



PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE
PARLIAMENT BUILDING
O.A.U DRIVE, TOWER HILL
FREETOWN
Tel: 232-22-223140- FAX: 232-22-222483
Website: www.parliament.gov.sl



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

SEVENTH 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 met on Thursday 28th February 2013 and interviewed five Presidential nominees for appointment to the following positions:

- i. Ministers & Deputy Ministers**
- ii. Justice of the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone**

2. PROCEDURE

The Committee adhered strictly to its set standards. The nominees were interviewed on pertinent issues relating to their educational backgrounds, declared assets, track records in public office, tax obligations and vision for a nationally productive tenure.

3. TWELFTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON THURSDAY 28TH FEBRUARY 2013

3:1 The following nominees were interviewed:

- i. Alhaji Ibrahim Kemoh Sesay – Proposed Minister of Political Affairs**

Alhaji Kemoh Sesay is an outstanding personality in the contemporary politics of Sierra Leone and has served his country as follows:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 1996 – 2007- | Member of Sierra Leone House of Parliament |
| 2002 – 2007- | Member of Pan-African Parliament |

2007 – 2008- Minister of Transport and Aviation

2010 -2013 - Special Adviser to His Excellency the President

Responding to questions as why his nomination should be approved by the Committee, he said that he had served his country in several high ranking positions to merit the confidence of the Committee in his ability to deliver. Recalling his days in Parliament, the nominee opined that members of the public that were present at the hearing should be grateful to him because “before now non-members of the Appointments Committee were not allowed to sit in. It is on record that it was I who moved a ‘Private Member Motion’ for the doors of Parliamentary Committees to be opened to the public so that interested members of the public and journalists could sit in as observers.”

Answering to questions about what he would be doing in his new office, he said that the Ministry of Political and Public Affairs is an interface between the Government and the public. “Most times,” he said, “the Ministry is misconstrued as a party Ministry. The Ministry is not a party Ministry but a national Ministry for political and public affairs. It is the Ministry that is in-charge of all political Parties, the APC, SLPP, PMDC and all public affairs that have anything to do with government. Hon. Alhaji Ibrahim Kemoh Sesay assured the Committee that with the support of Parliament he would endeavour to make Sierra Leoneans appreciate the functions of the Ministry of Political and Public Affairs.

ii. Mr. Valesius Victor Thomas- Proposed Justice of the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone

Mr. Thomas is a private Legal Practitioner (1981 to date) with speciality in Company Law, Real Estate and Employment Law. Prior to entry into Private practice, Mr. Thomas had served as State Counsel in the Office of the Attorney-General particularly in the Prosecution, Constitutional and the International Law Divisions. He was also attached as a Government Lawyer to the Mano River Union and the ECOWAS.

Reacting to questions as to what he would bring to the Supreme Court, Mr. Thomas informed the Committee that his reason for accepting the gracious offer of the President was that over the years, people including himself, have been too critical of the system. He had however realized that criticism without the willingness to make positive contributions does not bring about any remarkable change. He submitted that he has the gift to quickly analyze any given situation and to make appropriate decisions. He added that the delay of cases in court is one area that required a lot of improvement. “I will endeavor,” he promised, “to speedily expedite whatever assignments that are given to me.”

On the issue of the seeming lack of collaboration between the Legislature and the Judiciary, Mr. Thomas said that the Judiciary was supposed to be independent and judges were expected to give judgment on the basis of the evidence presented. "So while it may be necessary to have some collaboration, the impression must not be created that the judiciary is under pressure from the legislature. The Judiciary is headed by the Chief Justice and any concern of the legislature and the public," he said, "could be channeled to the Head of the Judiciary."

iii. Feremusu Konteh - Proposed Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs

Mrs Feremusu Konteh is a widely traveled housewife/businesswoman who has settled and acquired a lot of work experience in many countries abroad. In Paris, France, for instance, she was a 'Communication Support Officer' responsible for assisting school pupils with scholarship issues to further their education. As 'Vice President, African Women Organization' in Madagascar, she was 'Liaison Officer' to a number of civil society groups. In 2012, she was appointed Deputy Minister of Fisheries & Marine Resources, a position she held until after the 2012 General Elections.

Answering questions as to whether she was prepared to work in the Ministry of Youth Affairs after she had served as Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources, she said that she would do her best as she had what she referred to as "the will power" to do the job. The youths she added were anxious and their expectations were high. There was therefore the need for the wherewithal and will power to handle such high expectations.

iv. Mr. Ismail Al-Sankoh-Conteh - Proposed Deputy Minister of Sports

Mr. Sankoh-Conteh is a Civil Society, Human Rights and Youths Activist who has spent the better part of his life promoting the welfare and development of Youth Programmes.

