



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**FOURTH SESSION –FIRST MEETING**

**THURSDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2023**

*SESSION – 2022/2023*



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMETARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**VOLUME: I**

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House  
Held Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2023.

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*THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE*

**Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House**

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**FOURTH SESSION – FIRST MEETING  
OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT  
OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC**

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**THURSDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2023**

**I. PRAYERS**

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

*[The House met at 10:05 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]*

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

The House was called to Order

*Suspension of S. O. 5[2]*

**II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON FRIDAY, 10<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2023**

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, we go the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2023. As usual, we will skip pages 1 to 4 and start with Page 5. Page 5? Page6? If there is no amendment or correction can someone move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 as presented?

**HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH:** I so move, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any Seconder?

**HON. ABU KAMARA:** I so second, Mr Speaker.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 has been adopted as presented]*

**THE SPEAKER:** I do not know whether the Deputy Chief Whip, who also doubles as the Chairman for the Committee on Internal Affairs, is here. I wanted to draw his attention to something.

**HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS:** Mr Speaker, I was planning to tell you before now that the Deputy Chief Whip told me that he would be going to the hospital. I think he has left already.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want the Leader of Government Business to listen to what I am about to say here. I just want to draw the attention of this House to a very dangerous practice that I observed, particularly amongst motorbike riders. Most of you will agree with me that even within West Africa, motorbike riders are like motor vehicle drivers; i.e., they are subject to traffic rules and regulations and are obliged to respect traffic rules. Unfortunately, our own motorbike riders appear to consider themselves above the law. They get to an intersection instead of waiting or giving way to traffic. They usually

find a way to manoeuvre around the traffic, navigate their ways out of it and in the process present very serious danger to road users.

There was a particular time when the central business district of Freetown was exempted from use by bike riders, but they are back and causing tremendous havoc and danger to the public. I will like this matter to be taken up by the Internal Affairs Committee. I am sure the Deputy Chair is here. I want both the Internal Affairs and Transport Committees to take up this matter very seriously.

They could cause a danger to themselves but what about the passengers and other road users. I think the law should be enforced and nobody is above the law whether you are a bike rider or motorist you are subject to the same traffic rules. Where the law requires you to give way, you should give way; where it requires you to stop, you should stop. I think the police ought to be reminded of their duty in enforcing the law. This is the message I have for Parliament this morning. It is very disturbing and is a very serious concern. We should be concerned about the lives of our ordinary citizens, including ourselves as road users. We cannot have one group of people obeying the law, and another group seeing themselves or setting themselves above the law. That is most unacceptable. I hope the Committees concern have taken heed. Do we have the Transport Committee Chairman here? I hope you have taken heed to the comment I have made to work jointly with Internal Affairs responsible for the police, and to draw the attention of the police as the enforcers of the law to ensure that road traffic regulations are enforced to the letter. Let us proceed with the main business before the House?

### **III. BILLS**

[A] THE COURT AMENDMENT ACT 2021 THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE [INTRODUCTION OF THE FIRST]

ATTORNEY GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE

**MR MOHAMED L. TARAWALLY ESQ** *[Attorney General and Minister of Justice]*: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, the Court amendment Act 2021, be read the first time.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[The Bill entitled, the Court amendment Act 2021 has been read the first time]*

**MR MOHAMED L. TARAWALLY**: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your leave, before I proceed to the second reading, I want to crave the indulgence of the House to take notice of Page 2 of the Bill. The name of the Attorney General then has been changed to the current one, which is Mohamed Lamin Tarawally Esq.

