

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

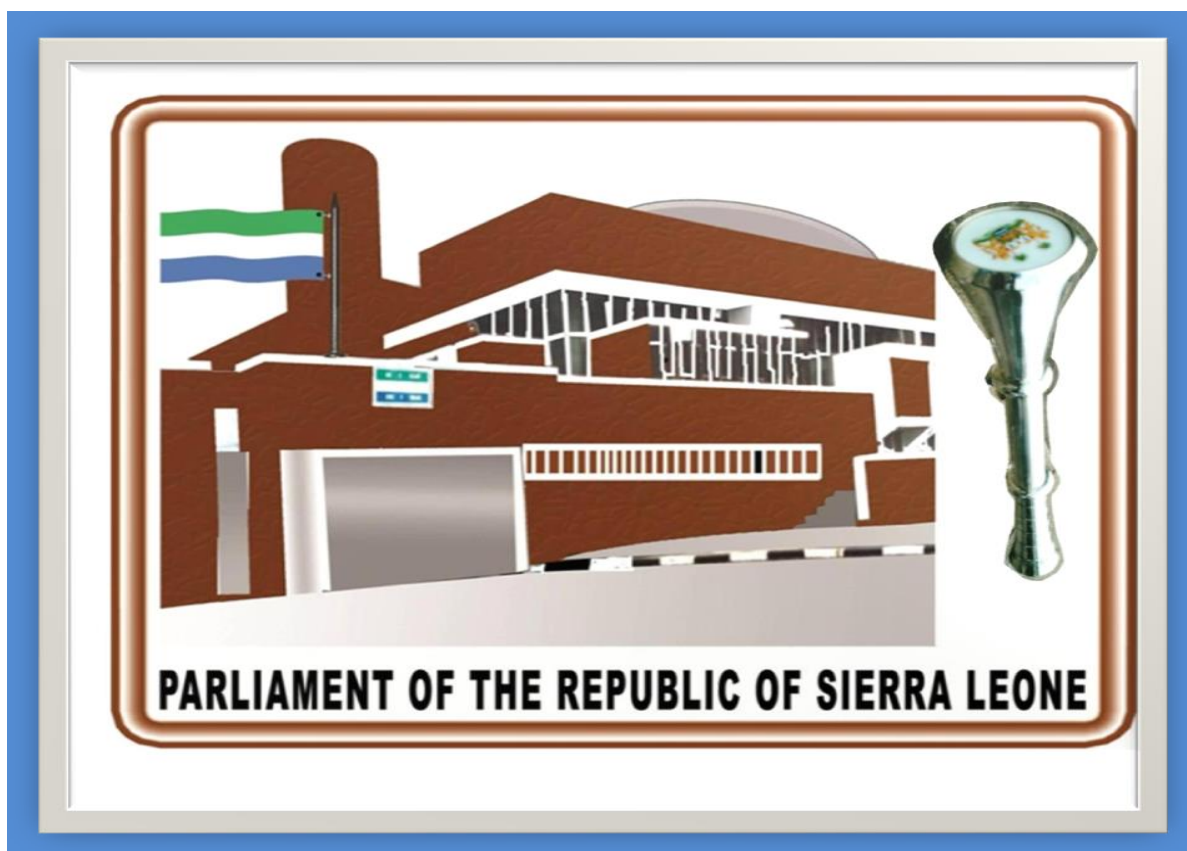
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

THIRD SESSION –SECOND MEETING

TUESDAY, 10TH NOVEMBER, 2020

SESSION – 2020/2021



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Tuesday, 10th November, 2020.

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THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

THIRD SESSION – FIRST MEETING OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Tuesday, 10th November, 2020.

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Mrs Bintu Weston, Read the Prayers]

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

[The Speaker, Hon. Dr Chernor Abass Bundu in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY 3RD NOVEMBER, 2020

THE SPEAKER: Leader of Government Business.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA [*Leader of Government Business*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to amend the Order Paper. Honourable Members, of course laying of papers is alright. It should be [b] The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice b[i] the next line: The constitution of Sierra Leone Act No.6 of 1991, remove the 1991 just after Sierra Leone. You come to b[ii]; the second line under b[ii], the constitution of Sierra Leone Act No.6 of 1991 is not 2020. For the Government motion item [V], we are only going to debate the first and the third, we are going to take out the second, and we defer that one to a convenient time. So, we now have item No. [V] for Government motion V [i & ii], now [iii] becomes [ii]. So, that is my amendment. Thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Is that the only amendment?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: It is the only amendment Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I have a motion on the Floor, are you speaking to that motion? Any seconder for this motion?

HON. AMBROSE M. LEBBIE: I so second the motion Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Motion to amend the Order Paper has been carried]

THE SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, from Bombali.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO [*Deputy Leader of Opposition*]: Mr Speaker, I thought I should raise this matter this morning principally because I have started seeing

signs of weakness and unwillingness on our part to go by the rules Governing the fight against COVID-19.

Mr Speaker, if you look at the Membership present here today you will discover that the use of mask has been severely 0.05% and therefore I simply believe that you should use your good offices to institute that.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, before you go further I have mined and I am wearing it right now.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, I have no intention of undermining your authority except to remind ourselves that these masks are very useful at this time.

THE SPEAKER: So, what do you want us to do about the Members without masks?

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, let them stand up so that we can see them. On that note could you please remind us that masks are very important at this time? Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: All those without masks to my left please rise let us see you?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, can you give us 5 minutes so that we can arrange our masks? Some have it under their desks.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: That is it. Mr Speaker, if that is your decision I would ask for a stand down of this House.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Yes. We stand down the House for 5 minutes.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: If that is your decision, otherwise I would definitely ask for a stand down if you insist.

THE SPEAKER: I was hoping that they have them in their bags.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: No. They have them under their tables; we have masks all over the place. Just distribute the masks.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, that is my decision, because we are the law makers and we should be the first to obey the law.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Agreed Mr Speaker and on that note I am asking for a stand down for 5 minutes.

THE SPEAKER: There is no need for that Honourable Leader.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: There is Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: No. no masks are being distributed.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, there is a need because we cannot dress in the Chamber. There is need for a stand down for 5 minutes; basically we are practicing the social distancing which is far more important than what we are talking about at this point. The essence of mask is used because of proximity, when we practice social distancing the masks will add value to what we do.

THE SPEAKER: I take due note of the fact that this point has been raised by your Deputy.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: And on that note Mr Speaker, this is Parliament, this is not partisan. I am doing it not just as a Leader of the Opposition but as a Leader of this House.

THE SPEAKER: Do you have comments to make Leader of Government Business?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I think the only comment I have to make is to cross check if everybody has put on their masks. I think everybody has masks now. So, they are properly dressed in term of COVID-19 rules and regulations.

Mr Speaker, thank you very much for giving us the space so that we can put on our masks and I think the Leader of the Opposition asked you to give us 5 minutes as you go along with the arguments tactically we have put on all our masks. So, all of us have masks now. But if you maintain a comfortable distance, I don't think you really need masks. I think we should forge ahead with the business of the day and if you can turn to the gallery you can see so many people without masks. So, can they leave the gallery through Mr Speaker?

THE SPEAKER: Absolutely.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Okay. I submit that one Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Sergeant-at-Arms, will you please go and inspect all the visitors in both the Upper and Lower galleries? Those without masks should kindly take leave of us.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, can I be heard please?

THE SPEAKER: No.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, you are saying this is the House of law.

THE SPEAKER: I have not given you the Floor Honourable John, take your seat. Do I take it that all Honourable Members are now properly masked? All Members to my right are you all masked and to my left. Thank you. I will now hear what you have to say.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. You earlier said that in this House we make laws and today you are mandating all Honourable Members to put on their mask. I am wondering if there are regulations to the effect because wearing masks has not been passed in this House of Parliament and this is the House of law.

I believe we have been calling on NACOVERC which they are in charge to come with the regulations to this House so that we can pass the law but up till now there is no regulation to Mann the Covid-19 and you are saying it is mandatory for us to wear masks, but I don't think it is mandatory for us to wear masks because there is no law for that.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, take your seat. I please refer you to Section [29] sub-Section [10] the answer to that question is in that sub-Section. It does not mean that a regulation needs to be passed before it becomes law. Under that provision, it comes into force and it is law which takes effect for at least 90 days before it elapses. Please Honourable Member, read that Section carefully. Shall we proceed please?

III. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY 3RD NOVEMBER, 2020

THE SPEAKER: We shall now deal with the Votes and Proceedings of the 16th meeting Held on Tuesday, 3rd November, 2020. As it's our usual practice we shall skip pages 1 through to 4 and start our consideration from page 5. Page 5, any comment or amendment? Page 6? and Page 7? Thank you. Can someone please move for the adoption of the Record of Votes and Proceedings for the Parliamentary Sitting Held on Tuesday 3rd November, 2020?

HON. ISHMAIL S. SANDY: I so move Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. JOSEPH W. LAMIN: I so second Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, put and Agreed to]

[Correction of Votes and Proceedings for the Parliamentary Sitting Held on Tuesday 3rd November, 2020 has been adopted as presented]

III. LAYING OF PAPERS

(C) THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

MRS MAMADI NGOBEH KAMARA *[Deputy Minister of Information and Communications]*: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your leave, I beg to lay on the Table of this Honourable House the following paper.

2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RIGHT TO ACCESS INFORMATION COMMISSION – SIERRA LEONE

(D) THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE

MR ANTHONY BRIWA *[The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice]*: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your leave I beg to lay on the Table of this Honourable House the following papers:

(i) THE CORONA VIRUS DISEASE EMERGENCY FUND REGULATIONS, 2020

THE CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE, [ACT NO. 6 OF 1991]

CONSTITUTIONAL INSTRUMENT NO.26 OF 2020

**(ii) THE CORONA VIRUS DISEASE EMERGENCY FUND
[MANAGEMENT] REGULATIONS, 2020**

THE CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE, 2020

CONSTITUTIONAL INSTRUMENT NO.27 OF 2020

**(iii) THE COVID-19 PUBLIC EMERGENCY RESPONSE
COORDINATION REGULATIONS, 2020**

THE PUBLIC EMERGENCY REGULATIONS, 2020

CONSTITUTIONAL INSTRUMENT NO.28 OF 2020

**(iv) THE COVID-19 PUBLIC EMERGENCY RESPONSE
COORDINATION [PROTECTIVE MEASURES] REGULATIONS, 2020**

THE CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE [ACT NO.6 OF 1991]

CONSTITUTIONAL INSTRUMENT NO.29 OF 2020

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise pursuant to Section [18] of the Standing Order in tandem with our constitution Section [23]7.

Mr Speaker, not faulting or blaming the former Attorney-General and Minister of Justice probably the fault will go to his predecessor who deliberately thought that she was far more brilliant than the entire nation. She failed with all the advice she received from this House and outside, she decided to abrogate knowledge to herself and today we are now in a quagmire. The quagmire I say is that we have 4 regulations before us and initially I am sure this House was unanimous in the view that the regulations were supposed to be put in one bound volume. As of today, we are yet to get the bounded document, but be that as it may, it's not the crux of the matter. Mr Speaker, you referred this House few minutes ago to Section [29] sub Section [10] of the

constitution, and on that note our position still remain constant and even though the regulations were supposed to have been brought to this House before the 90 days but let us accept it for argument sake because that is a decision for the Supreme Court, and even though papers had been filed months ago, the Judiciary has deliberately refused to list those matters for hearing whiles we are yet to be informed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I said we have 4 constitutional Instruments before us which includes 26, 27, 28 and 29, and on that note 26 and 27 cannot be before this House. The simple reason is that we have been asked to make these regulations retroactive and this House does not have that authority to do so, but if we do so we would be flouting Section [23]7 of our very constitution and punitive actions will be required. I am sure the Attorney-General is here and he knows very well with all due respect as a senior lawyer that penalties cannot be made retroactive. So, that is one point.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other two constitutional Instruments which are 28 and 29, they are fine documents but there are many provisions within the documents themselves that contravene the very financial provisions in our laws we have in this country. I am not blaming the Attorney-General as I said, had his predecessor done her work and done it properly today, we would not have found ourselves where we are. But she deliberately refused to listen to the pieces of advice she received from all quarters. We don't know what point she was standing on, I still remember one of the press conferences at State House, when she walked up the stage not like the general seated by me but like a military officer, I don't know where the former Attorney General and Minister of justice was trained.

Mr Speaker, definitely I would say with authority that these regulations should go back and they must be properly prepared before they are brought to this House, otherwise they would be laid on the Table of this House but posterity not too long from now might put Government in more serious jeopardy than where we are today.

On that note Mr Speaker, I am encouraging the current Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, I know he is a gentle man and I know exactly he knows what the law is, and

having being referred to the constitution which all of us respect, I would encourage the Attorney-General to come back to this House at the right time and ensure that these documents are withdrawn from the Table of this House otherwise we would be left with no alternative but to move a motion that would ask for the discussion of all these documents legally and with details for them to be removed from the Table of this House. Thank you very much *[applause.]*

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker, thank you very much Leader of the Opposition. You have raised series of issues regarding to the constitutional Instrument and for me I want to base on what you have said about laying of papers, it is the right of the Minister to come lay papers. But you said there is provision in Section [23]7 and Section [29] that has to do with the laying of papers and the commencement date of such Instruments. The Attorney-General is not far from us, I would like to invite the AG to take the podium again to do some clarifications because he just assumed office couple of months ago and I believe he has been with us for several meetings in this House. So on that note, I would like the AG to take the Floor to explain to us. Thank you.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, I would not want to disagree with the Leader of Government Business but if that is your wish so be it and then we would start the debate today.

