

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

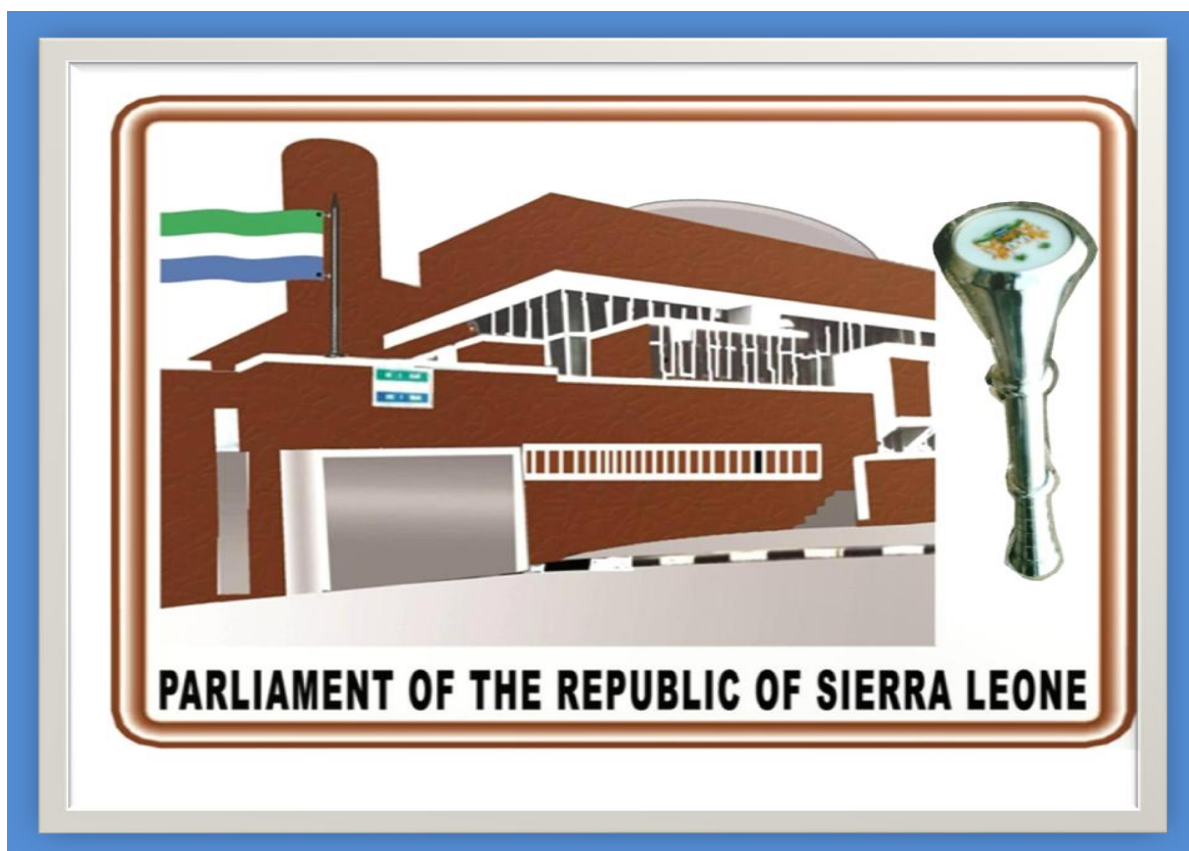
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

SECOND SESSION –FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 13TH FEBRUARY, 2025

SESSION – 2024/2025



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Tuesday, 13th February, 2025

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MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND AVIATION.



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 SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Tuesday, 13th February 2025.

I. PRAYERS

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

[The House met at 10:30 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]

[The Speaker, Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas, in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

[Suspension of S.O 5[2]

I. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING, HELD ON TUESDAY, 4TH FEBRUARY, 2025

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Tuesday, 4th February, 2025. As usual, we shall skip pages 1-4 and start with Page 5. Do you have any correction or amendment on Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? Page 10? Page 11? Page 12?

HON. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Speaker, the correction of the word February under adjournment.

THE SPEAKER: Clerks, please take note. Can a Member move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Tuesday, 4th February, 2025 as amended?

HON. AMBROSE M. LEBBY: I so move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

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

[Question Proposed, put and agreed to]

The record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Tuesday, 4th February, 2025 has been adopted as amended].

II. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: The only announcement I have is that the Parliamentary Service Commission will meet immediately after sitting and all the Commissioners are encouraged to attend and on time.

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

PROPOSER: HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE.

SECONDER: HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I present to you the Eight Report of the Second Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service on Parliamentary vetting of Presidential nominations.

1. Introduction

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service, that is charged with the responsibility of vetting Presidential nominees to serve in Public offices of State, met on Monday, 10th February, 2025 and interviewed Six Presidential nominees for the following appointments:

- i. Commissioner General, National Lands Commission;
- ii. Member, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Roads Authority [SLRA];
- iii. Member, Board of Directors, Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority [EDSA];
- iv. Member, Board of Directors, National Civil Registration Authority [NCRA];
- v. Member, Social Security Appellate Tribunal [SSAT]; and
- vi. Member, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Housing Corporation

2. Procedure

The Committee conducted its open hearing with live media coverage to encourage active public participation and within the usual framework of procedures. The nominees were interviewed on issues pertaining to their educational backgrounds to ensure that they have the required proven track records in pertinent work situations for appointment in such important offices of State. Further probing questions put to the appointees covered wide ranging issues relating to declared assets, tax obligations and their vision for productive tenures. Issues of unsuitability or otherwise were also closely looked into.

3. Eight Sitting of the Committee on Monday 10th February, 2025

The following Presidential Nominees were interviewed on oath:

- i. *Mr Abu Bakarr Sapay Foray-Musa, proposed Commissioner General, National Lands Commission*

Mr Abu Bakarr Sapay Foray Musa is an experienced GIS and remote sensing specialist and environmental science professional with over a decade of expertise in environmental sustainability, regulatory compliance and project management. He holds a Master's degree in Geographic Information Systems [GIS] from Temple University, Philadelphia, United States of America in 2020. He also graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from Njala University in 2009. Mr Foray Musa has further undergone professional trainings in Project Management, at the Project Management Institute in the United States and Spatial Analysis at the Environmental

Systems Research Institute, United States of America. This energetic young man has just completed a professional training course in Broadband Mapping at the International Telecommunications Union [ITU]. Prior to his appointment, he was Chief Executive Officer, [Head of Operations], Universal Access Development Fund [UADF] and from April to October 2022, he was GIS Specialist, at the Presidential Special Committee on Greenbelt Encroachment and Re-establishment.

The Committee adjudged the nominee to be suitably qualified to replace the late Commissioner General Sheik Sowa of blessed memory that was approved in the last Parliament, but who could not live long to implement the new Lands Commission Act.

Responding to the Committee on the various challenges of lands administration, distribution and inheritance, the erudite young GIS specialist said: "These are perennial problems that require total convergence of all stakeholders and the Ministry of Lands and Country Planning to help the Commission implement the Lands Commission Act of 2022." He concluded on the firm note that land administration requires capital, to leverage the GIS technology to drive impactful solutions in our Land usage.

ii. Hon. Solomon Emmanuel Bangalie, proposed Member, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Roads Authority [SLRA]

Honourable Solomon Emmanuel Bangalie was a sitting Member of Parliament from 2002 to 2007. After his short spell in politics, he engaged himself in diverse development projects and research, both home and abroad and acted severally as Coordinator and Evaluator for Boosting Agriculture and Food Security [BAFS] project 2023-2024 amongst others.

In his response to the Committee on what he would be adding to SLRA Board, the nominee said: "I will provide the required expertise collaboratively with colleagues to set up systems to ensure transparent and effective road project administration." He assured the Committee that collectively they will achieve value for money.

iii. Ms Ajaratu Marie Bomah, proposed Member, Board of Directors, Electricity Distribution and Supply Agency [EDSA]

Ms Ajaratu Marie Bomah is a seasoned Sierra Leonean business leader with over 18 years of hands on experience across international, public, private and non-profit sectors in the United States and Africa. Her expertise includes strategy development, partnership and relationship management, project management, media communications and business management, with a proven track record in resource mobilisation and organizational development.

Madam Marie Bomah has successfully managed large scale projects and led diverse teams in multi-stakeholder initiatives and building strategic partnerships with international organisations, government agencies, donors and private sector entities. She holds a Master's degree in Clinical Social Work from the Smith College school of Social Work, Northampton, United States of America. She also holds a Bachelor's degree in Sociology and African Studies, with major in Criminal Justice and Social Welfare from the University of Massachusetts, United States of America

From 2017 to date, she is the founder and consultant at the Women Mean Business. She is also the Consulting Executive Coordinator, British Chamber of Commerce - Sierra Leone. In a lengthy interactive session with Members of the Committee on the existing state of electricity in the country and what she intends contributing to EDSA, she eloquently catalogued the issues, ranging from intermittent power outages, poor revenue generation from both EDSA and EGTC, seasonality effects of our hydro power and dilated on her plans to work effectively with other Board Members to facilitate the urgently needed reforms at the Authority. She concluded that: "Energy is life and it is only our collective efforts and the willingness to implement the required reforms that can restore the nation's much needed energy supply."

iv. *Mr Andrew Emerson Musa, proposed Member, National Civil Registration Authority [NCRA]*

Mr Andrew Emerson Musa holds a post graduate diploma in Accounting from the Institute of Finance Management, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania and Certificate in Management Studies from the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration, Accra. He graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Accounting from Fourah Bay College in 1976.

Mr Andrew Emerson Musa is a retired civil servant who served as Project Accountant for many years at the then Ministry of Energy and Water Resources. He possesses an in-depth knowledge to produce quality results within expected timeframe. He assured the Committee that he was ready to use his expertise to cascade NCRA to the rural communities.

v. *Mr Mohamed Juma Bah, proposed Member, Social Security Appellate Tribunal*

Mr Mohamed Juma Bah is a Communication specialist with vast experience in Print Media from content gathering to news processing and publication. He is also experienced in information management, public relations and advertising. He holds a Bachelor's degree with honours in Mass Communication and is currently a Final Year Student in Law at Fourah Bay College. In his remarks to the Committee, he promised to

challenge wrongful decisions made by Social Security institutions such as NASSIT, regarding social security benefits to subscribers. He was however advised by Members of the Committee to further sensitise colleague journalists on the core functions of Members of Parliament, which are sometimes misconstrued by journalists and members of the public.

vi. *Mr Daniel Lamin Kamara, proposed Member, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Housing Corporation.*

Mr Daniel Lamin Kamara holds an advanced diploma in Accounting and Finance from the Government Technical Institute. He is currently serving as Company Manager, Sankara Media Hub Limited, Freetown.

Responding to questions from the Committee on what new ideas and innovations he would bring to the Corporation, he said: "The Sierra Leone Housing Corporation was established by an Act of Parliament in 1982 to complement government's efforts in addressing housing problems in the country." He assured the Committee of his unwavering commitments to mobilise resources, so as to enable the Corporation deliver on its mandate in addressing shortage of housing facilities for low and middle income class Sierra Leoneans.

4.0 Recommendations

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

- i. Mr Abu Bakarr Sapay Foray-Musa, proposed Commissioner General, National Lands Commission;
- ii. Honourable Solomon Emmanuel Bangalie, proposed Member, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Roads Authority;
- iii. Ms Ajaratu Marie Bomah, proposed Member, Board of Directors, Electricity Distribution and Supply Agency;
- iv. Mr Andrew Emerson Musa, proposed Member, Board of Directors, National Civil Registration Authority;
- v. Mr Mohamed Juma Bah, proposed Member, Social Security Appellate Tribunal; and
- vi. Mr Daniel Lamin Kamara, proposed Member, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Housing Corporation.

5. Conclusion

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

Signed.....