**THE SPEAKER**: It has been changed?

**MR MOHAMED L. TARAWALLY ESQ**: Yes, Mr Speaker. Having made that clarification, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, the Court Amendment Act, 2021 being an Act to amend the Court Act, 1965 to increase the jurisdiction of the Magistrate Court in civil matters and to provide for related matters, be read the second time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the proposed amendment to Section seven [7] of the Court Act, 1965 is necessary and very timely. First, it increases the jurisdiction of the Magistrate Court in civil matters from **Le5,000,000** the old Leones below **Le50,000,000**; second, to provide for the speedy resolution of civil and commercial at the Magistrate Court. Mr Speaker, with your leave, I want to read Section 7[1] of the 1965 Act. It says: **"In addition to any civil jurisdiction which maybe conferred upon a Magistrate Court by any other enactment, every such shall have jurisdiction to hear and determine any cause or matter other than an action founded upon libel, slander, false imprisonment, malicious prosecution, seduction, bridge of promise of marriage which maybe lawfully brought before it, and wherein the claim debt duty or matter in dispute does not exceed six hundred Leones in value whether on balance of account or otherwise."**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the current position with the extant Commercial Court Rule, which is the extant provision for a litigant to bring action to the High Court the sum [if any must be above fifty million Leones]. So, the gap between the first Act of 1965 to **Le50,000,000** is seriously affecting citizens of this country, particularly our people in the provinces and the petty traders. The claims they have most times are below **Le50,000,000** and is affecting them to initiate litigation to hire counsel to go to the High Court. Mr Speaker, this Bill is proposing for an amount that is below **Le50,000,000** and I am sure it will help to create an amicable atmosphere and give them the confidence to take an action to court with the hope that their matter will be litigated without recourse to hiring a lawyer. Mr Speaker, the purpose of this Bill, particularly the section referenced, is to ease the burden on the people of this country and to let them have access to justice within the four corners of Sierra Leone.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled the Court Amendment Act, 2021 be read the second time.

*[Question Proposed]*

**HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, we should ensure that this House continues to adopt the issue of making Members of Parliament more informed. This document is not controversial at all, but the next time you should give us an extract of the 1965 Court Act, so that we will be more informed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the Attorney General and Minister of Justice was making his submission, he made reference to the petty traders. He said matters relating to the petty traders would be speedily litigated at the level of the Magistrate Court. This is fine, but why are we not trying to ensure that some of the cases that befall some of the petty traders are decriminalised, so that even the congestion in our prisons will be taking care of. We want to see a situation wherein some of these minor crimes are decriminalised, instead of taking them to the Magistrate Court.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are piles of cases in our Judiciary in this country because of the procedures. If the Magistrate Courts do not have the jurisdiction



to look into a matter, the High Court has to do that and this causes delay. When this happens, then justice is delayed. I am sure this Bill will empower the Magistrate Court to look at cases below the claim of **Le 50,000,000**. In fact, I would like to ask this country to ignore the issue of the new notes and continue with our old notes because when you go to the market today, Mr Speaker the old Leones have flooded the market. So, the issue of the New Leones is infinitesimal in this country. What is happening on ground is quite different from what they are telling us. So, when you go to the bank, they give you the old notes. The old notes have taken over the new notes. I want to state here that this document is not controversial, but it is very sensitive.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, Point of Order. We have passed series of Legislations dealing with the change of currency and the Bank of Sierra Leone has the jurisdiction to extend the length of circulation of both currencies. There is always notice of extension of the old currency. I think they are not in violation of any law in terms of circulating the old notes. Perhaps, we should wait after the expiration of the deadline before we start to talk about it. There is no controversy because they told us that the old currency will be in circulation till March, 2023. I do not think the Bank is in violation of any regulation ratified by this Parliament or otherwise. So, I urge my colleague to confine his contribution on the Bill. Whatever trouble is going to emerge after that we have a legal framework as how to take the Bank Governor and his team to task for the existence of two currencies in the country and the steps to take.

**HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH:** Mr Speaker, for the records, I did not talk about any violation here.

**THE SPEAKER:** But you called on the House and by extension the general public to ignore the old notes or the new notes.

**HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH:** Does that connote a violation by the Bank of Sierra Leone?

**THE SPEAKER:** It is coming from you a law maker. The two notes are legal tender and they are running concurrently until the end of March, 2023 as I understand. So, it is inappropriate for any Member of Parliament to say one of them should be ignored. That is the point. I think let us focus our attention on the amendment before us that deals more appropriately with the Civil Jurisdiction of the Magistrate Court.

**HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH:** If I have my way, I will love to have the beautiful new Leones, but now the old Leones are more than the new ones. That is my position. Mr Speaker, this document will speed up cases in our Judiciary, particularly cases that should be dealt with by the Magistrate Court, but because of the limitations, they need to take them to the High Court and that will delay the process. With this repeal, I think we are on track and I want to urge this House that we approve this document when we come to the Third Reading and the Committee Stage. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Before I call on you, I will do a little diversion to reverse ourselves to where we should have started. You were out of the Chamber when it was your turn to speak. So, I give you the Floor now.

**HON. ABDUL S.M. CONTEH:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Well it is clear that times are changing and we have to change with time in a positive thing. It is not something we have to waste time on, but is just an issue of ensuring that we do the needful on time. We knew what we have to make the test of time and with the current law, some of the laws need transformation to deal with the current situation. What we have in front of us is going to make things better. It is going to help revamp our Judiciary. I strongly believe that this Honourable House does not need to waste time because we talk about providing pseudo resolution of Civil and Commercial Markets at the Magistrate Court. I am sure nobody will go against this amendment. If we talk about increasing jurisdiction of Magistrate Courts in Civil Markets financially, I do not think somebody will go against it.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I urge my colleagues to do the needful and ensure that we keep moving with the current trend. I thank you very much.

**HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH:** Mr Speaker, I want make quick correction. My colleague from Bombali spoke about the currency, and an undertone was made about the Bank Governor. Someone from the Press Gallery had picked it up and said the Bank Governor or senior person from the Opposition has said the Bank Governor is above Parliament. That is not true and the Bank Governor was summoned here, but since he is not a Minister to address Members in this Well, he was taken to Committee Room 1, where he explained to Members of Parliament exactly the challenges. He explained the issues and how he had been addressing same, especially with regard the calculation of both currencies and the general economic landscape of Sierra Leone. Therefore, it is wrong for the Press Gallery to pick up something coming from undertone. We should not present people in a bad manner. That is just the correction I wanted to make. If we go to the Parliamentary Update group where Members of Parliament and Members of the Fourth Estate, especially from the Press Gallery, are interfacing, you will realise that they just picked it up and they are circulating it. It presents the situation as if the Bank Governor is above Parliament. Parliament summoned the Bank Governor and he came and explained to us the challenges.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank you for that correction and I sincerely hope the Press Gallery or wherever it came from will take due note of that correction.

**HON. SHIAKA M. SAMA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, matters of justice are dear to my heart. One of the problems we have in this country is that we do not have enough judges. The judges are aging and they are retiring. Our population has increased and there are many courts.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, we have approved new judges recently.

**HON. SHIAKA M. SAMA:** That is an improvement and I am happy to hear this information. However, the fact of the matter is we need more judges. I want to commend those who did the appointment of judges Mr Speaker. I think this amendment is very positive.

**HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU:** Point of Order, Mr Speaker. The last time I was dressed in that attire I was not allowed to speak in this Well and my brother here is dressed in the same attire.

**THE SPEAKER:** Please continue, Honourable Member.

**HON. SHIAKA M. SAMA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The Honourable Member called me his brother, but he wants to obstruct me. Mr Speaker, this amendment is very positive. One of the problems with the High Court is that there are too many cases to be charged. There are people in prison for over five years, but their cases have not been heard. This is a very positive move by the Attorney General to decongest the High Court to ensure that some of those cases that have been there for years are brought to the Magistrate Courts. This is very good for the justice system of our country. We all know that justice delayed is justice denied. Therefore, I want to commend the AG for this move and I want him to look at other options, maybe there are other ways that we can improve the situation in the High Court. Fifteen Million then was very huge, but now less than fifteen million is not too bad. I want to use this opportunity to inform the AG that there are cases in courts that have taken a very long time and as a young person, I want to appeal that you look into those cases, so that those languishing in prisons are given fair trial in court. There are people who took the matter to court, they are no longer alive, and they are not appearing in court, but they keep adjourning such matters unfairly. This is very important because Sierra Leoneans have to have access to justice and you are creating this opportunity for that to happen. I want to commend you for this amendment. This amendment is not controversial; it is positive. I pray that the AG brings more of similar amendments to this House. I thank you very much.