THE SPEAKER: I want to know precisely what the AG is trying to say, you may please take your seat. Leader of Government Business what precisely are you asking the AG to inform this House?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: It is in line with the provisions that the AG cited in the constitution. I think he has said the Instruments are not properly laid before the House and they have long elapsed. So, it will good for him to withdraw these Instruments and properly prepare them and lay them before the House. I know we had problem with his predecessor, so I want the AG to just explain to us what causes the delay or what has happened along the line. If we have contravened the provisions in the constitutions

cited by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition or we are within the legal framework of laying the papers in front of this Honourable House today.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we want to know what is conviction in terms of these Instruments coming to Parliament today because there is a commencement date and there is provision for renewal in Section [29]. The AG will explain all those provisions to us if they are within the framework of the law. So, it is not a debate but a point of clarification. I just want you to clarify if we want to commence a debate I will engage with the Leader of Opposition to do so. I just want him to clarify for us the point raised by the Opposition Leader.

THE SPEAKER: Very well. In that case, I would like to pose a question to the learned Attorney-General. Mr Attorney-General, no doubt you must have left your office to come to this Well of Parliament with the sole purpose of laying papers on the Table.

You may not have anticipated the exchange that has just taken place. I don't know whether you came prepared to offer the answers to these questions raised or you would rather we give you time to come and be able to answer not only these questions, but many other supplementary questions that may flow therefrom.

ANTONY BRIWA ESQ [Attorney- General and Minister of Justice]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, of this Honourable House, my duty here is to lay these Instruments on the Table of the House. I never anticipated the point raised by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. Be that as it may, this House wants me to answer those questions and several issues raised, I will crave the indulgence of this House to be given a very short time which I will use to come to this House and then respond to all the issues raised *[applause.]*

THE SPEAKER: I thank the learned Attorney General for his submission. Attorney General still takes your seat. Order! Order! Honourable Members, what you want is virtual information, you do not want speculation. You want facts but not speculation from the learned Attorney. In light of that, since the learned Attorney has asked for time, I think this House should grant him that time *[applause.]*

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Yes Mr Speaker, may I be hard please? I have no problem that we give the learned Attorney General time to respond to these questions,

but on that note, I also want to bring it to the notice of this House that the rules governing laying of papers and the maturity of those papers remain suspended.

THE SPEAKER: No, no.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: No. We can suspend it Mr Speaker. There are rules governing laying of papers, and one of the rule state that; *"any Instrument being laid must be must mature after 21 days and it will becomes law"* but now that this is the first time such thing is taken place in this Parliament and this is my 7th years in Parliament this has never happen, but now that it has been the first time, I don't think it is fear enough, whiles waiting the response of the learned Attorney General, at the same time, the timing is going on. So, I am asking that we suspend the timing for now; otherwise it will be unfear to this House. Let's imaging if it would have come two weeks from now to this Parliament it would have become a Law.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, sorry Sir. The Attorney General assured us that he will come back to this Parliament. The Attorney General can assure us that he will come back at least within the next 14days maximum so that we don't go out of time as the Honourable Member is saying. Let us get the assurance in this House.

THE SPEAKER: I think that is the reasonable time. I will not entertain any Point of Orders at this point in time. Hold on learned Attorney General, there is a request that you come back to this House within 14 days to provide us with the explanation and information requested by the House. I hope you will find that convenient time to come as instructed.

ANTTONY BRIWA ESQ: As Mr Speaker and the House pleases.

THE SPEAKER: So, it is decided?

MR ANTTONY BRIWA ESQ: Yes Sir.

THE SPEAKER: So, it is decided that 14 days from now the Attorney General will come back to the House to offer the House the relevant information and explanations.

MR ANTTONY BRIWA ESQ: I shall be here when ever this House call up on me Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, I want to have the Floor. Thank you Mr Speaker, just a minute, you will be given the Floor back. I am standing on S.O [34] with your leave, I am saying thank you very much Leader of the Opposition for not moving the motion so that you don't put our Attorney General and Minister of Justice under stress and for given us such a longer time so that the Minister can go and prepared himself to come and answer to these questions you have raised this morning. Thank you very much.

Mr Minister, if you do not come within the stipulated time it will be contempt of Parliament. I hope you are a gentle man and long standing lawyer with no means standing? I know you will come.

THE SPEAKER: Leader of Government Business with respect I have already taking the ruling on that.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, but I also need to emphasize on that because I don't want the Minister to be in contempt with this Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: I have so decided that he will be here in 14 days.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUAM: Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Dickson Rogers, you have the Floor.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, for the records, we have visitors at the gallery and Honourable Daniel B. Koroma said; "this is the first time what is happening now has happened." I just want to make clarification because he also said; that he has been here for the past 7 years. I think we were in this House together and what has happened today is not a new phenomenon. It is happens under his own very eyes and on that day Honourable Chernor R.M. Bah was the Speaker presiding on that day. Thank you very much.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, this is why I cautioned initially when we started, but the way things are going now we cannot be here and misinformed the

public. When we give example, the example must be specific that is what I did; we cannot say it happened yesterday or today without giving specifics example. These things will not happen in this House, this is a House of law; we make laws here, so when you say something happened you must measure when, how and where it happened, you cannot just talk in vacuumed, it has never happened to my knowledge and it has never happened to his knowledge.

THE SPEAKER: I don't think quite frankly that issue is in contention, let leave it alone. Honourable Members, I am in great empathy with the learned Attorney General what unfortunately is been subjected to is none of his own making. It is the consequence of action or inaction by his predecessor, for that reason I am in empathy with his predicament. But haven said that; he is given the assurance that he will come back to the House to offer the necessary information requested within 14 days. I think that should suffice.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: upon that 14 days, the 21 days period will commence.

THE SPEAKER: That is not a decision for you to make the Honourable Member.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Otherwise, we will have only 7 days to debate.

THE SPEAKER: Opinions are free to make and facts are scared. So, that decision is not for you to make.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I am just suggesting Sir. I am not deciding, I am just suggesting Sir.

THE SPEAKER: These Papers will remain on the Table of the House until we comes back.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Until 21 days, commencing to date.

THE SPEAKER: Let me listen to the Opposition Whip.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Speaker, we are not uphold to the idea of the Attorney General coming back to this House, but let me also drawn the attention of this House that his predecessor, the sacked Attorney General came here made a commitment that

they were going to come with the regulations but those regulations never came, and now it is only her successor that is bring those regulations. What assurances do we have now, and are we sure that he is going to do what he promised us or we are going to get the experience that we got from his predecessor. Those are the things that are bringing up these questions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like we said; let us understand one thing, I will borrow from the page book of Mr Speaker, let us bring back dignity to this House, and let people treat us with dignity. This is a House of law and what we do here is that let it be our bound, so we are not objecting to the idea, but we hope and pray that within 14 days not exactly 14 days marked the Attorney General will be here and the needful will be done as far as we are concern.

THE SPEAKER: I take due note of what the Honourable Member has said, it is indeed a matter of regret that reference has to be remade to the action or in action of the previous Attorney General. That is a matter of history and for the record; as far as the present Attorney General is concern now we crave the indulgence of this House that we accept the assurances given and we wait for 14 days to laps for us to make the necessary judgement and decision. Thank you.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the whole issue of the State of Emergency and it accompanying regulations has been controversial. The laying of regulations here so far it almost 220 days instead of less than 90 days, because of that I will implore that we follow the procedures strictly. Many of us enter into very difficult negotiations which you are aware of, and we were are slapped in the face.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are people going to the media saying; "motions do not matter," and we had a motion on the Floor that those regulations would have been placed here 14 days after we declared State of Emergency. So, I am sure Honourable Speaker, you will understand our reticence, you would understand our distrust. Therefore, I agreed with Honourable from Kabala, that in fact we want to stop the clock, we had warned already during those controversial periods that when you break trust and we are not referring to the Attorney General as a person, we are

referring to the office because a Minister represented the then Attorney General here and when the Attorney General came back she said; "I was not brief." So, we need to know now and I want to agree with Honourable Koroma that in fact the clock has stop because we had even thought that we should withdraw this document, but we are doing with your ruling, that we would allow Honourable learned Attorney General to go back and prepare because there are many questions he has to respond to. It is not only the question raised by Honourable Daniel B. Koroma.

Mr Speaker, I do agree and if it is necessary, we want to move a motion that in fact the clock does not start now, the clock start when he comes back because been unprepared is not an excuse.

So, I want to take due leave to pass a motion, even if it is necessary, and my motion is that the consideration of 21 days rule when papers are laid in this House start when the learned Attorney General come back to this Well of Parliament. I need a seconder to this motion *[applause.]*

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, I so second the motion.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, I really cannot understand what Honourable Kande Yumkella is saying.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Leader of Government Business.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I want to conclude this statement Sir.

THE SPEAKER: No. To be honest, with respect just take your sit.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Alright.

THE SPEAKER: The Honourable Member from Kambia District, I don't know the purport of your motion and the seconder. I have made a ruling on this, are you reversing the ruling that I made?

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: If I may give clarification Honourable Speaker, we have accepted your ruling for 14 days.

THE SPEAKER: Therefore, ends right there, its ends right there.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: No, no Mr Speaker, if I may finish...

THE SPEAKER: Its ends there, I had made a ruling on the matter.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: On one issue Sir. It is also within our right Honourable Speaker, if I may with great respect to you Sir. We likes your ruling, because as I said; some of us wanted this withdrawn first but we consider Sir, because of your good intervention and it is a new issue we are raising with you Sir. We are concern because of what happened before instead of 90 days, we are looking at almost 250 days and for the records of the future President to believe what the previous Attorney General said that declarations can be made and they are law, we don't want bad precedent so this is why we want the procedure to be clear here.

We don't want the future Attorney General coming and say; after three hundred days of a State of Emergency to say sorry I am not prepared; it is an institution is not a person.

Mr Speaker, with respect we insist on our motion and the seconder *[applause.]*

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, I know S.O [42] states that the decision of the Chair is final.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you want to stop the counting for 21 days, let us allow them to move a motion, but you are not going to pin point saying come within 14 days or 21 days period, we have agreed in principle. It is a gentle man's agreement in this Honourable House, it did not come from me, its came from the Leader of the Opposition, I am just emphasizing on it. Can we respect the view of the Leader of the Opposition? He requested for 14 days and I asked him if he does not need a motion, he said he does not need it because it is a gentle man's agreement let the Attorney General come within 14 days and the Speaker made his ruling on that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for me whether you move a motion or not the Attorney General is going to come before 21 days and 14 days falls within the 21 days period. I don't know why you are weary about everything. I am begging my colleagues Honourable Members on the other side that this is not the time we need to fight about 14 days or 21days, and this is a new dispensation. We have agreed on 21 days except

it was it the Honourable Leader of the Opposition who raised the concern and gave this period. So, I asked him again to say I moved a motion for us to stop the counting for 21 days period. We know that if you laid legal Instrument before the House, it will take 21 days before it's become law, while if you want to stop that you should move a motion.

Mr Speaker, if they want to move a motion let it come from the Leader of the Opposition, because he started everything. We don't need to fight over this thing, but on principles we said 14 days is not beyond the 21 days period, let us believed ourselves. Thank you. I rest my case.

THE SPEAKER: I want to say if we can expedite our proceedings?

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Speaker, let me be heard.

THE SPEAKER: Hold done, are you trying to help me or you are trying to complicate matters?

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Not at tall Sir.

THE SPEAKER: The Honourable Member from Kambia, did I hear you move a motion? The Honourable Member from Koinadugu, are you still seconding that motion? Let me draw your attention to Section [170] sub-Section [7]. If you want to delay the proceedings it fine, but you need two third majorities of Members of Parliament. Again, I encourage you to carefully read Section [170] sub-Sections [7] Paragraph C.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, with your leave I beg because I don't want our colleague to fell...

THE SPEAKER: I don't want us to go that route.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: No. That is the reason I emphasize on what the Leader of the Opposition proposed because we need to trust ourselves in this House.

THE SPEAKER: I am coming.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I don't want us to go that route Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Hold on Leader of Government Business. The Honourable Member from Kambia quite frankly, I would have thought the point made by the Leader of the Opposition, responded to the Leader of Government Business on which I ruled should have satisfies this House.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, the relevant Section which you have referred us to, is Section [170] sub-Section [7] paragraph C doesn't in any way apply to this issue in question. We are not asking for annulment Sir, we agree with your ruling, let the document stand because this issue has been reason for the first time and the Attorney General is just taking over from his predecessor which leads to some of these actions...

THE SPEAKER: No. I am coming, Honourable Member.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: We are not annulling the document.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, we are not here to score points.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: We are not annulling the document.

THE SPEAKER: We are not here to score the debating point, I would have score.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, I am not here for scoring point. I am here to save the interest of Sierra Leone, not scoring point.

THE SPEAKER: The point you have made is quite relevant. We have a situation where we can clearly draw distinction between the scenarios that happen here under the watch of the previous Attorney General and what is happening now.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Indeed.

THE SPEAKER: I would have thought that this House should be extended some measures of indulgence to the new Attorney General.

HON. DAINEL B. KOROMA: Which we have done, even if you say three weeks we are ready, if three weeks is not enough.

THE SPEAKER: And let me land. Can I finish?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: We are ready to indulge Mr Speaker, we are ready to give in, we would understand with him, if three 3 weeks is still small for the learned Attorney General we are ready to give him more because we know this circumstances under which he took over.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: We are not debating at this point please.

THE SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition you have the Floor.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, I want to thank you very much for the patient you have exercised, but again I want to plead with all of us in this House more so my colleagues, having reference to Section [170] sub Section [7] paragraph C you refereed this House to, not relaying on annulment but duration of 21 days, I believed when the 14 days comes or before the 14 days the AG could decide to come tomorrow or even when he is ready. He cannot come after 21 days and if he does it is going to be contempt of Parliament. Mr Speaker, since this is a House of law and...

