

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

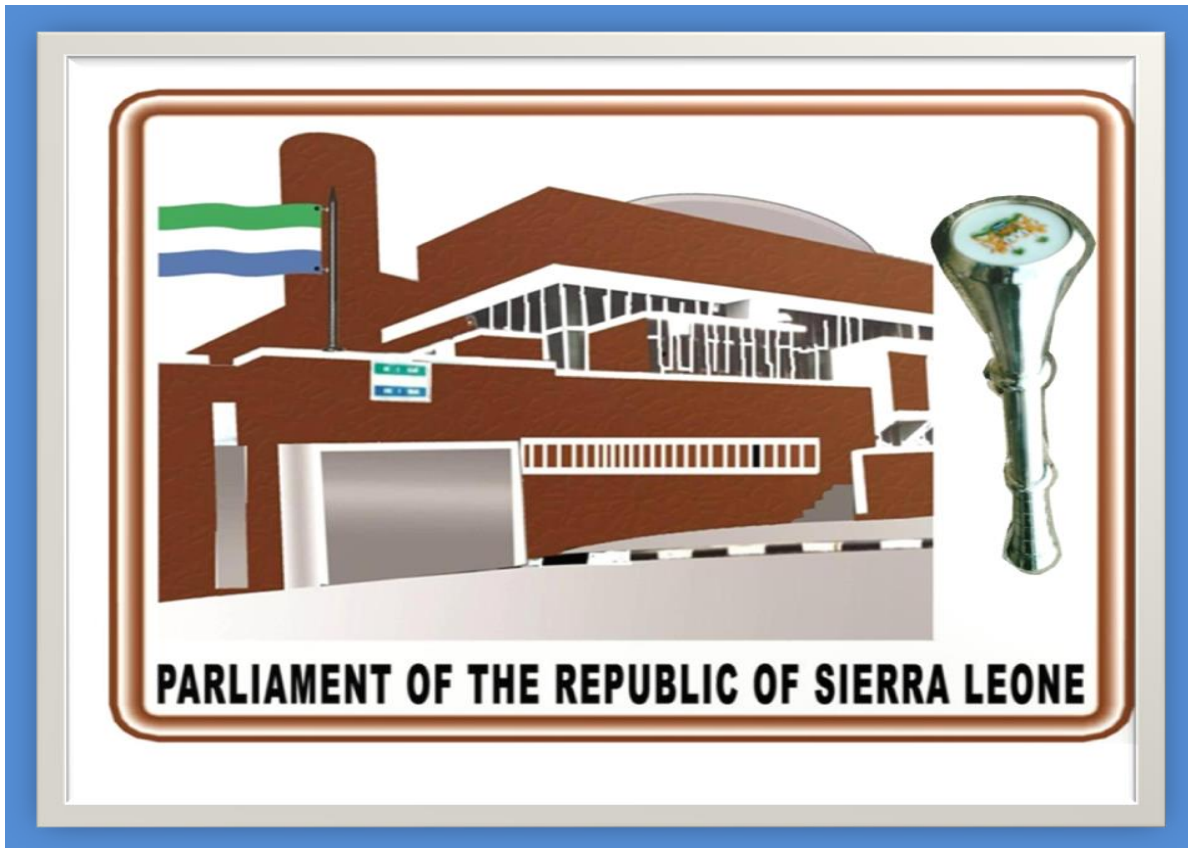
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

SECOND SESSION -SECOND MEETING

FRIDAY, 13TH DECEMBER, 2019

SESSION – 2019/2020



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Friday, 13th December, 2019.

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HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO

CHAIRMAN, LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

THE COMMENTS MADE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDERS 58[6] AND SECTION 106[7&8] OF THE 1991 CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE ON THE BILL ENTITLED: THE FINANCE ACT, 2020.

IV. MOTION

PROPOSER: HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO

SECONDER: HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT SECTION 42 OF THE ASSENT COPY OF THE FINANCE ACT, 2020 BE EXPUNGED.

V. MOTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE

PROPOSER: HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS

SECONDER: HON. EMILIA L. TONGI

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THE NINTH REPORT OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE BE ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE AND THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN BE APPROVED.



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Friday, 13th December, 2019.

I. PRAYERS

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

[The House met at 10:10 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]

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I congratulate all Honourable Members who were here before 10:00 a.m. I take special note of your respect for time and may you continue to respect punctuality.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to amend the Order Paper this morning. Under item IV, I move that the Secunder of this Motion, Honourable Alpha Bah, be replaced by Honourable Daniel B. Koroma.

THE SPEAKER: May I invite both the Acting Leader of Opposition and the Acting Leader of Government Business to come forward please? Honourable Members, we shall now proceed on the understanding that the amendment made is acceptable across the aisles.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, my colleagues on the other side have endorsed the amendment; therefore, we can proceed.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Ibrahim B. Kargbo, I hope are okay. I want someone to second that Motion.

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: I so second, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[Motion by the Acting Leader of Government Business to amend the Order Paper has been carried]

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY, 26TH NOVEMBER, 2019

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Tuesday, 26th November, 2019. As usual, we shall skip Pages 1 to 4. Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? If there is no amendment, can someone move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for parliamentary sitting held on Tuesday, 26th November, 2019 as presented?

HON. MOSES B. JORKIE: I so move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Tuesday, 26th November, 2019 has been adopted as presented]

III. PAPER LAID

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO *[Chairman Legislative Committee]:* Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table a Memorandum contained the reasons for the President's dissent of the Finance Act, 2020.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, may I observe? I think the procedure is that you have to present the letter from the President to this House by reading it verbatim. I am sure this has been the procedure. After reading the item on the Order Paper, you also read the letter verbatim.

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: Thank you, Honourable Daniel B. Koroma. As Lawyers, we acknowledge seniority very much. He is a very senior Member of Parliament and I thank him for the observation. On that note, Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table a Memorandum contained the reasons given by His Excellency the President for refusing to sign the Finance Act of 2020.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Chairman of Legislative Committee, will you please stay within the confines of what is on the Order Paper?

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: I will, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table the comments made by His Excellency the President in accordance with Standing Orders 58[6] and Section 106[7&8] of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone on the Bill entitled, 'The Finance Act, 2020.'

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, before the Honourable Member read the letter, I would like the Opposition Leader, myself and Honourable Daniel B. Koroma to meet.

THE SPEAKER: Let him lay the Paper first.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: I thought he is reading.

THE SPEAKER: Let him lay the Paper first, Honourable Member.

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table the comments made by His Excellency the President in accordance with Standing Order 58[6] and Section 106[7&8] of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone on the Bill entitled, 'The Finance Act, 2020.

IV. GOVERNMENT MOTION

HON HINDOLO M. GEVAO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House expunge Clause 42 of the Bill entitled, 'The Finance Act, 2020' in accordance with Standing Orders 58[6] and Section 106[7&8] of the 19191 Constitution of Sierra Leone. Mr Speaker, with the special leave of the Honourable Speaker, I would want to read the content of the memorandum contained in the President's Dissent for the edification of the Public.

THE SPEAKER: You may proceed, Honourable Member.

HON HINDOLO GEVEAO: Reference number is OP/BF250/293/01 Sierra Leone Government Memorandum.

From: The Secretary to the President,

To: The Clerk of Parliament

25th November, 2019,

copy Speaker of Parliament,

Finance Act 2020.

I write to acknowledge receipt of your minute of 22nd November, forwarding copies of the Finance Act, 2020 for Presidential Assent. His Excellency the President has perused

the document and has expressed grave concern over the open-endedness of non-accountable imprest as provided for in the said Act. He is of the view that this is prone to improper use of public funds. Accordingly, His Excellency the President has asked that a ceiling be provided for non-accountable imprest which shall be granted by the President. This is in line with the President's stands on transparency and accountability as well as the need for prudence in the use of public funds.

His Excellency the President is requesting that Section 42[6] be drafted as follows or as maybe appropriate in line with the concerns expressed above: Approval for authorisation of the use of the non-accountable imprest referred to in 5 shall be granted solely by the President provided however that the non-accountable imprest for any overseas trips shall not exceed. The Bill is therefore returned unsigned for further amendment. Please treat with speed.

Julius F. Sandi [PHD]

Secretary to the President

State House Tower Hill Freetown"

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member. Any Seconder?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I rise to second this Motion moved by the Chairman of the Legislative Committee, I want to inform this Honourable House and by extension the general public that there has been a Motion in respect of the Finance Bill, dated 21st November, 2019, and then thereafter, we received this letter from His Excellency the President. I am sure the Motion and the letter are requiring a review and reconciliation of this Bill. On that note and based on Section 106 of the 1991 Constitution, the procedures are very clear in respect of the letter from the President as to what is to be done and how it should be done. We stood on S.Os 32[7] and S.Os 4[2] and those are the provisions that will address how this Motion should be dealt with. We all believe that the Constitution is supreme.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I seconded the Motion moved by Honourable Dr Kandeh Yumkella, Leader of the National Grand Coalition [NGC].

However, I hereby withdraw that Motion because it has been subsumed in the letter from the President which states that the 'procedure is clearly stated in Section 106.' So, we must follow that procedure since it is supreme and then we arrive at a consensus. On that note, I second the Motion moved by Honourable Hindolo M. Gevao [*Applause*].

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Daniel B. Koroma.

[Question Proposed Put and Agreed To]

[Motion by Honourable Hindolo M. Gevao has been carried]

THE SPEAKER: For the edification of Members of this House, I now wish to address an issue. The Finance Bill from which you have now expunged, Section 42 will be adjusted in terms of its numbering and resubmitted to the President for the Presidential Assent. I just wanted all of us to be clear about that.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I want to thank my colleague on the other side. I believe this is in the interest of the country and this is how Parliament should work. I want to however state here that the President did not return that document because of pressure from the Civil Society. When he was campaigning, he did say that after he had been elected President of Sierra Leone, he would make sure that we have credible financial institutions in this country. He also promised to revamp the Economy. Therefore, when the President thought it fit that this document will go against his very campaign message, he returned it to Parliament for amendment [*Applause*]. I just want the public to know that he did it in good faith because he wanted to make sure that there is accountability in the Office of the President. I thank you very much and I thank my colleague on the other side [*Applause*].