Hon. Bashiru Silikie

Deputy Chairman & Deputy Leader of Government Business

THE SPEAKER: Hold on, Honourable Member. I am seeing some primary school kids around. Who brought them here and why they are here?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: They are here to observe, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thought they came to support a nominee.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed]

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, I am sure today is a busy day and today is Thursday. We have very good nominees before us. I have always said in this Well that we do not have problem with qualifications, but delivery is our problem. The people of this country are interested IN delivery and qualifications. Therefore, whenever we have nominees before us, we have to do justice for people who voted for us. We have to ensure that the issues we are bringing out guide the nominees when they go to their various offices. This is because these are real time issues that affect our people. Today, we have people who are going to these institutions and these institutions are very important for the economic growth of this nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, currently, there are many challenges within the land sector in Sierra Leone. These challenges undermine the private sector's ability to invest in Sierra Leone to boost our economy, so that the least person in our villages benefit from such investments. Therefore, the proposed Commissioners to the Lands Commission have to understand the challenges in that sector. The Minister of Lands should have been here because some of the issues we are discussing here today are pertinent to the Ministry. The Ministry should collaborate with the Lands Commission for the good of this nation. If you look around, none of them is here and that shows poor coordination between the Commission and the Ministry of Lands. This is one of the challenges you are going to face. You are going to a sector where you have the pastor-chambers of this world. I have not mentioned anyone's name, but you are going to

meet men of the world who think their business is to grab land. You are also going to meet people in those institutions who are working with these land grabbers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we need land reforms in this country to encourage investors who are coming to this country to engage in serious economic activities. I have been a victim and I would like to use this opportunity to share my experience with the Ministry of Lands. In 2007, I bought a land around IMAT. I protected that land for almost fifteen years, but in the midst of protecting the land, somebody from the Ministry of Lands told me that the land is a state land. I presented my documents to prove that the land belongs to me. Unfortunately, I travelled with my Leader to Kenya and by the time we returned, somebody had already erected a house on the land. This happened within a month. They were working day and night, while I was busy engaging the Ministry. I came to the Ministry and luckily, the British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC] reporter was in the meeting. It was later proved that the land was mine and it was ruled that the house should be demolished. The young man told the Minister to relocate me to another land, so that his building would not be destroyed. With all the evidence I presented, my land has not been given to me. If this was done to a Member of Parliament, I wondered what the ordinary man, who do not have voice, is going through in the hands of the Ministry of Lands. The said land was properly registered in my name and it was given to me by the Ministry of Lands in 2008 as a young man who just graduated from the University, but it was taken from me by the same Ministry. They promised to give me another piece of land, but that is yet to happen. It was taken from me by the Turad boys.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Honourable Member, we do not have Turad boys. These are government officials. It is either we have the Minister of Lands who is Dr Turad Senesie or members of his Ministry. They cannot be referred to Turad boys because he does not have boys in that Ministry. I just wanted to set the records straight.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: I wish you would have let that pass by. I am trying very hard not to mention the Sierra Leone Peoples Party's government and that is why I specifically mentioned the Minister. This is because even when he has been given several instructions for another piece of land to be given to me, nothing has been done. My cry is, if this was done to a Member of Parliament, what is the fate of the ordinary man? I have never seen a ruling that has been celebrated in our court compared to the ruling the court made against the Ministry of Lands regarding grabbing of private lands. That one was not just in the news; it was celebrated for the first time by Sierra Leoneans. That tells you how much they have been oppressing our people. Imagine, taking a piece of land from somebody, which the person has acquired from his or her great grandfathers. They are grabbing private lands in the name of State lands. Are you

telling us that the state does not have records anymore? This is very painful, Mr Speaker. The same Ministry that allocates these lands to people is the same Ministry that is taking them. If somebody goes to court and a ruling is made against that person who is building on a piece of land that he/she acquired legally, what do you think will be the person's fate? When they demolish the building, they say, government is demolishing houses. It is the handwork of the Ministry of Lands. We must stop these happenings. You are going to a sector that is full of problems. If you talk to the Minister, he will tell you that the people I work with here have an entrenched cabal and they have every stamp and signature. This is the sector that you are going to. If you are a Muslim, start praying ten times a day because your five daily prayers will not save you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to admonish the nominee for the Sierra Leone Roads Authority [S.L.R.A]. Mr Speaker, since I came to Parliament, for whatever reasons, my roads have always been graded, but the road leading to my Chieftdom headquarters remains the same. If you calculate the money being spent on that road for grading, it is huge. If they were taring that particular road, I am sure they would have reached the Chieftdom Headquarters. My road is terrible, Mr Speaker. If you left the main road of Bamoi Luma to Munui, you would find out that recently, five people have died on that bridge. Almost we have fatal accidents on the hill path of the road and it is alarming. Our people are suffering as a result of bad roads. But when you cry for the road in Munui, you will ask yourself, what is happening with the main road from Parliament here, leading to Goderich Street, Kissi Road and to the East. These roads are terrible.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all of us are aware of the fact that our people are paying tollgate fees; and even when they are paying, the road is still under construction. They are patching the same road we are paying for. This cannot be done in any civilised nation. This is happening here and we are not saying anything. What is wrong with us as a nation? So, we are pleading that the main roads are fixed. These roads represent the image of our nation. We should not allow this nation to be ripped off its own economic value. Yes, we did support the economic shift, which is a burden that is being transferred from government to the private sector in a form of tollgate fees. This should not be done to us as a people. You would agree with me that they are presently patching the toll road from Jui to Waterloo. This is a road we hope to inherit after the tollgate period is over. This means we are going to inherit a patched road and this is not part of the Agreement. According to the Agreement, they are supposed to repave the road after ten years, but they are currently patching the road even before the first ten years. The question is what are they going to leave for us? We the citizens

are taking prompt action to save the image of our nation. I am sure this is not happening in other countries.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to urge the Sierra Leone Roads Authority to stand firm and protect the citizens of this country. Of course, the energy sector in this country is a major pillar of economic growth. I do not care what you may say, but the current situation is not anything to write home about. Thankfully, the President has intervened, but the situation is still terrible. We are paying more than what we used to pay. What is the situation? Why are we still like this? In this Well of Parliament, we are praying everyday not to experience power outage. No wonder the President said that we do not have anything to tell our citizens anymore. I would like the lady that is going to that sector to work diligently. She has herself a good name as a young lady. Even though her CV is rich, she did not wait for people to employ her. She created employment for other people. We want you to go and make a positive impact at Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority [EDSA]. The current situation of EDSA is in the hands of the pastors to pray for that institution.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you for your intervention in the National Civil Registration Authority [NCRA] matter. I said to myself that we should not treat our citizens as football fans. We must treat them with the utmost seriousness they deserve. Mr Speaker, when we want their votes, we take the machines to almost every village to convince them. What is wrong in using the same machines they used during elections registration period for the ID cards and collection of information? What is wrong if they decide that for a period of one month, they should have registration centers across the country? Let the people say we cannot afford to pay, but we have the machines. They are now rotating the machines; i.e., if they spend three weeks here, they will go to the other place for another three weeks. Do you think this is how we cajole them to register and vote for us or are they only important during electioneering period? Is that how we treat our people? This is unfair, Mr Speaker. You have done so much in engaging the Management team of NCRA, but I want to see a situation wherein they open the registration centers at least for a period of month to give the people ample time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go to the airport now, the security personnel will not allow you to enter if you do not have an ID card. Think of what it will cost to have an ID card, especially if you have to come to Freetown or to one centre in almost every district to get it. We should not treat our citizens in such a manner. We are not saying this because we want to condemn the government; we are saying this, so that we will have alternatives that can better our people's lives. You cannot do this to them. We go to them; we cajole them; we play with them; we cook with them; and we eat

with them during electioneering period, but when they need documentation from us, we start to create unnecessary bureaucracy. This is undone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you for the first steps you have taken. SLRA has assured us that the roads leading to Parliament will be repaired. My question is, when? This is now February, 2025. We cannot continue to talk about good roads in other areas when we continue to drive on bad roads to Parliament. However, I am confident because the Speaker has assured us that they are going to fix this road. Today, we are having two Members of Parliament who are going to the Board and we have two bad roads in Parliament. So, it depends on what they are going to take first; whether they take the short one leading to Parliament or they take the long one leading to Parliament and State House. I always say that the road leading to Parliament is a reflection of our Parliament. As I conclude, let us be citizens.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please be guided.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, I am only thanking you for the effort you have made concerning this road.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I had very serious discussions with the Director General and he gave me the assurance that the roads are going to be fixed. These roads are not a reflection of Parliament. Please be guided.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Proceed!

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, let me conclude by saying this to the nominees that have been nominated because they were seen as a beacon of hope. The truth is that ask for my friend's experience who has been a Minister before, but was sent, but he has come back though. This means when you are sent home, you are left alone. So, you have to make friends while in office. You are appointed by the President, but the friends you make while in the office are the ones that go with you. If you decide to be a boss, you would be left to drive your bus alone; if you decide to be a leader, even after your tenure of office, you will still have people who would follow you. You have to be good citizens. Thank you very much.

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. In a special way, I want to thank His Excellency the President for giving us these great nominees. I want to thank the Members of Parliament, particularly the Opposition Whip, who has spoken eloquently regarding the nominees. Having gone through their Curriculum Vitae or their resumes, these nominees are fit for purpose. I do not usually shower praises on nominees because most of the time they come to Parliament and after their approval,

they do not recognise Members of Parliament anymore. This is why I made a decision not talk about nominees anymore. However, today is a special day for me and I am obliged to talk about a man I have known for thirty years. My friendship with this man has metamorphosed to brotherhood. I am pretty sure that this man will perform. I have no iota of doubt in my mind that he will perform. He is a man that is very firm when it comes to decision making and job related matters.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the nominee I want to talk about is Mr Abu Bakarr Foray Musa. Before his appointment to serve as Commissioner General of the Land Commission, he was the Deputy Executive Director of Unified Defense Force [UDEF]. He performed extremely well in that position and I am confident that he would take that spirit to the Land Commission. I used to call him Sapay. I know you are going to make us proud. Your late mum will be in heaven, smiling at us that my son Boston, is actually saying something that I have foreseen long time ago. Her mum and my mum provided proper guidance to us. They always placed us under pressure to take our studies seriously. Today, you are here for approval and I am saying something regarding your approval. We have come a long way, Sapay. Go and make us proud; go and make His Excellency proud. I am sure the Foray family will give you the necessary support. What the Opposition Whip said is nothing but the truth regarding the challenges he is going to face. You would agree with me that issues relating to land in this country are perennial. In fact, we have a lot of land grabbers who have established a cartel just to disadvantage legitimate land owners. There are lots of other issues relating to land. A lot of complaints are before us, but be rest assured that this Parliament and the Committee on Lands in particular will give you support to enable you perform your functions smoothly. We want you to achieve your goals and make us proud.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to wish the rest of the nominees well in their next endeavours. Regarding the nominee who is going to the SLRA, I want you to take this information to the Board members that the roads they are currently repairing or patching are deathtraps. The Hamilton Road is a clear example because after removing the damaged pavement, they left the holes opened without placement of patching materials. That alone is a recipe for accidents to occur. Please tell them to fix those roads. We are however pleased with the steps they have taken to close those garages obstructing traffic. We do not need those garages because they obstruct the free flow of traffic, thereby creating lots of obstacles. I would like all of you to make us proud as citizens of this country. Please go and prove yourselves; you have to show the President that he has given young people positions in this country and they are performers. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

HON. MOHAMED F. TAEAWALLY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we want to continue to say thank you to His Excellency the President for appointing trusted, qualified and fine men and women of this country to serve in various offices. Today, we have different men and women going to different offices. I want to use this opportunity to talk about a brother and a friend. He is a brother that I have known for over a decade. When we were in the United States of America, we served together in the party that we love, which is the Sierra Leone Peoples Party [SLPP]. I am talking about Brother Abu-Bakarr Sapay Foray Musa. He was once an Executive Member in one of the largest chapters of the SLPP in the United States of America. We usually call him brother Sapay. He is very committed and a disciplined young man who has served this nation in two prominent offices prior to his nomination to serve on the Land Commission. I want to inform him, as a brother and as a young man that the challenges ahead of him are enormous. The President has reposed his trust and confidence in him based on his previous performances in other capacities. We know that you are going to excel. Please go and do the needful for our people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sapay is a mixer. Wherever he goes, he leaves his legacy. He knows how to talk to people; he knows how to bring people on board when it comes to work ethics. I know all of these because I have worked with this young man and I know some of his family members; I know how they have excelled; I know how they have contributed to the progress of this country. Mr Sapay Foray Musa, I am very happy for your appointment. I also want to join other colleagues to inform you that the Commission you are going to manage has many challenges. I however know that you are going to excel and perform extremely well. I also want to bring you congratulations on behalf of the people of the SLPP in North America, a region where you once served. They are very proud of you and all of us are proud of you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about the Board Members going to the SLRA, including the Director General and team. It is not going to be easy due to numerous challenges in that sector. The road lead to Kambia or Samu has some challenges. Like what my Leader on the other side said, the road leading to his hometown is challenging. He is absolutely correct and for the past twenty years, that road has been in that terrible condition. The road is due for construction, Mr Speaker. I want the Board Members to please help the Director General and team to accomplish set goals. There are lots of other roads in the city. Traders are occupying these roads to do businesses. When you go to EDSA building at Percival Street, you would find out that the road from Circular Road to Pademba Road is occupied by car dealers, especially around the petrol station. You barely have passage along that route; they are using that road to sell cars. They packed their cars on the street and that is not good for the country. Please tell the rest of the Board Members and the Director General to please

look into some of these issues and proffer solutions. The traffic congestion in the city is not pleasant at all and these are some of the reasons that cause traffic congestion in the city, especially in the morning and evening hours. So, please work with the Director General to see how you provide the required solutions to solve some of those problems.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to say something regarding the Board Member who is going to EDSA. The issue of electricity is a perennial problem, but for the past six years, we have seen tremendous progress in that sector. Please go there and ensure that EDSA improves their service delivery. This is because the lives of our people depend on the energy. Even if people do not have a lot to do, but if they have their little businesses, they will be happy. If they have electricity to preserve their yogurt or juice and other things, they will sell them for their living. So, we hope that when you go there, you will help the institution to grow.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to wish the rest of the team good luck. Like our colleague said, Members of Parliament are not looking for any further relationship with appointees because it has never worked and I am not sure if it is ever going to work. This is because after here, we are never going to be friends anymore. When you call them or see them on the street, they are not going to recognise you. When you call them, they will tell you, S.O [2] tell dem say ar busy. However, we are doing our constitutional duty as Members of Parliament. It is our constitutional mandate to approve you and that is why our people sent us here to do the needful and that is what we are doing now. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

HON. ALPHA B. MANSARAY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to appreciate President Bio for appointing Mr Abu-bakarr Sapay Foray Musa. I have known him for a very long time, S.O [2] na a two sims man wae komot from Kenema. He is from the Foray Musa Family and also from the Caulker family of Bumpeh ehn ihn daddy na Paramount Chief called Charles Caulker. Sapay's Life is a lesson to any young man growing up in this country. You should have faith in anything you are doing. I stand to be corrected, but he stood by President Bio during the 2005 convention. He stood by him until the deceased former Vice President, Solomon Ekuma Berewa was elected. He continued to endure and to stand with President Bio. Your life is a testament for any young person in terms of consistency. I do not have much to say, but to inform you that the people of Bumpeh Chiefdom, Paramount Chief Charles Caulker and the entire family are proud of you. Your mother is now late and may her soul rest in peace. She will be very happy wherever she is today.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to admonish Sapay about the prevailing issues in the land sector. I anticipate that you are going to face war, but I know that it will not be a war for you because you are a competent man; you are a humble person;

you are an abled person and somebody that mingles. Our problem in this country is how we can align ourselves to be interdependent in most of these sectors. I am sure if the Ministry of Lands and the Land Commission align themselves or put aside individual interest, the land problems we have in this country will be a thing of the past. So, I want to advise that when you occupy your office, please collaborate. By next year, we want to hear both the Minister of Lands and the Land Commissioner on television. We want you to give us a positive feedback. Individuals are claiming lands, whether twenty, thirty, forty, fifty or hundred acres, where people have constructed buildings. They will say this is my property because my dad got it hundred years ago. Where were you? This issue is currently at pentagon. We will just have an individual who will stand and say S.O [2] dis na mi papa ihn property, ihn don get am hundred years ago.' These are issues where many citizens have been disadvantaged and this is the time for such issues to be minimised.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Opposition Whip spoke about the NCRA. In my district, people had to move from Shenge and other chiefdoms to come to Waterloo for their ID cards. We should move with the trend that has to do with technological change, so citizens can go and process their ID cards within the shortest possible time. I am sure we will get there. Sierra Leone is not too small to reach out. The government is passionate about technological change and the NCRA is no exception. So, when you go to your offices, please develop a strategic plan that will cater for the citizens' welfare. I want to thank you, Mr Speaker and the nominees. I wish them well in their new offices.

