banking and finance with eight of those years in executive positions. He is a knowledgeable analyst of financial markets and monetary operations at both local and international levels.

Responding to the Committee, Mr. Patrick Saidu Conteh said, "I am coming from the private sector, having worked for eighteen years in banking and finance at the executive level. I know the financial dynamics of Sierra Leone. I have over the years acquired an understanding of the financial system of the world at large. I have an appreciable knowledge of the dynamics of monetary operations both locally and internationally and how these would impact fiscal operation in a country. These are some of the experiences I will bring to bear on my new assignment," he said.

With his background and experience, Mr. Patrick Saidu Conteh promised to do his best to live up to expectations and not to betray the confidence reposed in him.

v. Dr. Mohamed Gibril Sesay- Proposed Minister of State I, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Intl. Cooperation

Dr. Mohamed Gibril Sesay is the Senior Special Assistant to His Excellency the President (2010 – present) He was previously a Lecturer in Sociology, Fourah Bay College, and University of Sierra Leone. Dr. Sesay has over 24 year of work experience in Social Research, program design, implementation, Monitoring and evaluation at the highest level of good understanding of Media and civil Society relationship democratization, international political economics, gender equity and socio-political development.

Responding to the Committee's inquiries, Dr. Mohamed Gibril Sesay deposed that he has been doing research relating to foreign policy and policy statements for H. E, the President. "I believe my expertise, experience, integrity, disposition and character have adequately prepared me for the kind of appointment offered to me. I will do my best," he promised.

vi. Mr. Mohamed Alhaji Momoh-Jah Stevens- Proposed High Court Judge

Mr. Mohamed Alhaji Momoh-Jah Stevens joined the Government legal service in 2005 soon after his legal education and was appointed a Magistrate, a position he has held to date.

Reacting to the Committee inquiries, Mr. Mohamed Alhaji Momoh-Hah Stevens had this to say, "I believe in justice, fairness, equity, expeditious hearing and determination of matters that come before me. I believe that everybody

deserves to be treated fairly and that has been my cardinal principle since I started my judicial career and I intend to adhere to that."

vii. Mr. Komba Kamanda- Proposed High Court Judge

A locally trained lawyer, Mr. Komba Kamanda became a Magistrate in 2005 soon after his legal education at Fourah Bay College (2000-2003) and the Sierra Leone Law School. (2003-2004) He was promoted Senior Magistrate in 2008 and further promoted to the position of Acting Principal Magistrate in 2011.

In his response to the Committee Mr. Komba Kamanda said that one of the most serious challenges he has faced in the dispensation of justice is the delay of the matters in the courts because of a number of reasons ranging from the non-appearance of witnesses when they are needed to the attitude of some lawyers not taking their work very serious. The third reason for the delays, he said, was the shortage of Magistrates to handle the ever-growing number of cases. The judiciary needs more judges and Magistrates." he said.

"If approved, I will definitely advise the Hon. Chief Justice to ensure that we have more Magistrates to lighten the workload," he promised.

viii. Idrissa Barrie-Proposed Board Member, Guma Valley Water Company Ltd

Mr. Idrissa Barrie is a professional Chartered Accountant with twenty-eight (28) years of work experience in auditing, financial management and control. He served the Sierra Leone roads Authority (SLRA) for 17 years. He also has worked with local governments, donor agencies and the private sector.

In his response, Mr. Idrissa Barrie promised to ensure, with the support of his colleague Board Members, to ensure that safe drinking water supply is made accessible to public.

4. **EXCERPT OF THE TWENTIETH REPORT OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE**

i. **Dr. Ebum Strasser-King (Mrs.) - Proposed Sierra Leone Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal.**

Dr. Ebum Strasser-King was, until recently, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. She had studied and practiced Law in the United States of America (USA) before returning home to Sierra Leone in 2010.

Answering to probing questions, Dr. Ebum Strasser-King said, "I'm very excited about my nomination because it is a demonstration of His Excellency's continued confidence in me. I believe this is another opportunity for me to continue serving His Excellency's Government and the people of this country. I promise to put the national interest above all other considerations and to work to the best of my ability."

5. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

- i. Hon. Justice Abdulai Hamid Charm - Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Judicature of the Republic of Sierra Leone
- ii. Prof. Monty Patrick Jones - Minister of Agriculture, Forestry & Food Security
- iii. Dr. Ebum Strasser-King (Mrs.)-Sierra Leone Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal
- iv. Mr. Patrick Saidu Conteh - Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
- v. Dr. Mohamed Gibril Sesay- Minister of State I, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Intl. Cooperation
- vi. Hon. Isata Kabia – Minister of State II, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Intl. Cooperation

- vii. Mr. Mohamed Alhaji Momoh-Jah Stevens – High Court Judge
- viii. Mr. Komba Kamanda- High Court Judge
- ix. Mr. Idrissa Barrie- Board Member, Guma Valley Water Company Ltd

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

Hon. Ibrahim R. Bundu

Chairman

Date.....



**HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT
OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL
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**FOURTH SESSION OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND
REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE**

**MINUTES OF THE SECOND SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON
APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE IN COMMITTEE
ROOM NO.1, PARLIAMENT BUILDING, ON MONDAY
11TH JANUARY 2016 AT 11:00 A.M.**

1. **Prayers** - Members observed a moment of silent meditation.

2. **Attendance**

2.1 The following Members of the Committee were present:

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|--------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| i. | Hon. Sheriff B Hassan | Chairman |
| ii. | Hon Alusine Marah | |
| iii. | Hon. Amadu Fofana | |
| iv. | Hon Claude Daniel Melville Kamanda | |
| v. | Hon Ibrahim Kamara | |
| vi. | Hon Leonard S Fofanah | |
| vii. | Hon. Jusufu Barry Mansaray | |
| viii. | Hon. Helen Kuyembeh | |

3. **Public hearing** - Hearing was open to the public and the press.

4. **Subject matter of the meeting:**

**“REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF CUSTOMS DUTY AND TAXES FOR THE
PROCUREMENT OF DECORATIONS AND MEDALS FOR THE 55TH
INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS”**

5. **Committee’s deliberations:**

5.1 The Committee observed that:

- i. It was abnormal to request for duty waiver in respect of an unsigned contract document forwarded to Parliament. Clarification was however sought from State House through the Deputy Speaker.
- ii. The importance of the activity for which the request was made need not be over-emphasised as a Presidential function. His Excellency, the President, is by law the Fountain of Honour and Section 40f of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, (Act No.6 of 1991) provides for Presidential "grant of Honours and Awards."

The Committee therefore unanimously approved the "**REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF CUSTOMS DUTY AND TAXES FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF DECORATIONS AND MEDALS FOR THE 55TH INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS,**" Ref: SF/OP/52 Vol.X, intended "to contract the services of Messrs Cleave and Co. Ltd of London to supply the Decorations and Medals required at the cost of

The Committee rose at 3:15 p.m.

Peter J. Kulagbanda

Director of Committee