THE SPEAKER: Let me perhaps clarify. The AG has to come back to this House not later than 14 days from today.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, it could be two days or a week.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all of us are not happy with what the previous AG did, we are all treated with all the things we don't like but this is where we have found ourselves, and I know that between now and 14 days or even at 14 days whatever we do here on that day I am going to find the formal motion. And in that motion things will be spelt out, but I think 14 days is a reasonable period. I am sure our position is not going to change after 14 days if the documents remain the way they are today. So, before 21 days we would have taking a position and whatever decision we would have concluded. So, for us to make progress I want to plead with my colleagues that we allow your ruling to stay so that we respect the Standing Orders and then make progress.

THE SPEAKER: I hope your colleagues are now ready to listen?

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: Mr Speaker, we are advising some of our colleagues to understand that Section [98] gives us freedom of speech here.

THE SPEAKER: I am listening to you.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: Mr Speaker, please Sir, for me and for the NGC we have looked into Section [170], Sub Section [7] paragraph C and understand but my colleague Honourable Leader of the main Opposition has said; "however for the benefit of society that Section which the Honourable Speaker referred to is very clear that is when the Instruments were laid here, and as far as we know no regulation has been laid here since May, we want the public to understand that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if the Honourable Leader of the APC is suggesting that we accept your ruling, we want the public to understand why we are sticking on the 21 days. So, I will yield to my colleague from the APC that has ask us to withdraw our motion which we will do in the spirit again and there was a motion that the Speaker had accepted and there was a seconder to that motion.

Honourable Attorney General, we hope that by compromising here again, we will all live with the compromises we have made, we did it before and after long meetings also facilitated by the Speaker, we started getting legal theories that even motions do not matter.

Mr Speaker, I just want to put on record that the Attorney General understands what we are trying to do here and why some of us are very firm this morning on constitutionality. So, I will withdraw my motion.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, before you take your sit, from my own edification where did you get your 21 days?

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: We moved the motion...

THE SPEAKER: Where did you get your 21 days because so much reference has been made to 21?

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: Any Instrument that is laid here becomes operative after 21 days.

THE SPEAKER: Where does it say that?

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: It is said in our Standing Orders and in the constitution. It is clear Mr Speaker, you know as I know that Section [170] sub Section [7] is clear let us not confuse the public.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, our colleague and Leaders of NGC have been relying on Section [170] sub Section [7] which clearly makes provision for 21 days, all these while that is what they have been doing.

THE SPEAKER: I thank you Leader of the Opposition. That is what I thought he was relying on.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: That is what I said over and over Mr Speaker. So, I am wondering why the question.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member from Kambia.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: Yes Sir.

THE SPEAKER: You cannot approbate on the one hand and reprobate on the other.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, for the records. My final bite is that I have heard about word "compromise" been use like three or four times.

THE SPEAKER: Exactly.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: For the records as he says and the public, we are not compromising anything out of the constitution.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you!

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: The compromise made is within the constitution, it is legal and it is justifiable before the 21 days period. So, I just want to make it clear for the public that I had said in the past and I will repeat again today, I will never join any

individual or group to compromise anything that will go against the constitution. I will respect the laws of the land and I will stick by them. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: For clarification the compromise here is that we remove our motion.

THE SPEAKER: You do not have the Floor. The learned Attorney General you are excuse, you may take leave of us.

1. THE THIRD SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENT AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE MET ON WEDNESDAY, 4TH NOVEMBER, 2020.

PROPOSAL: Honourable Mathew S. Nyuma

SECONDER: Honourable Hassan A. Sesay.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: After the marathon I cannot say more but to say thanks to the Opposition Leader for driven us through the Constitution that we don't need to compromise certain things, we need to work with the Instruments we have which is the Standing Orders and the Constitution. I cannot thank you anymore Leader of the Opposition, but let me now move to the other business.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolve that the sixth report of the third session of the Committee on Appointment and the Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations contain therein be approved.

1. Introduction

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service in tandem with its Constitutional obligations met on Wednesday, 4th November, 2020 and interviewed four Presidential Nominees for the following appointments:

- i. *Chairman and Commissioner, National Telecommunications Commission [NATCOM]*
- ii. *Deputy Head of Mission, Sierra Leone Embassy, Federal Republic of Germany*

- iii. Deputy Ambassador, Sierra Leone Embassy, Federal Republic of Ethiopia
- iv. Director General, National Disaster Management Agency

2. Procedure

The Committee maintained strict consistency with its established procedure. The nominees were interviewed on issues pertaining to their educational background to ensure that they have the relevant education and necessary backup experience to hold such important offices of State. Further probing questions put to the nominees covered wide ranging issues relating to their track records in pertinent work situations, declared assets, tax obligations and their visions for a nationally productive tenure. Issues of unsuitability or otherwise were closely looked into by the Committee.

The following nominees were interviewed on oath:

- i. Ambassador Joseph Christopher Blell, Proposed Chairman and Commissioner, National Telecommunications Commission [NATCOM]

Ambassador Blell is a renowned ex-service military professional, entrepreneur and politician of esteemed admirable service records that had earned him a national award of Commander of the Order of Sierra Leone [CORSL.] After his Military career, he registered the following professional services:

President, African Centre for Strategic Studies [ACSS], Sierra Leone - 2002-date

Director and Shareholder, Sierra Leone Insurance Company [SLICO] - since 1994

High Commissioner/Ambassador Plenipotentiary, Federal Republic of Nigeria- [1993-2002]

Deputy Minister of Defence, Republic of Sierra Leone [2002-2007], amongst others

Responding to questions on his knowledge on [NATCOM] operations and what he would bring as improvements to the Commission, the nominee said: "I am aware that the 2006 Act established the National Telecommunications Commission to provide for the licensing and regulation of telecommunications operators and for the promotion of

universal access to basic telecommunication services, fair competition for the benefit of investors, and the users of telecommunication networks and services, all in a bid to achieve effectiveness in regional and global telecommunications.”

He continued that as a team player, he would rely on his capability and other Commissioners to perform the ‘watch dog’ monitoring role especially relating to issues of general interest such as mobile tariffs charges and the sensitive issues of the monitoring and supervision of the Communication gateway amongst others as in the [NATCOM] amended Act of 2015,he concluded.

ii. Ambassador Fatmata Edna Kargbo-Proposed Deputy Head of Mission, Sierra Leone Embassy Federal Republic of Germany

Ambassador Fatmata Edna Kargbo, is a career diplomat with experience spanning nearly two decades in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation [MFAIC]. She holds a Masters Degree in Public Sector Management from the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration [GIMPA] and a host of other professional/diplomatic achievements to her credit. She has served in several high ranking diplomatic positions at the MFIC thus:

Minister Chancellor/ Head of Chancery, Sierra Leone High Commission, Banjul -2010-2012

Director, Administration and Finance Division – Ministry of Foreign Affairs -2012-2016

Minister Chancellor and Head of Chancery, Sierra Leone High Commission, Accra, Ghana- June, 2016 - May-2018

State Chief of Protocol - 2018-2019

On migration issues and her innovations to the new assignment in Germany, the experienced Diplomat assured the Committee thus: “I am a team player, and I promise to work hand in glove with my immediate boss to improve on our bilateral relationship and bring what is good for Sierra Leone. On migration issues as a diplomat, I know the

problem is global and topical in all multi-lateral relations, but we need to let our nationals know that they must abide by the laws of the host countries.”

She concluded that her long presence in the Foreign Service and expertise acquired from various missions served would help her to perform the tasks as a diplomat and with keen political lenses to promote the agenda of the Government.

iii. Mr Duwai Sellu Lungay - Proposed Deputy Ambassador, Sierra Leone Embassy, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

Mr Duwai Sellu Lungay is a seasoned career diplomat with credible serving experience spanning over two decades in both the diplomatic world and the Civil Service. He holds an advanced degree in Education from the Fourah Bay College [University of Sierra Leone] and a host of other certificates and diplomas to his credit in varying fields encompassing Leadership skills, International Security and Mediation, Diplomatic Protocols, Nuclear non-Proliferation and Disarmament. A further background check of his professional achievements from 2003- 2020 revealed the following:

2019-2020 - Acting Deputy Director General

2015-2019 - Minister Chancellor /Head of Chancery, Embassy of Sierra Leone, State of Kuwait

2012- 2015 - Director, International Organization and Legal Affairs, MFAIC

2010-2012 - Chancellor/Head of Chancery, Sierra Leone High Commission, Abuja, Nigeria

2008-2010 - Acting High Commissioner, Sierra Leone High Commission, Banjul, Gambia.

2006- 2008 - Chancellor/Head of Chancery, Sierra Leone High Commission, Banjul Gambia

Responding to questions relating to his length of service and experience in the corridors of diplomacy, he said: “I have been in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation for eighteen years and have contributed immensely to most of the transformation now unfolding.”

Reacting to questions regarding the cultural diversity of Ethiopia and his role as a diplomat in such country, the nominee said: "Ethiopia is a country that has a mixed culture of both African and Asian descendants; its politics is actually a bit dicey, especially when its links with Somali land and the role of the African Union [AU] bringing peace and unity to that region.

Speaking on his diplomacy, he stated that if called upon in arbitrating political divide in Ethiopia, the Diplomat said: "In the heart of diplomacy, we have certain elements we normally look at, and we also have certain tools we normally use to address certain issues and one of them is negotiation. You have to negotiate, you have to mediate, and you also have to dialogue with the parties as a way of trying to bring sanity in terms of peace, unity and stability to prevail in a country. If there is an any issue of contention, negotiating and getting the parties to understand, and taking into consideration the peace and security aspects that would be at stake would be carefully weighed before proffering solutions.

Mr Lungay promised the Committee that he would add value to our presence in Ethiopia and other international arenas of diplomacy in accordance with Government vision. He expressed hope to use the African Union whose headquarter is in Addis Ababa, to raise awareness among our nationals both at home and abroad to vie for positions within the AU and other international arenas such as the International Criminal Court [ICC] so as to increase our diplomatic representations globally.

iv. *Lt Gen. Rtd Brima Sesay, Proposed Director General, National Disaster Management Agency*

Lt Gen Rtd Brima Sesay is an example of diligent career military personnel any nation can be proud of. He rose through the ranks in the army with outstanding track records from a Platoon Commander, progressing through Adjutant, Company Commander, various Joint Forces Commanding positions, etc. to the most enviable army rank of Chief of Defence Staff of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces. He has a Masters

Degree in Strategic Studies and Administration and other Certificates/diplomas to his credit relating to handling issues on emergency situations.

Responding to Committee enquiries on his knowledge on disaster and mental state of alertness for the assignment, the nominee said: "I am mentally and physically strong as a retired military officer to take this job for which I am nominated to serve. I am also aware of the global trend of natural and man-made disasters for which Sierra Leone has set laws to prevent and mitigate. With team work, we will interpret and enforce the laws to protect the lives of fellow Sierra Leoneans. We will also work on stronger legislations and relate with other institutions, such as Environment Protection Agency [EPA], National Protected Area Authority [NPAA], Meteorological Agency [MET-SL], Ministry of Lands, etc. to reassess and remap countrywide disaster prone areas for strategic preventive measures instead of responses after occurrence of crisis," he concluded.

3. *Recommendation[s]*

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

[i] Ambassador Joseph Christopher Blell, Proposed Chairman and Commissioner, National Telecommunications Commission [NATCOM]

[ii] Ambassador Fatmata Edna Kargbo - Proposed Deputy Head of Mission, Sierra Leone Embassy, Federal Republic of Germany

[iii] Mr Duwai Sellu Lungay-Proposed Deputy Ambassador, Sierra Leone Embassy, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

[iv] Lt Gen Rtd Brima Sesay, Proposed Director General, National Disaster Management Agency.

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

Singed.....

Hon. Mathew S. Nyuma, Chairman and Leader of Government Business

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: I so second Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Members, the question is that the sixth report of the third session of the Committee on Appointment and the Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations contain therein be approved.

[Question Proposed]

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Thank you Mr Speaker. Today, again we are going through a process that is a usual one for us in this House that is to approve nominees sent to us by His Excellency the President. However, in this case today, I will leave the best for the last, but let me start with the lady, the proposed Ambassador Madam Edna Kargbo.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, normally we tell the gallery that they are here to be seen and not to be heard but I have never heard it from you today.

THE SPEAKER: Well say it for me.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: I won't that is your job. However, looking at the résumé of Madam Kargbo, we have no doubt that she will perform in her position. One thing that impressed me when she was going through the vetting process, she kept referring to one word that; "I will always work with my boss," meaning she is prepared to be working with her superior and not to challenge the authority of her superior because in most situations it is when people believe or they assume more authority that they really have is where the problem emanate. This demonstrated that she will be a true team player and she will always be ready to work within the ambit of the law and to respect

what the boss will say. I doff my hat for her and believe that she will deliver in that area. We interviewed fine diplomats of course she was one, another is Mr Lungay. I came into contact with him when I used to visit Ministry of Foreign Affairs, you might not be able to understand it...

THE SPEAKER: Are you okay?

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Yes Sir. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members.

THE SPEAKER: Whiles we await the Honourable Member, may I take this opportunity to recognise the presence in our midst of few personalities who are no strangers to this House. First, I will like to recognize Mr John O. Benjamin, former Leader and Chairman of the SLPP party. I would also want to recognize Dr John Karimu, who have served this country in many different capacities including the position of Minister of Finance and may I take pride and privilege to also introduce my eldest daughter Miss Isatu Bundu.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Speaker, I think I am fine now. I met Mr Lungay when I used to visit the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where he use to work with my brother, they were colleagues for a very long time, and I have lost him less than a year ago...