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. President Maada Bio is not in drought when it comes to human resource. He always nominates competent people to serve the people of this country. Mr Speaker, with the few minutes given to me, I am going to be looking at few of these nominees. The Leader of Opposition and I were privileged to represent Mr Speaker in Cairo, Egypt, three months ago. We learnt a lot from that World Summit. It is stated that **24.8%** citizens in cities live in slums and that is a case for Mr Sapay. They live in slums areas and SDG 11 targets resilient cities. In other words, it is how citizens can live in resilient cities without acquiring land. This Parliament did well when it ratified the Customary Land Rights Act, as well as the National Land Commission Act. These are two powerful Acts for this country. Today, Mr Sapay is going to superintend over the affairs of the Land Commission; and as a Commissioner General designated, you have a lot to deal with. I am sure this House is going to approve your nomination.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, land has become a gem and it is even valued at the moment than Ion Ore, Diamond and Gold. The most precious gift is land. I want you to

do a research about it. Land is so precious and here is a man that has the digital knowledge to superintend over land issues. The task is huge, but I will tell you that this man is an astute performer with dexterity. Twenty years ago, Mr Sapay and I were in the University together and we did play politics. He was very vibrant, but I always tell him S.O [2] borbor na borbor. I said your candidate is going to lose and we are going to win these Students' Union elections. He would even ask questions sometimes in a serious mood. Are you sure? I vividly remembered a particular article published by the Spectacle Press. I was the Editor in Chief of the Spectacle Press in the University and we used to say: "Wonders never end. How can agama lizard, animal, participate in the politics of humans?" We were referring to his candidate. His candidate's nickname was Agama and that particular statement could silence them for days. In fact they could not come out to campaign. However, we won the elections and he congratulated me. That indicated that he was a very good politician with tolerance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Sapay is taking over a Commission that is so distorted in terms of history. You will see a single land sold to two people at the same time and that is the confusion. Mr Sapay Musa, we want to see a Commission that runs in a smooth relationship with the Ministry of Lands; we want to see a Commission that runs with a click of the button. Somebody has to know that this land belongs to Honourable Rebecca Yei Kamara with descriptions of the date, time, address, etc. and it is acquired in this part of the region. We have to move from analogue to digital. This means at the click of a button, the name of the real owner of a piece of land pops up. I want you to know that you are superintending over one hundred and ninety chiefdoms, 22 Local Councils, 16 political districts and their administrations across the country. Those are huge tasks, but I am sure you will navigate well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the land Commission has given opportunity to investors. Definitely, you have a little repeal to make and I am going to tell you because there is a little conflict between the Mines and Minerals Act and the Lands Act. The repeal should be on the acreage. There are disparities and even the amounts an investor should have. This is a Commission that will give investors the confidence to invest on land. I want to inform you that the shortest way we can achieve the operation feed Salone is through this Commission. This is done by encouraging joint ventures. We have all the lands and all the Paramount Chiefs here are willing to give their lands, whether it is inland valley swamps or otherwise. They are willing to do so. We have to encourage joint ventures. Let us encourage the Chinese to come with their technology and money. That is the shortest way to accomplish operation feed Salone. Personally, I do not have any iota of doubt in your capacity to deliver. Two decades ago in the University, you demonstrated that you are a performer and you can perform with multitask skills. I wish you well and I have confidence that you will perform.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Sapay is going to give us Bills regarding our National Housing Policy; Bills that will look at land adjudications because there are lots of land conflicts; and Bills that will talk about National Planning. Today, surveyors are very powerful. Somebody can come overnight and claim to be a surveyor. There are no planners. Lands are given to people without making provision for the construction of fuel stations, hospitals, mosques or churches. There is no proper planning regarding this issue. The planners ought to be empowered. We have to ensure that planners are properly empowered. This is because when planners are empowered, the powers of surveyors will be minimised. So, you have to look out for resilient cities to build up proper planning.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about Honourable Solomon Bangalie. When you take the former Honourable Members to those Ministries, Departments and Agencies [MDAs], they will perform accurately. This is because they are very friendly with the law and they are the technical expertise of the law. They will guide the daily operations of those institutions. Honourable Solomon Bangalie, I know you are going to bring solid recommendations to your colleague members and Director General. You are also opportune to have a performing Honourable Member to work with you as the Chair of that particular Board. I am certain that you are going to work wonders if you work as a team. My recent visit to the United States of America revealed to me that most of today's roads are toll roads. So, do not be afraid to bring recommendations that are pertinent to the socio-economic growth of Sierra Leoneans. Please make those recommendations to us and we will ratify them as long as you have the opportunity to construct toll roads and we will pay within the shortest possible time. Those toll roads will eventually belong to us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the late President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah's legacy is still in existence. He ensured the construction of the Makeni, Magburaka, Jui, Regent, Masiaka, Bo and Kenema. He looked for the money to do so. That is a man whose legacy is still in existence. President Maada Bio's legacy will live because he corrected one wrong that was historical between Koidu City and Guinea. He looked for the money and the investors. If I tell you the socio-economic and potential value of that particular road, you will quickly look for investors. So, this is why I urge you to convince your fellow Board members that the Koidu City Road to Guinea is very important. In Kono, we will even forget about mineralisation and begin to look for trade activities. This is a special assignment for you. You are not going to force them because you have a Chairman that chairs that Board. However, you have to cajole or convince them to see the importance of that particular road. That is why I explained the legacy of former President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah and the beauty of government in perpetuity. Do not be afraid; you just have to look for investors.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when we were debating the budget last year, I actually felt good for perpetuity in governance and that was the time I knew that President Maada Bio's government paid for the Koidu City Road and the Kabala Township Road. That shows perpetuity in governance. Mr Speaker, the records are there. President Bio paid for the Kabala Township Roads and that shows the perpetuity and continuity in governance. Somebody can initiate an idea, but maybe another person will implement it. I can tell you with all seriousness and with authority that his government paid for those roads. Do not be afraid; you have to look for roads and when the Sierra Leone Peoples Party comes, we will pay for those roads. I talk with facts and that is why I pay less attention to undertones. I am the co-chair of the Committee on Energy. I am proud to tell you that Sierra Leone is always in good footing when it comes to payment of our bills for West Africa Power Pool. Today, the district I come from enjoys twenty four hours electricity and this is done under the government of President Maada Bio. This is because he always ensures that our bills are paid. I know this because when we analysed the energy budget, the countries that were lagging behind are Guinea and Liberia. I am saying the fact. Let me state the history. In 1999, late President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was among the heads of states and governments that agreed to pay bills to the West African Power Pool. I will also tell you that in 2014, the government of President Ernest Bai Koroma also tried and it was on the Order Paper for records, but in 2019, President Julius Maada Bio's government said he would not wait and he brought it here. That was how it was ratified, Mr Speaker. Liberia, Guinea, Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone will enjoy the West Africa Power Pool.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know I have exhausted my time, but please permit me to make a comment on the next appointee, who is no lesser person but Madam Assiatu Boma. She is the lady that is going to serve on the EDSA Board. I want you to ensure that we do not lag behind and you should always pay our bills, so that the Members of ECOWAS will be proud to say Sierra Leone is not, S.O [2] hommonger. We are not debtors and we will always pay our bills. For the records, President Maada Bio's government inherited **16%** of the energy in this country; but today, we have **44%** of energy in Sierra Leone. This is also another fact, which cannot be contested.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will conclude my speech with Emerson Musa, the man that is being appointed to the NCRA. Although I am not a historian, but I have a strong background in teaching and I do speak historical facts. Coincidentally, Emerson Musa has my name and for that he is my namesake. In 1972, President Siaka Stevens suspended the existence of Local Councils. After 32 years, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah re-established decentralisation. I am bringing this to the notice of the man that is going to the [NCRA. How can he initiate decentralisation? After 32 years, Tejan Kabbah reintroduced Local Councils. When I looked at the TRC Report, one of the

reasons that led to the war was because the rural people said that government was far away from them. They needed decentralisation system. He listened to the TRC recommendations to have a decentralised system of governance. In 2022, the new Local Government Act was also enacted in this Parliament to allow the NCRA to devolve certain functions. You have to devolve certain functions to the five regions of Sierra Leone. My aunty at Kesennie, which is a village that is very close to Guinea, will find it very difficult to get the ID card at King Jimmy. You have to devolve that function to make it simple for those in the remote areas to easily get their ID cards. If you live in the United States of America, you have nothing or little to do with your passport. All you need is your ID card that has your NIN number. When you enter your NIN and click, all your information will appear and that tells you the importance of ID cards.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to urge NCRA to decentralise that institution. I am not compelling them to do so, but I am encouraging you to do so. S.O [2] ar dey bell wuna. You have to decentralise the ID card function, so that citizens who are in the remote areas will have access to these ID cards. I am sure if the appointees cooperate well with Parliament, we will definitely assist them, so that our government will continue to strive for excellence. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker for this opportunity.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, sometimes we tend to forget the essence of parliamentary vetting. It is by no mistake that Section 56[3] of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991 instructing that Ministers, Deputy Ministers who are appointed by the President must be vetted and approved by this House. In fact, even the Chief Justice and Judges, Section 135[1] of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991 makes it mandatory for them to go through this House. However, let us ask ourselves the inevitable rhetorical question as to why they need to go through this House before they assume office. I will premise my debate on the need for parliamentary vetting and what we expect from appointees once they pass through this House. This House has approved many nominees and we cannot tell the specific number we have approved here. Again, in our oversight responsibilities, we have not been able to know whether they have comported themselves in their offices, whether they have lived up to the expectations of the President whilst he was appointing them and whether they have done the needful.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are gathering here today to approve a group of Sierra Leoneans to hold critical offices that man the affairs of our citizens. We are here to ensure that their appointments are on merit bases and they have the prerequisite qualifications for their appointments by the President. It will interest you to note that if Parliament denied their approval, the President would be left with no alternative, but to

re-appoint other people into these offices. So, when appointees fail, we should not only be castigating the President that his government is not working, Parliament should ask themselves whether they do due diligence when those people came for approval in the Well of Parliament. This is because that is our primary function. I am going to talk to the appointees on what is expected from them. I have seen so many young people being appointed and we are grateful for that. Young people have ascended and they have held several responsibilities. When we were growing up, they used to say we were the future leaders of this nation. In fact, when they want to deprive you from holding leadership position, they will add 'of tomorrow.' They will say future leaders of tomorrow, meaning even when the future comes, you have to wait for tomorrow. Today, we see young people and these appointments are deliberate.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will start with the appointment of Ms Hajaratu Marie Bomah. I have known her for a while and like I always say in this House, I do not vouch for people I do not know. I also believe in the adage which says: "It is considered a criminal offence for you to discover water in the desert and you are quiet about it." Therefore, inasmuch as I have refrained myself from vouching for People that I do not know, I do not want to be incriminated for not saying good things about good people.