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we appreciate the efforts of the Acting Leader of Government Business for appreciating the efforts of this side of the House, but I want to remind my colleague on the other side that this House, this Parliament and indeed this side of the House would not yield to any pressure from a group that is not part of this system. The fact of the matter is that we are representing the people of this country [*Applause*]. If our people raised issues, I am

sure we should listen to them. And we want to make it very clear that if we did not respect the letter of the President, we would not be here to discuss it. We respect it and that is why we are here to discuss it. However, we want it to be noted for the records that this House and indeed our party will not yield to pressure from any group or individual to undertake state expenditure without accounting for it *[Applause]*. Accountability is key to the very success of this country and indeed the development of the Economy. Therefore, we appreciate your efforts, Mr Speaker for putting in place the structures for us to remind the public that accountability in state governance comes first. Thank you, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I would like to thank both the Acting Leader of Government Business and the Acting Leader of the Opposition for their comments. There is no gainsaying the fact that the public has been very interested in this particular matter as very clearly demonstrated by the publications, utterances and newscasts outside of this House. I believe the procedure we have adopted is the most appropriate in dealing with this particular matter *[Applause]*. So, the matter is brought to rest.

V. MOTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I present to you the Ninth Report of the Second Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service.

1. Introduction

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service that is responsible for vetting Presidential nominees and selecting the most fitted and qualified persons to serve in public offices met on Wednesday, 1st December, 2019 and interviewed twelve presidential nominees for appointment to the following positions:

- i. Deputy Minister II, Ministry of Finance;
- ii. Deputy Minister II, Ministry of Health and Sanitation;

- iii. Sierra Leone Ambassador to Ethiopia African union;
- iv. Chairman Sierra Leone National Commission for Small Arms;
- v. Three Members Local Government Service Commission;
- vi. Member Board of Directors Environmental Protection Agency;
- vii. Member Board of Trustees National Social Security and Insurance Trust; and
- viii. Three Members Board of Director Road Maintenance Funds Administration.

2. Procedure

The Committee conducted its hearing within the ambit of established criteria. The Committee requested for public inputs into the vetting process to ascertain the suitability of the nominees for their proposed appointments. Members of the Committee strenuously examined the specific documents submitted by the nominees and ensured that everyone was clear of any criminal records by the Criminal Investigation Department [CID]. The Committee further probed into the Curriculum Vitae of the nominees to ensure that they have the relevant qualifications and necessary backup experience to man such important offices of State. Probing questions put to the nominees covered wide range of issues pertaining to their track records in other pertinent work situations, their declared assets and liabilities, fulfilment of their tax obligations to the state and their visions for a successful and nationally productive tenure of office.

3. The Tenth Sitting of the Committee on Wednesday 1st December, 2019.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the following nominees were interviewed on oath:

- i. Mr Sheku Ahmed Fatamadi Bangura, Proposed Deputy Minister of Finance II*

Mr Sheku F Bangura has over twenty-five years professional experience in Economic and Development Policy issues at national, regional and international institutional levels. He has previously served the Ministry of Finance as Director, Fiscal Decentralisation. Reacting to the probing questions of the Committee, Mr Sheku A. F. Bangura said: **"My background experience and exposure, I believe I have adequately prepared**

for my proposed appointment to help rebuild the Economy. I am a trained Economist with many years of professional work experience in Sierra Leone, the regional and international level. I have been part of the process of formulating processes, policy programmes and bringing development projects to Sierra Leone from outside. So, in brief, I think my background, both academic and professional, have prepared me and laid the foundation for me to join the team and add value to the efforts been made to turn the Economy around. Running the Economy of a country is not a one man's business, but a team. Our work will not only involve the Ministry of Finance, we are going to be working across the Government, Parliament and across Ministries, Departments and Agencies [MDAs]. I am joining the Leadership team of the Ministry and I know I am going to be a value addition to support the Ministry delivers on the commitment of the Government."

ii. Dr Amara Jambai, Proposed Deputy Minister II, Ministry of Health and Sanitation.

Dr Amara Jambai is a Retired Medical Officer who had previously served as Director of Disease Prevention and Control in the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. From 2002 to 2008, he was the District Medical Officer for the Western area. Doctor Jambai's field of professional experience and expertise include Health Care Delivery in Outbreak Response, Epidemiology and Surveillance of Infectious Diseases. Doctor Jambai has a wealth of research experience in Cholera, Yellow Fever and viral Haemorrhagic Fever. From 2009 to 2010, Dr Jambai was President of the Sierra Leone Medical and Dental Association. He represented Sierra Leone at the World Health Organisation's [WHO] Regional Committee on Africa 2011 to 2012.

Responding to the Committee's enquiries, Dr Jambai promised to continue his usual performance at Service Delivery for which he was well known. **"I will continue to make those positive contributions that have made me what I am, I believe in team work, I have the ability to motivate my colleagues, bring them together to enhance Service Delivery. Besides that, the Ministry of Health is heavily**

dependent on donor support. I have worked with donors for a very long time and I can always knock on their doors to make sure that we are supported in whatever we do," he said.

iii. Mr Adekunle Joliff Milton King, Proposed Sierra Leone Ambassador to Ethiopia/African Union.

Mr Adekunle M. King is a private Legal Practitioner under the Sheers Moses and Co. Law Firm. From 2007 to 2017, Mr King served as Senior Legal Counsel Petroleum Directorate in the Office of the President. Responding to a barrage of Committee's enquiries; Mr Adekunle M. King said that he was happy to appear before the Committee for a second time after a short interval. He said: **"It is a new challenge for me to go as Ambassador to Ethiopia and the Permanent Representative to Africa Union. It is a different arena and it is no longer a ministerial function, but a representative one in which I will be the principal representative of Sierra Leone to Ethiopia. In a country of increasing importance in Africa, I will ask, I will also be there to protect the national interest and the interest of Sierra Leone nationals who are residents there. There are also reporting obligations. I will be expected to use all lawful means to obtain information on events and development in Ethiopia and the Africa Union and to report thereon to my own Government."**

iv. Commander Rtd Moses B. Miller, Proposed Chairman, Sierra Leone National Commission on Small Arms.

Rtd Commander Moses B. Miller is a highly professional and distinguished formal military officer, who was enlisted in the Sierra Leone Armed Forces as an Officer Cadet in April, 1998. He rose through the ranks and retired in 2016 as Assistant Chief of Defence Staff, Personnel and Training.

Answering to probing questions, Commander Rtd Moses B. Miller said: **"The Small Arms Commission was established to provide an opportunity for people who needed Small Arms for varied reasons to license such arms so that we will**

know those illegally possessing arms. We know that some people need the Small Arms to protect their farm crops, but we still have Small Arms illegally in the hands of many people and that is dangerous. If I obtain the blessings of approval from this Honourable House, I will ensure that we fast-track that process of tracing people who illegally possess Small Arms so that we either get the culprit to obtain licenses or we seize such illegal arms instead."

Rtd Commander Miller promised to work collectively with Board Members to develop policies that will enhance illegal arms control for the peace and security of the Country.

v. *Madam Sia Alice Bockarie Torto, Proposed Member, Local Government Service Commission.*

Madam Sia Alice Bockarie Torto is a retired Civil Servant, a Provincial Administrator who rose through the ranks to the position of Deputy Provincial Secretary, Eastern Province, Kenema. From 2004 to 2006, she served as the first Chief Administrator [CA] Kono District Council. Responding to the Committee's enquiries, Madam Sia Alice B. Torto disclosed that she has a long surgeon as a Civil Servant particularly in the Local Government Service. **"I was the first Chief Administrator of the Kono District Council after the war. I laid the foundation for the progress of the Kono District Council. If I obtain your blessings of approval, I will assure you that I will make a difference on the Local Government Service Commission,"** Madam Sia Alice Bockarie Torto concluded.

vi. *Mr Joseph Bockarie Lahai, Proposed Member, Board of Directors, Road Maintenance Fund Administration.*

Mr Joseph B. Lahai is a retired educationist who has spent his working life in the noble profession of classroom teaching. Mr J. B. Lahai has broad experience and has served as a Member, Board of Directors, 2003 to 2005; National Power Authority [NPA], 2006 to 2007. He is currently the Chairman, Board of Governors, Kakua Community Junior Secondary School, Bo.

Responding to Members enquiries, Mr Joseph B. Lahai said that he viewed his nomination as a call to national duty and promised to work to the best of his ability for

the success of the Road Maintenance Fund Administration [RMFA]. **"I know that the Provincial road networks are in pretty bad shape and required constant repairs and rehabilitations particularly after the heavy rains. If I obtain the blessings of approval from this Honourable House, I will work collaboratively with my Board Members to ensure that we live up to expectations and deliver on His Excellency's promise,"** he said.

vii. *Mrs Nyilla Othman, Proposed Member, Local Government Service Commission.*

Mrs N. Othman is a business woman, local farmer an entrepreneur who had worked for many years in the Civil Service as a clerk, typist and has gained a wealth of experience. Answering to Members enquires, Mrs Nyilla Othman stated that she had served as a Councillor, Portloko District Council and had some experience in Local Governance issues. **"I know the challenges and I have a fairly good idea on how to grapple with those challenges. If I obtain the approval of Honourable Members of this House, I will work collaboratively with my colleague Commissioners to bring about positive change in local governance"**, she said. Mrs Othman made a clarion call for unity among Members of the Commission.

viii. *Mrs Margaret Sia Leomy, Proposed Member, Board of Directors, Environmental Protection Agency [EPA].*

Mrs Margaret Sia Leomy is a people's Barrister at the Gevao and Associate Law Firm in Freetown. In her interview, Mrs Margaret Sia Leomy informed Members that she viewed her nomination by the President as a privilege call to national duty. She has readily accepted the offer because she felt she could make a difference on the Board. She said: **"Man depends on the environment and the environment is greatly influenced by human activities. For instance, we are experiencing heat, waves because of our activities in the environment. If I take a little care of our environment by controlling, for instance, deforestation, stop the slash and burning method of farming, we would be able to make the air we breathe less toxic. Strange laws are required to force mining companies to mitigate the negative impact of their operations on the environment. If I obtain the approval of the**

Honourable Members of this House, I will ensure that the focus on the enforcement of Environmental Law be concluded."

ix. Mr Moses Sellu Mambu, Proposed Member, Board of Directors, Road Maintenance Fund Administration.