THE SPEAKER: I will suggest that you still need more time.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: I am fine Mr Speaker. I will have to move on. On meeting with Mr Lungay, he demonstrated all the attributes that a good diplomat must possess; he is humble, very direct and always very mild mannered, very respectful and no wonder he has been elevated to the level he has gone in diplomatic service. He is somebody who cannot hurt a fly, he is always in good company with people, he is one who will succeed in the diplomatic service that is why I have no doubt that Mr Lungay will deliver as expected in that area.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, of course when we talk about military men, we talk about discipline, when we talk about people who went through the rank we expect them to bring discipline to wherever they go. In the vetting process, he answered questions directly and assured us that even before coming to where he has been

nominated for he had been doing the same job that is not a strange area for him, he will be in the comfort zone and we expect him to deliver.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me come to the man of all season, the man of everybody which is Mr Christopher Blell. I don't know if Ambassador Alie Bangura is here, I am expecting him to be here, I know why I am saying that; because these are people who have been together for the longest time. Of course, I knew I was going to see certain people today and I have seen them. I met Mr Blell about thirty years ago and when I met Mr Blell, it was in an area where he demonstrated that he is got the skill to manage situations and I tell you the reasons why, since then I developed a trust in this man and we have been friends since then.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Blell came from Nigeria, worked with the old Edwardian football club at a time when old Edwards football club needed somebody to rescue from a situation, when I talk about him I talk about the Bangs flow of blessed memory because they came together to old Edwardian team, by then Nahim Khadi was with Eastern Lions. Mr Blell came in and filled that gap.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Blell demonstrated his ability to deal with every cadre of individual from the intellectual to the hoi polloi. He shows that he can cut across every area to deal with the illiterate, to deal with the literate, to deal with S.O [2] raray boys, and every kind of person. Of course, if you want to know what are difficult to manage are footballers. It is a difficult task anybody will have. I have been through it and he knows it. He showed his ability to manage also when he took Mohamed Kallon from Ahmadiyya School to Edwards School and then the ability to manage people was demonstrated also when Mohamed Kallon signed a contract at Monegasque it was Joel Blell handing work to have a 10% resale value to old Edwardian team whenever Mohamed Kallon is being sold from Monegasque.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when Mohamed Kallon was sold from Monegasque to Intermilland, Old Edwardians benefited from that deal it was the handing work of Mr Blell also. He spent his resources to make sure the players at Old Edwardians felt cared for, there we have players like; Junior Tumboos, Ahmidu Karim, Saidu Kamolie etc.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, since then Mr Blell has demonstrated his management skills at that level, and that is why when he was nominated to the position of Chairman, National Telecommunication, I have no doubt because he is a man that has passion for the Military and cannot go unnoticed because he has always being very proud of been in the Military and having served his country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe that in any area he is being given the position to serve I know he will go there with a passion, with a desire to succeed and he has always being succeeding. We interact in politics well, that is a topic for another day Sir.

THE SPEAKER: So, you were not just a spectator?

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: No. I was a manager, a very good one at that time.

THE SPEAKER: No. I was not going there.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Okay. Thank you. Today I am seeing the big Mr John O. Benjamin on the side, we have being friends since I knew him. He does not normally come to this Well except for a few times.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, however I have no doubt that Christopher Blell can always get his friends around him when they are required. He is such a good person, he is such a human being, he is got the heart and I am sure that going to NATCOM with that kind of mind set he can succeed. Let me again draw your attention that you are going to an institution with a lot of challenges and there have been issues that has to be dealt with but for now this is not the podium to discuss that. I am saying this because, I am the longest serving Member of the Information Communications Committee, so I know where you are going and we expect as a nominated Chairman of that Commission you will bring sanity to that institution and work with the Commissioners that are there to ensure NATCOM become what it used to be.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, of course I have no doubt in your ability to lead institution; I have no doubt in your ability to inject a dose of new blood into the operations of NATCOM. Even though you are not an Executive Chairman, yet the terms

of reference of what you ought to do will be determine by the Act. The Act stipulate precisely what you are supposed to be doing and so we hope you go by the Act and do what is necessary to uplift NATCOM again.

On that note Mr Speaker, I think I have said enough and if I keep talking about Mr Christopher Joseph Blell I will not stop, but for now at least we have done the needful, we hope he will deliver for Sierra Leoneans and for this country as a whole. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member, for his contribution. I will now give the Floor to Honourable Boston Munda.

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in a special way I want to thank His Excellency, the President for appointing these greats nominees in our midst today.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I do not like normally to sing praise on nominees but today I am oblige to talk on a specific nominee which is the proposed Chairman of NATCOM by the name of Ambassador Christopher Joseph Blell. Having gone through his résumé, I have no doubt in my mind that he will not perform and of course he has been there for quite a long time for us as young men. We have been so personate about your performance in some of these sectors you have been all through before. Of course, you are going to lead NATCOM as a Chairperson and you are going to work with six other Commissioners, you are going to work with management and staff of NATCOM, most of them are coming from different background and therefore you have to prepare your mind to face new challenges and ensure you work towards those challenges in a cohesive manner.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am confidence that this time around NATCOM will have a decorous situation. Of course, the late Chairman may his soul rest in peace did his best to ensure NATCOM progress but today he is no more and you are going to step in that capacity as a Chairperson at NATCOM. I am also confidence that you will perform; I have no doubt in my mind. Again, I want to draw your attention to the

Committee on Information and Communications which I happens to be the Chairman of that Committee, I want you to work with the Committee, you cannot work alone, Commission cannot work alone, they have to work with the Committee that is what the reason why they have the Honourable Members from different political parties that are part of that Committee and also all of you in that Commission are part of different Constituencies. So, we want your support and we are also here to give absolute support for you to succeed as a team and make us proud.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me look at one nominee by the name of General Brima Sesay; I met him when he was the Chief of Staff. One thing I know is that humility pays a lot and he is a very down to earth person and that is a clear example for all of the nominees that are present here today, that they should go along with humility because it pays, arrogant does not pay.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank His Excellency, the President for bringing General Brima Sesay as Director General because he has been there for all of us, and his is so much respectful that I can attest to. So, I have no fair and doubt in my mind that he will not perform, I am sure he will perform excellently. I want to congratulate all the nominees as you go to your various propose offices be rest assure of this House's commitment and support to all of you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, without much ado, I want this House to speedily ratify this nominees so that they can go to work. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member, for his contribution to the debate. Is that your new seat Honourable Member?

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: No Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Next time I will only allowed you to speak from your allotted seat.

HON.MUNDA BOSTON: Thank you Mr Speaker.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Speaker, we need to suspend S.O [5]2

THE SPEAKER: Does a long time ago. Do you know when I reinstated it?

HON.ABDUL KARGBO: No. We have not.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Yes. Indeed, I was with him when he did it few of us were here.

THE SPEAKER: You were not in the Chamber, and Leader of the opposition.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Honourable Abdul Kargbo, you were not here when we suspended S.O [5]2. Do not say anything, just accept.

THE SPEAKER: The Honourable from Port Loko, what do you want to say? No. I was referring to the Honourable Member, at the back there; his is from Port Loko, Lungi to be precise.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Exactly Sir.

THE SPEAKER: I am not given you the Floor. Take your seat.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Thank you Sir.

THE SPEAKER: We have not heard one particular Honourable for some time. I will give him the privilege which is the Honourable Paramount Chief Bai Kurr, you have the Floor.

HON. P.C. BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Some of you are envious not so? Chief give it short so they would not go too envious.

HON. P.C. BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, of this Parliament and all the people sittings up in the gallery, this particular nominees shows oneness in Sierra Leone, they clearly cut across the nation, and they have served very well.

To start with my former Ambassador, High Commissioner to Nigeria, it will be of interest to this nation to tell how well he worked for the peace of this nation. I have worked with him, I travel with him, and we stay to night together until 5:00 o'clock for us to get the peace agreement in Abuja, under the Government of the late Dr Ahmad

Tejan Kabba may his soul rest in perfect peace. We worked together with the current President, the current Minister of defence, we know the role these people played quietly for him to come back and serve the nation as Chairman of NATCOM which I think this House will really approve him, will be of great importance to this nation. I know him to be honest, sincere, and simple and he cut across the aisle. So, I will say his is a nominee that we hope will settle all the disputes at NATCOM.

Mr Speaker, you are so correct to allow me to speak to this debate because I am also a Member of the Information and Communication Committee. So, I know lot of problems that existed there and which has made us even on the 24th of December 2019 we had to come to this Parliament to settled dispute amongst Commissioners at NATCOM, and we could not even go for our Christmas holiday.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we look up to these people for them to come and serve Sierra Leone, we have approved so many good people in this Parliament, we called them great and educated, but where are we today in the world as an example of development. So, they need to come in and change the narratives of making a better change for all of us and for our future generation yet unborn.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to look at the former Chief at Defence Ministry, I say congratulation to him. I know he is a very religious person and he prays 5 times per day, and before he even attained the position of CDS, he was so humble, honest and real in his duty. He has been given an important position to handle all problems and Disasters in this country. We pray and hope to God almighty that the Government will give him all the instruments and the logistical support including the finances to handle these issues. When you go to that department please find International support from other agencies to come in to Sierra Leone to support, not only what Government can provide or the nation can provide but what you can also bring to the people of Sierra Leone. So, I salute you sir with all due respect that we hope you will do your best.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me come to the proposed Deputy Ambassador who will be going to Germany. I know her very well. When I meet with her I talk to her

in Themne, she will also say; "I am not a Themne" I say you are more than a Themne and she will laugh and said; I am only married to a Themne man, I said; Sierra Leone is one nation, one country, one people and wherever we are, we are one and so we bring in progressive people to progress the oneness of this nation. We hope and pray that all of us will know that Sierra Leone is one and we are one and we should serve the nation as one country. Everybody has a responsibility to see that there is peace and tranquillity and development in Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we welcome all of these nominees who are now going to represent us. I thank you very much for introducing some of the key people around us here. My elder brother John O. Benjamin, he is my personal good friend ever since I have knew him. I was taken to him by my brother and friend, His Excellency, the Former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma to his house and introduce me to him as his best friend and brother during their days in Fourah Bay College, and since that day three of us have been talking together, complaining each other and sometimes I am the traitor between the two of them, but at the end of the day they sit down and laugh, talk together and I am still with them. May God bless these people, may God bless this nation, may God bring development, may God bring peace to those who are trying to pure in venom to the nation. Let God give us the good people who will serve this nation as our country that we call Sierra Leone.

I thank you Mr Speaker, and I thank the President for nominating these fine nominees. May God bless us all. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Paramount Chief for keeping it short and sweet. The Honourable Ibrahim B. Kargbo, the man from Bombali. I will take two more speakers only after the Honourable has spoken.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, during the tenure of late President Joseph Saidu Momoh your great friend, I visited Binkoloh which is the home town of the former President, and by the time I got to Binkoloh it was time for dinner and I was invited to the table to dine with the late President at that time. Anybody who does not know when Momoh rules this country is not fit to be here *[laughter.]* We sat at table ready

for dinner when President Joseph Saidu Momoh announced very suddenly gentleman we really cannot start this meal because Christopher Joseph Blell is not here yet, some of us were shocked; the President said; yes, Joe Blel must be here as if that was not enough President Momoh asked one of the cleaners and said, is Joe Blell's room ready? I did not know if Joe Blell had a room in Binkoloh, but he did have a room in Binkoloh, and in less than 30 minute Joe Blel arrived; he was received by the President with great gusto and respect.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, may I also remind this House about another incident; there had been a change of the guard in one of the Ministries, and as usual I would go to President Kabbah, to find out why the changes? The Former President also gave me the liberty to interview him when he wanted to be interviewed and I said, what about these changes? He said because I want Joe Blell to be here with me. I said why Joe Blell Sir? He said Joe Blell is a dedicated man, a honest man, and that is the man I would like to work with. He says in any case, go an tell your "ndemia" that let him make arrangements to go to Lagos, I will not call the name of the "ndemia", and I told the President; please Sir, I am not strong enough to tell my "ndemia" to leave the present office of Internal Affairs at that time, but the fact of the matter is that I have seen Joe Blell performed duties in the interest of this country, and he was highly respected. Whenever one went to Ghana during the days the tenure of Bangura, when he was the High Commissioner to Ghana, you will not spent 3 minutes without Alie Bangura telephoning Joe Blell in Nigeria, he was in Nigeria and Alie Bangura was in Accra; and I reminded Alie Bangura that he is wasting a lot of time talking to Joe Blell he said; "Joe Blell is my friend I cannot do without him."

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is the kind of man we have here today and somebody has already reminded us about the nature of NATCOM at the moment. NATCOM is not a very comfortable place now and I also note that at one time you intervened in an effort to correct those irregularities at NATCOM. I would not say you failed, but you did not succeed...

THE SPEAKER: You cannot be so categorical.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, I know your style of making sure that people concede. Like I said; we could have done better, Joe Blel is now going to that Institution.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when we put together the NATCOM Act, I was thinking that somebody would come one day to make sure that the Act is properly read and interpreted, now it has been misinterpreted many at time. I hope that Joe Blel who is a very strong man, that he has some military background, not a soldier like Amadu Kargbo my late brother, but he will do his best and I am sure he would go to NATCOM and perform his duties well. For those of us who are Members of that Committee, the Information and Communications Committee, will give Mr Joe Blel support and would also advise him, which is necessary for us to make sure NATCOM works well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, too many difficulties have buffeted that Institution and we would not want to have it continue that way. So, Joe God will help you. You are going to a good Institution, you can develop it further, and you would also provide the necessary Leadership.