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

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Speaker, achieving our specific goals as a nation does not only stop at appointing the right people; it does not only stop at appointing qualified people; it does not only stop at appointing people with the requisite qualifications, but it goes beyond that. Mr Speaker, if I am permitted through your good office, I would want to go through some of the challenges that even when you appoint good people, if they do not meet the infrastructure; they do not meet the political will or they do not meet the collaboration, it will be difficult for us to experience the changes we need as a nation. She has been appointed to serve on the EDSA Board. My colleague Leader said that they were enjoying twenty four hours electricity in Kono district. I want to say kudos for that, but as Members of Parliament, our responsibility is not limited to the district we come from; we have a national responsibility to perform. We have to ensure that Sierra Leoneans across the country have the same facilities and the same infrastructure. That is what is missing and this is the only place we have to say it. We are saying it with the notion that it will be changed. We are not castigating government unfairly, but we need corrections or positive changes. As I speak, there are towns, cities and villages that are suffering from blackout. I am sure the lack of electricity in those places is as a result of lack of fuel. The generators are there, but there is no fuel.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am writing a publication and it is being referred to as '**Lungi is the New City of Shadow.**' This is because it is extremely dark. This is not only Lungi because we have places which are the stronghold of government and places that support this government that are also suffering from lack of electricity. I do not want to be political. I want to be nationalistic when addressing issues relating to electricity. EDSA does not have the houses of Members of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party [SLPP] neither the houses of the Members of All Peoples Congress [APC] to be supplying electricity. They supply electricity to everybody once the town has electricity. This is why issues relating to electricity should not be politicised because it is for the good of the nation. We have to look critically as to why the government is unable to buy fuel for this Thermal Power Plant. I can assure you that even the tariff has been increased over **300%**. In the first Agreement with the Karpowership, it used to be nineteen cent per kilowatt hour, but out of renegotiations, it dropped to sixteen cent per Kilowatt hour and government was making eighteen million Dollars from this new arrangement every two years. So, the question one may ask is why we cannot pay the Karpowership. Why we cannot buy fuel? These are sensitive issues the government has to pay attention to, except if somebody is not patriotic to talk about this issue. It is a serious issue, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you would agree with me that to run Sierra Leone is one of the easiest thing to do. You just have to give the people water, electricity and reduce the prices of basic commodities. So, you have to ensure that you use your skills to influence EDSA and to ensure that the electricity issue around the Western Area and major towns in the provinces is addressed within the shortest possible time. We do not have to wait until elections before we give our people electricity. The people are tired of such arrangement and we have to be proactive. I can assure this House that once it is a year to the elections, no community will experience twenty four hours blackout. As politicians, we should not only supply basic amenities to our people because we need their votes.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is one serious challenge which has to do directly with the distribution network. It is so challenging that we have communities in the Western Area that are suffering from serious low voltage issue. In some areas, you cannot even put your freezer on talk less of your split unit [air conditioner]. You cannot put them on because of low voltage and that has to be addressed. These are basic things that other nations have passed years back. Most times when we travel, we ask ourselves the whereabouts of Sierra Leone all these years? We are just grabbing things in this country. I do not want to castigate any political party for this; it is our responsibility to say these things. It is because we are currently the political class of this nation, it behooves all of us to take responsibility. That is why in Parliament, one of our

roles is to 'parler,' which means to talk. We will talk about it and if we do not talk about it, we are reneging from what we were voted for. Equally, the people in those areas should also take responsibility. I wish you well in that office. Like I have always said, you cannot go to an office and leave the office the way you met it. This will mean you did not create any positive impact. It would have been better if you had never gone to that office. When you go to those offices, try to create a positive change. You now have the opportunity to do so and please make use of it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will go to my brother, Mr Abu-Bakr Sapay Foray Musa, proposed Commission General of the Land Commission. I have known him for a while. Sierra Leone is a small country and that is why whenever inter party violence happens; everybody feels the pinch. Some of us have mingled with people on the other side, either at university level or elsewhere. We hold this responsibility to this nation. If Sierra Leone is divided based on political lines, it means we are not doing our responsibilities as young people who have lived together; who have been in a conclave while we were in the University. You are a fine gentleman and I have known you for a very long time. Like I said, I do not vouch for everybody. I do it for selected few and for those I have vouched for, I called them periodically to trace their performances in their offices. Anybody who wants you to fail is not patriotic to this nation. This is because when you fail, it is Sierra Leone that goes backward. Whosoever that comes, will have to do what you should have done. As a young man, it is my wish and prayer that all of you succeed in your various appointments. Your success has definitely nothing to do with the coming back to power of the All Peoples Congress Party. We want you to succeed and it is our prayers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like what the other Members of Parliament have opined, the land sector is so challenging. Today, if you go to court or you come to Parliament, the highest number of cases that you will hear is land related matters. You will see individuals out of gluttony will deprive a whole community just for their own individualistic and selfish means. This is bad. Honourable Ben Mansaray mentioned the pentagon situation, where they allowed people to purchase the land and they build houses. Some of them have lived in those houses for over twenty, thirty or forty years and just in a twinkle of an eye, somebody came from his or her cacao garden and said, all of this land belong to my father or my grandfather. They wanted to demolish those houses just to secure the interest of that individual. So, this is an issue you have to look at carefully. You have heard the testimony of the Opposition Whip regarding what he went through. He had to lose his land just because somebody else built on it. If this happened to a sitting MP, what about the common man who has no voice. Mr Speaker, before Peter Munga died, he sang a song. In that song, he said there is a place for those who speak for the ones who do not have voices. So you have to serve humanity.

In most cases, people go for money, instead of serving humanity. The question is what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul. We have to think of the people who cannot fight for themselves.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are experiencing rapid urbanisation because of the unfair distribution of resources or amenities. People migrate from rural areas to urban centers due to the absence of basic facilities. We have to address this issue as a nation. What do we do? In fact, like the last debate we had here, I told this House that until we begin to decentralise some of these offices, we will continue to experience serious congestion. This is because people will always want to go where the amenities are available. In 2010, there was a forest at a particular place at Regent, but when I went there recently, to my greatest surprise the forest has gone. People are building houses all over the place. All of us here knew what happened at Mortomeh. Mr Speaker, none of us knew whether that would happen, but it was because of the reaction of the environment, lives and property were lost. As I speak, people are still constructing houses in areas that are deeper than Mortomeh. We are waiting again for relief when another disaster happens, God forbids. We have to use the preventive mechanisms, instead of damage control. The police arrest those who are not using the seatbelt. If you cannot save yourself out of your discretion, you should be forced as provided for by law, in order to save yourself. That is why the police arrest those failing to use the seatbelt. I think we should institute the same thing to those constructing houses on disaster prone areas. We should not compromise this at all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I agree with the Deputy Leader of Government Business II from Kono District when he said that we should transform the Ministry to a paperless Ministry. This is exactly what we have done in this Parliament. Previously, they used to share reports to every Member of Parliament; previously, they used to give hardcopies of Votes and Proceeding or Order Papers to every Member of Parliament. Today, when you come to the Well, you meet them on your desktop. In India, it is the same thing. I am sure with your knowledge in mapping, we will make good use of the Google map to be inputting coordinates before the Ministry signs on any document. This is because if a similar coordinate exists, the name will pop up and that will indicate that the Ministry should not sign the document because it will mean the land belongs to two different people. Let us go paperless. People are struggling because of their lands. There are people who have bought three lands and all of them were not theirs. As I speak, they have lost all. This is worrisome and we must find solutions. I think there is a department within the Military known as Land Grabbing Department. They use military officers to grab land. I am sure that is not their responsibility and that is not their business. As far as enforcement of law is concerned, the police are not incapable to deal with this issue. Let us use the police, instead of the military.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have gone to various places and I have seen military officers. They will tell you, S.O [2] na mi boss ihn land na ihn are kam protect up yah. This means even when the land belongs to you, if you do not have access to a military officer, you will lose your land. Let the military officers go back to their barracks. There are more serious issues to concentrate on, than securing lands. They have no business with securing lands. I wish you well in your new office. As young as you are, you have more time to live than the life you have already lived. When you go elsewhere and come back, you should be able to point at your legacy. Please get something to point at after you would have left office. Your kids will ask you one day; saying, Papa you were made Commissioner General of the Land Commission, what did you do? You must be able to show them what you did and what you left.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say something about Board member for SLRA, Honourable Solomon Emmanuel Bangalie. You know the tremendous issues we are facing. Please make sure that your appointment makes the relevant inputs for societal growth. I have always said that the only way your absence will be felt is when you do what has not been done before. You should be innovative in terms of doing what others have not done. That is the only way your absence will be felt.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to admonish Mr Mohamed Bah, proposed member to the Social Security Appellate Tribunal. This is also a good appointment. Please do due diligence and do justice to this appointment. I do not want to think that once you are appointed, you have the laxity or freedom to do whatever you want to do without questioning you. Even if Sierra Leoneans do not question you, posterity will question you one day. So, always have that in mind.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would also like to say something about the nominee to the NCRA, Mr Andrew Emerson Musa. Of course, I want to say at this moment that I applaud the Speaker, who is a good listening Speaker. This is because through his office, he invited the NCRA. I am sure their answer to that invitation was timely and meaningful for the furtherance of this nation. I want you to make sure that when you go there, please do the needful.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will conclude with Mr Daniel Lamin Kamara, proposed Board of Directors of the Sierra Leone Housing Corporation. The issue of housing is a very serious issue in our country. Please do the needful after you would have been approved by this House. It is my wish and prayer that all of you succeed in your new appointments, so that you will have something to show to your family or the nation. I could remember, you had once opposed government's appointees, you had once condemned a Minister, you had once criticised a Deputy Minister and you had

once criticised a Commissioner General. Now the buck stops with you to actually prove your mettle. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank Members of Parliament who have contributed to this debate. This is the recommendation from the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service and it has been overwhelmingly accepted by Members of Parliament after listening to their various contributions. I would like to thank His Excellency the President for presenting these nominees to us. As a Parliament and as a Committee on Appointments and Public Service, we have done due diligence to these nominees. We have interviewed them and we have also asked the necessary questions. We have looked at their documents and we were convinced. In other words, they were able to please us and that is why we have recommended them to the House for approval.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have always told nominees and I will continue to say it here that the President decided to select you from among millions of Sierra Leoneans to help him to achieve his agenda. Excuses will not be tolerated; performance should be the watch word. I will continue to say that our faces will have to be on the ballot papers if we are contesting to become an MP. It is us the people know; they know our homes; they know our offices; and our phone numbers. Whatever you do, you are doing it not just for yourself, but for this Parliament. That is why when His Excellency nominates you, you are told to face the people's representatives, so that due diligence is done. If you go to these offices and decide to fail, you have not just failed yourself, but this Parliament and His Excellency the President. You would agree with me that the questions that are being put to Members of Parliament are the questions that these nominees should answer. Whenever we go to the people to campaign for re-elections, the first question they will ask us is, S.O [2] 'na watin u don do for di people.' This is because our people are strongly convinced and they have the belief that we Members of Parliament are responsible for every development in their localities. They sometimes call us if they no electricity. They would say, S.O [2] Honourable, light nor dey oo, Honourable den don take mi land, Honourable ar nor able register because ar nor get ID card.' This is because they know us; they know our numbers and they know our homes. They know they voted for us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the President nominates people to man offices of this country, they have to come here for approval; and when they come, we have to remind them that these approvals are not just for them or the President, but also for Members of Parliament because at the end of the day, we rely on their performance for re-election. I have always said that MPs turnover has always been for the wrong reasons. You would agree with me that ever since democracy emerged, the turnovers

have been extremely huge because the people believe that we have not been performing our functions as expected, even when we enact the best laws and provide effective oversight. Well, the yardstick that is being used to determine our performance is development. Whatever we do, with the best laws we make and all of the interviews we have conducted, they are still convinced that because we do not take developments to them, we have not performed. That is why the turnover rate is very high. There had never been a turnover rate that is less than **50%** in this Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have noted that when people are nominated, they become extremely humble, especially when they are facing Parliament. In most cases, they lobby Members of Parliament, and sometimes even when we detect difficulties or obstacles, we ignored them. However, when once they occupy these offices, some of them become demigods; some do not pick phone calls; some are not in their offices; some do not have time to attend to people; and some treat these offices as if they will be there forever, little do they realise that these offices are transitional offices. In fact, before they were appointed, there were people occupying these offices. Today, you are opportune to serve in these offices; and immediately you take the exit door, someone will occupy these offices. My advice to the nominees is for you to treat these offices as if they are transitional offices. These offices are not created for you alone; they are created for everybody if you are lucky. Please, treat the office as if you are passing through and not as if you are permanent.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am going to talk about few nominees and I will start with Mr Sapay. He is about to take a very serious challenge, as a young man. I believe this is the biggest challenge any young person will take at this moment in history of Sierra Leone. Based on what the Deputy Leader II from Kono District has said, Land is a jewel all over the world. The disputes we have today around the world are because of land. Today, you are taking the biggest challenge in this country. I do not envy that office, neither do I envy you, but the best we can do for you is to support you. Today, I have seen the crowd here to support you. The level of expectations they have is unbearable. I know that everybody who is here to support you is expecting something in return. It can either be financial, moral or land. This means everybody is expecting from you and you should be able to bear with that. They have listened to the Members of Parliament who have raised issues around the land systems. They have raised issues around a piece of land being sold to various people; they have also raised issues around surveys.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me read a portion of the Act that created the Land Commission. Owing to the numerous problems relating to land, we decided to establish the Land Commission in 2022 in order to correct these anomalies within the

Ministry of Lands. We decided to create the Lands Commission and to give it more powers and allow same to recruit surveyors and sign survey plans, so as to harmonise these challenges that have been within the land system. We have transferred some of these challenges and some responsibilities from the Ministry of Lands to the Lands Commission. We believe that the Commission will be more proactive than the Ministry. This is why we created Commission and we expect it to be extremely professional. With your leave, Mr Speaker, I refer you to Section 4 of National Land Commission Act, 2022. It says: "Subject to this Act, the Commission shall perform the following functions:

- [a] take inventory of private, government and public lands;
- [b] maintain a comprehensive and updated register of government and public lands;

This means you are going to take inventory of both Private and Public Lands in this country. This is a huge responsibility. It was expected that after the creation of this Commission, nobody will go to the Ministry of Lands.

- [c] establish and maintain a system of registration of title deeds throughout Sierra Leone;

This paragraph gives you the responsibility to determine land title in Sierra Leone.

