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

SIXTEENTH 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 12th December 2013 and interviewed nine Presidential nominees for appointment as:

- i. Ambassadors
- ii. Chairpersons, Boards of Directors of various state institutions

2. PROCEDURE

The Committee maintained strict consistency to its established procedure. Probing questions put to the nominees pertained to their educational backgrounds, track records in public office, declared assets, tax obligations and their visions for a successful tenure of office. Unsuitability in terms of character to hold such high offices were very closely scrutinized.

3. TWENTY SECOND SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON THURSDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2013

3:1 The following nominees were interviewed:

- I. **Dr. Tom Obaleh Kargbo – Proposed Board Chairman, National
Telecommunication Commission
(NATCOM)**

Dr. Kargbo is a veteran University lecturer and a seasoned diplomat. From May 2008 to date, Dr. Kargbo has been serving as Chairman, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Telecommunication Company (SIERRATEL)

Responding to probing questions, Dr. Kargbo said that as proposed Chairman of NATCOM, he did not want to give the impression that he was going to have an easy walk-over. “It is a tough and very competitive environment with many challenges to be faced. But I am not going there alone. I am going as a Member of a Commission. I am going to find people working there and I am prepared to work with them. I am sure that my experience at SIERRATEL would serve me well to achieve those objectives for which NATCOM was established,” Dr. Kargbo assured the Committee.

ii. Dr. Michael Sorie Kargbo – Proposed Board Chairman, National Commission for Privatization (NCP)

Dr. Michael S. Kargbo has worked for over fifteen years as a University lecturer. Eight of those years were spent in the University of Sierra Leone where he rose to the position of Senior Lecturer in Public Policy. Since May 2013 to date, he has been serving as Presidential Adviser (Private Sector) Strategy and Policy Unit, Office of the President, State House, Freetown.

Dr. Kargbo believed that his past activities have adequately prepared him for his new role as Chairman of the NCP which, he said, is a policy and decision-making body. “I want to say that I have been looking in from the outside as a public policy specialist working closely with Government. Now, I am going to work from within and I believe my past has actually prepared me for this moment. I have the requisite policy work experience to be able to undertake the challenging demands of this new job,” Dr. Kargbo said.

iii. Mr. Y. T. Sesay - Proposed Board Chairman, Road Maintenance Fund Administration (RMFA)

Mr. Sesay is a veteran Civil Servant who joined the Sierra Leone Civil Service in 1967, rose through the ranks and retired in 1992 as Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance.

Mr. Y. T. Sesay assured the Committee that he would draw on his wealth of experience and work to the best of his ability for the realization of His Excellency, the President’s Agenda for Prosperity.

iv. Mr. Winstanley Bankole Johnson- Proposed Board Chairman, Sierra Leone Commercial Bank.

Mr. Johnson is a career Banker of eminence with a record of 27 years of service in the Standard Chartered Bank. From 2011 to date, he has been the Chairman, Board of Directors of the 'Road Maintenance Fund Administration of Sierra Leone.' (RMFA)

Reacting to inquiring questions about recent events at the bank, Mr. Johnson said, "I am taking on this responsibility with a very clear and open mind, fully knowing that I am supposed to be the last line of comfort between the shareholders, which in this case is the Government, and the administration. I want to go there to use my expertise and experience in international finance, to see how best we can sanitize the banking environment. I am going there with an open mind so as to get a clear picture of what the situation is and then see how best I could direct and take the bank out of any murky situation it may be in... and I assure this Committee that once I get there, I would be able to turn things around"

v. **Sulaiman Kabba Koroma**- **Proposed Board Chairman, National Revenue Authority (NRA).**

Mr. Koroma is a professional legal practitioner who has previously served as a Board Member of NRA (2008 – date) and is currently the Acting Chairman, Board of Directors of the National Revenue Authority.(NRA)

Questioned on what added value he would be taking to the NRA, he said, "the first value I would add to the NRA is the generational value. Considering that I am given the unique opportunity to serve as Chairman of NRA at this youthful stage in my life, I would have to ensure that I do not fail that generational bracket to which I belong. I cannot afford to betray the confidence reposed in me by the President. I have to work hard to succeed so as to create avenues for other people of my age group to serve in similar positions in the future."

