

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

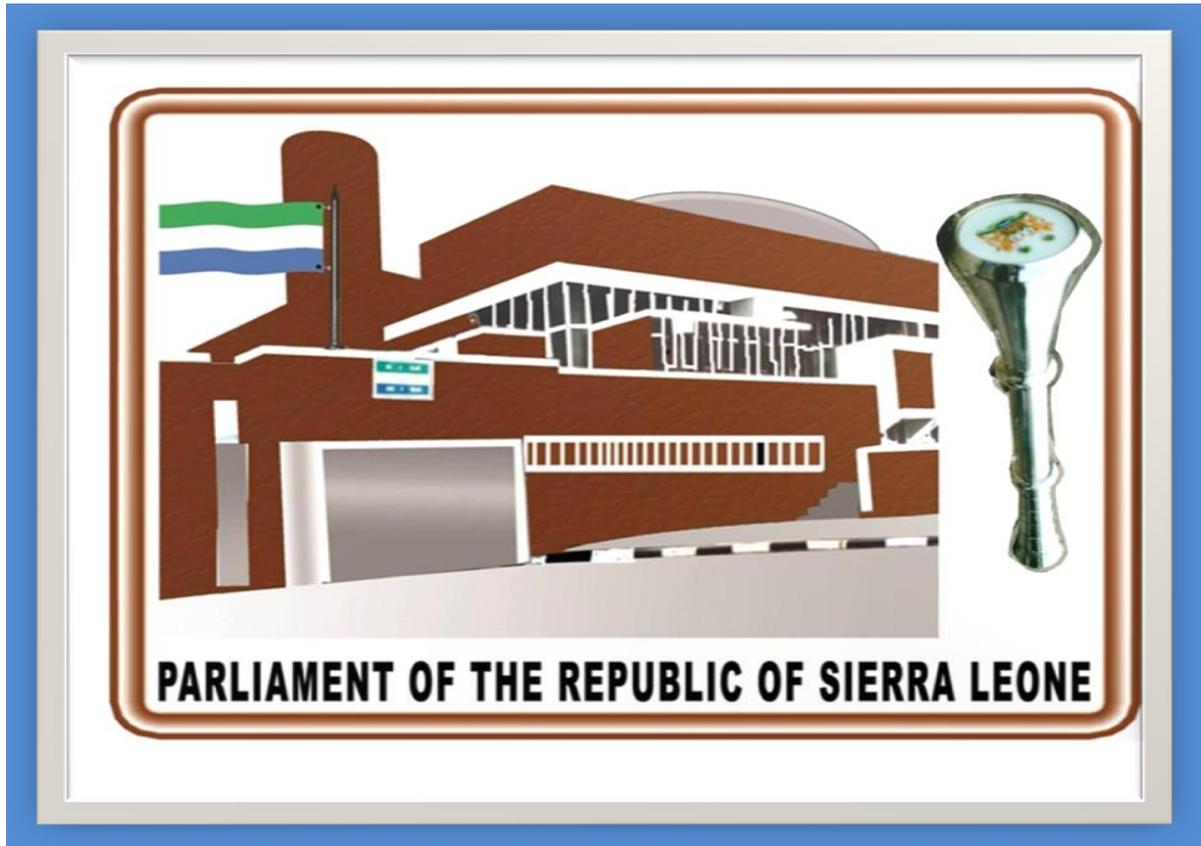
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION –FIRST MEETING

THURSDAY, 13TH JULY, 2023

SESSION – 2023/2024



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

VOLUME: I

NUMBER: 1

First Meeting of the First Session of the Sixth Parliament
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Thursday, 13th July, 2023.

CONTENTS

I. PRAYERS

II. SWEARING-IN OF ELECTED MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

[THIRD SCHEDULE] OF THE 1991 CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE

III. WELCOME STATEMENT BY THE CLERK OF PARLIAMENT

IV. ELECTION OF SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT

SECTION 79 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE [ACT NO. 6 OF 1991] AS AMENDED BY THE CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE [AMENDMENT] ACT, 2013 AND STANDING ORDER 8.

V. ELECTION OF DEPUTY SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT

SECTION 80 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE ACT NO.6 OF 1991 AS AMENDED BY THE CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE AMENDMENT ACT, 2013 AND STANDING ORDER 9.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENT



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

FIRST SESSION – FIRST MEETING OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Thursday, 13th July, 2023.