- [d] Set rules and standards for conducting examination for persons wishing to be enrolled as pupil surveyors and licensed surveyors.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the issue of having unlicensed surveyors who are not even recruited by the Ministry is a worrisome situation and we expect that when once this Commission kick starts its responsibilities, this issue will be a thing of the past. I am sure all the allegations levelled against Land Ministry will be sorted out by the Commission. The Ministry is just going to be providing policy guidance and political leadership to the Commission, while its operations are going to be done by the Commission. That was why I said that the Commissioner General would be occupied with the most challenging responsibility as a young man. I wish you well and I hope you will be able to surmount these challenges. This is because at the end of the day, everybody will be running to your office and you have to be strong and firm in taking decisions. I am very pleased with his Curriculum Vitae. He has lots of experience in Information Technology and he should be able to know, at every given point, which LS number is attached to any piece of land.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the worst thing we have today regarding the LS number is that you can see an LS number attached to a land that falls in Lungi, while the land is at Mambo. You will have an LS number attached to a land that falls at Hill Station, but the land is at Tokeh. These are all the anomalies we have to correct. You should be able to create a system wherein you will sit in your office and when titles are

brought to you, you would be able to determine the location of the land. These are the systems we need in this country. You have to establish systems relating to the land sector. It is not just about holding the position of Commissioner General. It goes with huge responsibilities. You have to put systems in place in order to address these challenges. If you have been to the Ministry of Lands, you would have seen the amount of pressure the Ministry is going through. You are going to face the same pressure.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when we enacted the National Land Commission Act, we said that you should establish offices in every district and these offices should employ professionals. You have so much in your hands, but I know that you will conquer. I am not envious of you, but I wish you well and success. This is because if you failed, you have not only failed yourself, you have also failed the President from believing in young people. You would have also failed the people of Sierra Leone, especially the young people. I have said in this Well that one thing His Excellency has done is to challenge us the young people. He has appointed a lot of young people into his administration and that is why we should not fail him. If we do, that will be the end of this opportunity for the young people. The elders are always looking at the President, thinking that believing in young people should not be the case, but His Excellency is challenging us. In those days, it is difficult for a young man to be appointed as Commissioner General in this country. This is because in those days, people appointed as Commissioners General were those above the ages of fifty and sixty years. Today, we have people within the age of thirty and forty being appointed as Commissioners General, Directors and Directors General etc. So, we are the guinea pigs for the young people of Sierra Leone. Please go and make the President proud; make us proud; and make sure you deliver for the President and for this Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a lot has been said about the electricity and of course, I believe that governance is continuity. What we are struggling with today is something we inherited as a government. I am sure excuses should not be encouraged, but the reality has to be told. I could still remember when former President Tejan Kabbah of blessed memory was handing over power, he said that His Excellency Ernest Bai Koroma has visited the Bumbuna Hydroelectric Power Station and it was a public secret that the hydro was almost **96%** complete. It was expected that governance is continuity. The President by then, who ruled for eleven years should have developed the hydro from **96%** to **100%**. I want to restate here that excuses are not tolerated. Whenever we are campaigning to be elected, we should campaign on promises that are achievable. When we took over in 2018, it was a public secret that we met the Karpowership supplying electricity in Sierra Leone, instead of the Bumbuna Hydroelectric power supply. What actually happened in the middle of those processes we do not know. Today, we still continue to use the electricity from the Karpowership

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank His Excellency the President, eleven years after President Ernest Bai Koroma, he did his best in generating electricity to **16%**. Today, we have doubled that and we are now around **44%**. Thank you very much, His Excellency the President and that is continuity in governance. Mr Speaker, before 2017, electricity generation and distribution in the Western Area was limited at Goderich axis; but today, I can say with authority that we have electricity as far as Number two. When we took over in 2018, electricity in the Eastern part of Freetown stopped at Allen Town; but today, Members of Parliament living at Waterloo can attest to the fact that they now have electricity there. That means there has been more access to electricity than before. My brother from the Lumely axis can attest to the fact that Pentagon now has electricity. Today, it is a public secret that there is electricity at Jui, Hastings and its surroundings. These are public secrets and we should not politicise them. We are aware of the fact that governance is continuity. We have not achieved all, but it is a process. We cannot say in six or seven years, we have achieved everything. Governance is continuity. His Excellency the President is doing his best and we expect future President to continue from where President Bio will stop.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, every new President needs a strong foundation and that is what His Excellency is doing currently. That should be the vision, Mr Speaker. You should lay foundation for your successor to come and build on. We inherited a system without any foundation and when we are laying the foundation now, you are grumbling. I can understand your position, but we are laying a strong foundation for the next government. You can see the number of Agreements we have ratified in this Parliament and the support we have been giving towards electricity. Like what the Opposition Leader said that there are some districts that have generators, but are without fuel. That is also a challenge and I agree with him wholeheartedly. That is why we have laid the foundation by taking the generators to the districts. We have not said we have achieved everything and we will not say we will achieve everything. We have mini-grids around the country. There is no district headquarter town we have not installed generator. We have even gone to the Chiefdoms and they can attest to it. This is a process and we should accept the process. After President Bio, another President from the Sierra Leone Peoples Party will continue where President Bio stops.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Speaker, I want to attest.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: No, please.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: You said we can attest to that and I want to attest to it.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: When you were debating, I concentrated. We are the representatives of the people and issues of this nature should not be politicised at all.

Mr Speaker, let me tell you one thing that I am proud of His Excellency the President. The individual he has nominated to the EDSA Board is an APC member. When she was brought to this House, there were lots of complaints, S.O [2] Honourable na APC ihn dae oh.' I said that is how His Excellency behaves; he wants everybody to be on board. If you have the experience, skills or the knowhow, please come on board and support. It is not just about the SLPP, it is about Sierra Leone and this is their sister. This Parliament has the right to refuse, but when she came, we supported her. We know her and it is not a secret that we did not know her at the interview. We supported her because we know she has the ideas and the President is tapping from her knowledge. Please bring your ideas to support the EDSA. His Excellency is a good man, Mr Speaker. It is not just because you are a member of the SLPP or the APC; he is looking for good Sierra Leoneans with experiences, skills and knowledge. Madam, you are wished well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, His Excellency had the opportunity to refuse her nomination made by the Chamber of Commerce. He would have said go and bring me another candidate. He has the right to say so, but he accepted your nomination. He knows that you are a member of the APC, but he knew you have the experience, education and he believes in young people. The President did not say he would not accept because she is a member of the APC. He believes in young people. When he saw your name, he noticed that you are a young person and he decided to accept you. Please use your experience to support the energy sector. You have to make sure you work with other members of the Board. The President is the President for Sierra Leone and he is a President that believes in every Sierra Leoneans. That is why he accepted your nomination. Please give your total support to the Board and keep your party ideology to yourself. Let us work together. Like what the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said, electricity distribution is not done based on the political party one belongs to, but rather distributed to everybody, whether you are APC or SLPP, electricity will reach your homes. Nobody is going to check whether the people living in Makeni are SLPP or APC. Please go and support the vision of the President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is what we expect future Presidents to do and not to ignore people because they belong to other political parties. I doff my hat to His Excellency the President. He is a fine gentleman. This is the type of leadership that is expected from other people. The President has a positive vision for this country. This is because when we talk about education, people usually say that this is the only President that prioritises something that does not have kickbacks. In other words, if our government had prioritised roads, we expect all of us to be rich. I am saying because when you are constructing roads, the level of kickbacks is huge. This President said no, my priority is education and he is laying the foundation. We cannot see the benefits

now because it is a continuous project. The future should be built on education and that is why the President is laying the foundation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about the gentleman that is going to the SLRA, Honourable Solomon Emmanuel Bangalie. He was in this Parliament and he knew the challenges of the roads. It is not a secret to you and it is not unique to you either. As you are going to that sector, please help Management and team in terms of formulating cogent policies that will enhance the effectiveness of the road sector. Fortunately, we have the Chairman of the SLRA Board, who is also a former Member of this House. I have always told Members of Parliament that the Agencies, Boards and Commissions we are establishing through Acts of Parliament are institutions we are going to occupy in future. These offices are our offices. When we leave this Parliament, we are expected to be Board Members, Board Chairmen, Directors, etc. I want the Ministers to respect these Board Members. These are our future offices because we are seeing, of late, former Members of Parliament occupying these offices. We are in a rush for development, but we need good roads. I am sure the achievement of free education, food security and other things depend on good roads. There is nothing that can be achieved without good roads.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know that the interview of Mr Andrew Emerson Musa was very tedious and I can understand. What was not mentioned in the report was that Mr Andrew Emerson Musa is almost the founder of the BBR Project. He was the first person to be recruited during late President Tejan Kabba's era for the BBR Project. In fact, the head of that office met him there. He was there for a long time. Please bring those skills and experiences you have garnered over the years to the NCRA. Like what the Opposition Leader said, everybody needs ID card; not everybody wants passports. When we were ratifying the Agreement relating to the ID cards, we were promised in this Well that they were going to establish offices in all the Chieftdoms for the purpose of producing ID cards. You would agree with me that this assurance was given and I want to remind the nominee that it is a private contract and has nothing to do with NCRA. There is a private contractor that is doing that business. The agreement was passed in this Parliament. Please remind them because we were assured and the reason for that is because you cannot expect someone who lives almost forty miles with rugged roads to come for an ID card in Bo. The person will have to spend almost over six hundred thousand just collect his or her ID card. The ID card costs only one hundred and forty five Leones **[Le 145]**. If you allow the person to come, he/she will spend almost two weeks in Bo just to collect his/her ID card. This is extremely cumbersome. Please make sure you talk to the contractor to establish the offices in every chieftdom headquarter town. It is our rights for us to have ID cards. Everybody should have an ID card.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, anyone who wants to travel outside Sierra Leone can go and find a passport. For those of us who have the opportunity to travel out of this country, you hardly see citizens of other country going around with passports. They walk around with their ID cards and it is mandatory. You have to walk around with your national ID card and even when you are doing certain transactions, you have to present your national ID card. So, it is a must that everybody should have an ID card. It is only now that they are encouraging people to have ID cards, but how do you expect somebody to have an ID card when the service is being centralised. They said they were going to punish those without national ID cards. They also said they were going to mount checkpoints to prevent people from accessing certain places. I think that is unbearable and unreliable. You have to make the service accessible to the people and give them ample time. The ID card issue is a continuous process because it has an expiring date. Therefore, NCRA should establish these offices in every district for ease of access by the people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know that the Sierra Leone Housing Corporation [SALHOC] is not something to be proud of and that is a public secret. The housing system is extremely poor. This is why the private sector has taking over renters of housings. Today, somebody will tell you that a room and a palour is fifty thousand New Leones [**NLe 50,000**] per year. Before now, SALHOC used to provide low cost houses; but today, those houses have been sold for good purposes. The question is what are they doing? If you build low cost houses and you sell them to people who have lived there for forty or more years, you should be able to construct more low cost houses in order for the middle class to have accommodation. Today, we have staff across MDAs who are paid **NLe4,000 or NLe5,000**, but the house rent they pay is very exorbitant. We have civil servants who are paid **NLe2,000 or NLe3,000**, but they are paying almost **NLe30,000** for accommodation per year. How is that person going to generate that money from the little salary he or she is earning? So, SALHOC needs to do more in that regard. I have noticed that their lands have been sold by your very self and some have been encroached upon and you have not taken any action. Please work with other members of the Board and make sure that some of these lands are retrieved. You have to buy more lands and ensure that you build some low cost houses.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in this country, you can see two houses with the same facilities [two rooms and a parlour], but with different prices. If this person is asking for three thousand Dollars, the other one will be asking for eight thousand Dollars. There is no harmonisation regarding the prices of house rental in this country. Those who are receiving these rental fees are not even paying NRA fees. They usually collect and eat these moneys. Please work with other members of the Board to improve that institution.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about Mr Juma Bah. He is a seasoned Journalist as per his credentials. When he was before the Appointments Committee, I was deliberate to ask him about the role of Members of Parliament. This is because the first question a journalist will ask is, S.O [2], watin u don do for u people dem? We asked him that question, Mr Speaker. He was however struggling to tell us the role of Members of Parliament. I decided to bring this matter here because I have challenged the media that whatever we are going through, as a government, should be squarely laid on them because at the end of the day, it is not just about giving information and entertainment; it is about educating the public. The Honourable Abdul K. Kamara from Kambia is a very good Member of Parliament, but as a media house, you have somebody who is not performing the same role that he is performing. Some of the journalists cannot even explain what is happening in Parliament. Some journalists even skewed his message to make it good; and at the end of the day, when Honourable Abdul K. Kamara is removed from Parliament and another Member of Parliament is elected, you expect him to play magic. Some people campaign without knowing the role of a Member of Parliament. Those who are campaigning in our constituency are now constructing bridges, schools and roads on the pretext that, S.O [2] mi we ar kam Parliament, na dem thing dem yah ar get for do for you. This is because that is the perception of Sierra Leoneans. The perception is that we are giving moneys for developments and if you want to unseat me, the only message you will take to my people is that, S.O [2] Honourable nor do natin. So, the journalist was before us and when I asked him, he was struggling to tell us our role because some of them do not even know the functions of Members of Parliament. Sometimes what they discuss on radio or write in newspapers are always different. When it gets to our people, it is different and even when you talk to them, they will say S.O [2] 'Honourable, radio don talk am yesterday.' This is because whatever that is being said on radio and television, is considered to be a fact because they believe it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, sometimes if you explain to these journalists that what they have aired on radio was not correct, they would not believe. So, I used that opportunity to engage him and the media to say if you do not understand the functions of Members of Parliament, you should consult us because we have traveled all over the world and we know the functions of Members of Parliament. I am also a Member of the Pan-African Parliament and all over the world countries focus on their parliaments. If you look at the laws or the Constitution and see the powers of Parliament, there is no need for the Anti-Corruption Commission to even exist. We just need to improve Parliament because this is the Supreme Arm of Government. Parliament provides oversights on the Executive and the Judiciary. This is the only Arm that vets and approves nominees who have been nominated by the President. All Ministers and