Mr Speaker, before I sit down I must say a word or two about Mrs Kargbo. It is not because Mrs Kargbo is Mrs Kargbo, I am Ibrahim Ben Kargbo, it is because Mrs Kargbo is herself, she is capable, highly educated, and I do not want her position of being subservient to be misunderstood to mean weakness. She could be a strong woman, but I hope that she would perform well as time goes on. I first came across her when Parliament reopened after the elections, I have been listed down to travel with the President to attend the Inauguration of the President of Mali, not mainly the SLPP would travel with the President, I also do.

Mr Speaker, the moment the President told me about the travel to Mali, Mrs Kargbo made sure that at every point in time I was reminded of that event. And she also made sure that I was not late, and that we all went together and came back safe and sound. So, she is a good woman, she is going to perform remarkably well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Lungay is a Household name, because I am also a Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I feel elated and satisfied, that a good number of my people ...

Suspension of S.O [5]2

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo from Bombali, you may continue. Try and wind up.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, from Port Loko. Thank you very much
[laughter.]

THE SPEAKER: I am from Karene now.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Karene yes.

THE SPEAKER: Port Loko by birth and Karene by Legislation.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, if I may remind you, I created Karene District, and you should be thankful to me for doing that.

THE SPEAKER: No. You did not create it, you resuscitated it.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Oh which I did Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you for that.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Thank you. Mr Speaker like I said; Mr Lungay is a very important person, and because I am the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I feel very elated that a good number of people from my Ministry keeps on coming here for approval; and I am very certain that some other people will come later during this week.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I only wants to state that Mr Lungay is widely known both as a teacher and as a very important Administrator who is highly respected at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. So, having stated that, all I can say now is that I hope all of us will advise ourselves to ensure that we approve these nominees. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I will take only two more, I have exhausted this side. I will now recognise the Member from Kono followed by your Member from Koinadugu and then we wind up the debate.

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I actually do not intend to speak long on this debate owing to the fact that the nominees before us have the required human capital to perform. Having scrutinised by the appointments Committee, we are all satisfied in unanimity because their curriculum vitae spoke to the entire Committee on appointment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, speaking to the proposed diplomat and encouraging them, I understand that diplomats going to Addis Ababa and Germany should be fine sale woman and sale man to especially the flagship program, of this present Administration to the foreign countries where they are going.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sierra Leone will be at 60 by next April what do we stand to gain from those foreign countries? I would encourage those diplomats to invest more in those countries where they are going for direct foreign investments. I have heard and see much American businesses here in this country, I have heard and seen much Russia businesses here in this country, businesses from the great UK but in Germany, much is not seen. What would Sierra Leone stand to gain at 60?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we want to employ the diplomats, the substantive Ambassador for Germany, was once a student from Germany, I want to believe he is in his comfort zone interacting well with the Government of Germany in as much as he speaks the language of the Germans. So, whiles we give the blessings of this House to the Ambassador designate, we also want to ginger them to bring much and better to this country in as much as we will be at 60 in April.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am coming from the provinces where Disaster is so prone to the District. Today, a Military man in the next few minute will be at the helm of managing our Disasters in this country. Having perused the Disaster Management Agency Act, I see much of education, sensitization, with fewer penalties and the

regulations that would follow that particular Act; I hope the penalties would come. Managing Disaster also have potential to raise revenue giving warning shot to those that will abrogate Disaster management rules will definitely pay the fines. Environmental Protection Agency has done their best, the Lands Ministry have also done theirs but much has not been seen in managing our Disasters and climate change is ravaging nations every year and every time. Every year we must witness Disaster in one area or the other; what have we done to manage Disaster in this country? I have been reliably informed that initial fund would come from the World Bank but after which how will that particular Agency be managed that is also a question for the proposed Chief Disaster Manager that we will soon be approved.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the nominees are fine but I must also summarise with the Commissioner of NATCOM, Joe Blel. Much has been said concerning this fine man and a trace of all the offices that he once surmounted can prove very good testimonies about him. Having listened to the short constitutional conjoined today on Covid-19 regulations, also made me to understand that NATCOM and the mobile companies have to do a lot in the implementation of those regulations. If one peruses through the very regulations of NATCOM, you will notice that Africel and Orange have a role to play especially those that will give false information about COVID-19 and there are also fines that will be levied. If we are to get the cooperation of those mobile companies then the Chief Commissioner of NATCOM has to also do a lot.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we will continue to lend the leave on Section [105] of Sierra Leone's 1991 constitution, we are aware that this House happens to be the Supreme Legislative Authority in making all laws and even regulations and whenever Mr Speaker, makes rulings we respect that. At the same time, we also encourage MDAs to adhere to those things that the book speaks.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what I will also not agree with is that; a complete display of hypocrisy or rather crocodile tears. We have seen and we have heard in this same Parliament when things that almost brought this nation to war as reminiscent to South Sudan case. I will not hear much from past Members of this Parliament to speak

on those issues. We were not consumed by COVID-19 because of divine grace as other countries also faced, if by divine grace we are here today managing COVID-19 very well and whenever regulations come instead of coming drunk, hitting and hitting that, we have to as a House do the sacred responsibility;

1. Not bending bags,
2. Bring cohesion for us to have a way forward that is what we will encourage.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, once again nominees, I wish you all well to your office where you will soon be manned, and I beg this House to lend credence for their swift ratification. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I now recognised the Honourable Member from Koinadugu.

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would say the nominees before us are the best nominees so far been made by the President, because the reason is that one from the North which is Koinadugu and Falaba, Lieutenant General Brima Sesay. The name alone Sesay today carries a lot, and I know him for quite a while wherein failure has not been an option for him. Retired General Sesay, you are going to assume a very big job as a Disaster Management Director. We know him very well; he has done a lot especially when he was in the military, some of us are coming from a military home where he used to assist our brothers, he used to assist our fathers in the military, and with the wealth of experience, with the wealth of education he has I know he will do better in his new position.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, without much ado, I will say congratulations in advance to Mr Sesay and to the rest of the nominees. My only advice I will give to them if approved by this House is that, they should not close your door on MPs especially in terms of Disaster management Agency which is going to be held by Lieutenant General Brima Sesay, because MPs are the source core persons people will always call and indeed we will go to your offices to ensure that you assist our people, and I am quite

sure they would not close their doors. This will go to the entire nominees that are here this morning for approval. Without much ado, I want my colleagues MPs to join me in approving these nominees. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition you have the Floor followed by the Honourable Leader of Government Business.

HON. CHERNOR R.M BAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will join others before me in recommending the nominees before us to this House for approval. A lot has been said about these nominees, but I am sure many more also wanted to talk on Ambassador Joe Blell but they do not have the opportunity to do so. The beautiful things that are going to happen at NATCOM, I hope it will be a blessing this time round. Ambassador Blell is a man that has enjoyed working with young men and women all his life. I am sure Mr Roger is right at his side, it is just a testament to what I am saying some of us have spent years with Ambassador Blell, and those years have not been a wasted years we have learnt a lot from him, he is a very patient man, he is always ready to listen and to proffers advice and solutions when necessary. I am sure with those skills, he will bring a new turn to NATCOM, those running NATCOM today from the Director General downwards over 80% or more of them are young people. I am not saying they are youth, I am saying they are young people, and with his experience I am sure a lot would happen.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Ambassador Blell is a very good man, he is not only a proud Sierra Leonean but he is a Sierra Leonean we should all be proud of elsewhere. I will not say much on Mrs Kargbo as Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo said, "we know that she is a good woman," she spent a long time in the diplomatic cycles, she has a wealth of experience, and I am sure it was deliberate for His Excellency to have nominated her to replace the current Deputy. A man been replaced by a woman so the women you should be happy, and not just an ordinary woman but a woman with excellence and woman of substance. I will not want to say much on the retired Lieutenant General Sesay. The Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo was just whispering to

me saying; "this man is still young to retire." But I said to him it was people like you and the current Speaker that are making people like them to retire this point in time because the constitution that tagged the retirement age at 55 was passed in 1991. The Ibrahim B. Kargbo and the Honourable Dr Abass Bundu were Members of this House in that time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, definitely General Sesay has been one of the finest military officers in the History of this country, not just in the recent past but in the history of this country, he is being one of the most light within the military not because of indiscipline but because of his love for discipline. He enjoyed being discipline in the military with humility, he respected all in the military from the zero rank to the top everybody were treated equally whilst he was in the military. And for that, I am sure that might be one of the reasons for His Excellency's decision to appoint him to these all important body to be the first person to held that institution. We want to wish him well, but I know he is from Koinadugu/Falaba District. And we all know what Disasters are. Mr Speaker, I wanted to wrap up but you won't give me more time...

THE SPEAKER: Go ahead!

HON. CHERNOR R.M BAH: Thank you Sir.

THE SPEAKER: I was just noticing the absence of the Honourable Lahai Marah.

HON. CHERNOR R.M BAH: Mr Speaker, the Leader of Government Business assured General Sesay of the support of this House knowing fully well that he is going to nurse a new born baby. We agreed with him and I am sure we are also joining him in ensuring that the required resources and personnel are made available soonest so that he will not just go to an institution and takes him months or probably year or two before he start proper operation. The institution is urgently needed so given him the speed will also add value to his result orientation.

I will conclude perhaps with the most important person in the likes of Uncle Joe and he knows that he is very close to me but unfortunately he was not my teacher, he taught me when I was at the University through experience not in the classroom. This

Gentleman I am referring to the Ambassador designate Deputy to Ethiopia Ambassador Lungay taught me whilst I was in Secondary School, and he was one of my best teachers and probably I was one of his best students not his best but one of his best student. You know he is a very humble man from a humble beginning as well at the Saint Edwards Secondary School Mr Speaker, where you surgeon at a point in time Ambassador Blell you wanted me to say that.

Mr Lungay is a result oriented man, when he left the classroom for public service there again he served with distinction. I believe that this opportunity is relevant and very important. Mr Lungay, we have always been with you and we want to assure you that again we will continue to be with you, we believe in you, we believe in your delivery. Please take that perfection to at least work with your Boss as you always had been doing, give the Boss the required support and the result will be as excellent as always.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note I want to join others before me in endorsing the nominees and to confirm that all four nominees have our blessings, and we believe they are excellent Sierra Leoneans who will deliver excellently in their post. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and over to you, the Leader of Government Business.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker, and I thank my Colleagues Honourable Members for their numerous contributions towards the Presidential nominees. It is not a strange thing for us when you have fine Sierra Leoneans with high rate of integrity in society not as criminals. These people have served diligently in the interest to put Sierra Leone on the global stage. You will sing all of these praises to them but that is the reason before the President decides to make his choice of nominees, he has to take into considerations series of Parameters. So, today those Parameters are coming out to the public; what parameters do you use to have somebody in such positions, what is the level of their expertise or experience they have to work in such institution? Those are the questions you need to ask yourself as a responsible President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank my colleagues Honourable Members, for their brilliant contributions. I would not like to single out the nominees, I will just bundle them all, they are fine nominees to serve in their various capacities, I will say some of them their level of skills in the diplomatic world is credible. For examples; the nominees for the Federal Republic of Germany in her interview I asked her series of questions and because she is carefully educated especially in the diplomatic field; I also asked her on how do she planned to work with her Boss? Because the level of insubordination is cut right across some of the MDAs and even some of the Ministries and Embassies, she always uses the phrase that; "I will not take decision by myself, I will work with my immediate Boss, I have served in various capacities and contributed in various ways and I will always listen to my Boss." So, sometimes when we say ladies are well educated, we start to see level of confrontation with certain people especially when they know that they have worked in such institution for a very long time, and in that vein when they realised that and they are higher standards than their Boss they will tend to bring in some challenges. In the case it is a very quiet different thing because Mrs Edna Fatmata Kargbo is a very humble woman even in front of the Committee on appointment during the interview session she displayed that, and I asked her to stand up and she did, and I asked again to seat she did it. I asked the question; why are you so humble? She answered me by saying; "this is my nature not because I am educated it because; I have served in a various capacities at different levels. So, I need to respect my immediate boss and that is what I am doing this." So thank you very much Mrs Kargbo because you have served as a very good diplomat.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I said earlier that; I would want to bundle them all, but I will like to single out again a man of conglomerate of characters that is no less a person but Ambassador Joe Blel. We have had a lots of presentations from the report which shows that he was a business man, a politician, an extrovert, an enjoyer, a father, a military man, and old Edwardian, a football team manager, and so that is the reason I said; a man with a conglomerate of characters which you can rely on to

transform the institution that he is going to head and it is very good for us to have people with such characters, because the character speaks for itself.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today what we have here is their résumés', what you put as your résumé is what at that particular point in time will judge you, but it is a different scenario when you get to the office. A different scenario wherein you are going to work with different professionals especially the nominee that is going to NATCOM, you cannot know all, but what she said; "I will like to use the NATCOM Act of 2006 to see how best I can discharged my duties, I will monitor the competition and do fair play." And that is very necessary because it will help you to work within the ambit of the law.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I admired the shades of characters we have for the Presidential nominee going to NATCOM. May the soul of the faithful departed rest in perfect peace, in the person of Mr Fahuad Sheriff who at NATCOM passed out in the difficult time, he left us for a resting place in the kingdom God. We have another powerful man taking the stage which he can able to negotiates, he can able to cut across, he can able to work with the emulous, and these are critical times they are providing services for us. Looking at the private sector investment we need to consider those that are at the helm of affairs must have the qualities and some of the attributes to be able to talk to those who are in the driving seat so that things will happen for the commission. There will be a time when we will like to change the laws and make an amendment we need such characters to come on board so that we can succeed and the institution can achieved what they are yarning for.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for the nominee going to held the Disaster Management Agency, I asked him a question that if he is mentally fit for this position? He replied saying; "yes he is fit for the position, he also said; I have retired as a Lieutenant General in the military but I am not tire in serving my people." He is a man with humidity, a man who we can rely on the amount of display he showed when he was at the helm of affairs in the military at the Chief of Defence staff. I don't think you can easily bring him down for showing such collaborative measures and that type of