I. PRAYERS

[The Senior Table Clerk, Mrs Tangela M.C Sam, Read the Prayers]

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

[The Clerk of Parliament, Hon. Paran Umar Tarawally in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S. O. 5[2]

II. SWEARING-IN OF ELECTED MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

[THIRD SCHEDULE] OF THE 1991 CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY [Clerk of Parliament]: Honourable Members-elect, in conformity with the certificate of elections submitted from the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone [ECSL] to my office and pursuant to Section 83 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone Act No.6 of 1991, in tandem with S.O. 1[a], I hereby declare that the following have been duly elected as Members of Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

Now therefore, I hereby read out aloud the correspondence directed to me by the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone. It reads:

The Honourable Clerk,

House of Parliament, Tower Hill

Freetown

Dear Sir,

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS

I have been directed to inform your office, that the results of the Members of Parliament elections regarding the two set of elections for Paramount Chief Members of Parliament and ordinary Members of Parliament are hereby certified in accordance with the Public Elections Act, 2022, Act No.17 of 2022. The Commission list for the All Peoples' Congress and the Sierra Leone Peoples Party, and the Paramount Chief Members of Parliament have met the threshold that qualifies them to be duly elected as Paramount Chief Members of Parliament and Members of Parliament under the District Block Proportional Representation System.

Attached are copies of notification letters for duly elected Members of Parliament of Sierra Leone. Please accept the assurances of the Commission's highest esteem.

Yours faithfully

William Ado Davies

Executive Secretary ECSL

I will now call on the Table Clerk to announce the names of Honourable Members elect by region, starting with the Paramount Chief Members of Parliament. Members elect, when you hear your name you must let us understand you are around and then you come to the centre of the Well.

I want all Christians on one side and the Muslims on the other side. Let us have the Christians on my left and Muslims on my right. Let one person on either side to hold the Holy Quran for the Muslims the Bible for the Christians and the rest should stretch their hands towards the Holy Book you believe in.

The following Paramount Chief Honourable Members of Parliament from the fourteen [14] districts subscribed to the oath of office.

No.	NAME	DISTRICT
1.	Hon. PC Foray Cyril Gondor II	Kailahun
2.	Hon. PC Foday Stephen Kpakra Faba	Kenema
3.	Hon. PC Paul Ngaba Saquee V	Kono
4.	Hon. PC Kandeh Baba Keiha III	Bombali
5.	Hon. PC Marrah III Thor Thor Sheka TinK Fonkola,	Falaba
6.	Hon. PC Alie Balan Sama Marrah III	Koinadugu
7.	Hon. PC Alhaji Masakama Kanamanka III	Tonkolili
8.	Hon. PC Ngbak IV Bai Farama Tass Bubu,	Kambia
9.	Hon. PC Kandeh Paria Kawaleh II	Karene
10.	Hon. PC Bai Shebora Sheba Gberek III	Port Loko
11.	Hon. PC Desmond Mahayei Kargobai	Bo
12.	Hon. PC Bio Prince Lansana,	Bonthe
13.	Hon. PC Haja Fatmata Bintu Koroma Meama Kajue	Moyamba
14.	Hon. PC Kebbie III Brima Victor Sidi,	Pujehun

The following Honourable Members from Karene District subscribed to the oath of office.

- 1 Hon. Mohamed Bangura
- 2 Hon. Abdul Karim Bangura

The following Honourable Members from Kailahun District subscribed to the oath of office.

- 1 Hon. Sarty Banya
- 2 Hon. Hindolo Moiwo Gevao
- 3 Hon. Wuyatta Bernadette Songa
- 4 Hon. Musa Lahai
- 5 Hon. Mohamed Kanneh
- 6 Hon. Margaret Feimata Johnson
- 7 Hon. Fallah Kenawah Tengbeh
- 8 Hon. Hawa Rosaline Siafa
- 9 Hon. Emilia Lolloh Tongi
- 10 Hon. Quintin Salia-Konneh

The following Honourable Members from Kenema District subscribed to the oath of office.

- 1 Hon. Mathew S. Nyuma
- 2 Hon. Musa Peter Moigua
- 3 Hon. Rugiatu Tarawalli-Mussaffa
- 4 Hon. Francis Amara Kaisamba
- 5 Hon. Boston Munda
- 6 Hon. Alice Kornya Sandy
- 7 Hon. Alie Bayoh

- 8 Hon. Brima Mansaray
- 9 Hon. Mariama Ella Gbla
- 10 Hon. Ibrahim Koroma
- 11 Hon. Momoh Bockarie
- 12 Hon. Juliana Aliematu Fatorma

The following Honourable Members from Kono District subscribed to the oath of office.