Mr Moses Mambu has had a long surgeon in the Non-Governmental Organisation [NGO]/Civil Society world as an activist and has a wealth of experience in Social Work. He is currently the Programme Director Child Welfare Society Sierra Leone, 2014 to date. Reacting to Members enquires, Mr Moses Sellu Mambu assured the Committee that he was getting to the Road Maintenance Fund to work in the best interest of the rural people who are in dire need of good roads to bring their agricultural products to the market. **"I am going to be most concern with the feeder roads that would connect our rural farmers to the big markets,"** he said.

Answering to further questions, Mr Mambu disclosed that the creation of the RMFA is important and has served its intended purpose of providing funds for the Sierra Leone Roads Authority [SLRA] contractors to maintenance feeder roads, hence RMFA and SLRA need more collaboration, coordination and more synergies for the good of this nation, particularly as RMFA is also providing resources to Local Government Councils to facilitate road works.

x. Madam Sarah Mary Keptieu Mannah Thomas-Kamara, Proposed Member of Trustee, National Social Security and Insurance Trust [NASSIT].

Madam Mary Thomas-Kamara joined NPA/EDSA as a clerk in 1992. She rose through the ranks to the position of Acting Director and Acting Deputy Commercial Manager, Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority [EDSA] in 2017. In her interview, Madam Sarah Mary Thomas-Kamara expressed thanks and appreciation to the President for nominating her to the Board of Trustees of NASSIT. She said: **"It is a Social Security Pension Scheme that was established by an Act of Parliament in 2001 for all Sierra Leonean workers."**

Answering to probing questions, Madam Sarah Mary Thomas-Kamara said that she had given a lot of thought to what she was actually going to do as a Board of Trustee, NASSIT. She had made up her mind to convince her colleague Board Members to tackle two important issues that are currently affecting many Sierra Leonean workers. The first issue has to do with NASSIT Investment in Housing. **"I believe that NASSIT should be investing in Housing that will help the poor workers who constitutes the majority. The kind of Housing Estate built by NASSIT in Adoncare is for the rich. I would want NASSIT to consider investing on Low Cost Housing Estate for the poor and the middle class people. "The second issue I will like to delve into is to ensure prompt payment of benefits to pensioners, as soon as they retire from active service. The delay by NASSIT to pay pensioners' benefits is unnecessary. Some pensioners are not to have died waiting for moneys they had contributed while in active service and that is not fair on the part of NASSIT and I am very passionate about it,"** she said.

xi. Madam Janet Jabati, Proposed Member, Local Government Service Commission.

Madam Janet Jabati is a Gender Specialist who worked for a consortium on Women's Empowerment for Leadership and Development Project that involves World Vision, Action Aid and Network Movement for Justice and Development [NMJD]. Madam Janet Jabati spent the better part of her working life in the NGO world. Reacting to the Committee's comment, Madam Janet Jabati said she knew that she was going to a Commission that was very challenging. **"The Commission is responsible for recruiting the core staff of Local Government Council. There are many Local Government Council people occupying core staff positions without the requisite qualifications. There are also times when some people are appointed to functional positions for which they do not have the expertise. We also have instances where people are employed and put to work without any training to equip them for the job. If I receive the blessings of approval of this Honourable House, these are the issues I want to address. I will ensure that no square peg is put in any round hole,"** she said *[Applause]*.

xii. Madam Seibatu Conteh, Proposed Member, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Road Maintenance Fund Administration.

Madam Seibatu Conteh is a retired Nurse who served as a Prison Officer at the Freetown Central Prison [now Correctional Centre] from 1979 to 2008.

Responding to Members' inquiries, Madam Seibatu Conteh assured the Committee that if approved by this House, she would address the issue of feeder roads connecting the rural farmers to the urban markets for their farm products. **"With the collaboration of colleague Board Members, I will ensure that rural roads get their fair share of the road fund in terms of construction and maintenance. I will also ensure that Road Funds are prudently and judiciously used,"** she said.

4. Recommendations

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

- [i] Mr Sheku Ahmed Fantamadi Bangura, Deputy Minister II, Ministry of Finance;
- [ii] Dr Amara Jambai, Deputy Minister II, Ministry of Health & Sanitation;
- [iii] Mr Adekunle Joliff Miton King, Ambassador, Sierra Leone Embassy, Ethiopia/ African Union;
- [iv] Commander [Rtd] Moses B. Miller, Chairman, Sierra Leone National Commission on Small Arms;
- [v] Madam Janet Jabati, Member, Local Government Service Commission;
- [vi] Mrs Nyilla Othman: Proposed Member, Local Government Service Commission;
- [vii] Mrs Sia Alice Bockarie Torto, Member, Local Government Service Commission;
- [viii] Ms Margret Sia Leomy, Member, Board of Directors, Environmental Protection Agency;
- [ix] Madam Sarah Mary Keptieu Nannah Thomas-Kamara, Member, Board of Trustees, National Social Security and Insurance Trust [NASSIT]
- [x] Mr Joseph Bockarie Lahai -Member, Board of Directors, Road Maintenance Fund Administration

[xi] Mr Moses Sellu Mambu, Member, Board of Directors, Road Maintenance Fund Administration; and

[xii] Madam Seibatu Conteh- Member, Board of Directors, Road Maintenance Fund Administration.

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

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. EMILIA L. TUNGI: I so second Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed]

HON. EMILIA L. TUNGI: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. First and foremost I would like to thank His Excellency the President and to also seize this opportunity on behalf of my colleagues to wish him happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. I believe these are the last nominees for this year.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, this is not the last sitting for this year. I am not so sanguine about that because we still have a couple of days to go.

HON. EMILIA L. TUNGI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As I said, I am very happy today because if you look at the nominee, you will see a number of women and this is what the women in this Parliament are praying for. We want His Excellency the President to nominate as many women as possible because he knows that anywhere women are, there is always trait of good governance. So, I thank His Excellency for nominating many women this time and I want to promise him that we will do our best to please him.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about Mrs Sia Alice Bockarie Torto who is going to the Local Government Service Commission. I am happy she will be joining the Local Government. We are having serious issues in our constituencies, especially Constituency 001, Kailahun District, Kissy Tongi Chiefdom, which is my

constituency. Any time there are local elections, the District Officers [also known as the DOs] and others usually go around, charging our people lots of money. For God's sake, these people are very poor. So, if they continue asking them for more money, they are rendering our people bankrupt and the blame comes to me. So, they told me if I have the opportunity to meet any nominee, I should seize the opportunity to tell him/her to stop asking for more money from our people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about Dr Amara Jambai. Dr Amara Jambai is a brother and I have heard about him many years ago. He is a workaholic and he is loved by his workers. I am sure this is why you can see a lot of them around. He is an excellent listener and he is a nice person. I love you very much, Dr Jambai *[Laughter]*. As I earlier said, he is a brother and you can love your brother.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk a little bit about Commander Rtd Moses B. Miller, who is going to the Small Arms Commission. Let me say this again that my dad was a military man and I always like soldiers. Some months ago, we talked about Small Arms. As I said and I will keep repeating it here that thirty gun men entered Sierra Leone through my village. When they were arrested, they said they were chasing a wild animal called the "bush cow." Well, we were lucky because it was for a good reason, but it could have been something else. So, the nominee has promised to collect these arms and we want him to ensure that these arms are collected and the unlicensed ones are licensed. My own people are also trying to get some arms because I have said it time without number that our areas, especially the border between Sierra Leone and Liberia has been abandoned in the hands of different people. They could come in and out as they like. So, if this House approves your nomination, please control these arms. The war started there and it could start again, may God forbid. So, when you take up office, make sure these issues are taken into consideration.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about Road Maintenance Fund Administration. Four years ago, the Road Maintenance Fund Administration killed twenty-nine members of Kissy Tongi Chiefdom because the Road Maintenance Fund Administration does not actually do its job properly. There was a bridge that was almost

collapsing and instead of reporting the abysmal state of that bridge, they chose to ignore it. This was why twenty-nine [29] of my own people lost their lives. So, I crave the indulgence of Road Maintenance Fund Administration to establish the culture of maintenance. A maintenance that could cost **\$100** or **\$1,000** is usually neglected until it costs us over billion Dollars. Let us inculcate the culture of maintenance as Sierra Leoneans and that will help us a lot. We cannot continue to use things without maintenance or repairs. We have to imbibe the culture of maintenance and we should inform our people about the culture of maintenance. This will enable us spend less.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like Mr Bockarie Lahai to know that the roads in this country have been in existence for over twenty or thirty years and not a single cement has been put on them. Today, we are spending millions of dollars to repair those roads. So, I am advising you because I love you all. We hope when you go to those MDAs, you will do your best if approved by this House. I thank you *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I think I will be guided by that principle. I had applauded those who were punctual and therefore I am going to give them the privilege they deserve. So, all of you who know you came late do yourselves justice by taking your seats. Honourable Gevao, you have the Floor. All those Members who walked into this Chamber late do yourselves a service by taking your seats because I am not going to recognise you today.