relationship between him and his colleagues. I could remember when they came for a Committee meeting called by Honourable Hafiju Maada Kanja, I was there and I met them there and the General Sesay said to me; "oh sorry Honourable Leader I have not pay you a visit," but in the meeting I asked them series of questions relating to the battalion and he said I will not go against the wish deserved the people of Kenema, I will corporate and ensure that they will get what they need. It has far too long that we have been looking for this battalion to establish in Kenema. Thank you very much for doing that under your leadership. What he demonstrated is that to show us that he was nominated to that position under the previous administration; he is also able to serve in this present administration because of his humidity and professionalism that is what we need to demonstrate.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should not politicised our institutions, we should not say because I was appointed by Mr, 'A' in the past administration so I should also undermine the present administration because at any time they will fire me. It is the responsibility of the Present to hire and fire under Section [61] but if you don't perform he will fire you, and that is what we need to accept. The last time I told some of the nominees that you can be hire today but if you don't perform the President will fire you and that is the truth of the matter. When you are giving the position you need to demonstrate the level of professionalism in that particular position, you don't need to carry your personal interest to those offices. So, we should behave like Sierra Leoneans, you are going to serve the people of Sierra Leone, not political parties, and they are not going to serve their selfish interest.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is good for us to do our oversight. I am happy the Chairman of Information and Communication Committee, he opened a debate, he said; "you need to work with the Committee" and I have my colleague on the other side, he also said; "you need to give space to the Honourable Members, because in terms of Disaster our constituents will call on us first, in terms of telecommunication when there is no network our constituents will call on us first." We are professionals in our political skills, but we don't have the financial muscles to carry those responsibilities, what we

have is the influence, how do we influence you to do the right things for our people, we are representing our people, we have to recognise that one. That is why we are here and there is no malice amongst us, in the Committee of appointment when you were in front of us you see no malice, all of us are here shower praises on you and telling each other to approve you. Today, when you get to your office it is the responsibilities of you to represent the Executive because you are an extension of the Executive to say let me serve the people which are the bottom line. In respect of the aye, it is about the people, it is about Sierra Leone, it is about our constituents, whether they are blue, green, black we don't know them but they are all Sierra Leoneans.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I said; we are going to get the diplomats to go there way, but the way they received us sometimes it is not proper because some of us we belong to International Parliament and other colleagues too, when Members of Parliament travel they are going to represent the face of Sierra Leone, they are carrying the audacity of hope of this nation. I will always remind the nominees that if they don't perform, the President has the right to fire you because that is an Executive Order, so wish you all the best. I hope that you will perform and I hope you will not let us down, but it is not our responsibility to fire or maintain you in your position, we are only here for approval and to play our own role in the system of Governance, work for the ordinary man, transform our manifestoes into reality, and transform the dreams of the ordinary Sierra Leoneans, transform this nation to a better place for all of us because posterity will judge us because that is why we are here, all of us are Leaders. So, if you are given an extension of the Executive powers it is the responsibility of you to carry out your duty without fear or favour and to ensure that at the end of the day Sierra Leoneans benefit from what you have discharged as a responsibility to serve the State.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, thank you very much, thanks to the Paramount Chiefs. I always say praises to you, thank you very much and we respect you. That is the unique aspect of our Parliament, we have Paramount Chiefs and we take a lot of advice from them and even wisdom. When they speak, some of us we listen, because they don't speak all the time, when they speak they speak with volume of authority.

Thank you very much and may the Lord bless us all. Continue to guide us and continue to be with us.

Mr Speaker, I said the last time that; when I see the Paramount Chiefs in this Chamber is like our forefathers are with us, our forefathers were great people because they were not involved in what we call corruption today, they believe in what they were doing and that is the reason today we protect our traditions, our values, we have the Western style watering down our traditions. May the Lord bless you all, you talk to them if they listen to you they can succeed, I know we are going to succeed in this business of development that we are charge with the responsibility giving hope to our people. Thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that the six report of the third session of the Committee on Appointment and the public service be adopted by the House and that the recommendation contained therein be approved.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, the question is that the six report of third session of the Committee on Appointment and the public service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations contained therein be approved.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

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

THE SPEAKER: It is now my pleasant duty in consonance with the chorus of felicitations and commendations made across the aisle to add my own voice of congratulations to the new appointees. They are men and women of great repute, great experience and acumen, not only do you carry with the confidence and trust of His Excellency, the President, but that confidence has also been endorsed by the entire House. So, you are relieved in the knowledge that you go with the blessings not only of the Executive Head, but also of the Legislature of this republic. We have no doubt in light of your previous performance, in your various responsibilities entrusted in you that you continue to discharge in your new offices and in the best of your ability and to the credit of mother Sierra Leone. Good luck and God bless.

Before you rise, I see somebody like the women's Leader, am I right? Let me recognise her presence amongst us. In case there is any other person I have not recognised because of face masks, it is necessary that we wear them but they have a way of distorting your identity and it is not easy at all. My look alike of course is here with us, he is always my confidence and my blessing. You are excuse; you may take leave of us. Good luck to all of you. Honourable Members, please I am standing the House down just for five minutes.

THE HOUSE WAS STAND DOWN AT 12: 46 AND RESUMED AT 12:51

THE SPEAKER: The House resumes, let's proceed.

GOVERNMENT MOTION:

THE MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

MR HINGA SANDY [The Minister of Trade and Industry]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolve that this Honourable House hereby ratify the following agreements which are laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday 3rd November, 2020:

1. AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE [GOSL] REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY [MTI], THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE [MOF] AND THE SIERRA FLOUR MILL SIERRA LEONE LIMITED.
2. CONCESSION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY AND MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ALL PETROLUM PRODUCTS, SIERRA LEONE, FOR THE REHABILITATION AND REFURBISHMENT OF THE KISSY STORAGE TANKS PROJECT.
3. AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND SOCIETE NOUVELLE DE COMMERCE [SONOCO S.A.]

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these agreements establishing two big flour mills are the major fulfilment of His Excellency, the President's Manifesto commitment in

supporting the private sector and in also promoting industry development. They are also in line with the implementation of the medium term national development plan put together by the new direction Government. They are in direct manifestation of how the doing business environment has remarkably improved under this current dispensation. We are also using these agreements in preparation to meet market opportunities offered by the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme, and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement. These two agreements seek to promote the agenda for import substitution while as well promoting exports. The two companies put together will provide over hundred jobs opportunities for skills and technology transform. The Fourah Bay, Kanikay and Wellington communities where these two companies are going to be established must be boozing that this New Direction Government is going to create more jobs, and the backers and habitual bread eaters are going to be the key beneficiaries of these two agreements.

So, in addition alongside the establishment of flour mill will also be developing an assembly plant in Wellington for the production of bakery equipment's.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as a primary commodity producing country, Sierra Leone needs to harness these potential through value addition to provide sustained food production, and supply locally and create a niche in the sub region and the global market. Initial efforts at industrialisation targeted import substitution in place of export promotion. The infant industries that were established under this initiative died out in the face of massive competition from foreign companies that have comparative advantage over them. To address this anomaly the current Government has identified agro processing and value addition in the Agricultural food chain as a nations step towards industrialisation transformation. To actualise this, the Government has concluded a series of agreements with the local and sub region farms to enable them utilise locally produced products into semi or final products for the local market, and for export purposes. The strategy entails granting concession in taxes, and levies initially to enable these companies expand and are fully established. These two flour companies hold the potential of utilising our locally agricultural produce cassava and potato in

particular to be input as one of the raw materials in blend with wheat flour. In the wake of dwindling export earnings and competing demand for foreign exchange, the Government has initiated contacts with these two companies which are both committed to increasing in the medium term and input of between **5 to 10%** of either potato or cassava into their flour production.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, flour wheat has taken central stage as one of the highest commodity in demand next to rice. This has resulted in shortages of flour due to foreign exchange constraints, to alleviate these problems the Government of Sierra Leone represented by the Ministry of Trade and Finance engaged the Chairman and the CEOs of these two companies to extend their operations and to also refurbish the old flour mill that has been shut down for over two decades. I am pleased to note that their intervention is timely and is there to assure availability and affordability of flour, but also to stabilise price of wheat flour in the long run. The Ministry of Trade and Industry notes that the two companies, and the establishment plus expansion meet the Investment and Private Sector Development Policy Objectives, and recognise the expected benefits and expansion that these two companies are going to bring in areas of investment, job creation on the job training to employees, knowledge and technology transfer, stable employment income, value addition from the countries local agricultural product and possibly other economic sectors, improve exports and foreign exchange earnings, provide support to local farmers for the production of wheat, and improve livelihoods for rural population from the purchase of premium quality wheat flour, and Corporate Social Responsibilities as well. This will create an opportunity for both Government, and these companies to establish legal bases for the promotion and establishment of state of the earth agro process and food technology development activities to meet domestic demand for flour, bread, pastries etc. Thereby creating value addition and increasing employment opportunities export earnings and revenues for Government. It will thus present an opportunity for the Ministry to grow awareness of Sierra Leones enormous investment opportunities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, direct benefit from these two agreements range from one Government availing the farms prime land for industrial development. Externalities for local Sierra Leoneans supplies for goods and relevant ancillary services, such as transportation, input supplies, wire housing and others from time to time on specified terms and conditions, development of indigenous service providers by promoting out goers, promote human capacity and technology transfer to Sierra Leoneans. Sierra Leone will have a niche in the sub region and also in the global market. Communities within these operations of the companies will derive tangible benefits in the form of corporate social responsibilities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the establishment of infant industries to manufacture local raw materials will absorb the surplus labour from the rural areas in the job market. This will enhance growth in the local economy and curb rural urban migration; it will contribute to Government inclusive growth vision through labour expansion and job facilities.

On this note Mr Speaker, and Honourable Members, I pray that these two agreements will meet your favourable approval. Thank you *[applause.]*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, the question is that this Honourable House ratifies the following agreements that were laid as read out by the Honourable Minister of Trade and Industry on the Table of the House on Tuesday the 3rd November, 2020.

Namely: An agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone represented by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Finance and the Sierra Leone flour mill [SL] Limited and the agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Societe Nouvelle de Commerce [SONOCO S.A.] Yes madam, you have the Floor.

[Question Propose]

HON. VERONICA K. SESAY: Thank you Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me take this...

THE SPEAKER: I don't mean to interrupt you Honourable Member, but I am sure all of you will agree with me that the temperature has changed to an intolerable level. So, I am only going to take two speakers from either side. It is too much. I don't know what has gone wrong with the machines?

HON. VERONICA K. SESAY: Thank you Mr Speaker. We are again here to ratify very good agreements.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, talking about flour you cannot know the importance of it until you have shortage of bread in this country. We can say sometimes rice, cassava and foo foo are our staple food, but almost everybody be you black, white, American, England or wherever you are you eat bread. So, bread production is very much important. When I went through these agreements, some of the parts are very dear to me, but looking at page four [4] and page [28], b4 and b5 that says; ***"whereas the company is desirous to register, and work with all relevant Ministries Departments and Agencies who continue to encourage, attract, and coordinate private sector investment in the manufacturing sector."***

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister failed to mentioned Parliament, and it is very much necessary to work with Parliament, because if you were here without the approval of this House it can't work. So, by mentioning that you will work with all the relevant stake holders, all relevant MDAs you are right in your own way, or that is your own perception? But Parliament is very much pivotal in this because if we are not mentioned then I don't know where we are heading to. Mr Minister, you have to know the importance of this House because we make and unmake. So, it is very important to work with Parliamentarian because we are representing thousands or millions of people here. Our population is seven million and it is being divided amongst us all, it is a great deal, so you have to make use of the Honourable Members in every sector especially in these agreements which have to deal with the production of flour.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I remember vividly sometimes in 2018 to 2019 in this country there was a shortages of bread and everybody was going helter and skeletal to find bread. I want to thank our able President and the Minister of Trade for

being so proactive to invite investors to come to our aid for the production of flour. In as much as this business has to do with gaining and losing but we need to appreciate the effort of the investors for coming to this country to invest in such business, we take them by their words. We are going to keep those agreements' document because it is been written in black and white, we are going to follow these agreements and that is why sometimes it is necessary we the Honourable Members are involved because we are witnessing this particular agreement which are very important to us. It gears towards the lives of the people and we are talking of job creation, it will create so many jobs, and this machine is not only going to be producing flour but manufacturing bakeries as well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go through these agreements it is clearly written that; they will be manufacturing flour and baking bread, and when you talk about bread baking you have so many people that are involved in this business like the Fullas, they embarked on bread baking as their economic activities. If such opportunity is available now, they will call their neighbours or brothers to come join them to produce S.O [2] "Tapalapa bread" because people consume bread so much in this country and it will also create job opportunity for the youths.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me read some importance bullet points of these agreements;

1. Flour is going to be very easy to get because the mill is close us to us now. It's very important and it is non-controversial agreements.
2. You and I will benefit out of the production of flour in this country, and it will reduce the cost of the flour of all types, be it bread flour or cake flour.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the message I will like to give to these investors who are bringing these flours mill project is that let them make sure they identify or divide the mill into various communities. I was once a baker so I know much about flour. In our own days, when there is a shortage of bread, the grandmother is not there you go to your mother when your mother is not there you go to your grandmother. So, in producing cake flour they normally produce what we call tablets and I hope they will

not forget so that if there is a shortage of bread flour you will just take half of the tablet and put it into the mill so that it will immediately goes back to the bread flour. So, please make sure they try to bring that into these agreements.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these agreements will attract income for Government through taxes. Even in the local market they will pay dues and all those monies put together it is a big space, and if we are talking about free quality education those are the small monies that we put together to create some of these incomes, it will improve training of many Sierra Leoneans who later become experts in flour industries. I was trained by a Fulla man, he thought me how to bake bread, and let me tell this House that I baked bread to educate my children. So, I am very much happy for bringing all these agreements because sometimes we have shortage of flour in this country, and we have to send to Guinea or elsewhere to get flour.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these agreements are also good for farmers especially those who produce wheat and cassava, you can make series of flour dust from cassava. It will further strengthen Agro Processing in Sierra Leone, and you had from the Minister talking about Agro Processing in these agreements, people are going to be trained and they will be given small amount to start their lives. It will also promote regional trade which are the key to ECOWAS. I am just coming from ECOWAS meeting, we dealt with the free trade areas, and we never knew that these agreements are coming up because I was at the ECOWAS meeting to deliberate on the same issue, it will promote local investment especially to farmers in agriculture. People can no longer say; I am going to plant cassava for the thieves. It will promote local investment in the production of primary products of flours such as grains, beans, roots etc. So, bringing these agreements here this afternoon I believe there are non-controversial and I know everybody will buy the idea.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know these agreements catered for people who wants to be a baker today and tomorrow and also wants to be a big businessman. I know these investors who are coming with these agreements are now big business

people, but we want you to continue the good work as written in these agreements, it is so rich and we are going to follow it up.