- 1 Hon. Saa Emerson Lamina
- 2 Hon. Tamba Simeon Johny
- 3 Hon. Rebecca Yei Kamara
- 4 Hon. Musa Fofanah
- 5 Hon. Sia Mahawa Habiamama
Tommy
- 6 Hon. Komba Quee
- 7 Hon. Sahr Koutu Momodu

The Honourable Members from Bombali District were **absent**.

The following Honourable Members from Falaba District subscribed to the oath of office.

- 1 Hon. Mohamed Billoh Shaw
- 2 Hon. Jabbie Alpha Fode Maddie

The following Honourable Member from Koinadugu District subscribed to the oath of office.

Hon. Konkofa Farah Mansaray

The following Honourable Member from Tonkolili District subscribed to the oath of office.

Hon. Foyoh Tholley

The following Honourable Members from Kambia District subscribed to the oath of office.

- 1 Hon. Adama Bangura SLPP
- 2 Hon. Mohamed Tarawallie Fofanah SLPP

The following Honourable Members from Port Loko District subscribed to the oath of office.

- 1 Hon. Ishmael Sankoh Yillah SLPP
- 2 Hon. Sheik Santigie Ibrahim Kargbo SLPP
- 3 Hon. Racheal Christiana Bundor SLPP
- 4 Hon. Abdulai Karim Kanu SLPP

The following Honourable Members from Bo District subscribed to the oath of office.

- 1 Hon. Bashiru Silikie
- 2 Hon. Christopher Keikura Vandy
- 3 Hon. Massay Ngahiteh Aruna
- 4 Hon. Nenneh Lebbie
- 5 Hon. Ambrose Maada Lebby
6. Hon. Joseph Williams Lamin
7. Hon. Joseph Abdul Bash Kamara
8. Hon. Yusuf Mackery

9. Hon. Amie Nyava Moriba
10. Hon. Habib Keifa Fabbah
11. Hon. Beatrice Maaya Kangbai
12. Hon. Osman Abdulai Charles

The following Honourable Members from Bonthe District subscribed to the oath of office.

- 1 Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas
- 2 Hon. Jibrila Surmoijueh
- 3 Hon. Alice Jebbeh Kumabeh
- 4 Hon. Idrissa Moiwai Dauda
- 5 Hon. Bintu Fatmata Bockarie

The following Honourable Members from Moyamba District subscribed to the oath of office.

- 1 Hon. Edward George
- 2 Hon. Veronica Kadie Sesay
- 3 Hon. Capt. (Rtd.) Sylvester Arnold Maxwell Boima
- 4 Hon. Umu Pyne
- 5 Hon. Mustapha Musa Sellu

The following Honourable Members from Pujehun District subscribed to the oath of office.

- 1 Hon. Sidie Mohamed Tunis
- 2 Hon. Dickson Momoh Rogers

- 3 Hon. Hawa Kallon
- 4 Hon. Alex Mattia Rogers
- 5 Hon. Abu Kemokai
- 6 Hon. Mariama Munia Zombo
- 7 Hon. Shiaka Musa Sama

The following Honourable Members from Western Rural District subscribed to the oath of office.

- 1 Hon. Osman Wurie Jalloh
- 2 Hon. Beatrice Iyamide Langley
- 3 Hon. Amara Momoh Kargbo
- 4 Hon. Ibrahim Kabba
- 5 Hon. Ahmed Joseph Kanu

The following Honourable Members from Western Urban District subscribed to the oath of office.

- 1 Hon. Ibrahim Tawa Conteh
- 2 Hon. Mohamed Sheriff Rahman-Coker
- 3 Hon. Princess Kadie Daramy-Nabbie
- 4 Hon. Benjamin Turay
- 5 Hon. Idriss Sahid Kamara
- 6 Hon. Fatmata Sarah Soukenah
- 7 Hon. Abdul Sulaiman Marray-Conteh

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: Honourable Members, please make sure you sign the oath book to conclude the exercise. Please take photos before you take your seats.

[The House stood down at 12:20 p.m. and Resumed at 1:30 p.m.]

III. WELCOME STATEMENT BY THE CLERK OF PARLIAMENT

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: Honourable Members, I greet you on behalf of the staff of Parliament. It is a great honour and with greatest of gratitude to welcome you to the Sierra Leone House of Parliament, our beacon of hope and peace and supreme legislative authority.

It is tough to compete for any kind of job, but I strongly believe that it is tougher to acquire a job as an elected Member of Parliament. The reason is that the screening for most jobs is done by a few people, but when it comes to the screening for elective positions, it becomes more intensive and competitive. Your party and your people have to screen and vote for you, and this makes it a very difficult task to reach where you are today. Let me therefore congratulate you on your successes for being duly elected as Members of Parliament by your people, through a free, fair and transparent election.