HON. HINDOLO M. GAVAO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say thanks to His Excellency the President for nominating many women to occupy important national positions in different Parastatals. This is how politics should work and for me, I do not believe that women should be asking for a **30%** quota. They should be asking for **50%** quota *[Applause]*. I consider them very capable. As we always say, some of us went to co-education schools in those days. Some women used to beat us in class. So, if that was happening, why should they ask for **30%** representation in governance? They should now be matching with the men, particularly in the educational sector. It is my view that if women are placed in the educational sector, that sector will operate on the principles of transparency and integrity *[Applause]*. I will transpose that same

principle to other institutions where women are in control. I thank the President for nominating these women to go and serve this nation in different capacities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will start my contribution with somebody who has made me proud and happy. She is no less a person but Margaret Sia Leomy. Margaret Sia Leomy is a Sierra Leonean who was born in Kono. I discovered that since her youthful days, she had always worked towards protecting the environment. I am sure this is why God spoke to the President to nominate her out of the seven million people to serve as Director on the EPA Board. I have no doubt that once she is approved by this Honourable House, she will continue to make us proud. When I knew that she was going to appear before us [with the hope that she will be approved by this Honourable House], I took her on a ride to Kent and I showed her one of our protected areas, a forest that has been tampered with by citizens. I pleaded with her that I might not be able to get in touch with the Director of the EPA, but if approved by the House, she promised that the Reserved Forest would not be destroyed by people who are trying to build houses on areas being protected to save our environment. She made a promise on that faithful day. She is very particular about the use of plastics. I am sure she would like a situation where the use of plastics is controlled. This is because we do not use them well. We usually dump them in the gutters and when it rains, the gutters get blocked which usually result in flooding and other disaster. I beseech you all this day to approve a young lady whose ideology is in sync and resonate with the principles of the 'New Direction,' a direction we are all proud of as Sierra Leoneans.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to somebody who happens to be my constituent, Dr Amara Jambai [*Applause*]. Sierra Leoneans know that he is a performer, having occupied the position of Chief Medical Officer and under his tenure of office, it was very successful. He did his best and that is why he has been nominated by His Excellency the President as Deputy Minister of Health. I want to remind the nominee that he comes from one of the most deprived areas in terms of health care. He is from Gbala Section and I am sure the entire Gbala Section does not really have any

standardised Peripheral Health Unit [PHU]. My Constituency is made up of Gbela, Upper Gbonbali, Mano Sewalo and Kissy Kama Chiefdom.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I call on the Government to pay attention to that part of the country because when the Ebola struck this nation due to the trans-border activities between Sierra Leone and Guinea, over **5%** to **7%** of our people died because of lack of hygiene. I am sure that there are villages in that constituency that do not have toilets or proper hygiene system. In the dry seasons, people usually defecate in the nearby bushes and when it rains, it washes the faeces into the streams, where they get drinking water. Many of our people get sick by drinking contaminated water. I am sure it is also happening in the constituency of Honourable Lahai Marah and every other Member of Parliament. I want to crave your indulgence that this not a personal campaign. I have taken it upon myself to construct three basic hospitals in that Constituency. I am sure when those structures are completed, please help in terms of providing nurses and other logistics. The only Periphery Health Unit is miles away from the remote villages and pregnant women normally give birth on the way. For example, from a village called Ngadehun to Mabambom, it is about ten miles. So, if a woman in Ngadehun is in labour, it takes hours to get to a PHU; and in the course of travelling to a health facility, women easily go into the bush and deliver babies. Today, God has brought you close to the cries of the people. I want to crave your indulgence to look into this issue nationwide. I am not only talking on behalf of my constituency, but many other constituencies in this country have similar problems. Let us pay attention to our health sector, so that our women and children will be proud of us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about a woman who does not know that I know her. She is no less a person but Madam Nyilla Othman. Madam Othman is a Sierra Leonean whom I cannot link to any colour. I first met Madam Othman at the Rokel Commercial Bank, when somebody tried to defraud her in her business. She is a very strong woman and these are the type of mothers we want to occupy important positions of state. I am happy that the President is using his lens to select and nominate her to serve in the capacity she has been nominated to serve. I

besech the President to look for several other women to come and occupy other important positions, so that Sierra Leone can be a place where we will be talking about quota or a place where if you see a man, you will as well see a woman.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would end by thanking the President for encouraging young people to come to the main stream of administration. When I was listening to the British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC] this morning, the Labour Leader who lost the elections was asked about the way forward and he said: **"I will not be running again, we have several young people who are now matured to take over the mantle of leadership."** He promised to convene a conference and it is his conviction that there are several young people in the Labour Party who are matured enough to take after him. So, looking at a woman in the person of Miss Margret Sia Leomy in her late twenties gives hope to the young people. I congratulate the President and to further encourage him to continue appointing more youths because the youths are also yearning for a quota. I am sure this House has over **30%** young people. This research was done by Honourable Catherine Z. Tarawally. We are also looking for other sectors of the society to be included in governance, like the disabled. We want to see more disabled nominated and approved by this House. We want to see more women, so that we have an inclusive society where everybody is adequately represented.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank you for giving me this opportunity and I ask this Honourable House to approve these nominees. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I think we have spent a lot of time together since I was appointed or elected by your good selves. You know that I am a man of my word. I recognise Honourable Lahai Marah. Again, I want all those who came in late to save themselves the problem by not seeking to catch my eye, please.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, let me use this opportunity to say thanks to His Excellency the President for appointing women, though in a very low cadre in his administration. We want to see the women of this country occupying top positions, not only as Commissioners [*Applause*]. We want to see them as ministers. We want to see situations where the SLPP or APC appoints women running-mates. We want to see a

woman as Vice President in this country *[Applause]*. Also, I think it would do us better if we replace male Paramount Chiefs with women in every district *[Laughter]*. Instead of having Paramount Chiefs in the various districts to represent us in Parliament, let us have women and this is very important.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as per procedure, the President appoints and we approve. If you go through the report of Appointments Committee, I was part of the vetting process. During the vetting process, my colleagues, especially Honourable Bashiru Silikie and Honourable Dickson M. Rogers never allowed a thorough and comprehensive examination of these nominees. In other words, we were not given the absolute opportunity to vet these nominees properly. Today, we are here to complete the process we started at Committee level. I keep asking the question, what are we doing in Parliament? Are we actually performing our roles as they are supposed to be or are we just completing a process? I want to see in this Well where we start rejecting nominees based on their characters, capacities and other factors. Mr Speaker, under your watch, I am looking forward to that because of certain reasons. It is high time we started rejecting nominees based on criminal records and other negative factors. We do not have much time to vet them properly at all.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I do not think I would have the courage to do that, not under the present rules, but you have every opportunity to present whatever evidence you have against any nominee to the Appointments Committee.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, the Honourable Bashiru usual say, 'I vouch for this person' and that is the end of the vetting process.

THE SPEAKER: You can ignore that and do the needful. You know this is a matter of conscience, Honourable Member. If you know that a particular nominee falls short of the basic requirements for appointment, then make it a duty to bring that information to the attention of the Appointments Committee. As a Member of Parliament, you can work into that Committee at will and make your point either to the Member or ask to be heard. But you are asking me to do something which would be very difficult for me to entertain in the Well of the House.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. You are right, Mr Speaker. Sometimes when you want to ask important questions, the Chairman overrules and that is the end of the question one may want to ask. Mr Speaker, in this 21st century, we want to see a situation wherein Members of Parliament... - *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I am in sympathy with your point of view very much, but as the Standing Orders provide for in this particular instance, we have to go strictly by the law as it exists. Maybe when we come to revise the Standing Orders that point would be taken into account, so that we are not just saddled with a fatal complaint; i.e., the Report of the Appointments Committee. The plenary of Parliament would have the opportunity of re-opening issues reported to them by the Appointments Committee. We have not yet reached that stage, but let us confine ourselves within the ambit of what is possible for now. I thank you.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, you are correct, but I want to see a situation where Members of Parliament are given the opportunity to carry out their functions. In any case, I go to the nominees and I will start with the proposed Deputy Minister II of the Ministry of Finance. I am sure there is Committee at Cabinet level that is in charge of Budget and one of its functions is to advise the President. Like what happened this morning, we do not want to see a situation where expenditure that is not related to a particular document is captured and brought to this House. And in the course of advising the President, make sure you do that with sincerity and honesty. I am sure the Deputy Minister I of the Ministry of Finance is now the Deputy Minister II. I am not against it because it is within the powers of the President to create more positions, but thinking of the present pressure on the Wage Bill and expanding or creating new offices will continue to pressurise or enlarge the Wage Bill. I think His Excellency the President need to take a keen look at this issue. We want to see a situation where, as Deputy Minister II of the Ministry of Finance, you create a value expected of you. You have to look into the Economy because it is not friendly at all. We are still searching for investment opportunities and the enabling environment that will lure investors to come and invest in our country. This is still missing in this 'New Direction' government. Please

Mr Sheku Ahmed Fatamadi Bangura, when you assume office, advise the President to do the needful. That is what we need to do, so that we will be able to capture that investment variable that is missing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to the Local Government Service Commission. In my local dialect, which is Koranko, it is said: **"kutimi salla tar sisila artimi salai ar ta la ar ta fur sicila."** This means when you want to send a message to God, tell the smoke. I know it is not within your domain as Local Government Service Commission, but please inform the Ministry of Local Government that we presently have illegal regent chiefs in our areas. Those illegal regent chiefs are still occupying the chieftaincy positions in Falaba and their time is long overdue. If you read the Local Government Act, it should be twelve [12] months. As we speak, we are very close to fourteen [14] or sixteen [16] months. They are still occupying those positions. I would like the nominee to inform the Minister to start putting things in place, so that we have permanent chiefs. We want the Minister to start thinking of ways of conducting those elections *[Applause]*. Some of those regent chiefs are not serving the interest of the chieftaincy, but rather the political party that appointed them. In my Chieftaincy, for instance, the Regent Chief was the Chairman of SLPP in my constituency. This is the reality and he is not serving the interest of the people, but rather his political party. We are faced with a situation where if somebody is known for another particular political party different from the SLPP, that individual will be fined exorbitantly because he/she is not an SLPP. So, tell the Minister of Local Government to start thinking of how we can conduct those elections immediately.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to remind the nominees to the Local Government Service Commission about the salary structure of core staff of Local Councils. Local Councils staff have miserable conditions of service. Sometimes I do not know what we are doing to ourselves or what is actually happening with our thinking faculties as Sierra Leoneans. We are paying the Anti-Corruption Commissioner more than **Le40mln** because we do not want him to be corrupted or because he is fighting corruption. We now have a situation where the Chief Administrators [CAs], Finance

Officers [FOs], Procurement Officers [POs] and other core staff within Local Councils are being given budgetary allocations in billions of Leones to manage. Besides, they are also collecting own source revenue in billions of Leones, but they are paying them as small as **Le1mln**. Technically, we are creating opportunity for them to be corrupt and that is wrong. Please, when you go to that Commission, think of them dearly and let us find ways of creating reasonable salary.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Miss Margaret Sia Leomy who has been nominated to the EPA. We have to be honest and sincere with ourselves. In other words, the 'New Direction' Government has to be sincere. We cannot be fighting corruption when there are still loopholes in the system. We cannot be protecting the environment when we are indirectly contributing to its destruction. Look at the timber logging process that is going on in the country. In fact, corruption is more visible in the timber logging industry. I would like to ask the Acting Leader of Government Business some questions. I want to know where the revenue generated from timber is going. Is it going to the Consolidated Revenue Fund or to a special account being created? If you go to the chieftom level, there is no system being put in place and timber loggers usually go to the chiefs with **Le500, 000** per machine. Again, after logging every 100 timber sticks, ten sticks are given to the Chief and the benefit is not going to the chieftom at all. If you go to Krubola, for example, or Masadu and Kulosadu in my Constituency, they have destroyed all the bridges. They have destroyed all the culverts and the roads. As we speak, I cannot use a vehicle to visit my constituency. We have created another Ministry in charge of the environment because we want to create jobs for party supporters. Are you doing this because you want to decrease the pressure of those running after you for jobs?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, let me remind you that what we have before us right now is the approval of presidential nominees and by Monday, we shall have before us the reports from various Committees of the Committee of Supply and you would have ample opportunity to go into all of these nitty-gritties.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am just raising the issues around their offices because they will be approved very soon. I am sure because we are trying to complete a process of which the President appoints and we approve. I have never seen a situation wherein this Parliament rejects appointees or nominees.