Mr Minister, we will be bordering you because we will have to call the investors to meet with the Committee formally in order to introduce them to us. They will have to enlighten us about their product and how they intend to preserve them, because sometimes when there is bad flour there will be bad bread. So, in all of that we have to go to their mills to verify and convince us. So, we will stand again in this House to tell people that these agreements we passed in this House some time ago the investors are doing very well. Just like what JOLAX Company limited did, when they produce they brought their product for us to see and inspect whether it is good or not. We have to show case about the flour, we want to assure Honourable Members that they should have no doubt because we are going to show case again the product of the flour mill. We have to bring the flour to the Honourable Members, to taste and verified for themselves whether the company is producing very good flour. So, with that I want to tell my colleagues Honourable Members to make sure not to waste time as the Speaker has said to ratify these agreements. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable from the East end of Freetown you have the Floor.

HON. ALPHA A. BAH Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having looked at these agreements, it is clear that the rationales behind these agreements are clearly and laudable, because if you take a look at roman figure 6, figure 10 and roman figure 11 they clearly point that these agreements will create job opportunities, the promotion of local content policy and promoting investment as stated by the Honourable Minister.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, they must ensure in situation like this because these are two parallel entities, it is clear that we have competition and in cases of competition I would want to admonish the Minister that we monitor the operations of these companies in order to ensure fair and healthy competition. The flour mill is an indigenous own company, SONOCO is a subsidiary of a company owned by investor out of Sierra Leone and if you take a look at both, the investment capital of SONOCO company for me as stated per contract amounting to **7 Billion Guinean Franc** as well as **7**

Billion Leones I stand to be guided. If you take the SONOCO agreement it is a little bit less than **\$1Mil** when you take a look at capital investment of flour mill it over **\$20Mil** we see the disparity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the company invest level **\$80Mil** I agreed but a particular reference to **LE7Bil** referring to the capital so far invested here and this **\$80Mil** investment is the entire SONOCO and we must not forget that the SONOCO in Sierra Leone is the subsidiary of parent of SONOCO company whereas flour mill is not a subsidiary that is what I am referring to. In that regard, I would want to admonish the Ministers to ensure that they monitor in other to achieve the desire objective of these agreements. One of which is a concessional of no withholding tax will be deducted for services procured for small farmer holders, but how far can we ensure that is achieved and the manner in which the monitoring has been provided for in these agreements. For me, what I see here is that only two quarterly agreements per year between SONOCO and flour mill and the commercial production capacity there is vast difference between the two.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we are seeking to promote local content policy we must give preference to the indigenous own company, we must not also forget the fact that these producers are being giving huge taxes concession, they will have the capacity to produce massively and then 9 chances to 1 will likely compound the problem of unemployment if not taking care of. We have this small scale of bread producers S.O [2] "tapalapa bread and J1 bread factory," they have been using to produce small quantity and now we have bakery that has the capacity to produce 1000 pieces of bread and 1000 loaf of bread per day. So, we must ensure that they do not sell wholesale; they must be seeing supplying the retailers so that they cannot be put out of business. It is very likely that the problems we may be seeking to solve at this time will ended up been compounded.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, again I see there is exemption to the importation of diesels and other petroleum products wherein they are required to pay taxes for those products, but previously we have ratified other agreements here and they were all

included. I am admonishing the Ministry as well that subsequently if they continue to give tax exemption it means Government is losing revenue and that in consideration Government is giving in return for production, in return for investment and in return to solve the economic problems of our country. If we are losing any amount of money which is the consideration to this contract, I am saying subsequently whenever we do agreement of this nature we ensure that not everything is giving away. Previously, the subsequent Government has been condemned for giving tax concession to the African minerals. As rightly stated by the Minister; these agreements seek to encourage and promote private investment, it seek to encourage production which at the end of the day it will lead to employment and more capital ejection to the economy. So, we must avoid politicising agreement of this nature and we have been always saying this that we on this part aisle we will never politicise issues of national interest.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to conclude I want to beseech the Ministry of Trade to be more vigilant in seeking to ensure that the desire objectives of these agreements are achieved and they should not be remain just on paper. This has been our problem over the years wherein we have beautiful agreement but they always remain on paper when it comes to the implementation. Let us learn to give preference to our indigenously own entities because at the end of the day buck of the money that will be raise from that investment will be revolving within our economy. It should not be discriminating against each other because that has been the case across the World. I don't want to say that is an unfair term but we must seek to promote our own entities because at the end of the day when you say our local content policy in term of personal, in terms of procurement service we must seek to promote our own local content. I thank you and God bless you all.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Member for his contribution. I will now give the Floor to Honourable Member from Kono.

HON. MUSA FOFANAH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to lend my voice to this debate in connection to these agreements. Of course, the Chairperson of Committee on Trade said a lots and

my learned legal colleague Honourable Member have also said a lots on these agreements and I want to look at the national medium term plan. I think I did lot of workshop with the Minister of Trade and Industry and I want to assure this House that the Minister of Trade and Industry is somebody that knows what he is doing. Mr Minister, I just want you to consider cluster 8 of the national medium term plan, as the Chairperson was talking about involving Parliament in the monitoring of these fine agreements. The simple reason is because in Kailahun, Bo Bonth, Kenema and in Matruwe you talked a lot about infrastructural development to support trade, I must agree with you that we need collaborative support from different MDAs to see that we succeed when we are talking about trade, because my District for example; we know what we are losing in terms of Trade and when you talk about cocoa, plantain and pear, most of those items goes to Guinea because during the raining season it is impossible to ply the road from Kameyandor to Koidu. But the Minister give us lot of confidence during the depolarisation and the decentralization of the ownership of the medium term national plan that you have lot of ideals you are putting together to make sure that trade succeed in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the area of ownership investment for Sierra Leoneans we really want the Minister to pay some attention to that because it is really paramount as he explained about Trade and Industry, he categorise trade separately and then industry separately. I have learnt a lot from him and I believe he has all the skills to fixed things that were not fixed long ago. The refurbishment of the Sierra Leone flour mill is a laudable venture. I want to remind him that he talked a lot about alternatives, and let me assure the Minister that cassava is not only in Bo District but Kono District also has lot of it. So, when you are talking about alternative please Mr Minister for the benefit of fair trade in Sierra Leone context consider other District that are producing cassava the more.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note, I just want to assure this House that for me these agreements are non-controversial and I want to ask the Minister that Parliament should be in centre of monitoring and the evaluation of these two

agreements under the Leadership of the Chairperson of the Committee on Trade and Industry. I thank you very much.

HON. P.C BIA KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Mr Speaker, point of order Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Chief, I would have encouraged your point of order but the heat in this Chamber is getting intolerable.

HON. P.C BIA KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Yes Sir, one minute. Mr Speaker, the reason why I brought this issue is that when I came in this morning they handed me document signed and sealed and delivered by the Minister of Trade and Industry on behalf of the Government of the republic of Sierra Leone. I want to look at cluster 9b and cluster 9c in the document which I want the Minister to look at it because he said; it is an addendum. But irrevocably and unconditionally cluster 9c says;

"acknowledging the execution performance and delivery by each party of this agreement shall constitute a private commercial transaction entered into entirely in commercial capacity." Cluster 9b says; "agreed that should any other party bring legal proceedings against it or its assets to relation to this agreement no immunity from such legal proceedings shall be deemed to include without limitation attachment prior to judgment."

I thank you.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Paramount Chief who give that document to you?

HON. P.C BIA KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Yes Mr Leader, it was given to me this morning immediately I came in.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Paramount Chief, I am sure the Minister will clarify the situation.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: It is not an addendum. I remember when we distributed the document; the signature aspect was omitted from the document so we asked the Minister to bring the photo copy. It is not a different document it is the same Sir.

HON. P.C BIA KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: But on that amendment they put it as an addendum.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: If you tend to read the bulk document you can see the reason why they are making reference to cluster 9.8. You should go to the parent document Sir.

HON. P.C BIA KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: I read it but this one is very critical in terms of...

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: The Minister can respond.

THE SPEAKER: The Minister will respond to you Paramount Chief please. Can we wind up this debate?

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: I want us to understand the point Paramount Chief is trying to make because I cannot make sense in the line of debate and it is good for all of us to be educated.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister did you understand what the Chief was saying?

MR HINGA SANDY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think what the Chief was making reference to is the component of most agreement which guides both parties with regards either breaches to the terms of the agreement, and almost any other agreement have components of them.

THE SPEAKER: With that explanation from the Minister, shall we then proceed and conclude this debate? Are you insisting on the Floor? I will give you two minutes.

HON. UNPHA KOROMA: Thank you Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to add my voice to this debate. As a Member of Parliament representing the people of constituency 114 of which Wellington is one of the beneficiaries community I think it is imperative that I add my voice to this debate.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these agreements I think are comforting to me. Why I called them comforting because for far too long we have approved agreement in this Well that has to do with loans but today these agreements that are here before us are

agreements that will bring jobs to our communities, they are agreements that will create foreign direct investment as well as local investment for our people. As a Member of Parliament representing deprived communities looking at the document here from the outset especially the one from the SONOCO Company S.A it will be creating more than 5000 jobs from the outset. And of course **\$80Mil** and **\$20Mil** from the Sierra Leone farming I think it something this country will stand to benefit from. I believe that for far too long we take loan with interest and we are worried about paying those monies, but this time we will creating value to our cassava, value for our potatoes and value to the farmers. We pray that these agreements do not become politicise, I believe that when the visiting was made in Willington, as a Member of Parliament representing that community I was not even informed that this kind of development will be taking place in my constituency. As at now we have no information regarding that development in my constituency.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as far as we believe these investments will create job opportunities for our people. My concern is that these jobs should not be one sided and the blessing should be spread all across to the people of our country especially the people in constituency 114 who for the most part have been deprived from getting jobs from factories right next door in my constituency. Another thing that the Mr Minister stated was about the substitutions for the high amount of import that we have in this country, we don't have foreign exchange and we believe that this will bring foreign exchange to our county and a country we are highly suffering from foreign investment. What draw my attention more is that this company is going to add value to our raw materials; they are also going to create jobs for our people but we pray that these jobs are not politicise and we believe if we benefit as a country from that opportunity then the people of constituency 114 stand to benefit from this investment. A colleague Honourable Member stated that; "a balance in trade that may affect our indigenous company which is the Sierra Leone flour mill, if that happens then there is a challenge and we believe that if we set the requisite environment and we ensure that all the agreements that has been approved here are not balanced to one company that is just

a subsidiary with huge investment, it might take some of our local traders out of business, he also stated about the retailing, we pray that they will be doing wholesale largely which means our brothers and sister who are in the baking business will not be taking out of business.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today I think these agreements are non-controversial to large extent because they will be creating jobs for Sierra Leoneans if it is realized. Unfortunately, we are concern a little bit about what it may lead to if it is politicise, but today we are happy that it is not going to be a loan agreement, it is not going to be a loan that we will stock with for years to come, and it is going to be something that could create jobs for our citizens especially the people of Willington. I thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I the Honourable Member, for his contribution. Honourable Leader of opposition, you have the Floor.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Thank you very Mr Speaker. Today we have two very important agreements before the House for approval for ratification. We have been told that these agreements will bring jobs, will create revenue etc. Like I have done few occasions in the past to also remind this House that were a lot of talks about tax exemption in the past, I will keep reminding this House on that, we are not going to block agreement because of that or because it was used at a point in time to campaign. We believe that you will not bring in industry that will create jobs without looking at some of these areas because we have competition all over the World, be it in Africa or East end Europe that are looking forward industries to come. I have gone through the agreements and I have seeing that the flour mill agreements specifically talks on protecting local content which is very good. We know that SONOCO is a subsidiary of a company base in Guinea but flour mill is wholly own by Sierra Leoneans. So, whiles we make the playing field good for SONOCO Company we also expect the local content policy to be applied into the latter.