Judges are sent to us for vetting and onward approval. If we do not accept a nominee, he/she will not occupy the office he/she has been nominated to serve. This shows that Parliament is the Supreme Legislative body. It is the only Arm that approves the National Budget and supervises how public funds are utilised. That is why it is the Supreme Arm of government. This is the only Arm that can impeach the President if the need arises. We are the people's representatives. However, people do not know the level of powers that we have. When you go to the United States of America and Britain, you will see the powers of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have challenged other Members that when I leave this House, I will be advocating for this Parliament to be empowered in order to have good parliamentarians. There is no way Sierra Leone can develop if we do not have good and serious parliamentarians. After you would have voted, the rest of the five years is left in the hands of Members of Parliament. So, if you do not have a serious Parliament, you will not have a serious government. Even if the government spends all its resources, if you do not have a Parliament that provides robust oversights, there will be no serious developments. So, I have challenged the media that in future, let us draw the line; and as citizens, let us determine the type of Members of Parliament who can deliver and not those who give vague promises. I have told Members of Parliament that if we do not know the problem, we will never know the solution. If changing a Member of Parliament is the problem, I do not think whether that is the solution. People who have travelled to other parliaments would agree with me that there are Members of Parliament who have served their parliaments for twenty, twenty five and thirty years. These are seasoned and serious Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our people always, S.O[2] 'dis na dreg man wok, but ihn don go two term. Komot now le oda man kam.' The people have made this job to be S.O[2], 'dreg man wok. Bo you don get pension, komot now le other person kam sidon.' This is a career job. I could still remember when the Speaker and I went to PAP and that was my sixth years as a Member of Parliament. We were the youngest serving Members of Parliament. When we went there, we saw seasoned Members of Parliament who have served for a very long time. I am sure the least serving Member that we met was thirteen years from Uganda. The man has served for thirteen years as Member of Parliament and I was just six years. The rest of the other Members of Parliament have served their parliaments for eighteen or twenty five years with a wealth of experience. We are struggling to even cope. This is the fact and I am saying it without fear or favour. If we do not have a serious Parliament as a country, we should not expect developments at all. How will you be able to oversee the Commissioner General who is managing a budget of four, five or six Billion Leones, but could not provide accountable records? What do we expect as Members of Parliament? Some Members of Parliament

do not even read documents and they do not also attend Committee meetings. This is true and I will continue to say it. We should have a serious Parliament and the media should help us achieve this in order to deliver developments. The media should stop giving misinformation. It is this same media that follow some Members of Parliament whom they have known, even when they know that those MPs are not serious with their work. They will be running after somebody and be saying, S.O [2] 'dis na d new Member of Parliament, we get for kam eh n na ihn don build dis school,' They know that when this person comes to Parliament, he/she cannot deliver. We do not even have offices to keep our documents. Most Members of Parliament use their vehicles as offices. They take their documents to their vehicles. If we do not explain our problems, nobody is going to explain them for us. So, I want to thank you and to wish you well. Please ensure that you deliver for us and for His Excellency the President. We have one of our kinds as Speaker and the other as Clerk of this House. We should be explaining some of these issues for the public to understand because we do not want to make the same mistakes. If they do not know the problems, they will not proffer solutions. I thank you very much and I want to wish you well.

With that being said, Mr Speaker, I want to move that the Eighth Report of the First Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations contained therein be approved. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much Leader of Government Business.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

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

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much and congratulations. When you go to your offices, do what is best for Sierra Leone.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to amend the Order Paper. The next item, which is Roman Figure V that has to do with 'Government Motion is now Roman Figure VI and Roman Figure V should now read 'Announcement of Sessional Select Committees and Roman Figure VI should now read 'Government Motion' by the Minister of Works and Public Assets. Roman Figure VII should now read 'Bill.' I so move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA: I so second, Mr Speaker

[Question Proposed, Put and Agree to]

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

V. ANNOUNCEMENT OF SESSIONAL COMMITTEES.

HON BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I announce to this Honourable House the following Sessional Select Committees for your approval:

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

The Chairman: Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh

Deputy Chairman: Honourable PC Desmond Mahayei Kargobai Members:

Honourable Jibrila Moijue

Honourable Emilia Lolloh Tongi

Honourable Abdul Joseph Bash Kamara

Honourable Dickson Momoh Rogers

Honourable Musa Peter Moigua

Honourable Aaron Aruna Koroma

Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara of Kambia

Honourable Ibrahim Aziz Bangura

Honourable PC Haja Fatmata Bintu Koroma Meama Kajue

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

The Chairman: Honourable Abdul Suliaman Marray-Conteh.

Deputy Chairman: Honourable Jibrila Surmoijuel

Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh

Honourable Hindolo Moiwo Gevao

Honourable Margaret Feimata Johnson

Honourable Alice Kornya Sandy

Honourable Osman Abdulai Charles

Honourable Jabbie Alpha Fode Maddie

Honourable Abdul Joseph Bash Kamara

Honourable Daniel Brima Koroma

Honourable Osman Abdal Timbo

Honourable Mohamed Sheridan Kamara

Honourable Tamba Kellie

Honourable Alpha Amadu Bah

Honourable John Sartty Kargbo

Honourable PC Paul Ngaba Saquee V

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Chairman: Honourable Francis Amara Kaisamba

Deputy Chairman: Honourable Mustapha Musa Sellu

Members:

Honourable Ishmael Sankoh Yillah

Honourable Mohamed Tarawallie Fofanah

Honourable Rebecca Yei Kamara

Honourable Momoh Bockarie

Honourable Christopher Keikura Vandy

Honourable Habib Keifa Fabbah

Honourable Musa Peter Moigua

Honourable Alfred Ayodele Thompson

Honourable Rose Marie Bangura

Honourable John Charles Conteh

Honourable Sallieu Osman Sesay

Honourable Soreiba Alhaji Turay

Honourable Cecilia Mabinty Bangura

Honourable PC Desmond Mahayei Kargobai

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

The Chairman: Honourable Mohamed Bangura

Deputy Chairman: Honourable PC Foray Cyril Gondor II

Members:

Honourable Sia Mahawa Habiamma Tommy

Honourable Abdul Karim Bangura
Honourable Boston Munda
Honourable Wuyatta Bernadette Songa
Honourable Emilia Lolloh Tongi
Honourable Mohamed Kanneh
Honourable Mohamed Billoh Shaw
Honourable Ambrose Maada Lebby
Honourable Alice Kornya Sandy
Honourable Rosemarie Bangura
Honourable Rugiatu Rosy Kanu
Honourable John Charles Conteh
Honourable Hawa Conteh
Honourable PC Kande Paria Kawaleh II

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

The Chairman: Honourable Dr Unpha Sorie Gbassay Koroma

Deputy Chairman: Paul Samba Conteh

Members:

Honourable Osman Wurie Jalloh
Honourable Hindolo Moiwo Gevao
Honourable Mohamed Kanneh
Honourable Nenneh Lebbie
Honourable Amie Nyave Moriba
Honourable Mariama Munia Zombo
Honourable Brima Mansaray
Honourable Rugiatu Tarawalli-Mussaffa
Honourable Fatmata Sarah Soukenah
Honourable Alpha Bah
Honourable Mabinty Fornah

Honourable Abdul Aziz Bangura

Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara of Kambia

Honourable PC Alhaji Masakama Kanamanka III

COMMITTEE ON MINES AND MINERAL RESOURCES

The Chairman: Honourable Saa Emerson Lamina

Deputy Chairman: Honourable Fatmata Bintu Bockarie

Members:

Honourable Sidie Mohamed Tunis

Honourable Bashiru Silikie

Honourable Tamba Simeon Johnny

Honourable Mohamed Tarawallie Fofanah

Honourable Musa Fofanah

Honourable Fatmata Sarah Soukenah

Honourable Edward George

Honourable Jawah Sesay

Honourable Tom Issic Tucker

Honourable Alpha Ben Mansaray

Honourable Lucinda Finda Kellie

Honourable Alhaji Sorieba Turay

Honourable Aminata Sesay

Honourable PC Paul Ngaba Saque V

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND SANITATION

The Chairman: Honourable Wuyatta Bernadette Songa

Deputy Chairman: Honourable Emilia Lolloh Tonga.

Members:

Honourable: Dickson Momoh Rogers.

Honourable Yusuf Mackery

Honourable Alice Kornya Sandy

Honourable Tamba Simeon Johnny
Honourable Sarty Banya
Honourable Umu Pyne
Honourable Margaret Feimata Johnson
Honourable Alpha Ben Mansaray
Honourable Hawa Conteh
Honourable Haja Maitta Amara
Honourable Paul Samba Conteh
Honourable Catherine Zainab Tarawally
Honourable Dr Unpha Sorie Gbassay Koroma
Honourable PC Alie Balan Sama Marrah III

COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENTS AND ECONOMIC PLANNING

The Chairman: Honourable Musa Fofanah

Deputy Chairman: Honourable Hawa Rosaline Siafa

Members:

Honourable Juliana Aliematu Fatorma
Honourable Hindolo Moiwo Gevao
Honourable Amie Nyava Moriba
Honourable Adama Bangura
Honourable Hawanatu Alice Kallon
Honourable Osman Abdulai Charles
Honourable Alice Jebbeh Kumabeh
Honourable Ibrahim Barrie
Honourable Aruna Papay Solomon Larkoh
Honourable Ernest Dura Koroma
Honourable Abdul Latif Sesay
Honourable Peter Yamba Koroma
Honourable Adama Conteh

Honourable PC Ngbak IV Bai Farama Tass Bubu

COMMITTEE ON TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION.

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Honourable Saa Emerson Lamina

Honourable Alice Kornya Sandy

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Honourable Capt. [Rtd] Sylvester Arnold Maxwell Boima

Honourable Ibrahim Bangura

Honourable Alpha Ben Mansaray

Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara of Kambia

Honourable Abu Bakarr Fofanah

Honourable Mohamed Sheridan Kamara

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Honourable Neneh Lebbie

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Honourable Foyoh Tholley

Honourable Ibrahim Koroma

Honourable Umu Pyne
Honourable Abdul Kamara
Honourable Daniel Fornah
Honourable Mohamed Papa Bangura
Honourable Mamoud Kamara
Honourable Mohamed Conteh
Honourable Hawa Conteh
Honourable PC Paul Ngaba Saquee V

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Honourable Shiaka Musa Sama
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Honourable Mohamed Sheriff Rahman-Coker
Honourable Mohamed Billoh Shaw
Honourable Mohamed Tarawallie Fofanah
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Honourable Rugiatu Kamara
Honourable Marie Kamara
Honourable Mohamed Sheridan Kamara
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Honourable Brima Mansaray

Honourable Catherine Zainab Tarawally

Honourable Mohamed Bangura

Honourable Cecilia Mabinty Bangura

Honourable Mabinty Fornah

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Honourable Rugiatu Tarawalli-Mussaffa

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Honourable Tamba Simeon Johny

Honourable Beatrice Maaya Kangbai

Honourable Fallah Kanawah Tengbeh

Honourable Alpha Ben Mansaray

Honourable Memunatu Jalloh
Honourable Daniel Amadu Bangura
Honourable Dr. Unpha Sorie Gbassay Koroma
Honourable Abdul Latif Sesay
Honourable Abdulai Kamara
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Honourable Abdul Suliaman Marray-Conteh
Honourable Jabbie Alpha Fode Maddie
Honourable Konkofa Farah Mansaray
Honourable Juliana Aliematu Fatorma
Honourable Princess Kadie Daramy-Nabbie
Honourable Abdul Karim Kanu
Honourable John Sarty Kargbo
Honourable Sorieba Alhaji Turay
Honourable Alfred Ayodele Thompson
Honourable Jawah Sesay
Honourable Ibrahim A. Bangura
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Honourable Momoh Bockarie
Honourable Komba Quee
Honourable Capt [Rtd] Sylvester Arnold Maxwell Boima
Honourable Veronica Kadie Sesay
Honourable Abdul Karim Kanu
Honourable Musa Lahai
Honourable Abdul Karim Bangura
Honourable Daniel Fornah
Honourable Mamoud Kamara
Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara PortLoko
Honourable Rugiatu Kamara
Honourable Alfred Ayodele Thompson
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Honourable Massay Ngahiteh Aruna
Honourable Princess Kadie Daramy-Nabbie
Honourable Sahr Koutu Momodu
Honourable Beatrice Iyamide Langley
Honourable Ibrahim Kabba
Honourable Sorieba Alhaji Turay
Honourable John Sartty Kargbo
Honourable Haja Maitta Amara

Honourable Mohamed Conteh

Honourable Tamba Kellie

Honourable Hamidu Holla Mansaray

Honourable PC Haja Fatmata Bintu Koroma Meama Kajue

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Deputy Chairman: Honourable Joseph Bash Kamara

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Honourable Mohamed Koroma

Honourable Bashiru Silikie

Honourable Veronica Kadie Sesay

Honourable Ambrose Maada Lebby

Honourable Alie Bayoh

Honourable Jibrila Surmoijueh

Honourable Mohamed Bangura

Honourable Abdul Latif Sesay

Honourable Rugiatu Rosy Kanu

Honourable Daniel Fornah

Honourable Kemoko Conteh

Honourable Paul Samba Conteh

Honourable PC Kandeh Baba Keiha III

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Deputy Chairman: Honourable Momoh Bockarie