Honourable Members, you will be exercising the legitimate and constitutional mandate of making laws that will shape the destiny and serve the interest of our people and the future generation. All eyes are now on you; the stakes are high and the expectations are exponential. You will be working to ensure that government works for the people by giving a voice to the voiceless through law-making, transparency, accountability and equitable distribution of resources. While acknowledging that your job is challenging, I must emphasize that it is also an interesting one because you will not be on your own over the next five years. My professional staff and I would be committed to supporting you.

Honourable Members, we are aware that you are from various backgrounds and experiences, but not necessarily enough to go through the practices and procedures of Parliament, especially the first-timers. We have put in place an Orientation and

Induction Programme that is geared towards providing you with a strong and solid foundation to enhance your capacities to perform effectively.

Honourable Members, over the past five years, we have built a strong reform minded and successful administration, through the excellent supports and strategic vision and directive of the previous Parliamentary Service Commission. Our hope is to build on that trajectory and to run a corporate Parliament anchored on quality service delivery, productivity, transparency and mutual respect.

Let me again with the deepest honour and gratitude congratulate each and every one of you for your outstanding and historic achievement of winning the mandate of your people. I wish you success in the next five years of your political career. God bless Sierra Leone *[/Applause]*.

Honourable Members, having gone through the short welcome statement, I may now want to proceed to the election of the Speaker of the House.

IV. ELECTION OF THE SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT

SECTION 79 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE [ACT NO. 6 OF 1991] AS AMENDED BY THE CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE [AMENDMENT] ACT, 2013 AND STANDING ORDER 8.

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: Honourable Members, I now instruct the Sergeant-at-Arms to close all doors for the elections. I hope all Members of Parliament are seated. Honourable Benjamin Turay, please come forward. Honourable Members at the back please make sure you come to the front rows, so that it would be easy to cast your ballot.

Honourable Members, I will go through the procedure for the election of the Speaker. The Speaker of Parliament is elected pursuant to Section 79 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No.6 of 1991 as amended in 2013, Constitution of Sierra Leone, [Amendment] Act 2013. It says: "The Speaker of Parliament shall be elected by Members of Parliament from amongst persons who are:

[a] Members of Parliament and who had served as such for not less than 5 years.

[b] Qualified to be Members of Parliament and who had served as such for not less than 20 years and who are not less than 40 years of age.

Honourable Members, Standing Orders 8 deals with the election of a Speaker and for us to elect a Speaker, we should have the votes of two/third of Members of Parliament and taking into account the current configuration of Parliament; i.e., 149 Members. You would agree with me that two/third of 149 is 99.5. However, since we do not have half human beings, we take two/third to be 99 Members of Parliament. So, during the elections of a Speaker, we would go through the first ballot; and if no candidate gets ninety-nine [99] votes, it means nobody has been elected a Speaker. If this is going to be the situation, we would go through a second ballot process. Again, the second ballot is also two/third majority of Members of Parliament; and if no candidate secures 99 votes, it also means no Speaker has been elected and we have to go to a third round of voting. If again no candidate obtains 99 votes, we go for the fourth round which is going to be simple majority of all Members present instead of 2/3 majority. This means that any candidate who defeats an opponent by one vote will be declared the Speaker of the 6th Parliament. So, the simple majority in this case is 75 votes cast before a winner is declared. So, the process is a bit tedious and that is why I want to entreat all Members of Parliament to be very swift in the voting process. Once the ballot papers are distributed and your name is called, you have to move forward quickly to the ballot box and drop your ballot.

Honourable Members, once nominations are opened for the position of Speaker, we would allow Honourable Members to nominate any individual who is qualified as per Section 79 by proposing that the person takes the seat as Speaker of the Sixth Parliament. Every nomination would have to be seconded and once that is done, I, as Clerk of Parliament, would propose the question whether this House would want the nominee to take the seat as Speaker of Parliament before voting commences.

Honourable Members, if you look at the ballot papers, the words Sierra Leone Parliament Election of Speaker are inscribed. There are two ratings; 'Aye' and 'Nay.' If you want the person to take the seat as Speaker of Parliament, tick 'Aye' or tick the second box which is 'nay' to mean you do not want the person as Speaker. In parliamentary terminologies, 'aye' means 'yes' and 'nay' means 'no.' In the last Parliament, we had void votes. I want to plead to you all to vote correctly.