Asked to give an opinion on the acrimony between the Ministry of Sports and SLAFA, Mr. Al-Sankoh-Conteh said that he was aware of the acrimony between the Sierra Leone Football Association (SLAFA) and the Ministry and that his responsibility would be to engage the stakeholders in a round-table talk to find a peaceful solution. "I will engage in consultation and dialogue, for all to put their cards on the table in a kind of a family gathering. I do not believe in addressing indifferences between brothers on radio or television." He added that the sports and football associations were supposed to be independent bodies, though government was providing the

financial resources which, he believed, should be accounted for. "SLAFA," he went on, "should operate in a transparent and accountable manner." He promised to ensure that a culture of openness exist between SLFA and the Ministry.

ii. Mr. Peter Bayuku Konteh – Proposed Minister of Tourism and Cultural Affairs

Mr. Konteh is a Community Development Initiator and Coordinator of the "Little Step 2000 Development Organization" (a Humanitarian Organization) for Koinadugu District. (2000 –date) Through this Organization, Mr. Konteh initiated, financed and implemented many development programmes in the Koinadugu District. In 2008-2012, he contested and was elected Chairman of the Koinadugu District Council.

Responding to questions on whether he was au fait with the operations of the Ministry of Tourism, he frankly admitted that he was new in the business of tourism. However, he has a passion for tourism and culture and if given the opportunity, he promised to demonstrate the initiative, drive and leadership that would make a significant difference. He was aware, he said, that he was going to a Ministry that has little political attention and very little resources but he assured the Committee that he was ready to tap on the experiences of the staff to make a change in that sector. "I do not want to pre-empt policies or projects" he said, "I have ideas but I want to be humble in tapping on other ideas. I have strong commitment in promoting the common good, and I will always endeavor to make sure that I speedily accomplish any assignment given to the best of my ability."

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- i. Alhaji Ibrahim Kemoh Seasay – Minister of Political & Public Affairs
- ii. Mr. Valesius Victor Thomas – Supreme Court Judge
- iii. Mr. Peter Bayuku Konteh – Minister of Tourism & Cultural Affairs
- iv. Ms. Feremusu Konteh - Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs
- v. Mr. Ishmail Al-Sankoh-Conteh – Deputy Minister of Sports.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the Seventh Report portrays the collective view of the Committee. I therefore move that the Seventh Report of the First Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendation contained therein be approved.

Hon. S. B. B. Dumbuya
Chairman

Date.....

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

**MINUTES OF THE TWELFTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON
APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE IN COMMITTEE
ROOM NO.1 PARLIAMENT BUILDING ON THURSDAY
28TH FEBRUARY 2013 AT 1:00 P. M**

1. **Prayers** - Members prayed in silence

2. **Attendance**

2.1 The following Members of the Committee were present.

1. Hon. S. B. B. Dumbuya
2. Hon. Chernor R. M. Bah
3. Hon. Ibrahim Bundu
4. Hon. Alhaji Ansumana Jaia Kaikai
5. Hon. Augustine B. Torto .
6. Hon. Amadu Kanu
7. Hon. Bliss Osho-Williams
8. Hon. Dr. Matthew Teambo
9. Hon. Benneh Bangura
10. Hon. Alimamy Kamara
11. Hon. E. K. Koedoyoma
12. Hon. Alice Foyah
13. Hon. Brimah Conteh

2.2 The following Members of the Committee were absent:

1. Hon. P. C. V.B.S. Kebbie
2. Hon. Dr. Bernadette Lahai
3. Hon. Mabinty Fornah

3. PUBLIC HEARING - Hearing was open to the public and the press.

4. Consideration of Presidential nomination for ministerial appointment as listed:

4:1 The following nominee were interviewed on oath:

- i. Alhaji Ibrahim Kemoh Seasay – Proposed Minister of Political & Public Affairs
- ii. Mr. Valesius Victor Thomas – Proposed Supreme Court Judge
- iii. Mr. Peter Bayuku Konteh – Proposed Minister of Tourism & Cultural Affairs
- iv. Ms. Feremusu Konteh - Proposed Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs
- v. Mr. Ishmail Al-Sankoh-Conteh – Proposed Deputy Minister of Sports.

5. Closed Session

5.1 The Committee unanimously accepted the nomination of all the five candidates interviewed.

The Committee rose at 4: 40 p.m.