**HON. DR SHEKU M. TURAY:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the Attorney General and the Minister of Justice for bringing this document to this Parliament. It is properly written to re-institute the procedure of the court in such fascinating manner. I want to say many thanks to you and many thanks for the good work you have done.

I have some concerns with this Bill. First of all I will talk about the establishment of the Order 3 of the Court User's Group. I looked at the functions in the establishment of the Court User's Group with the theme and not very elaborative. I want to know if there is any distinction between the practices of the court and the functionality of the court, of which each of the procedures defined here are done within a relative time as you are saying. This is because most of the activities or the steps you are taking are within short period of 3 days; some are 14 days; and others are 90 days. If you want to take action within three days, it requires more capacity, more resources, and more technicalities. Do you have the procedure defined within the system, so that you will be able to handle such cases that will come within the system?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have looked at the reporting procedure. The main function of the team or group is to recommend to the Chief Justice. Is there possibility or is there a linkage between this procedure of making recommendation to the court and also sending the report to the Chief Justice within the same procedure?

**HON DR MARK M. KALOKOH:** Point of Order, Mr Speaker. I want the Honourable Member to be guided. We are not discussing the Act here yet. We are to look at this Court Amendment Act 2021.

**HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH:** Mr Speaker, what the Honourable Member is doing is very good, but not timely. This is something we looked at yesterday or the day before, when the Instrument was laid, but the AG and his team have promised this House to take Members through the document before it matures and those points he is making will be relevant during those discussions. This will help us to know whether they would have to take it back or we do something else. His points are very good, but the time is not appropriate.

**HON. DR SHEKU M. TURAY:** Noted, Honourable Member. The Leader of the Opposition has cautioned me. I will wait for the right time, so that we discuss those issues. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** The House has been reminded more than one that this Bill is not controversial, a proposition I agree with. Therefore, we wrap up the debate.

**HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, I join colleagues before me in commending the Bill before us and if there is anything to be done on the Bill, it will be done during the Committee Stage. I joined my colleagues to state here that this document is relevant and it is timely. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** I call on the Leader of Government Business to make his contribution.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Thank you very much, colleagues for your meaningful contributions on this Bill. I thank the Minister for taking reforms to the Judiciary, which we are all looking forward to. I am sure during the time we were about to approve the judges here, the deputy speaker spoke about progressive laws, so as to change the dynamics of the court. The Judiciary should look into series of issues that have to do with welfare; how to do the reforms; how to do with the translation from what we call short term or modern way of giving out their own judgement. This will reduce the burden and constraints in delivering their judgements. These are all part of the reforms in trying to broadening the jurisdiction of the Magistrate Court.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, under the supervision of the Speaker, we want to say he is doing well for Parliament, irrespective of the difficulties he is going through. He has done a lot of good things for this House and this is one of what he has for the past years. The Minister said in the provinces, it must be used and look at how best those in search of a lawyers can now come to a Magistrate Court, follow the procedures and also have the judgement without involving financial difficulties. So, this is a very good legislative reform which we all appreciate. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and thank you all for your contributions.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Leader and all other Members who have spoken before him.

**MR MOHAMED L. TARAWALLY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in answering some of the questions posed by Honourable Members, particularly so in decriminalising