We shall now go through the roll call before the distribution of ballot papers.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr Clerk. Few days ago, you were on 98.1 Radio Station and I heard you saying that you only become a Member of Parliament after you would have subscribed to the oath of office. The question is, are you going to count those who did not take oath today?

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: This is a very good question.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Clerk, I thank you very much for this education and for throwing light on some of the issues relating to the election of a Speaker. We know that you are the presiding officer or the legislative returning officer of this exercise. I thank you very much for your courage to conduct these elections. However, my colleague raised an important point because you have been on the radio few days back. So, I was expecting you to throw more light on Section 83 of the 1991 Constitution.

Mr Clerk, Honourable Members, Section 8[3] is specific and I do not want to say it is skewed. It is straight forward and that is why I was expecting you to shed more light on it. You have educated us enough, but we need more information on Section 83 of the 1991 Constitution Act No.6. We want to know if someone who has not subscribed to the oath is still eligible to vote for a Speaker or not. So, we want to know if we are still going to use the 2/3 majority despite the absence of other Members of Parliament. Section 79[2] of the 1991 Constitution Act No.6, clearly stipulates that you have to get 2/3 majority. I am sure after three rounds of consecutive voting, the fourth one should be simple majority. We are novice I am speaking on behalf of all of us. So, we want you to give more explanations on Sections 79[2] and 83. I thank you very much for giving me the Floor.

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: Thank you very much, Honourable Mathew S. Nyuma.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you, Mr Clerk. I want to remind you that you are here to conduct elections and not to interpret the 1991 Constitution.

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: Honourable Member, I am in charge. Please resume your seat.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Clerk, I stand on S.O 34. This is a House of procedure. I made reference to your utterances on 98.1 few days back. The public is looking at us because we are on full view of cameras. I asked you to educate us and not to interpret the Constitution. We asked for education; we did not ask for interpretation. I rest my case sir.

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: Thank you very much. Honourable Members, these are very legitimate concerns and it is true that I would be doing a disservice if I fail to give you some explanations. Honourable Members, if you are requesting for explanations, it would apply to the citizens of Sierra Leone if they also request for explanation.

Honourable Members, I would not bore you with the details of Constitution and the S.Os, but Section 83 of the 1991 Constitution is simple and clear. I am sure for someone to become a full blown Member of Parliament, there are three stages: first, you have to contest election; second, you have to be declared winner by the National Returning Officer; and third, you subscribe to the oath of office. This is what qualifies you to be an Honourable Member of Parliament. However, the Standing Orders are clear. A Member-elect can take part in the election of the Speaker even if he or she has not subscribed to the oath of office. In other words, the Standing Orders state that you can take part in the elections of the Speaker even before subscribing to the oath of office. I want to state here the 2/3 majority is calculated based on the number of people who were duly elected and declared by the National Returning Officer. So, to allay your fears, this election is going to be based on the 149 Members of Parliament duly declared elected. That is my ruling.

Honourable Members, pursuant to the relevant sections of the 1991 Constitution and the Standing Orders and as the Parliamentary Returning Officer, I declare nominations open for the position of Speaker of Parliament of the Sixth Parliament of the Second Republic.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Clerk, before I nominate the candidate of my choice, I praised you a few minutes ago for keeping within the ambit of the constitutional provisions, especially Section 84. I want you to go to S.O 8[3]. This provision is a bit confusing and that is why we need more clarifications because we

have over **50%** of new Members of Parliament. The election of a Speaker happens only once in every five years after a General Election. So, I called your attention in camera to S.O 8[3]. I would like you to read that provision for the edification of the Members and the public before I go to the next step. I thank you.

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: I thank you very much, Honourable Mathew S. Nyuma. S.O 8 deals with the election of the Speaker, but I will read S.O 8[3] I want you to listen very carefully. It says, "If only one person is so proposed, the Clerk shall propose the question that that person do take the Chair of the House as Speaker." If more than one person is so proposed, the Clerk shall propose the question that the first person proposed do take the Chair of the House as Speaker.

Honourable Members, the interpretation is that if only one person is nominated, the Clerk of Parliament will propose the question that Mr 'A' do take the Chair of the House as Speaker. S.O 8[3] only refers to the proposition of the question; it does not refer to letting the person go unopposed because Section 79 of the Constitution and S.O 8 talk about that very clearly. In other words, whether we have one candidate or not, the said candidate should be voted for and the candidate in question must secure 2/3 majority in the first, second or third ballot. If this is not the case at first, second and third rounds, a fourth round will be conducted, which is to be simple majority of Members present.