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Honourable Mohamed Kanneh

Honourable Margaret Feimata Johnson
Honourable Boston Munda
Honourable Bashiru Silikie
Honourable Alex Miatta Rogers
Honourable Ambrose Maada Lebby
Honourable Abu Bakarr Fofanah
Honourable Mohamed Sheriff Kargbo
Honourable Mamoud Kamara
Honourable Mabinty Alice Taylor- Bangura
Honourable John Charles Conteh
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Honourable Aaron A. Koroma
Honourable Mabinty Alice Taylor-Bangura
Honourable Mohamed S. Koroma
Honourable Mabinty Jalloh
Honourable Ibrahim Kabba
Honourable Mohamed Billoh Shaw
Honourable Idriss Sahid Kamara
Honourable Alie Bayoh
Honourable Beatrice Iyamidele Langley
Honourable Fatmata Sarah Soukenah
Honourable Amie Nyava Moriba
Honourable PC Ngbak IV Bai Farama Tass Bubu

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Deputy Chairman: Honourable Abdul Aziz Bangura

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Honourable Fatmata Sarah Soukenah

Honourable Juliana Aliematu Fatorma

Honourable Adama Bangura

Honourable Hawa Conteh

Honourable Ernest Dura Koroma

Honourable Daniel Amadu Bangura

Honourable Aaron Aruna Koroma

Honourable Mohamed Conteh

Honourable PC Cyril Foray Gondor II

COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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Deputy Chairman: Honourable Alpha Bah

Members:

Honourable Ernest Dura Koroma

Honourable Mabinty Alice Taylor-Bangura

Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara of Port Loko

Honourable Rugiatu Kamara

Honourable Mamoud Kamara

Honourable Umu Pyne

Honourable Ahmed Joseph Kanu
Honourable Saa Emerson Lamina
Honourable Mustapha Sellu
Honourable Hindolo Moiwo Gevao
Honourable Sheikh Santigie Ibrahim Kargbo
Honourable Idrissa Moiwei Dauda
Honourable Capt [Rtd] Sylvester Arnold Maxwell Boima
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Honourable Haja Miatta Amara
Honourable Mariama Bangura
Honourable Daniel Brima Koroma
Honourable Jawah Sesay
Honourable Hamidu Holla Mansaray
Honourable Habib Fabbah
Honourable Abdul Karim Bangura
Honourable Amara Momoh Kargbo
Honourable Foyoh Tholley
Honourable Abdul Karim Kanu
Honourable Musa Fofanah
Honourable Emilia Lolloh Tongi
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Deputy Chairman: Honourable Benjamin Turay

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Honourable Ibrahim Kabba

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Honourable Fatmata Bintu Bockarie

Honourable Abdul Karim Bangura

Honourable Massay Ngahiteh Aruna

Honourable Adama Bangura

Honourable Zainab Bah

Honourable Adama Conteh

Honourable Aminata Sesay

Honourable Daniel Fornah

Honourable John Sartty Kargbo

Honourable Mohamed Sherriff Kargbo

Honourable P.C. Bai Farama Tass Bubu Ngbnak IV

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Deputy Chairman: Honourable Mohamed Kanneh

Members:

Honourable Sia Mahawa Habiamat Tommy

Honourable Abdul Karim Bangura

Honourable Adama Bangura

Honourable Mustapha Musa Sellu

Honourable Mohamed Tarawallie Fofanah

Honourable Boston Munda

Honourable Bashiru Silikie

Honourable Samba Conteh
Honourable Mohamed Sherriff Kargbo
Honourable Aruna Papay Solomon Larkoh
Honourable Marie Kamara
Honourable Sallieu Osman Sesay
Honourable Dr Unpha Sorie Gbassay Koroma
Honourable PC Bai Shebora Sheba Gberek III

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Deputy Chairman: Honourable Rugiatu Rosy Kanu

Members:

Honourable Mohamed Papa Bangura
Honourable Aminata Sesay
Honourable Aruna Papay Solomon Larkoh
Honourable Hawa Conteh
Honourable Ishmael Sankoh Yillah
Honourable Juliana Aliematu Fatorma
Honourable Rugiatu Tarawalli-Mussafa
Honourable Alice Jebbeh Kumabeh
Honourable Joseph Williams Lamin
Honourable Princess Kadie Daramy-Nabbie
Honourable Sheik Santigie Ibrahim Kargbo
Honourable Beatrice Iyamide Langley
Honourable Idrissa Moiwai Dauda
Honourable PC Kieha Kandeh Baba III

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Deputy Chairman: Honourable Habib Keifa Fabbah

Members:

Honourable Tengbeh

Honourable Joseph Williams Lamin

Honourable Ambrose Maada Lebby

Honourable Rugiatu Tarawalli-Mussafa

Honourable Saa Emerson Lamina

Honourable Mohamed Tarawally Fornah

Honourable Boston Munda

Honourable John Sartty Kargbo

Honourable Hawa Conteh

Honourable Mohamed Mansaray

Honourable Mohamed Alpha Jalloh

Honourable Daniel Brima Koroma

Honourable Sallieu Osman Sesay

Honourable PC Bai Shebora Sheba Gberekere III

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The Chairman: Honourable Hamidu Holla Mansaray

Deputy Chairman: Honourable Ibrahim Barrie

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Honourable Mamoud Kamara

Honourable Peter Yamba Kamara

Honourable Mahawa Alice Kallon

Honourable Alice Kornya Sandy

Honourable Saa Kortou Momodu

Honourable Sia Mahawa Habibama Tommy

Honourable Edward George

Honourable Idrissa Moiwo Dauda

Honourable Idrissa Sahid Kamara
Honourable Ismael Sankoh Yillah
Honourable Komba Quee
Honourable PC Alie Balan Sama Marrah III

COMMITTEE ON GENDER AND CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS

The Chairman: Honourable Zainab Catherine Tarawallie

Deputy Chairman: Honourable Abu Bakarr Fofanah

Members:

Honourable Mohamed Sheriff Kargbo
Honourable Alfred Ayodele Thompson
Honourable Alpha Ben Mansaray
Honourable Musa Moigua
Honourable Alice Jebbeh Kumabeh
Honourable Veronica Kadie Sesay
Honourable Alice Kornya Sandy
Honourable Rugiatu Tarawallie Mussiafa
Honourable Foyoh Tholley
Honourable Mariama Munia Zombo
Honourable Sia Mahawa Habiamma Tommy
Honourable Rachael Mariatu Sesay
Honourable PC Alie Balan Sama Marrah III

COMMITTEE ON NaCSA AND NGOs

The Chairman: Honourable Abdul Latif

Deputy Chairman: Honourable Bash Kamara

Members:

Honourable Mabinty Fornah
Honourable Lucinda Kellie
Honourable Marie Kamara

Honourable John Charles Conteh
Honourable Osman Wurie
Honourable Tamba Simeon Johny
Honourable Wuyatte Bernadette Songa
Honourable Mohamed Sheriff Rahma Coker
Honourable Saa Momoh Kortou
Honourable Rachael Mariatu Pessima Sesay
Honourable Abdul Joseph Bash Kamara
Honourable Mahawa Rosaline Siaffa
Honourable PC Sheku Thulu F. Marrah

COMMITTEE ON PRIVILEGES AND ETHICS

The Chairman: Honourable PC Sheku Thereme Lahai Marrah
Deputy Chairman: Honourable PC Bai Shebora Sheba Gberek III

Members:

Honourable Dickson Momoh Rogers
Honourable Abdul Joseph Bash Kamara
Honourable Keikura Vandy
Honourable Veronica Kadie Sesay
Honourable Saa Emerson Lamina
Honourable Qutin Salia Konneh
Honourable Alpha Fode Jabbie Maddie
Honourable Joseph Williams Lamin
Honourable Aaron Aruna Koroma
Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara of Kambia
Honourable Daniel Brima Koroma
Honourable Sallieu Osman Sesay
Honourable Alpha Bah
Honourable PC Alameen Kanneh

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS

The Chairman: Honourable Peter Yamba Koroma

Deputy Chairman: Honourable Jawah Sesay

Members:

Honourable Brima Mansaray

Honourable Musa Moigua

Honourable Komba Quee

Honourable Joseph Williams Lamin

Honourable Ahmed Joseph Kallon

Honourable Amadu Bangura

Honourable Adama Bangura

Honourable Abdul Suleiman Marray-Conteh

Honourable Dickson Momoh Rogers

Honourable Princess Kadie Daramy Nabbie

Honourable Tamba Kellie

Honourable Memunatu Jalloh

Honourable Alfred Ayodela Thompson

Honourable Adama Conteh

Honourable PC Alie Balan Sama Marrah III

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT

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Deputy Chairman: Honourable Abu Kemokai

Members:

Honourable Beatrice Iyemidele Langley

Honourable Habid Keifa Marrah

Honourable Brima Mansaray

Honourable Rebecca Yei Kamara

Honourable Mustapha Sellu

Honourable Saa Kortou Momodu
Honourable Alpha Amadu Bah
Honourable Zainab Bah
Honourable Adama Conteh
Honourable Daniel Amadu Bangura
Honourable Mariama Bangura
Honourable Ernest Duwa
Honourable PC Mustapha Moina

COMMITTEE ON SPORTS

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Deputy Chairman: Honourable Rachael Mariatu Pessima
Members:

Honourable Alpha Amadu Bah
Honourable Mariama Bangura
Honourable Mohamed Alpha Jalloh
Honourable Mohamed Papa Bangura
Honourable Abdul Karim Kanu
Honourable Joseph Kanu
Honourable Idrissa Sahid Kamara
Honourable Foyoh Tholley
Honourable Amara Momoh Kargbo
Honourable Massay Ngahiteh Aruna
Honourable Musa Moigua
Honourable Quintin Salia-Konneh
Honourable PC Alie Balan Sama Marrah II

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Deputy Chairman: Honourable Alpha Ben Mansaray

Members:

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Honourable Abu Bakarr Fofanah

Honourable Benjamin Turay

Honourable Tamba Simeon Johny

Honourable Shek Santigie Ibrahim Kargbo

Honourable Brima Mansaray

Honourable Veronica Kadie Sesay

Honourable Fatmata Bintu Bokarie

Honourable Dickson Momoh Rogers

Honourable Musa Lahai

Honourable Ibrahim Kabba

Honourable PC Foray Cyril Gondor II

I thank you very much, Mr Speaker and I so move.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Motion for the adoption of the Sessional Select Committees has been carried]

THE SPEAKER: At this stage, I urge all Committees, particularly Committee Chairmen and their Deputies to go to work immediately. I urge every Committee to do the necessary concepts for oversight. The moment we get any disbursement, I will ensure that Committees go on oversight. So, I urge you all to do your concepts and when you are done with your concepts, send them to your leaders for vetting and approval before we make any payment for oversight activities. Honourable Members, we are proceeding with the Agreement and I am just going to stand the House down for five minutes for obvious reasons. After the Agreement, we can go for lunch.

[The House stood down for five minutes]

VI. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND PUBLIC ASSETS

DR. DENIS SANDY [THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND PUBLIC ASSET]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Friday, 20th December, 2024:

Concessional Agreement for the Reconstruction of the Magbang, Moyamba, Gbangbatoke Road project, 86 Killometers between the government of Sierra Leone represented by the Ministry of Works and Public Asset and Society International, the equipment and the TRAVOCS CITRA, December, 2024.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to proceed with the object and reason of this Agreement. This is an expansion of the road infrastructure project in this country, as a process of continuity to ensure that this country moves along the path of socio-economic development. This is a project that has been based on the Public Private Partnership concept. It has a volume of about one hundred and forty eight million, two hundred Dollars [**USD148,200**]. It has a concessional period of about thirty years. However, the beauty of this Agreement is that it is going to ensure free movement of goods and services, enhance trade and increase the lifespan of the average Sierra Leoneans. The Agreement is going to upgrade this country internationally and ensure that we move from one place to the other. It is going to create jobs and ensure job security for our people, not necessarily the young people or those with the requisite qualifications, but it also caters for everybody.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, after 18 to 20 kilometers of road construction, [this is exactly the beauty of this particular Concessional Agreement and it is different from the CRSG], we can now think about constructing one toll plaza to provide certain services for three years. This is going to be a good legacy if all of us work together in terms of supporting the current President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio. At this point, let me acknowledge the work done by the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. This is a continuous process. When this road is completed, it is going to open or connect the various regions, South-East, North-West, etc. I am here because of the seriousness of this particular project. This morning, I have been accompanied by Christiana Queen Fofanah and the current Chairperson of the SLRA Board, who was with you few years ago. I am also accompanied by the Director General of SLRA, Eng. Alfred Charlie Momodu. This tells you the seriousness we have attached to this Project and the reason this Agreement should be ratified. As soon as it is ratified by this House, the funds will be released and the contractor will be informed to commence the execution of the contract.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Friday, 20th December 2024:

Concessional Agreement for the Reconstruction of the Magbang, Moyamba, Gbangbatoke Roads Project, 86 Killometers between the Government of Sierra Leone, represented by the Ministry of Works and Public Assets and Society International, the Equipment and the TRAVOCS CITRA, December, 2024.