the cases of petty traders, the purpose of this Bill is purely on civil matters and not on criminals. I reference Section 7[1] of the Parent Act of 1965 which we are encouraging this House to repeal. It deals with purely civil matters and there are instances where people are put behind bars either the police station or somewhere else for petty fines. That is the whole essence of this Bill. In the good spirit of the law, and with the true intention of access to justice that no one is left behind within the four corners of this country. It will serve this well if people have confidence to approach the court and the right thing is done. For the most part, Honourable Members, this case is been coming up before now are always settled between the parties. They either go to their Mammy Queens or go to their tribal heads to settle these issues. They were afraid to come to court. Now, we are opening the space to ensure that if you could not get justice from their Mammy Queens or the tribal heads, you can go to the traditional court. So, that is why the Government, in its wisdom, has thought it fit to increase the space from **NLe5,000** to **NLe50,000**. This is good because people will not feel trapped by either hiring the services of Counsel or think that their matters will delay if they go to court. In terms of decriminalised cases in court, I want to draw your attention to the fact that there is a new Criminal Procedure Act that is in progress. When we complete working on that document, we have to come before you again for approval.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one thing that is also very important for us to take home is the fact that this law is very old. We are now in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and we are to move with the time. That is why we are trying to repeal the old Criminal Procedure Act that we are still using in Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are several reasons for the delay in the courts, but several things could be done to resolve that problems. It is not the wishes of the court to delay cases in courts; there are lots of issues that are responsible for people to be in prison or behind bars. However, it is a requirement that if someone is behind bars, it might be for several reasons: one particular reason is the person is a danger to society. So, the laws must ensure that they protect society from this force than the person who is behind bars. The underlining effect of this particular Act is to ensure that

all of us have justice, including our brothers and sisters in the remote areas not only for petty traders, but for the ordinary man who is not a petty trader. Those who think could be victims can now liberate themselves and have access to mitigate their own issues on their volition. I think these are the issues this Bill will address. I guess I have addressed the concerns of Honourable Members.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill, entitled 'The Court Amendment Act, 2021' be read the second time.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[The Court Amendment Act, 2021 being an Act to amend the Court Act, 1965 to increase the jurisdiction of the Magistrate Court in Civil Matters and to provide for other related matters has been read the second].*

[COMMITTEE STAGE]

THE HOUSE RESOLVE TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE]

**MR MOHAMED L. TARAWALLY:** Mr Chairman, the Honourable Members, I move that Clause one stands part of the Bill.

Clause 1 Proposed

**HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH:** Mr Chairman, I move that the **Le5,000,000** is changed to **NLe50,000**.

**THE SPEAKER:** Is that the only amendment?

**HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH:** The name of the AG will now change from Anthony Y. Brewah to Mohamed Lamin Tarawally.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** I just want to draw the attention of this House to something more substantive, between 1965 and now we are talking about 58 years. The jurisdiction of the Court was limited to **Le5,000** and in those 58 years. Can't we be more proactive than that? That is the question I want to put.

*Suspension of S.O 5[2]*



**HON. SHIAKA M. SAMA:** I want to observe, Mr Speaker. This Law was enacted in 1965 and it is possible that the **5mln** was as a result of an amendment. It might not have been **5mln** then; it might have been a figure that was lower than that, I think. It is like the amendment we have just ratified.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Chairman, it is good to do the amendment and see how best you can compare it with the times and also look at what the people you are dealing with are earning. As we heard from the Minister, he referred more to the people in the rural areas and the petty traders. So, we want to be reasonable with the people of Sierra Leone to look at some of these amendments. Ministers can always bring amendments and I think this one is good. We are going to use this one for now, but if there is need for another amendment, the Minister will come again for further amendment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with regard to the name, I want to believe that when we get to enactment, we do not need to put the name of the Minister. We only need to include the name of the Ministry in charge. We noted the Leader of the Opposition's statement. As the Honourable Dr Mark M. Kalokoh has said, we should go for the new notes as per law legislated. So, we are happy that we have done the amendment for that one also. I think that is all I have to say for now, Mr Chairman.

**HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH:** Mr Chairman, before the Minister responds, you raised a very salient point and we have not resolved it yet. The issue of timeline that this Law was either amended or passed in 1965 and the jurisdiction was **5mln** and 58 years down the line it was **Le600** and moved to **5mln** and now it is going to **50mln**. I am considering the range that the Minister intends to cover the petty traders and the small businesses. If you look at their transaction volume, I am sure we are still putting what they will take to the court outside the jurisdiction of the court. Therefore, I think we have to give consideration to your suggestion.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** But it a good point actually that I raised. There is no hard and fast rule about it. Let listen to the Minister.

**MR MOHAMED LAMIN TARAWALLY:** Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, while I appreciate the concerns raised by this honourable House Mr Chairman particularly so to the issues you raised about the jurisdiction taking from 1965 to date and the period of years and going forward.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Over half century.