THE SPEAKER: Should providence ever smile at you and make you President, I would love to see how you react when your own nominees get rejected by the House.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, you are simply saying we are not independent and we do not have independence at all.

THE SPEAKER: I have just been reminded that what you are saying is not entirely correct. There are instances that people have been rejected by this House.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Not under your watch, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Oh! So, you want me to do things for you? SOs 2, "u wan tek mi hand pul banga na fire?"

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity. I want to congratulate all the nominees in advance. When you go to your various offices, serve Sierra Leone. I am seeing my brother sitting in front with an SLPP fan, but you are not going there to represent the SLPP party. You are going there to represent Sierra Leone. I thank you.

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Section 61 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, in tandem with Section 73 makes the President a Member of this Honourable House and makes him covertly or indirectly participates with us in spirit for subsequent approvals. This was why when the Imprest Bill came to this House, he participated in the affirmative for the benefit of the nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the nominees before us give clear semblance, if not a sharp reminiscence, of my two weeks study tour in Kigali, Rwanda where **51%** of

women dominate the Parliament of Rwanda. I can see Sierra Leone very close to Rwanda. I congratulate all the nominees before us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am going to limit myself to just a Commission in which I see my predecessor, Alice Sia Bockarie Torto. At the end of the war, she was the first Chief Administrator and she laid the foundation brick for the information of this noble House. According to United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] statistics, **96.6%** of the destruction took place in Kono, which tells you that Kono was the most hit district during the eleven [11] year interregnum. This woman laid the foundation for 'Operation no Wooden Bridge.' The bridges in the fourteen chiefdoms in Kono were wooden bridges. She laid that foundation and declared 'Operation no Wooden Bridge.' I am sure approximately **80%** of the bridges were designed by her. She laid a very strong foundation, no wonder when we took over, Kono was placed first among the nineteen [19] Local Councils. She is a workaholic and a trailblazer. I believe being a de facto Paramount Chief of Nimiya Chiefdom, she will definitely do well.

[Suspension of S.Os 5[2] being 12:00 noon]

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: As I was saying, this nominee is a de facto Paramount Chief of Nimiya which makes her also knowledgeable about the chieftaincy of this country. She is going to give us a very fine result.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Miss Janet Jabati. She was a classmate of mine and I have no iota of doubt that she will do well. She proved that when I was reading my second postgraduate degree. We were in the same class and she attempted to beat me, but I did not allow her at all. Miss Jabati has been doing fantastic. Gender policies in this country will remain uncompleted without her signature. She is a gender specialist, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I refer you to Section 95 of the Local Government Act of 2005. In this Section, we realise that at least **5%** of women should be represented out of the **10%** of every Ward Development Committee [WDC] in this country. That is a fine sign and a fine design or model which I encourage other MDAs to practice. I am quite sure that Miss Jabati will continue to fight for the women of this

country. I believe even the recruitment of core staff is going to be under her purview because recruitment lies in the hands of you Commissioners of East, West, South, North and now North-East and North-West. All of these Commissioners would sit and look at promotions and recruitments. For the past two years, I will not shy away to tell you that there has been lots of irregularities because the core staff, vis-à-vis, the Procurement Officers, Finance Officers and Development Officers are being promoted to the position of Chief Administrator and that has been a misnomer. It was not supposed to be so and that has been demotivating the Deputy CAs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to inform you it is in this country that Executive Secretaries of Commissions send CAs on leave. That is wrong because that function does not fall within their mandate. Mr Speaker, Section 31 of the Local Government Act states that the Local Council shall appoint its staff, after consulting with the Commission. I am quite sure that it is only the Local Council that sends CAs on leave and not Executive Secretaries. I am sure the Commissioners have a lot to do in terms of rectifying these anomalies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to inform this House that Section 109 of the Local Government Act created a huge problem in the local governance of this country and that has been disturbing this country for the past ten [10] years. Ten years ago, there was no development fund because all development funds stopped since 2010 to Local Councils. Ten years ago, the Inter-Ministerial Committee, which is spelt out in Section 109 is on life support machine because it was found to be epileptic. It is the Vice President's Office that is supposed to superintend that Committee, by bringing mayors and chairmen, commissioners, key ministries like the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Health and Sanitation, and Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. Those devolved ministries are under the purview of the Vice President. For the past ten years, that Committee has not been functioning properly because successive Vice Presidents did not have time to summon meetings and take decisions. I now see the reason why the central government is still stubborn

to devolve functions to the Local Councils. So, I want to encourage you to develop the courage and ensure that the Inter-Ministerial Committee is brought to speed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during last year's Budget debates, I cried aloud for salaries of mayors and chairmen to be increased. Thankfully, the 2020 Budget has captured it and I say kudos to His Excellency the President and the Executive because they listened to my cries. Some of us know that the salaries of these people were miserable, but today there are signs of hope for better salaries.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to call on the nominee to the Road Maintenance Fund Administration, who is a member of the Civil Society who has been so vociferous, vocal and articulate in discussing issues affecting the common man. I am still confused about the matrix used for the distribution of feeder roads, which falls within the mandate of Local Councils. Mr Moses Sellu Mambu, I have no shadow of doubt in your ability to perform. I come from Kono District and we normally get our livelihood from mining, petty trading and agriculture. I will not shy away to tell you that the potentials of other chiefdoms that do not have Diamonds or Gold is so huge. It is high time you started advocating for potential districts that can contribute to the food security of this country to have more feeder roads, so that we have potential to feed Freetown with plantain, cocoa and other important cash crops.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all the nominees are fine and they will be approved because their CVs speak volumes. I almost got permanent disability when I involved in a car crash in Rwanda, Dr Amara Jambai has been very helpful. As we speak, I am healthy and strong *[Applause]*. Thank you very much, Dr Amara Jambai. Again, I have no iota of doubt that Mr Adekunle Joliff Milton King will definitely move Direct Foreign Investments from Ethiopia to Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the nominees are fine and on behalf of my Party, I endorse their approval. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I now recognize the Honourable Dr Kandeh K. Yumkella.

HON. DR KANDEH K. YUMKELLA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My contribution is going to be very short. We commend the new nominees for their positions. I just want to remind them that our country is still very poor and very underdeveloped. They have a big responsibility ahead. I do not like praising people too much. I always like to praise their outputs. I would just single out two individuals.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I start with the Deputy Minister II of the Ministry of Finance. I have met him several times when I was Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation [UNIDO] doing collaboration with the President of World Bank. I met him there many times, but I would like to remind him that he is coming at a very critical time, a time the President needs to beef up his finance team. The Economy is in trouble and we need your expertise. I thank you for agreeing to come and help this country. It is easy to criticize, but it is difficult to step forward to help and we admire you for what you have done *[Applause]*. Please, you are very young and you have to be professional in the exercise of your duties. What I think the President needs at this crucial time is people who can tell him the facts about the 'New Direction' economic blueprint. Things are difficult and we also know that he inherited a legacy, but two years is good to beef up his team with technocrats. Please continue to be a technocrat and give him what you know. So, we wish you well *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, others will tell you, we have been very generous to the Government in terms of approving lots of Bills that have been brought here. I want to believe His Excellency needs advice and he needs to put together a Council of Economic Advisers from businessmen, bankers and others who will be briefing him about the Economy and what he needs to do. I would advise you to push that agenda.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I usually call Dr Amara Jambai 'ndemia' S.Os [2]. Well, I am sure the Kailahun Members of Parliament are wondering why I called him. It is none of your business and whatever the reason is, it stays between us. The point I want to make is that we got scared recently when we heard about Lassa fever. We were scared. We were wondering whether our systems were ready to handle another