Honourable Members, the provision further states that if there are two or more contestants, the Clerk will proceed with the process one after the other, and proposes the question that the first candidate so nominated takes the Chair of the House as Speaker and voting commences for that candidate. If that candidate fails to secure 2/3 majority, the process continues with the second candidate. Again, if the second candidate fails to secure 2/3 majority, the process will continue with the third candidate. If no candidate secures the 2/3 majority, the first and second candidates who scored the highest vote cast would now contest for simple majority, wherein any candidate who scores the highest number of votes would be elected Speaker of this House. I hope this is understood.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Yes, you are well understood, but I have a question. We are dealing with a very gullible opposition. So, can you please tell the audience

in this Well what will constitute the 2/3 majority based on the 149 duly elected Members of Parliament?

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: I have stated earlier that 2/3 majority is 99 Members of Parliament.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you.

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: We proceed with the election process.

HON MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Clerk, thank you very much for elucidating us on the procedures. I have no question on what you have said to us. You are in charge. We have listened to you attentively and you have cited provisions in the Standing Orders and the 1991 Constitution. We also have Section 171[15] of the Constitution. We now understand the process very clearly. There have been lots of debates on the election of the Speaker. We have new Members of Parliament from all over the country and we do not want them to make their own interpretations of the process. This is why we insisted that you explain the process succinctly.

Having said that, Mr Clerk, Honourable Members, I stand as Honourable Mathew Sahr Nyuma from Kenema District, representing the district under the PR System in the just concluded elections. In my locality, I represent two sections; Gbokakajama and Gbolamayama [*Applause*]. The other sections in Kenema District are as well important. So, I stand on behalf of the people of Sierra Leone and the political party I represent, to nominate a seasoned politician and a diplomat who has served in the Fifth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone. It was during his tenure as Speaker of this House that the Gender Empowerment Bill was passed into an Act of Parliament, which paved the way for over **30%** of females in this Chamber [*Applause*]

Mr Clerk, the Fifth Parliament of the Second Republic was characterised by progressive legislations and transformative decisions. I will go to the same provision of the Standing Orders to talk about the candidate I want to nominate. I am not expecting any contention. This is about unity, freedom and justice. You would agree with me that democracy has prevailed since 1996 and we have seen the change from opposition to ruling and from ruling to opposition.

Mr Clerk, my nominee is someone who brought ECOWAS to a transformative Community of West African States. Today, ECOWAS is the building block and a pillar of democracy in the Sub-region. My nominee served as Secretary General of ECOWAS. He is the almighty of the progressive Sierra Leone and a progressive Parliament. He is the man in whom we trust; a scholar from Cambridge; a PhD scholar. I am not trying to campaign, but to convince you to vote for my candidate.

Having said that, Mr Clerk, Honourable Members, I stand on Section 79 of the 1991 Constitution and S.O. 8 to nominate Dr Abass Chernor Bundu as the Speaker of the Sixth Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone. Thank you *[Applause]*

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: Thank you very much, Honourable Member. Do we have any seconder to that nomination?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Clerk, I, Honourable Bashiru Silikie, who is serving his third term in this Parliament and representing the people of Baoma Chiefdom in Bo District, which is the Chiefdom of the Chairman of the SLPP, hereby second the nomination for Dr Abass Chernor Bundu.

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: Honourable Members, do we have any other nomination?

[Question Proposed]

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: Honourable Members, since there is no other nomination, we proceed with the roll call. Honourable Members, once your name is called, please stand up quickly and a ballot paper will be issued to you for onward voting process.

Honourable Members, the voting has ended, but we are going to sort out the ballot papers before counting commences, and eventually the announcement of the result. I would now ask my staff to open the ballot box and sort out the ballot papers by 'aye' and 'nay.' Honourable Members, Standing Orders 8[5d] reads: **"When all Members who wish to do so have dropped their ballot papers into the glass, the Clerk shall examine the ballot papers and report the result of the ballot."** So, my responsibility is to examine and report. I will examine and report accordingly. This is going to be a manual counting process.

Honourable Members, by the power vested in me as the Legislative Returning Officer, I hereby announce the result of the first ballot. There were no void votes. 96 persons voted, but the ayes are 93, the nay is 1, and 2 people abstained. Therefore, Section 79 of the 1991 Constitution, in tandem with Section 8 of the Standing Orders, the candidate who was proposed to take the seat as Speaker of the Sixth Parliament has failed to pull the 2/3 majority. Thus, second round is required.