Mr. Koroma assured the Committee that "having worked for NRA since 2008, I know the challenges and what the future plans and goals of NRA are. When I joined the NRA in 2008, we were only collecting billions but now we collect trillions due to the good policies formulated by the Board and collaboratively implemented by the NRA management and workers."

vi. **Mr. Omire Golley** – **Proposed Ambassador, Extraordinary Plenipotentiary to South Korea**

Mr. Omire Golley is a legal Practitioner and a U.K. based International Business Consultant advising on investment opportunities in Sierra Leone and other selected developing countries.

Giving his knowledge on South Korea in response to inquiring questions, Mr. Golley said that he knew South Korea to be one of the leading economies in South East Asia. “ I know it to be very advanced in the areas of electronics, shipping, transportation and other areas,” he said. Mr Golley assured the Committee that the South Korean environment was one that he was very familiar with and could conveniently operate in. “South Korea and Sierra Leone, in my view, have a number of similarities which could help us in terms of our own agenda for development and prosperity. In fifty years and without minerals, South Korea has been able to advance itself through education and a very determined work ethic. This is an area I believe that would be useful to us.”

“South Korea,” Mr. Golley went on, “wants to be recognized for who they are in the world today and with the South-South cooperation being advanced by Sierra Leone amongst other developing countries, that,” he said, “could help Sierra Leone very much.”

On the issue of his peace adventure in Sierra Leone, he said “I felt there was need for us to come together to bring peace. My main thrust was to bring peace to our country and for that, I had to devote myself away from my work to accomplish that particular feat. I had had to undertake various tasks which, in my conscience, I thought were correct and right to try to bring peace to our country.”

vii. Arthur S. Harvey – Proposed Board Chairman, Sierra Leone Road Authority (SLRA)

Mr. Arthur Harvey is a former Member of Parliament (2002 – 2007). From 2010 to date, he has been a Member, Board of Directors, Road Maintenance Fund Administration (RMFA) where he also serves as Chairman of the Project Planning Committee.

Mr. Harvey assured the Committee that having served as a Board Member of the RMFA, he would endeavour to solve the impasse between the RMFA and the Sierra Leone Roads Authority (SLRA) “I know what the problem is. It is a matter of trust.”

viii. Mr. Osman Keh Kamara – Proposed Ambassador Extraordinary Plenipotentiary to Ethiopia, the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa.

From 2008 to date, Mr. Osman Keh Kamara has been the Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative for Legal Affairs of the Republic of Sierra Leone to the United Nations.

Members of the Committee, across party lines, who knew Mr. Kamara, commended him for his diplomacy and professional efficiency in the UN particularly for his dedicated and undivided attention to all matters on Sierra Leone in the UN Headquarters.

Reacting to questions, Mr Kamara said that Ethiopia is a multilateral station like the UN with about a 154 states including other accredited countries. “It is also the Headquarter of a regional organization where we need visibility. Sierra Leone ought to be heard in all the decision making machineries in the seat of the African Union in Ethiopia.”

Mr. Kamara promised to ensure that Sierra Leone is seen and heard in the Afrcan Union headquarter in Ethiopia if he is given the blessing of approval by Parliament.

ix. Mr. Claudius Josephus Thomas –Proposed Chairman, Members of Council, Statistics Sierra Leone.

Mr. Thomas started his career with a brief sojourn in the Civil Service. In 1982 he joined the university administration and by 1984, he had become a full time lecturer in Economics. He is the Founder/Director and Chief Editor for Research Publications on public policy issues.

Members of the Committee who knew Mr. Thomas expressed their belief in his ability to put the Statistic Office on course to provide a reliable and trustworthy information which this country needs.

Reacting, however to pertinent questions, Mr. Thomas deposed that prior to his nomination, His Excellency, the President had appointed an interim Committee, of which he was a member, to do some investigation into the Statistic Sierra Leone within a period of six weeks.