epidemic. The problem still exists, but we hope you will be able to guide how to deal with epidemiology. This country is still at a risk for many other outbreaks, we should not take our eyes off the ball.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to the nominee for the Local Government Service Commission. I will take this opportunity to inform this House that some of our own Councilors in Kambia District have been under siege for three weeks. We have been trying to handle that issue. I am appealing to the nominee because we do not want that issue to be politicised. As a Party, we want to protect our Councilors and Chairmen in their roles. We pray that people listen and resolve the issue.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our colleague is going as Ambassador to Ethiopia, the center of governance in Africa. I wish you good luck in your new role. You may see me once in a while. We are still looking at energy issues for Africa, so as to promote investments. Maybe I will come and eat some meal at your place one day. The Honourable Lahai Marah raised an issue which I want to reiterate. I hope we will raise it on Monday and Tuesday if they will listen to us. We have to mobilise all the districts where timber logging is going on heavily. We have to make direct demand and protest to the President himself. Mr President, what you did for us last year, if people did not understand, you asked the group to come here to show us the extent of deforestation, but nobody is listening to you and nobody is listening to us. This country is one of the deforested countries and we are vulnerable to Climate Change. I have been to the district of the Speaker this weekend, Karene District to be precise. What Honourable Lahai Marah said was an understatement because people are logging as if tomorrow will never come. There are no plans of replacing those trees that have been cut down. It is as if they do not care or maybe they are not aware. I am sure corruption in the timber trade is killing this country. It is going to mess up the Agriculture the Honourable Saa E. Lamina talked about. It is happening in Kailahun, Kabala, Kambia and Karene districts. I am sure those are the only places left with forests. They are devastating the country and the bridges are gone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we want to know what is going to happen with the Reforestation Fund. It cannot be distributed equally to every district. We have to target where the trees are being cut down. We can do it sustainably and we can replant trees and cut them every three years, so that we do not deprive people of their income. It cannot be job for everybody and this has to be targeted to areas with forests. We have to target areas with serious problems and where we can have potential sustainable forestry management. Mr Speaker, we will talk more about this issue on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday because nobody is listening. The roads are being destroyed, the trees are gone, Agriculture is badly affected; and in five to ten years from now, we can handover to the next generation. I am sure inter-generational equity is important, Mr Speaker. Thus, I would like the nominee to the EPA to take note of this issue. Well, a new Ministry has been created and I visited the new Minister two weeks ago. I was in his Office to discuss Yeli Boya. Yeli Boya is sinking due to Climate Change and he acknowledged it. He also raised it with the Koreans who are hosting the Green Climate Fund. There are issues of Climate Change happening in our country and we cannot neglect it at all. We are among the ten most vulnerable countries in the world; and that is the case, we have to be climate resilient. We cannot keep cutting down trees without replacement. We wish you well in your work. I would like to wish the young economist good luck, although it is not going to be easy. We however hope that his dynamism will bring the new economic blueprint to Sierra Leone. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I sincerely thank the Honourable Member for his very eloquent contribution to this debate. I wish to cease this opportunity once again to re-echo the point he has made. This country's forest cover is been degraded and devastated more than at any time before and we are going to bequeath to the next generation nothing, but premature death or involuntary relocation to greener pastures overseas because we are not taking care of our environment. So, I implore Honourable Members not only to have a Select Committee on the Environment, but to pay more attention to Climate Change, particularly to the environment we are destroying. The destruction is not by

act of God because it is artificial or manmade. And because it is manmade, it is within our responsibility and ability to stop it. A word for the wise is quite sufficient.

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are again doing our work by helping the President to make Sierra Leone. I am sure approving presidential nominees means we are helping Sierra Leoneans to push the country forward. We are here to help the President to make Sierra Leone a nation that will be very unique and envious. According to the Appointments Committee report, the nominees before us are not only wonderful but highly qualified for the positions they have nominated to serve. As opposition party, we are always ready to support the President in achieving his dreams and we are always here to help him develop this country. We are happy with the names of the nominees because we have been hearing about them when we were going to school. This means they are no longer boys or girls, but responsible men and women. Mr Speaker, when we were going to school, we used to hear these names and they have done a lot in terms of helping Sierra Leone's development. Some of them have done so much that you cannot just push them away because they have served both political parties. They have also worked very hard for this country. We as opposition Members of Parliament are always ready to help His Excellency achieve his dreams. We are here to remind them of their responsibilities if this House approves their nomination. I want to remind them that we are not critiquing them, but rather we are here to help them through the numerous advice we are providing to you. We are here to provide guidance and to show you the things that you may know or may not know. I am sure that is the role of parliamentarians. We are not just here to look at your faces and let you go. We are here to remind you to work well or to do your work as directed. We have names that are very important and we cannot just talk without mentioning them. We are here to tell you what you should do as Sierra Leoneans.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start with the proposed Ambassador. I am a traveller and the countries I like travelling to are Tanzania and Ethiopia. I always transit through Ethiopia, Tanzania and back to Sierra Leone and to Ethiopia. Please do

your best. There are loopholes or problems in our Embassy and I would like Mr Adekunle Joliff Milton King to immediately swing into action after parliamentary approval to resolve those problems. I know you have worked in the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations. This means you have worked for the common man and woman. Please sir, do not go there in any strange capacity, but as Sierra Leonean and treat everybody as Sierra Leonean. I implore you to do the things that can make every Sierra Leonean happy. You are a legally minded person and please do the things that are correct for the benefit of every Sierra Leonean. We have seen your name on the nomination list to represent us. I am sure Ethiopia is the hub of Africa and you need to do more. We will be visiting you and reminding you of what we are discussing here. We will be asking you some questions whenever we go to Ethiopia. So, do us good and do Sierra Leone good by doing the needful. Please work with the Ethiopians that you will meet there, especially the team. Do not segregate because they are all Sierra Leoneans.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the proposed Board Members to the Local Government Service Commission. Mr Speaker, if you could remember, maybe some few hours ago, we were in your Office to talk to you about the Ministry of Local Government. As a Member of the Committee on Local Government, we have serious problems with both the Ministry and the Commission. I am however happy to see some of these names on list of nominees. We shall be calling you to sit and talk about the problems and the way forward. I do not know how to describe the issue because it is going in a way that we Members of Parliament could not even understand. We had a very stubborn Minister in that Ministry, but we fought very hard for his removal and he was removed. Today again, we have another nominee for that sector. We do not know what the problem is, but you have been nominated as Commissioner and we want you to do the needful for the people of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we know that the Local Government Service Commission works with the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry is in charge of local governance. We have 22 Local Councils presently in this country and without

these Councils, Honourable Members cannot do anything. We depend on them because the development of this country is in the hands of Local Councils. If you fail to do the needful, then there is bound to be problems. There are already serious problems, especially the indiscriminate transfer and sending core staff on leave. The question is for what purpose? Is that the role of the Executive Secretary or the Minister? So, we are reminding you of your functions as a Commission. Please help us by bringing people on their toes. You have to tell them their functions and what they should not do. If you do that, we are ready to work with you as a Committee because we want to see the Local Government Service Commission and the Ministry to work in close collaboration for the benefit of our people. We want to see the reality of devolution, which is still a problem in this country. There are MDAs that have still not devolved their functions to Local Councils. So, we are reminding you of your roles. We will not ask you today or tomorrow, but maybe in the next couple of weeks, we will send letters for us to sit together and look into the issues affecting the Commission, the Ministry and Local Councils. So, we want to wish you well and we want to assure you of our commitments and support to see you through and to work for Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the proposed Deputy Minister II of the Ministry of Finance. My senior brother has talked a lot about him. When I was at the Ministry of Finance, I was fortunate to talk with him. He has worked with the World Bank and he knows the economic situation of Sierra Leone. He knows the problems in the Ministry of Finance and I am sure he knows the steps to take, so as to tackle them. We want you to help us build a system that is robust and unique, so that when your tenure ends, your good work will still be appreciated. Please do the needful for Sierra Leoneans.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Dr Amara Jambai. I am sure you have been a medical doctor for many years and we want to assure you of our commitments and supports *[Applause]*. We the opposition Members of Parliament will support you and help you achieve your mandate. If it is not for the opposition, you will not sit where you are seated now. You are here because of us and I want to encourage you to do the

right thing. We will allow you to do your work for the benefit of Sierra Leoneans. Please do the good things you used to do for Sierra Leoneans. The Ministry is not anything new because it is your baby. The Ministry is your friend and close brother *[Applause]*. So, help us rebuild the Ministry and make things work. We want you to help us encourage our partners because you said in your interview that the Ministry of Health depends wholly and solely on donors. We do not have much to give the Ministry of Health, but with you, we are pretty sure that things will work.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will not say I am a feminist, but I am a gender specialist. Mr Speaker, I want to state here that although we are happy with the **50%**, we however not happy with the other **50%**. Therefore, we want to send a message to the President. We want to first and foremost thank him for nominating **50%** of women. We are pleased with that but please appoint more women in higher positions. We have women who are highly qualified to be Ministers and Ambassadors. If you do this for us, I am sure we will be happy with the **30%** Affirmative Action that we are about to table. We need your support because we are about to table the **30%** Affirmative Action *[Applause]* and we have received confirmation from Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker is ready and His Excellency himself is ready because the will is there. When we went to Rwanda and Kenya, our report was well received by His Excellency the President and the Speaker was with us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am not supporting Honourable Lahai Marah, but we want 32 seats to be reserved for women and we will fight for the remaining seats. So, we ask you to support us and we will call on you to help push women issues forward. The women are very small in this House. There are only sixteen [16] of us 16 in this House. I want to say a very big thank you to our dynamic and wonderful Speaker. He is very caring and he is always ready to support women.

On behalf of the main Opposition Party in this House, we want to wish them well and assure them of our supports. I thank you *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for her brilliant contribution. Honourable Members, consistent with the concerns expressed by Honourable Kandeh

Yumkella little while ago and endorsed by me, I wish to take this opportunity to recognise three very important people in our midst. They are all experts on the environment who are visiting Sierra Leone from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. They are here to help train the legislators on Climate Information Service in support of development planning in climate sensitive sectors, such as Agriculture, Energy, Water, Health, Transportation and Disaster Risk Reduction. So, international agencies are progressively taking action to bring to our attention the importance of Climate Change, but somehow we seem to be ignoring what is happening around us. I hope our attitudes will change for the better. I recognise Dr Frank Routerbeenwah, Senior Climate Change Expert; Dr Charles Moorawah, Information Management Expert; Dr Joseph Manner, Climate Change and Adaption Researcher; and Mr Taricuagoe. Welcome to Sierra Leone and welcome to our Parliament. On behalf of this Honourable House, I thank you very much for your visit to our country. We appreciate the purpose for your visit and as you may have heard, we are just as concern as your agencies about Climate Change in our environments.

With that, Honourable Members, we are getting very close to winding up this debate and I will recognise somebody that came late, but has pleaded very passionately.

HON. DAINEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, may I observe?

THE SPEAKER: You are observing on me?

HON. DAINEL B. KOROMA: Yes Sir.

THE SPEAKER: I have not landed and you want to observe?

HON. DAINEL B. KOROMA: This is because we do not want you to land. You can approach me instead.