Honourable Members, the second round ballot has just ended and I now ask the officers of the House to sort out the ballot papers by ayes, and nays. The counting has concluded and the results of the second ballot, as by the powers vested in me as Legislative Returning Officer, are as follows: 96 persons voted 'ayes,' no 'nay,' no void and nobody abstained. However, pursuant to Section 79 of the 1991 Constitution, in tandem with S.O 8, of the Standing Orders, the candidate who had been proposed to take the Chair as Speaker of the Sixth Parliament has not met the threshold. We would now proceed to the third round of the ballot.

Honourable Members, voting has ended and the results of the third round of votes are announced thus: Ayes is 94 and Nays is 2. I therefore announce to you that the candidate who has been proposed to take the Chair as Speaker of the Sixth Parliament has failed to pull 2/3 majority.

Honourable Members, we now proceed with the fourth and final round of the voting process, which is going to be by simple majority. The voting process has ended and that brought us to the end of the speakership election. Honourable Members, before I announce the results of the fourth round of the election, I want to refer you to S.O. 8[7]. It reads: "provided that, if three successive resolutions, proposing the election of a Speaker, fail to receive the vote of 2/3 of all the Members of Parliament, the Speaker shall be elected by a resolution passed by a simple majority of all Members of Parliament...." Honourable Members, the current configuration, simple majority of all Members of Parliament is seventy-five votes. Bearing this in mind, I hereby, as the Legislative Returning Officer, announce the results of this Sixth Parliament speakership election as follows: 95 people voted and the Ayes received 92 votes while the nays received 3 votes.

With those results, Honourable Members, I hereby declare the Honourable Dr Abass Chernor Bundu as Speaker elect of the Sixth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone and propose that the Honourable Dr Abass Chernor Bundu do take the seat as Speaker of the Sixth Parliament. I now have the honour to invite the Honourable Abass Chernor Bundu to subscribe to the oath of office as Speaker of the Sixth Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

SWEARING-IN OF THE SPEAKER OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT

HON. PARAN UMAR TAWARALLY: Honourable Dr Abass Chernor Bundu, are you a Muslim or a Christian?

HON. DR ABASS CHERNOR BUNDU: I am a Muslim.

HON. PARAN UMAR TAWARALLY: Please receive the Quran? You are now going to subscribe to the Oath of office as Speaker of the sixth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

[The Honourable Dr Abass Chernor Bundu subscribed to the oath of office as Speaker of the Sixth Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone]

Honourable Members, we may now wish to robe the new Speaker of the Sixth Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone. I may now wish to usher you to your seat.

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

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members please be seated.

VI ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT

SECTION 80 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE ACT NO.6 OF 1991 AS AMENDED BY THE CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE AMENDMENT ACT, 2013 AND STANDING ORDER 9.

HON. MATTHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, whilst you were away and awaiting your election as the newest Speaker in the Sub-Sahara and Africa, I need a round of applause because I nominated you *[Applause]*. I am trying to delay the election of the Deputy Speaker, but we were unable to obstruct the Clerk because we wanted the procedure to move forward.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you read S.O. 8[4], we are supposed to give felicitations or appreciations of the Speaker. So, before the election of the Deputy Speaker, I would want to move a Motion to postpone the election of the Deputy Speaker today. Section 84[2] of the 1991 Constitution Act No.6 is very clear.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I will now call on the Clerk to proceed with the election of the Deputy Speaker of Parliament.

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, with your leave, I will proceed with the election of the Deputy Speaker. Honourable Members, by the power vested in me by Mr Speaker, I now declare nominations open.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I, Honourable Bashiru Silikie, a former Member of Parliament representing Constituency 82, in the Baoma Chiefdom, now a Member of Parliament representing Bo District, in the Southern Region of the Republic of Sierra Leone, rise to nominate one of us. I took an oath in this Parliament in 2012 and the person I am about to nominate was one of us when we took oath in 2012.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the candidate I am about to nominate has darkened the walls of this Parliament for the second term of office and this is the eleventh year starting. Mr Speaker, I am about to nominate an outstanding lawyer, one of the best in the legal profession in Sierra Leone. I am here to nominate a person who has gone unopposed in his constituency and district for the third term to come to this Parliament. He served as the Leader of delegation of this Parliament to the Pan-Africa Parliament, whilst I served as his deputy. I can say here without any iota of doubt that he is one of the best Members of Parliament in the Pan-African Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, whenever the candidate I am about to nominate stands to speak in the Pan-Africa Parliament, you can sense the respect from other Members of Parliament. He has served as Deputy Speaker in the Fifth Parliament. Those who were in the Fifth Parliament would ascertain to the fact that he is one of the best Deputy Speakers in this House. Mr Speaker, during difficult moments, this is the only candidate you can call S.O. 2 "okada" meaning, he does his duty as swift as possible.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on behalf of the people of Baoma Chiefdom in the Bo District, the people of Bo District, the people of Southern Region, the people of Sierra Leone and of course Members of Parliament in the Sixth Parliament, I, Honourable Bashiru Silikie, rise to nominate the Rt. Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas to serve as Deputy Speaker of Sixth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: Honourable Members, Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas has been nominated to take the Chair of the House as Deputy Speaker of the Sixth Parliament. Any seconder to that nomination?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all the adjectives I wanted to use have been used by the former Deputy Leader. I want to however state here that there could be no better Deputy Speaker to be elected than the Honourable Segepoh S. Thomas. Mr Speaker, I was in this Parliament in 2012 with Honourable Segepoh S. Thomas. I noticed that he would one day become the Deputy Speaker of this Parliament. Therefore, I second the nomination of Honourable Segepoh S. Thomas to be elected as the Deputy Speaker of this House. Thank you very much.