The Committee, he said, had submitted a report in which the shortcomings of the institution were highlighted including, how it could be prepared for the upcoming census of 2014. “We also took into account the apprehensions of our development partners as to the readiness of the institution for the pending census. I can assure Members that very serious work was put into it and that once we take over, we will put the institution in good stead to attract necessary funding which is in excess of US\$9 million....

“If we are appointed as a Council, we will first of all pursue the enactment of a bill which was developed by the interim Committee. The bill, once passed into law, would resolve many issues dealing with the institutional framework of the institution. That, I believe, would make the organization work better and more efficiently so that in due course, we may be able to work, as Sierra Leoneans, to produce our own census report, with people who are more knowledgeable about the process.”

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. Mr. Omrie Golley - Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to South Korea
- ii. Mr. Osman Keh Kamara - Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Ethiopia, the African Union & The Economic Commission for Africa
- iii. Mr. Arthur S. Harvey - Board Chairman, Sierra Leone Road Authority
- iv. Mr. Y. T. Sesay - Board Chairman, Road Maintenance Fund Administration
- v. Mr. Winstanley Bankole Johnson - Board Chairman, Sierra Leone Commercial Bank
- vi. Dr. Tom Obaleh Kargbo - Board Chairman, National Tele-communication Commission (NATCOM)
- vii. Dr. Michael Sorie Kargbo - Board Chairman, National Commission for Privatisation
- viii. Mr. Sulaiman Kabba Koroma - Board Chairman, National Revenue Authority
- ix. Mr. Claudius Josephus Thomas – Chairman, Members of Council, Statistics Sierra Leone Council

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the Sixteenth Report reflects the unanimous view of the Committee. I therefore move that the Sixteenth Report of the First Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations 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 TWENTY -SECOND SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE IN COMMITTEE ROOM NO.1 PARLIAMENT BUILDING ON FRIDAY 22ND March 2013 AT 11:00 A. M.

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

2. **Attendance**

2.1 The following Members of the Committee were present.

- i. Hon. S. B. B. Dumbuya
- ii. Hon. Chernor R. M. Bah
- iii. Hon. Dr. Bernadette Lahai
- iv. Hon. Ibrahim Bundu
- v. Hon. Alhaji Ansumana Jaia Kaikai
- vi. Hon. Amadu Kanu
- vii. Hon. Bliss Osho-Williams
- viii. Hon. Veronica Sesay
- ix. Hon. Claude Kamanda
- x. Hon. P. C. V.B.S. Kebbie
- xi. Hon. Benneh Bangura
- xii. Hon. E. K. Koedoyoma
- xiii. Hon. Mohamed Sidi Tunis
- xiv. Hon. Brimah Conteh

The following Members of the Committee were absent:

- i. Hon. Mabinty Funna
- ii. Hon. Augustine B. Torto

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

**4. Consideration of Presidential nomination for Ambassadorial
and other appointments:**

4:1 The following nominee was interviewed on oath:

Mr. Omrie Golley - Proposed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to South Korea

- i. Mr. Osman Keh Kamara - Proposed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Ethiopia, the African Union & The Economic Commission for Africa
- iii. Mr. Arthur S. Harvey - Proposed Board Chairman, SLRA
- iv. Mr. Y. T. Sesay - Proposed Board Chairman, Road Maintenance Fund Administration
- v. Mr. Winstanley Bankole Johnson - Proposed Board Chairman, Sierra Leone Commercial Bank
- vi. Dr. Tom Obaleh Kargbo - Proposed Board Chairman, NATCOM
- vii. Dr. Michael Sorie Kargbo - Proposed Board Chairman, National Commission for Privatization
- viii. Mr. Sulaiman Kabba Koroma - Proposed Board Chairman, NRA
- ix. Mr. Claudius Josephus Thomas – Proposed Chairman, Members of Council, Statistics Sierra Leone Council

5. Closed Session

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

The Committee rose at 3: 30 p.m.