HON. DAINEL B. KOROMA: Okay, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I was in mid-flight when you stopped me. Representations have been made and I listened to those representations very attentively, but at the same time I

have a soft spot for a particular Member of Parliament who has asked for the Floor. I give the Floor to Honourable Basiru Silikie.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to begin by thanking the President for presenting to this House these nominees. I want to make few clarifications before I talk about the nominees. During the Appointments Committee meeting, all Members of the Committee were asked if they were satisfied with the nominees. Those who were not satisfied expressed their dissatisfaction and those satisfied expressed their satisfaction. I am sure the recommendations contained in this report were the Committee's recommendations. Again, the Appointments Committee consist of the leaders of this House and senior Members of Parliament. So, we always do due diligence on every nominee brought to this House. If for any reason a nominee is not qualified, we will not approve him/her. For instance, when we had issues with the proposed Ombudsman, we did something. Again, a female nominee was rejected by the Committee. So, my friend from Krubola said we have never rejected presidential nominee. That is not correct at all, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want the nominees to know that they have been nominated to serve in different positions not because they are beautiful/handsome or the best in this country, but because of due consideration by the President. Therefore, I want to remind all the nominees that they have no option, but to perform for the people of Sierra Leone. We are in a haste to develop as a nation. We are far behind in terms of development. We are expected as a country to meet the current development trend of the World. His Excellency the President has bestowed a lot of trust in you and you are expected to reciprocate through performance. We do not want you to disappoint the President. If this House approves your nomination, make sure you preform.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the former Minister of Labour and International Relations has done a lot in that Ministry. I heard his predecessor, Honourable Alpha Timbo showering praises on him. You brought a lot of statutes here to be ratified, which is very good *[Applause]*. When you go to Ethiopia, we expect you to do your

best. I am sure you are replacing a young and dynamic person, but we expect you to do better because the President has trust in you. As the Honourable Dr Kandeh K. Yumkella said, Addis Ababa is the centre of governance in Africa and that is why we want you to represent Sierra Leone very well. This House has a lot of confidence in you and we want you to put Sierra Leone on the map.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Dr Amara Jambai. Of course, Dr Amara Jambai told us during the Committee hearing that the Ministry of Health has been his place since he became Medical Doctor. He spent the better part of his professional life in the Ministry of Health. Today, he has been promoted to the position of Deputy Minister of Health. As the Honourable Member from Kailahun mentioned, it is not just the Constituency where you are coming from that lacks PHUs, but all constituencies in this country. We do not have proper PHUs in our constituencies; which means you have a very herculean task ahead. Of course we are au fait with the challenges and above all you were in a position where you were not given the free hand to take decision. You are now at the helm of affairs. Please, make sure the people in our villages have access to basic medical facilities. During your interview, I told you that the distance between villages to access health facilities are very long and as a result, pregnant women are sometimes rushed into the bushes to give birth. We have lost many people on their way to these health facilities. We presently have a situation where we have many untrained and unqualified Traditional Birth Attendants [TBAs] in this country

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Mr Moses Sellu Mambu. We all know that 'Mambu' is a household name in Sierra Leone. He has been very vocal in terms of advocating for good governance and road infrastructure. You have been given the opportunity by His Excellency the President to perform *[Applause]*. Coincidentally, you will be working with me as Chairman of that Committee. When you go to that Department, please have a team work because I want you to work as a team. This is no longer a Civil Society business but governance and how to manage people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I cannot end without mentioning Mr Joseph Bockarie Lahai. Few months ago, I appeared before Mr Joseph Bockarie Lahai to be interviewed

for party symbol to enable me come to Parliament. He is one of the strongest executive members of the SLPP in the Southern Region. In fact he is the vice chairman of the SLPP.

THE SPEAKER: I can understand why you are now mentioning his name *[Laughter]*.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Indeed, Mr Speaker. I was before him few months ago, but few days ago, he also appeared before the Committee on Appointments of which I am a Member. This is why people usually say the World is a global village.

THE SPEAKER: And three years from now you will be appearing before him again *[Laughter]*.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, maybe few months from now, he will appear before me because he wants more. Mr Joseph Bockarie Lahai is a household name not only in South, but the entire country. We know how he struggled for the SLPP and the 'Poopa' mantra. He was one of the godfathers of the 'Paopa' in Bo District and in the Southern region of Sierra Leone. He gave us confidence and inspired us greatly. He taught us perseverance and we chose to follow his footsteps. He is a leader and I thank him very much for inspiring some of us. Please perform, so that the President will consider you again. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: You exceeded your five minutes. The last speaker on my list is the Acting Leader of Government Business.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, let me start my intervention by thanking my colleagues on the other side. It has been a very good debate and this is what we are expecting Parliament to do. It is not about opposing, but participating in good governance. I do not normally refer to them as Opposition Party, but partners in development.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by making few clarifications as Acting Leader of Government Business. On the economic situation of this country, I want the public and my colleagues to know that we inherited a very bad economic situation. It is now that we are trying to improve on the Economy. So, let it be known that the

terrifying economic situation we have today is not our making at all. The second point I want to make has to do with the environment. Thankfully, Honourable Dr Kandeh K. Yumkella intervened in that direction. One of the goals we are trying to achieve is how to mitigate Climate Change. Let me also hasten to tell the public that since this Government took power, we have not logged and sold anything. Honourable Members would recall that few weeks after assuming power, His Excellency the President made an Executive Order, debarring every Sierra Leonean from logging timber. I am sure those who are exporting timber now were already on the process before we took over power. In other words, the timber had already been logged, ready for exportation. And I am sure there was provision for those who had spent so much money to export their timber. I thought I should make this clarification for the edification of the public.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is unfortunate that Honourable Lahai Marah is not here, but Honourable Bashiru Silikie tried to respond to the comment made by Honourable Lahai Marah. Honourable Lahai Marah said that this House has never rejected a nominee. That is not true at all, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I want to bring the proceedings to a temporary halt, because there is no quorum in the House. Where are the Whips? On my right, who is acting as Whip? There cannot be any workshop or any Committee meeting when we are in the plenary. Go and ask all of them to appear here without delay.

Honourable Members, after few minutes of break, I have just been told that we now have a quorum. For the new Members, I want to state here that it is against the rules to attend any other Committee meeting while the House is in session. Your priority is attending plenary sittings. I hope you will not give me cause to remind you again. You should know that your first priority is to attend plenary proceeding and not Committee meetings. I know there should be a workshop and I also know what it means at the end of the day. Acting Leader of Government Business, you have the Floor.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague on the other side talked about lower cadre of appointments. I am sure we approved women as Ministers and Ambassadors in this Well. His Excellency wants to make sure that for

every cadre of appointment, there are women. That is exactly what we are doing here today. It is not about having women in lower cadre because I do not want that to serve as demotivation to our gallant women in front of us here today.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable Lahai Marah also spoke about illegal regent chiefs. I think it is even an abomination to describe a regent chief in that manner. I am sure those regent chiefs were appointed by the Government and that makes them legal. He also said that the Regent Chief in his constituency is the Chairman of SLPP in Kambia District. We had a situation in my Chieftaindom in which the Regent Chief who conducted the paramount chieftaincy elections was the constituency chairman of the APC. So, what are you saying, Honourable Member?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my sister on the other side, Honourable Catherine Z. Tarawally. I want to agree with her when she said that we needed more women in Parliament. I would like to make a suggestion, which I believe would help. I disagree totally with Honourable Lahai Marah when he said we should stop the Paramount Chief Members from coming to this House. We can have the same quota wherein every political party can nominate one woman to come to Parliament. If we do that, we will be getting about fourteen [14] women as Members of Parliament. That number is different from the ones the political parties will provide party symbols to be elected. If not, it will be very difficult for the women. I am sure even in Europe, the fathers of democracy do not have that type of law in their law books. We can have a female representative from every district.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, how is that going to work for the North and Kono for a team? We do not have female Paramount Chiefs in those parts.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: No, I am not talking about Paramount Chiefs Sir.

THE SPEAKER: I thought you were talking about that.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: No Sir. I said for us to have more female representation in Parliament [like the Paramount Chief Members of Parliament], we can have one female representative from every district, to be nominated by political parties.

They can contest elections the same way the Honourable Paramount Chiefs are usually elected. That is the point I was making, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to the nominees. Today, we have before us eleven [11] nominees from the President and six [6] of them are women. That tells you the seriousness the 'New Direction' Government attaches to the women. One of my researches shows that offices occupied by women sometimes tend to produce very good results than those occupied by men and the President is aware of that. Those boards that are going to be manned by these beautiful and hardworking women are very important. I want to congratulate the President for that and I also want to thank them for accepting their nominations. All these nominees are capable and hardworking; they have what it takes to manage state institutions. All of them are close to my heart because they are all appointed by my President and your President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to start with Dr Amara Jambai. Dr Amara Jambai, like what other speakers have said, is very hardworking [*Applause*]. I believe he has this country at heart. If you go through his resume, you will discover the amount of sacrifices he has made for this country. It is no doubt that he is going where he will be going today after his approval.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Ambassador Adekunle Joliff Milton King commonly called Chairman Local Content Policy. He is also a hardworking gentleman. He is a Local Content Policy Analyst and he has improved the Local Content situation in this country. For your information, that is why we normally call him Chairman Local Content Policy [*Applause*]. I am sure Ethiopia is the only country in the world that has all its embassies around the world. Mr Speaker, you can do your research about that, but Ethiopia is the only country that has almost all its embassies around the world. Therefore, it is the hub for doing business in Africa and the world at large. Therefore, I want to ask the proposed Ambassador to ensure that he brings home the goodies from that country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know most of us are Muslims and we want to go and prayer. Therefore, I cannot say more, but I want you to know that you are very

close to our hearts and to the President's Agenda. Therefore, we are calling on you to make sure you work very hard and improve the lives of the people of this country. Please make sure you do what you have been appointed to do and with sincerity. Again, do not put the name of the President into disrepute. I am saying this because if you fail to perform, the shame and embarrassment will go to the President. I want Honourable Members to join hands with me and His Excellency the President to approve these nominees. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Acting Leader of Government Business. Honourable Members, before I put the question, I would like the Honourable Sahr E. Juana to come forward. It is now my privilege on behalf of the House to present this plaque, which is of an award to Honourable Sahr E. Juana as the best of the best for 2019 *[Applause]*. You have been nominated and approved as the best male Member of Parliament for 2019. Congratulations on behalf of the entire House *[Applause]*.