So, on that note Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will support the agreement but let us make sure we look at tax exemption because there will be a time when we will be

asking how much are we given, how much are we getting because what we give away should not exceed what we will be getting in returns. One to two years down the line Mr Minister, we pray that you are still in the same Ministry or even if you have move to another Ministry but definitely who ever occupies that sit in year or two this Parliament will be expecting a report from the Ministry that we give away X, Y, Z and as a result of that we are benefiting now from A, B, C.

So, when you go back to the Ministry Mr Minister, tell your team for them to be keeping tabs. I heard the two Honourable Members from the Wellington, Calaba Town axis looking forward to the work. The Honourable Member from Moyamba gave us the fairy side of it. She was a Baker; she is no more a Baker. So, we want to know eventually because we heard about SONOCO for some months now when the President was there to do the ground breaking, I know the Minister would tell us they were waiting for these agreements; that is what would have slowed their pace, but after the ratification, we want to see them accelerating the speed within which they operate.

Mr Minister, do not forget to make use of the local content because those that would be employed let them come from that constituency. We know that Guinea is within the Mano River Union, Guinea is within the ECOWAS but first let us look within. When they want to employ let them first employ Sierra Leoneans before they go for the Mano River Union or the ECOWAS. We are doing this because we want to create jobs, we don't want to create jobs for non-Sierra Leoneans as a priority. Mr Minister, we would be monitoring you on these particular agreements. On that note, I would support these agreements. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Leader of Government Business you have the Floor.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you very much Honourable Members, for your various contributions. If you go through these agreements, you would realise that some of the things that we look for in agreements like this are all present. When you talk about the infrastructure, you talk about the job creation; you have to monitor the fiscal concessions given. It is clear in both agreements that protecting the local content and

also talking about competition against foreign investors, especially for the flour mill; it is very clear in cluster 4. 1. 2 which talks about; ***"protection of the local content."***

Mr Minister, you have to monitor the fiscal concessions they are not given because we love them or because they are going to do pro-bono service for us. We are giving them concessions because we want them to develop our infant industries. So, because of that reason, you have to monitor these fiscal concessions given to all of these companies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you look at the recitals, they are talking about job creation, infrastructural development, and backers Union. Mr Speaker, with your leave, I would like to read portion of page 3 of the agreement and as I said, it is not on pro-bono business, it says; ***"Provide support to Sierra Leoneans, Backers Union and Backers Association through regular and uninterrupted supply of bread and other parcels flours."***

For the SONOCO Company they would be providing corporate social responsibility for people living in Wellington. Honourable Member, from that constituency please takes note of the area of corporate social responsibility; read that one properly, it is clearly enshrined in the agreement. And also for the flour mill, it is also in the agreement that things should not be politicised. Ones should not use the Company to do any political activity; to sponsor, to build party office or to sponsor campaigns, it is against the agreement.

Mr Minister, Honourable Members of the Committee on Trade, these agreements need proper oversight, both the fiscal and the corporate social responsibility for all the infrastructural development for the organization and the protection of our employees.

Also in one of the agreements, it is very clear that for unskilled labour you should not employ foreigners. Unskilled labour is purely for Sierra Leoneans, I cannot say more than what is in the agreement because the agreement is simple and very clear; I cannot overemphasise the spirit of the agreement.

Mr Minister, as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said; "you want to make a hallmark." Today, you may be transferred to another Ministry, it is fortunate that all the Members from the other side are praising the agreement but they have raised some questions. Honourable Member of the Opposition also said; he has an issues about using the company as a campaign tool for fiscal concessions, and those fiscal concessions can only be interpreted as well meaning for the people of this country if proper oversight is done.

I said it is not on pro-bono bases; it is a give and take, because we don't have the means to develop those industries to do the investment, we rely on foreign investors to come; this is a private partnership business with Government. So, it is purely on how do we administer our oversights and bring other players on board to see how best we can do. As I said, I repeat for my Honourable Member from Wellington it is very clear that if you want to do site visit, you should go along with stakeholders and make sure that what they have put in place for corporate social responsibility is maintained and must be carried out and for the good of the community and not for the good of their own personal interest.

Mr Speaker, I think these agreements are non-controversial, they are good for our people in terms of investment, and if you look at the reciters, as I said; it is for job creation, infrastructural development and transfer of skills and knowledge based from one level to another.

So, I think we should ratify these agreements. Thank you very much Mr Speaker, thank you all for your contributions and may the Lord bless us all.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr Minister any comments, any answers?

MR HINGA SANDY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am truly grateful for the comments that have come from the House, regards provisions of these agreements. I am particularly grateful for the accolades that have also been showered. All agreements that we bring to this House, whether in print or silence, absolutely takes into full consideration the statutory provisions established for unhindered oversight of

Parliament. And while I remain in the office of the Ministry of Trade, I will ensure that all Committees that may wish to express interest in the operations of Companies in this country have access and are given unfettered access to do their required oversights.

So therefore, particularly with the Committee on Trade, let me give the assurances that moving forward we would ensure that we are going to have strong engagement with you and let you be part of the role out of the agreements. I agree fully well with the Leader of the Opposition who stated that tax concessions granted should be done in the interest of bringing benefit to the people of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to note here that the tax concessions granted in these agreements are actually time bound and they are meant to allow these Companies to establish the investments within a reasonable time period. And I would also allow them to create the necessary jobs and be able to start their full operations. By and large, mentioned about the medium term national development plan, the Ministry of Trade is fully committed and not actually that we use the document as a Bible, but we make sure that each time we try to engage with the private sector we try to be guided by the provisions of the medium term national development plan.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday 3rd November, 2020:

1. An agreement between the Government of the republic of Sierra Leone, represented by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Finance and the Sierra Leone Flour Mill [SL] Limited.
2. An agreement between the Government of the republic of Sierra Leone and Societe Nouvelle De Commerce [SONOCO-S.A].

THE SPEAKER: The question is that this Honourable House ratifies the following agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday 3rd November, 200;

1. An agreement between the Government of the republic of Sierra Leone, represented by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Finance and the Sierra Leone Flour Mill [SL] Limited.
2. An agreement between the Government of the republic of Sierra Leone and Societe Nouvelle De Commerce [SONOCO-S.A]

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Government Motion by the Minister of Trade and Industry has been ratified.]

THE SPEAKER: Thank you Mr Minister. Yes madam!

HON. VERONICA K. SESAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise on S.O [25] notice of private Members motion that was sent to the Office of the Clerk on the 2nd November 2020.

Mr Speaker, be it resolved that the motion moved by Honourable Bashiru Silikie on the 18th November, 2019, which inter earlier stated that; ***"all large scale industries, mining Companies with access to sea ports, river exports, import terminals, jetties, through with the aforesaid companies, out export of the commodities, minerals that they mine, produce or carry an import of machinery, spare parts or any other imports must report, deliver a minimum of 60% of their monthly fuel consumption by sea, river via the aforesaid sea port, river export, import terminals and jetties. Only Sea transportation Companies who have had experience supplying petroleum products via sea, river into sea ports, river export, import terminal, jetties in Sierra Leone in the last five years shall operate or carry out this service in Sierra Leone."***

Mr Speaker, be rescinded and nullified as it is selective, discriminatory and counterproductive to revenue generation, tax collection, business and investment promotion in Sierra Leone.

MR SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON.....: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Motion moved by Honourable Veronica K. Sesay has been carried.]

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, thank you very much. Before we leave, I also will want to use this opportunity to remind the House that we met yesterday at 1:00pm we were expecting a broader attendance in that meeting but also there are other things with the Office of the Clerk; other motions and concerns that have been raised in this House by the Leader of the NGC, some of them have been filed for some time now, including that of the Honourable SOS. We need to trigger them out so that this House will finish with them. We are getting very close to Christmas; it is very important Mr Speaker.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you. I talked about the question time, I have asked the Clerk to go through the normal procedure to get the questions to come before us. That motion to be very honest is not properly before me but it is in the form of a memo, let them check. If you don't believe, I will read the same memo before the House.

Honourable Leader, I don't intend to read it but that will not dampen the spirit of the intension of what you want to do in terms of that motion; but it is not properly before us, I will tell you for free. If you go through S.O. [25]2 it is not properly before us but that will not dampen the spirit of the motion.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, with all due respect to the Leader of Government Business, we have made it very clear in this House that it is the responsibility of the technocrats to ensure that whatever we have with them, all fall with our rules and regulations. So, if a document is filed with the office of the Clerk, and if there is an error, it the responsibility of the technocrats to ensure that document is cleaned up. It is not acceptable and that should not be an excuse, because we should not be blaming Members of Parliament for duties that belong squarely to the experts. The Director of Legislative Affairs is supposed to be here, this is something we raised

and agreed upon in this House. It should not be used to delay issues that we want to trash.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I think it is not about technocrat; it is about making use of the Standing Orders. For you to use S.O 25 [2] you have to address the motion to the Clerk. The motion was not address to anybody; it is just an ordinary memo. As I said; I don't want to open a debate, it is deliberate omission and that will not dampen the spirit for us not to debate the Auditor General's Report. S.O. 25 [2], may I read? Proposer: Honourable Kandeh Yumkella of Constituency 062, Kambia District.

Seconder: Honourable Hassan A. Sesay of Constituency 050, Tonkolili District.

They cited the Standing Orders but they did not follow the proper procedure, and it is not the office of the Clerk that would tell him to do the correction. I can remember in 2010, Honourable Ibrahim Bundu, the erstwhile Leader of the House of Parliament threw out our motion for not putting time on the motion, and it was served after the working hours, you are aware of that. Let me read S.O [25] 2 "***when notice of motion is required, such notice shall be given in writing and signed by the Member and addressed to the Clerk of Parliament.***" And this motion was not addressed to the Clerk of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am responding to these issues because you have raised it. I wanted to talk to the Clerk that they should redo the motion so that we can have a debate. So, what I will do now is that, since you have brought it on the Floor of Parliament, I will talk to the mover of the motion to do the proper thing; that is to address it to the Clerk of Parliament and rewrite the motion. That is only what we need to do but it will not dampen the spirit of the debate of the Auditor General's Report. Thank you.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, on that note I want to thank the Leader of Government but again, let me reiterate that in future, let our technocrats ensure they assist us in doing the right things, that is why they are here. Thank you Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, let me just accept what he has said so that it can be across the aisle. It is good for us to do that because we want to have transparent Parliament. We said this is a new beginning; as you said when we came back after the recess...

THE SPEAKER: Does it require a motion?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: No. It is not a motion. We are just moving on; we have accepted that it is not a motion. We are going to make an honourable agreement that this Honourable House will ask our technocrats to help us when we want to write a motion, we should consult them so that they can help you out. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Frankly, let us go by the constitution, it is very clear. The responsibility of this Parliament is clearly spelt out in the constitution; let's go by that, we don't need a motion on this matter.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: Mr Speaker, may I respond?

THE SPEAKER: Let us not reopen a debate; we would deal with this issue.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: Mr Speaker, I agree with you. We would go by the constitution and we were requested to move a motion which we did.

We actually took the existing motion, we looked at it, we had a group of seven MPs looked at the process, we copied and changed some aspects, we called Mr King; the technical expert- is this the correct procedure? He said 'yes'. So, if the systems are changed, no problem. We are here to learn, we know we went over backward. If I don't know the procedure but I am sure the seconder of the motion knows the procedure and I was in his office with other MPs when we called Mr King to go through the document, and we had other experienced People; they say yes, you are following the right path. But if my Honourable colleague says we did not follow the procedure of the motion, Mr Speaker, we go by what you have said. It is a constitutional requirement but we know that we were guided through the activity. But anyway I hope the rules don't keep changing as issues arise.

THE SPEAKER: It is a constitutional requirement and the constitution supersedes the S.Os of Parliament.

HON. SEGEPOH S. THOMAS: Yes Mr Speaker. At this stage, as Chairman of the Public Account Committee, I consider this to be a little strange but less misinterpreted as not want the Auditor General's Report to be debated. I wish to state today that I am in total support of every Auditor General's Report that comes to this House to be debated before they are referred to the Public Account Committee.

But let me state Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, that if we are to debate the Auditor General's Report before it is referred to the Public Account Committee, I crave the kind indulgence of your seat and this House that that be done speedily because I wish to state that when that notice of that motion was given here, it took eternity for that particular debate to commence to the effect and the real steam of the debate was taken away, we had to wait and wait endlessly without that debate taking place. If we are to debate a particular Auditor General's Report, then I crave the indulgence of this House that we do that immediately when there is steam. Otherwise, we risk the misinterpretation by the public that we are holding on to a sensitive document; that we do not want a particular document to be debated. Of course that is the kind of impression that went around when that motion was moved and nothing was done. So, I crave the indulgence of this House that if we are doing that we do that speedily so that we don't get the public misinterpreting the House.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Deputy Speaker for that clarification. Yes, Leader of Government Business.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I thank you all very much and thank you Deputy Speaker. I want to read the Internal Notice Paper.

BILLS:

THE CYBER ACT, 2020

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING:

MR MOHAMED RADO SWARAY, MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

SECOND READING, COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING: - MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS.

THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION FOR PEACE AND NATIONAL COHESION, 2020-

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

PROF. DAVID FRANCIS, CHIEF MINISTER

SECOND READING, COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING: - THE CHIEF MINISTER

1. THE MEDICAL EXAMINERS ACT, 2020-

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING: - MR DAVID N. PANDA, MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

SECOND READING, COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING: - THE MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

THE SPEAKER: Chairman, Finance Committee, please come forward. Honourable Members, following consultations, the House will stand adjourned to Thursday 12th November, 2022. You have any announcements?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

[The House rose at 2:10pm and was adjourned to Thursday the 12th of November at 10:00am prompt.]