**MR MOHAMED LAMIN TARAWALLY:** Mr Chairman, currently there is a provision that the High Court rules are the faster Commercial Court rules of 2020 and the Constitutional Instrument No.25 of 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2007, which is the High Court rules. These give the jurisdiction of the High Court, for any matter, above **Le 50,000**. So, any matter, or any sum, or any claim below **50mln** is what this Bill is speaking to and that is what I am trying to encourage this House to approve. However, for any claim over **50mln** should fall within the jurisdiction of the High Court, i.e., either the Commercial Court or the general jurisdiction of the High Court. So, that is the provision as it is for now. However, to make way to current trend, that is why in the wise wisdom of the Judiciary and the Government, we have ensured that we try to cover that space to fill the gaps between the **5mln** in 1965 to increase it to **Le 50,000,000**, so that people will have the confidence to go to court and argue their matter or make their claims before the court without any fear of not been able to hire the services of a lawyer or having no fear of not getting a fair and proper trial.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I crave the indulgence of this Honourable House that this particular Bill before you is a great strive and the House has the right to consider same, but again we should not also forget that there is a current provision, a current instrument, a current rule and law that we are working for the High Court that gives it a different jurisdiction. Thus, I urge this House, through the Chairman to approve what is before it and proceed until such a time. Therefore, I move that Clause 1 stand part of the Bill as amended.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

Clause 1 stand part of the Bill as amended.

[THE HOUSE RESUMES]

**MR MOHAMED LAMIN TARAWALLY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I report that the Bill entitled, 'the Court Amendment Act, 2023,' having gone through the Committee of the Whole House with amendments [I now move that the Bill] be read the third time and passed into law.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

The Bill entitled the Court Amendment Act, 2023 being an Act to amend the Court Act 1965 to increase the jurisdiction of the Magistrate Court in civil matters and to provide for other related matters has been read the third time and passed into Law.

[B] THE NATIONAL UNITY AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION REPEL ACT 2021 THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICES INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING.

**MR MOHAMED LAMIN TARAWALLY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Repeal Act, 2021 be read the first time.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

The Bill entitled, 'the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Repeal Act, 2021 has been read the first time.

[SECOND READING]

**MR MOHAMED LAMIN TARAWALLY ESQ:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Repeal Act 2021 being an Act to repeal the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Act, 1996, Act No.1 of 1996 and to provide for other related matters be read the second time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the proposed Bill, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Repeal Act 2021 is intended to repeal the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Act 1996, Act No. 1 of 1996.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in June 1996, the former President, Dr Alhaji Ahmed Tejan Kabba of blessed memory signed into law the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Act, establishing the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission with a mandate to promote peace, stability and national cohesion in Sierra Leone. The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission was not functional. However, the National Unity and Reconciliation Act, 1996 remains in our law books. The intended purpose of the National Commission for Unity and Reconciliation Commission is very similar to that of the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion, which is envisioned to provide an effective mechanism to strengthen peace, stability and national cohesion throughout Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is unnecessary to have two institutions with identical objectives in our law books. In approving the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion Bill, Parliament stressed the need to formally repeal the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Act, 1996. It is for this reason that this formal request is made to you to repeal the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Act, 1996.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the reason for the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Repeal Act, 2021 is to remove it from our law books once and for all and avoid unnecessary duplication. Therefore, I move that the Bill entitled the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Repeal Act, 2021 be read the second time.

*[Question Proposed]*

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes maybe you want to say a sentence or two.

**HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH:** Mr Speaker, this is very clear. We are trying to avoid unnecessary duplication. We are now going to have an institution that will perform this function. Therefore, I think we have to clean our law books. This is timely for us to repeal this particular law. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**HON. SHIAKA M. SAMA:** Mr Speaker, according to the AG, the intention is to remove this law from our law books. Let us look at the short title again, the National Unity and

Reconciliation Commission Repeal Act, 2021, being an Act to repeal the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Act 1996. We can stop here and expunge 'other related matters.' Why related matters?

**HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH:** Mr Speaker, there is no need to waste time on this point because we are trying to repeal the process.

**THE SPEAKER:** There was an oversight done in 2021 we are trying to cure.

**HON. CHERNOR R.M BAH:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I have very little or nothing to say. I look forward to us addressing the Bill at the Committee Stage.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, I think the Minister has done well in explaining to us why we need to repeal this law and he thinks we do not need difficulty with that and we have no problem. Therefore, I urge Members to accept the repeal and move forward.

**MR MOHAMED LAMIN TARAWALLY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Repeal Act, 2021 be read the second time.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

The Bill entitled, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Repeal Act, 2021 being an Act to repeal the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Act, 1996 Act No.1 of 1996 and to provide for other related matters has been read the second time.

[COMMITTEE STAGE]

CLAUSE 1 PROPOSED.

**HON. SHIAKA M. SAMA:** Mr Speaker, I was saying that we are getting rid of the old law, but this phrase, 'to provide for other related matters' is not important. That is my comment.

**HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE:** Clause 1 is saying to repeal and this is the title of the Bill.

**HON. SHIAKA M. SAMA:** I am talking about the title, Honourable Member.

**HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE:** That is the original long title and if you read Clause 1 is asking us to repeal the long and short titles.

**HON. MARRAY CONTEH:** Well, it could have made provision for any other instrument that we had also added to that, but they were not even functional. We do not want to leave any stone unturned.

**HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH:** Mr Chairman, the point is straight forward. What this Bill is doing is just to repeal and not doing any other thing. So, it cannot make provision for other related matters.

**HON. MARRAY CONTEH:** That is for the 1996.

**HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH:** That is just to repeal it. We are talking about this Bill and not the 1996.

**HON. MARRAY CONTEH:** Which date has been changed there already?

**HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH:** They are separate documents. This one is talking about repealing.

**HON. MARRAY CONTEH:** Agreed, Honourable Member.

**HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH:** It is talking about nothing else and is provided for in this document. As for the date, 2021 changes to 2023 and the AG's name also changes.

**HON. MARRAY CONTEH:** I agree, Honourable Member.

**HON. JOSEPH L. WILLIAMS:** Mr Speaker, my question here is that since this has been in our law books, I do not know whether people were employed in this particular Commission and what will happen to those persons that were employed in this Commission.

**HON. MATHEW. S. NYUMA:** Mr Chairman, I think we should proceed. The AG stated everything very clearly.

**MR MOHAMED LAMIN TARAWALLY:** Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Clause 1 stands part of the Bill as amended.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

Clause 1 stand part of the Bill as amended

[THE HOUSE RESUMES]

**MR MOHAMED LAMIN TARAWALLY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I report that the Bill entitled the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Repeal Act, 2023, having gone through the Committee of the whole House with amendments [I now move that the Bill] be read the third time and pass into Law.

*[Question proposed put and agreed to]*

The Bill entitled, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Repeal Act 2023, being an Act to repeal the National Unity and Reconciliation and Commission Act of 1996 Act No.1 of 1996 has been read the third time and passed into Law.

[THE HOUSE RESUMES]

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the distinguish Attorney General and Minister of Justice.

**HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA:** Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O. 23. Mr Speaker, this is in relation to the announcement you made this morning. I stand here in my capacity as the ambassador for the Bike Riders Union comprising Kono, Kailahun and Kenema. I am the ambassador for the East bike riders and with consultation with our president, president Mohamed Teddy Bah, I have relayed to him exactly what you have just mentioned here, i.e., the attitude of these bike riders. If possible, we will work in collaboration with the Chairman of Internal Affairs Committee and the Chairman of Transport Committee to hold meetings at regional as well as national levels.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are also not oblivious of the fact that bike riders attitude in this country is the same as those in other countries. I have travelled in all West African countries and I observed that their attitude is the same. However, I want to assure the Speaker that a communique will be signed across the country and their attitude will be changed. I thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** You have simply re-echoed and confirmed the need for the two committees to meet and I thank you for that.

***ADJOURNMENT***

*[The House Rose at 12:30 p.m. and was adjourned to Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.]*