[Question Proposed Put and Agreed To]

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

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, it is now my privilege, and again on behalf of all Members of Parliament, to extend warm words of congratulations and felicitations to the presidential nominees that have just been approved. I need not be labour the point which I think has already been said around the House that by your appointments or by your nominations I should say, the President reposed confidence in all of you. And by the parliamentary approval, this House is not only endorsing what the President has done, but we are also expressing our trust and confidence in all of you. We wish you well and we plead with you to do the best you can for this country. Remember, you are going to serve Sierra Leone in your respective offices; not any particular interest, be it political, ethnical or regional. You are there as a Sierra Leonean and we expect you to do your job well and to the best of your conscience. Thank you and congratulations once again. God bless you.

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O 23. On behalf of the main Opposition party in this House, I sincerely thank and appreciate the Speaker for

the effort and for the time given to the Whip of the Opposition during his predicament. I want to appreciate you for what you have done in terms of the medication at the Connaught Hospital. You are also working towards taking him out of Sierra Leone for more medication. We are very happy and we appreciate you. We appreciate the leadership of Parliament and the Clerk for his timely intervention. I also want to thank all other Honourable Members for the time they have given to visit him in the hospital. We know it has not been easy with him, but with your support, he is gradually improving. So, I want to thank you for your time and your fatherly concern you have been showing to us. We are grateful and we are happy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other thing I want to bring to your attention has to do with a journalist. A week ago, we in the Opposition faced confrontation with a journalist. Even though, we will tender our letter to you, but we want to make it public for the listening public about a journalist commonly called Melvin. I think others called him Tejan. Some days ago, in front of the Clerk, Honourable Umar Paran Tarawally, Melvin attacked the Honourable Amadu Kanu. He also attacked me on phone through text messages. Melvin attacked the Honourable Member some days ago at the Canteen, where he used some indecent words against him and luckily the Clerk was present. The Clerk asked one of the Sergeants-At-Arms to throw him out, but I stopped him. We are not happy with the way and manner the said journalist treated the Honourable Amadu Kanu. He even sent me messages on my phone that I have already taken sides with Honourable Amadu Kanu; and that he has no regret over the issue between him and Honourable Member. I have the text and I will forward it to you, Mr Speaker. So, I thought I should bring this issue to your notice in a form of complaint. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member and I await receipt of the complaint in writing for this House to take action this kind of conduct deserves.

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Mr Speaker, I rise on S.Os 23 to bring to the attention of this Honourable House an issue, having visited the Eastern Region [Kono], Southern Region [Bo], Kenema, etc. It came out clearly as a consensus among artisanal miners that they

are not happy. Mr Speaker, Section 73[3] clearly states that we are to make laws for the peace, order, security and good governance of Sierra Leone. If those good governance principles are threatened, then law makers should cry foul.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the ban on excavators and heavy duty machines like bulldozers to work at the Artisanal Mining has not improved the Economy in the past two years *[Applause]*. And because it has not improved the miners, we have to bring it to this House. I am sure about three hundred thousand people are employed in the mining sector, including family members. Today, they have been rendered impotent by a mediaeval law. I consider it mediaeval because diamond is almost depleting and we still have archaic tools like shovels, pickaxes. The energy is no longer there and until the top soil is bulldozed by excavators and dozers before miners can easily get access to excavate the gravels. I therefore call on the National Minerals Agency [NMA] that is responsible to regulate those mining companies and miners, and the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources to propose some amendments or formulate policies that will help these artisanal miners.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want you to know that between 2015 and 2018, the mining sector has been contributing **24%** to our GDP. It is however sad to note here that we only get **4%** these days from mining for our GDP. I am saying this with all authority that mining only contributes **4%** as compared to the **24%** that we used to get. This is very worrisome and I am sure this is why the Dollar is always high. This is for the attention of the House. In summary, the Coalition for Change [C4C] will be two years on the 20th December, 2019 *[Applause]*. On this note, you are all invited to Koidu City.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, the point you have made is very important and I think I speak the mind of the entire House. I am sure if your concern is not addressed expeditiously by the Ministry of Mines, then you are at liberty to bring before this House a Motion for the amendment of the Act in question by expunging from it the relevant provision that you cited. We have to do so as soon as possible because the mining season has already begun.

HON. SAIDU E. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, I rise on S.Os 23, to inform this House that there was fire accident in my constituency, which is Constituency 129, Tengbeh Town. I however want to report here there was no fatality, but properties worth millions of Leones were lost in the inferno. If there is any Member of Parliament who will want to help is at liberty to do so.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say something concerning the just concluded 'Parliament Open Day.' For me and other colleagues, we were not adequately informed with regards to the essence or the importance of this occasion. It was like a fanfare. We actually enjoyed it and the outcome was fantastic. However, our constituents were not happy at all because it appeared as if we did not tell them. They watched the advert on television, but they were not happy with us. Some of them wanted to attend the programme to make it more interesting. I met Mrs Frazer when I was told that she was the lead programme coordinator and I told her that some of us were not happy because our constituents were not adequately informed or invited.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we want more publicity be done either in the form of public notices in our various pigeon holes or making jingles. Those that were fortunate to come had the opportunity to hobnob and interface with the Clerk and even the Speaker. At one point, I went to your office and told you not to sit in your office because there were people who might want to see or interact with you. I am sure that was the essence of 'Parliament Open Day.' It was a very good idea, but in the future, we want our constituents to be fully informed. You only invited the donors, but failed to inform Civil Society Organisations. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Let me state here that that event was an event to which Honourable Members should not wait to be invited. You should actually take ownership of the event and invite your constituents to come and interface with parliamentarians. I am sure that was the essence of the three day 'Parliament Open Day'. We hope next year's 'Parliament Open Day' will be celebrated outside Freetown. We will work towards ensuring that it happens and we hope that since this was just the inaugural event, next year's event will be better attended, particularly by Members of Parliament. It is your

event and I hope and pray that you spare no effort in taking full ownership of it. It will become an annual event that will be celebrated not only in Freetown, but also outside of Freetown.

Honourable Members, I want to take this opportunity to inform you that on the 17th December, 2019, which hopefully is going to be our last sitting day before we break for Christmas, Parliament, in collaboration with the family of the late Honourable Dr Salia Jusu Sheriff, will be celebrating the life of that illustrious former Member of Parliament in Parliament at State Hall. Please take ownership of it. We will be celebrating the life of a very distinguished personality who donned this Well with brilliance and eloquence. The Honourable I.B. Kargbo and I can testify what I have just said. When Honourable Dr Salia Jusu Sheriff used to represent his constituency in Kenema, it was a spectacle to watch and to listen to.

Honourable Members, Honourable Dr Salia Jusu Sheriff believed in many things. To me, he was a man who lived many light years ahead of his time. I will give you one solid example. When he was appointed Minister [the same year I was appointed in 1982 by President Siaka Stevens under the One Party dispensation], he was appointed Minister of Finance and I was appointed Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources. I can assure you he acquainted himself very well. As far as I can remember, one legacy he left was that he was the first public officer who thought it wise to declare his personal assets before he assumed office. At that time, that kind of action was considered utopian. Today, it is part and parcel of our laws. So, you can see the vision that the man had in his day as Member of Parliament. But more will be said and more will be heard about the greatness of the late Salia Jusu Sheriff on the 17th December, 2019 at State Hall. So, I am extending the invitation of both Parliament and the family of the late Honourable Dr Salia Jusu Sheriff to all Members of Parliament to please make it a duty to attend that important occasion. Today it is Salia, tomorrow could be you.

Honourable Members, the last announcement I have is that I have received communication from my counterpart in the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Parliament, informing us that the Fourth Parliament of ECOWAS is about to

end its tenure to be succeeded by the Fifth Parliament that would commence its life from the 3rd February, 2020. Consequently, we are being asked to send our representatives to the Fifth ECOWAS Parliament that will start its life in February, 2020. Accordingly, after due consultations, the conclusion has been reached for your consideration and approval that we maintain our current representation in that Parliament. I will dutifully ask a Member to move a Motion accordingly and get a Secunder before I put that question for your approval that our present representation in the ECOWAS Parliament, which is the Fourth Parliament, be maintained for the Fifth Parliament. Our current Membership in that Parliament is as follows:

- Honourable Chernor R. M. Bah, leader of delegation;
- Honourable Sidie M. Tunis, Member;
- Honourable Ajibola E. Manly-Spine, Member;
- Honourable Veronica Kadie Sesay, Member; and
- Honourable Siaka M. Sama, Member

That is the current membership that after due consultation, we are being advised to maintain.

HON. BRIMA MANSARAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I so move that our current membership in the Fourth ECOWAS Parliament be maintained.

THE SPEAKER: Any Secunder?

HON. DR KANDEH K. YUMKELLA: Point of Order, Mr Speaker. What procedure are we using to change membership or maintain membership in Parliament? I hope this will be the procedure each time we come here because we have a discussion now about the Pan-African Parliament where I am a Member and there is a suggestion to replace me and I do not know why.

THE SPEAKER: We shall deal with that issue when we come to that, Honourable Member.

HON. DR KANDEH K. YUMKELLA: So, I want to observe again, Mr Speaker. The Leader of C4C and I felt slighted when you invited the Leader of Government Business

and the Leader of the Opposition to consult on an issue without inviting us. We are the only Leaders here because those you invited are acting. We have not been consulted, but we did not want to disrupt the proceedings of Parliament. I am sure this is the 21st Century Sierra Leone Parliament and we are preparing ourselves for multi-party representation. We just pray that we are consulted on some of the issues. I thank you very much Sir.

THE SPEAKER: I take note of what you said, Honourable Member. Can I have a Secunder to the Motion?

HON. NENNEH LEBBIE: I so second the Motion

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

[Question Proposed, Put and agreed to]

[The Motion by Honourable Brima Mansaray has been carried]

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at 1:32 p.m. and was adjourned to Monday 16th December, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.]