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: Thank you, Honourable Member. Do we have any other nomination? There is none, so we proceed. The election of the Deputy Speaker is a simple majority of Members present. The 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone and the Standing Orders are very clear on this. So, you listen to the roll call as you come forward to cast your vote.

THE ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY SPEAKER

The voting process will be by collection of voices.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Honourable Segepoh S. Thomas has been duly elected as Deputy Speaker of the 6th Parliament]

HON. PARAN UMAR TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, the assignment you gave me has been accomplished and it is now my pleasure to give you the details of what transpired in the Well. For the election of the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, we

were expecting 96 voters, but one abstained. So, we only had 95 Honourable Members who voted. Interestingly, all 95 Honourable Members voted in favour of the Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas for the position of Deputy Speaker of the Sixth Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, you have all heard the results of the election of the Deputy Speaker as pronounced by the Clerk of Parliament. By virtue of the powers vested in me as the Speaker of the Sixth Parliament of the second Republic, I hereby declare the Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas as duly elected Deputy Speaker of Parliament.

On behalf of the entire membership of the House, I would like to extend our warmest congratulations to the Deputy Speaker. We would all have an opportunity to do so again at our next sitting in greater detail.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, your ruling is accepted, but thinking about the present climate, where we are, we know you are fully aware of it. We met you some moments ago and we discussed pertinent issues relating to the regulations of Parliament. People are expecting felicitations, but if you look at Section 94 of the 1991 Constitution, we can regulate our own business. I am saying this for the edification of not only Members of Parliament, but for the gallery. We also have in our midst former Members of Parliament, such as Honourable Alpha Khan. He is expecting us to give some felicitations to the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker. So, with your leave, Mr Speaker, we have discussed it and we would want you to differ that item to a later date.

THE SPEAKER: Your point is well noted. I observed that Item VIII on the Order Paper would have been an acceptance speech by me at least today and felicitations would have to come at the next adjourned date. But after consultations, we have agreed to suspend that particular item and take it up at the next adjourned date. In the main time and before the announcement, I would now like to announce the leadership of the House. I think it is an appropriate moment for us to do that unless, I hear any objections to the contrary.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, Point of Order. I want to know if there is a provision for the Deputy Speaker to take the oath of office.

THE SPEAKER: No, Honourable Member.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: If there is any provision, be rest assured that it would have been adhered to. So, I will proceed with the announcement of the Leadership of the House. The House already knows who the Speaker and Deputy Speaker are. So, I do not need to repeat their names.

The Majority Leader and Leader of Government Business is Hon. Matthew Sahr Nyuma; Deputy Leader 1, Honourable Bashiru Silikie; Deputy Leader 2, Honourable Sahr Emerson Lamina; Chief Whip, Hon. Dickson M. Rogers; Deputy Chief Whip 1, Hon. Veronica Kadie Sesay; and Deputy Chief Whip 2, Hon. Ibrahim Tawa Conteh.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[The Leadership of the House has been adopted as Announced by the Speaker]

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Members of Parliament are kindly requested to return their completed Bio-data forms to the Members Support Team enquiring desk at the entrance of the main building of Parliament. Please be informed that the registration process continues tomorrow, 14th July, 2023 at 10am, at State Hall of Parliament; both old and new Members of Parliament are encouraged to register as the information on the Bio-data form is urgently needed by the Ministry of Finance.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, considering the lateness of the hour and the fact that we have been through a very long process of voting, the House will stand adjourn to Tuesday, 18th July, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at 4:40 p.m., and was adjourned to Tuesday, 18th July, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.]