[Question Proposed]

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are here to ratify an Agreement that Honourable Members of this House are pleased with. I am sure our people are going to be happy as well because we are yearning for good roads. We need good roads for the benefit and development of this country. The road between Gbangbatoke and Moyamba is a road that every Sierra Leonean wants to see reconstructed. It will ease the pains of going through Masiaka and Mile 91 to Moyamba; from Freetown to Songo; and from Magbang to Moyamba. I want to thank the Minister and the government for this Agreement. We have the Wellington/Masiaka toll road and we have just reviewed that Agreement last year. We have amended some of the clauses in the Agreement, especially those that are not good for our people. Today, we are looking at another toll roads Agreement, but this one is going to be managed or controlled by the government. This tells you that the government wants to help our people by generating more funds for them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement is not a political Agreement. It is an Agreement that is tenable to this House and it is an Agreement that is good for the people of Sierra Leone because it will benefit every Sierra Leonean. For instance, if I want to leave Freetown to Bo, I will just use the toll road because I want to pass through roads that are very good. Mr Speaker, we on this side of aisle are in support of this Agreement because it will benefit our people. We want to say thank you, Mr Minister and the Honourable Ellen Kuyembeh, Chairperson of the SLRA Board. Within your short period as Chairperson, we have started seeing what we call beneficiary Agreements for Sierra Leone. I thank you very much. This House is your House; make us part and parcel of this work and bring us on board. Please make our people feel as if they are part and parcel of this Agreement. We are ready to work with you and we are ready to support the project. We want it to benefit Sierra Leone. We support you and we are ready to play our oversight role relating to this particular Agreement. I thank God that the Deputy Leader of Government Business is the Chairman of the Committee on Works and Public Assets. Mr Deputy Leader, please do the needful for Sierra Leone as Chairman of that Committee. We are supporting this Agreement and we are saying

congratulations to the Ministry and team. We wish the contractors the very best. The Speaker has already pronounced it in French and therefore I will not pronounce it in French again. However, we are trying to do what we call translation; i.e., to translate it into English, so that our people can understand that the toll roads are for their own benefit. We will be collecting and paying at the same time. Nobody will collect on our behalf. I thank you very much. I am sure the people of Moyamba, Gbangbatoke and Magbang will be happy and they want to see this materialised. We wish you well and may God bless Sierra Leone.

HON. UMU PYNE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker for giving me the opportunity to add my voice to this debate. This project is a laudable one and it is not only for Moyamba District, but it is also for the whole nation. I am happy and I am proud for this Project. As I stand here, it took me just 45 minutes to drive to Freetown this morning because from the Songo Junction to the bridge is about to be completed. It should have been completed had it not been the too many culverts along that road. This Agreement is one of the best that I have seen. This is a national Agreement. As the Minister said, this Agreement will create jobs or employments for our youths and it will provide other facilities for our people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, driving from Freetown to Moyamba will be very short if this toll road is completed. I want to thank the President and the Ministry for this Agreement. Moyamba District is a district that has many agricultural products the people of Freetown could benefit from. For instance, in the Ribbi Chiefdom [where this road will pass] through Rotifunk to Bumpeh and other places have many agricultural produce. We have palm Kernels, palm oil and many other farm products. Sometimes we do not even bother to bring them to Freetown because they easily get spoiled on the road. In fact, during the rainy season, the Honourable Members from Moyamba and I spent a lot of money, including the Director General of the SLRA, who is seated here, to rehabilitate the road. There was a time she sent money to help us rehabilitate the one from Magbang to Bradford and from Bradford to Rotifunk. Those places are so terrible during the rainy seasons. In fact, my colleague on the other side of the aisles also contributed financially. I thank God because this Agreement is going to address this problem.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have some concerns I want to bring to the House. In my case, it is a yes that this Agreement is going to be ratified, but let us do not forget to establish local markets along the roads. For example, there is no market along the Freetown/Masiaka Road. There should have been markets along the road, but we are not seeing any. On the 27th February 2024, we are on the verge to establish a local market at Magbang S.O [2] dowe in Mende. We have a market at Masanke that opens

every Tuesday. We have a market in the center of Bradford that opens every Friday and also at Rotifunk and Mbawuyah. Are you only constructing the roads without local markets? I really want to appeal for the construction of local markets along those roads. We should be working towards establishing local markets along the roads you will be constructing. That is not all, Mr Speaker, what about the toilet facilities? If the road is going to be a good road, we need toilet facilities. The days of using the bushes to defecate are over. We have to make ourselves comfortable. Therefore, I am appealing that these two aspects are highly considered.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am just from Moyamba and I got this Agreement this morning. I like this Agreement, but it should have been brought to this House earlier today. This should have helped me to read and understood it better. The Agreement mentioned that the payment would be made within ten years and I also read something about toll. I really want to understand a little bit about this toll issue, so I will be in a better position to explain to my people. As I stand here, I am not only talking for myself, I am also talking for my people at Shenge, Bradford, Rotifunk and elsewhere. I know that as soon as I arrive home, they are going to ask me the obvious question; Honourable, did you talk for us? I will say Yes, I spoke for all of you, but I have not got the answer yet. This Agreement is going to be ratified. Thank you very much, Mr President and all those who contributed towards this Agreement. I thank you very much, Mr Minister and team.

HON: HINDOLO M. GEVAO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to use this opportunity to thank His Excellency the President for connecting communities in Sierra Leone. This is what we want to see in this country. We want to see a national cohesion through connecting the South to the East, and East to the North. That is one of the best things that has happened in this dispensation. Mr Speaker, like what the Honourable from Moyamba said, this is going to be a toll road. The toll fee will be collected after the 86 kilometers is completed. That will be the time the collection of toll fees commences. Again, there will be toll fees collectors or agents who will be in charge of collecting the toll gate fees. These collectors will be supervised by other government officials. They will be supervising the toll collectors or agents.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure this is a loan to the government of Sierra Leone and when once the concessional period is over, the Company will transfer all the facilities to the government of Sierra Leone. It will now be left with us, as citizens, to decide whether we will continue to pay toll fees or it is made free for the people to continue enjoying their road. That is a plus to the Minister for his hard work and for bringing such an Agreement here. There is need for incorporating the Company. In

other words, this is a foreign company, but they are yet to be incorporated into Sierra Leone for the business of that company to continue its operations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just want to use this opportunity to thank the Chairman of the SLRA for this Agreement. I have already started talking to the Director General concerning the two death traps in my constituency. The one is very close to Kissi Kama and a vehicle got trapped and we lost a life. The other one is very close to Mano. The iron that used to construct that place has been broken and there are major cracks on the concrete, especially the path where the trucks drive to Koindu. So, we really want to plead for assistance. I made a rough estimate totalling ten thousand Dollars **[\$10,000]** to fix those two bridges. This is urgent and I am craving your indulgence to come to our aid. Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity to lend my voice.

HON. MUSA FOFANAH: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take up this opportunity to thank the Ministry of Works and Public Assets, the SLRA and the government of Sierra Leone for this wonderful Agreement. I want to assure this Honourable House that we are very happy with this Agreement. The Honourable Kuyembeh is going to support the SLRA team. Those of us who were Members in the Fifth Parliament were very comfortable with the current Director General and Deputy Director General of SLRA. In December 2020, we did a job with this gentleman and his deputy. We discovered that they showed a lot of interest in the Magbang Bridge and the road leading to Gbangbatoke. This is what is in this Agreement and it is critical for the development of Sierra Leone. The five day work with the Sierra SLRA team educated Members of Parliament that if you conduct a thorough oversight activity, MDAs will do their work effectively. So, we are confident that this Agreement is very good for the development of this country. If you looked at page 16, Article 2.5, it talks about the Committee that will supervise the payment or the repayment of this particular loan. Despite the Ministry of Works, the Ministry of Finance and the SLRA, they have added the Ministry of Planning. I think this is also an indication to show that the Ministry of Planning is pivotal to what government is doing.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that this Agreement is not controversial at all. As a progressive Parliament, these are some of the Agreements that should be brought to this House through the Ministry of Works and we will continue to support you. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, indeed, this sounds as an Agreement that is not controversial. If you go to other countries today, the toll road is the right way. When I was in Ghana from 2003-2007, all their major roads were almost toll roads. There are two advantages to this; first, it reduces the pressure on

government. If you looked at our current budget and the dreams of the presidents, both past and current, you will understand why our roads are bad. Even when we manage to make or repair these roads, we still cannot meet the required standards. Therefore, you will understand why we need toll roads. However, there are critical elements we need to understand. I have always said that there is need for collaboration among politicians and political parties. Yesterday, it was bad; but today, it is good. Well, somebody will come tomorrow and condemn everything. What is for national interest should not be politicised because when we do that, it comes back to us; and when that happens, we feel the pinch. Yesterday, we did not understand it, but now, we understand it better. We are sending this to an area where our people do not understand what toll road is. So, we need to educate them better.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you looked at the road from Mile 91 to Matotoka, you would realise that that could be another perfect toll road because there is already an alternative route. The worries of Sierra Leoneans are that if you are constructing a toll road, there must be an alternative. This is why the road from Mile 91 to Matotoka is a perfect example of toll road because it has an alternative route. This means it is either you round or you use the toll road. Again, the road leading to Bo is another good opportunity for a toll road. What about the one from Kono to Kenema? These are all roads that will connect the country together. If this is the new model, then we have a role to play as Members of Parliament in terms of educating our people. We cannot continue to suffer. Mr Speaker, instead of going from Kambia to Bombali, we have to come all the way to Karene. We can use the Madina route to go to Bombali District without spending an hour. This is how we use excess fuel to get to that place. With this Agreement, fuel consumption will reduce and this will help national developments.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what I think we must do as Members of Parliament and as a nation is that we must not just ratify this Agreement, we must make sure that our people understand the current modern trend; i.e., toll road system. This is the new trend that will help to develop a nation. There is no country that can manage its own roads effectively by just depending on government tax to fix them. They cannot be fixed. If we could understand this, then we have to educate our people; and if they understand the modern trend, then we can fix more roads. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honorable Abdul Karim Kamara. We round off the debate.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today is another day of history making and we are here to ratify an Agreement relating to the construction of 86 Kilometers roads from Magbang to Moyamba and Gbangatoke junction. As rightly mentioned by the previous speakers,

this is a toll road. For the attention of the general public, we are aware of the fact that it is a toll road, although we have got an experience before. However, Sierra Leoneans now know what a toll road is because they know that they have to pay for using it. Without government's effort, the toll will be paid for until all the money that was used to construct it is recovered. In fact, the road will pay for itself and that is one; second, the construction Agreement will last for thirty years, but based on the prudence and the efficient economic focus of the Ministry of Finance, we strongly believe that within this period, we can pay back in thirteen years. Just imagine if we pay back in thirteen years and then for the rest of the thirty years, it will be a different ball game.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, anytime we talk about toll, people become jittery and they are afraid based on the previous mistake we made in the Wellington/Masiaka Agreement. It was our first experience and sometimes we learn from our experience. I am sure this Parliament will never repeat that mistake. Therefore, we are in support of this Concession Agreement for this singular reason. Unlike the Wellington/Masiaka toll road Agreement, which is being collected **100%** by the Chinese and their receptive companies, this one will be done by the contractor and then hand over to the government of Sierra Leone. For the information of the public, this is not going to be constructed and retained, but it is going to be transferred immediately it is completed. We are going to collect the toll fees and pay to the contractor. So, with that mechanism being put in place, we can pay as and when it is possible.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, unlike the Wellington/Masiaka toll road, which is for twenty five years before it is handed over to us, this one is completely different because it is going to be handed over to us after it has been constructed. I believe that the money for the Wellington/Masiaka toll road has long been recovered, but we are bound by the provisions of that Agreement. So, we have to endure until after twenty five years; and at the end of that period, we will get back our baby. We have learnt our lessons and that is why this new Agreement is different. We are going to nurture this baby until it is matured to adulthood; and in thirteen years, our baby could have been matured to adulthood and it will be able to stand on its own.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, how it is being paid? It is being paid based on this format that **60%** will go for the repayment and then **25%** will be used to operate the toll; i.e., staffing and the administrative arrangements and **15%** will be used for maintenance. This is a very good system. Mr Speaker, please allow me to make this declaration that any contractors who have enough in their banks should come and invest in Sierra Leone. There are toll road opportunities and we want them to come and invest. Again, we are encouraging Sierra Leoneans who have connections with the business people who are outside the shores of Sierra Leone to bring them, so that they

will score another point for us and for our President to deliver on his political mandate. We will reward you with the operation of the toll. With the blessing of the Speaker, I would like to declare that any Sierra Leonean, who is patriotic enough to support the President, Dr Julius Maada Bio to deliver on his political mandate or any other future President who brings investors, this Parliament will allow you to operate the toll road because you deserve it. You just bring the investor and after completion, Parliament will reward you. You will be allowed to operate and employ Sierra Leoneans. You will recover whatever resources you must have invested.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Member from Moyamba was saying that the Wellington/Masiaka toll road has no market and toilet facilities, but this particular one is going to be an exception. It is going to have three tollgates and each tollgate will have something like a hotel facility. It is not a promise because it is part of this Agreement the contractor is going to execute. The contractor is going to complete the work within three years, including the construction of the toll plazas and hotels. The road must have a resting place; a place to feel good and a place for amusements. If you are tired after a long travel, you can go to one of those hotels and rest. It is not part of government's manifesto, but it is going to be done by the contractor because it is part of the Agreement. So, this toll road will be one of its kinds; and above all, it connects the regions. We have only two major roads; i.e., the one from Masiaka to Bo and the one from Masiaka to Makeni. There is another road leading to Kenema and Kailahun.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Member from Kambia said that in between those stretches, there are various options. For instance, if you cannot pay from Gbomsamba to Batkanu, then you use the other option. There are options available and this is one good thing about this Agreement. Again, unlike any other toll system, this one has a system of technology that will be properly monitored. There is no room for fraud because after you would have made payment, the machine is punched and the figure will register to the Minister of Finance, Minister of Works and SLRA. State House will also know the amount that has been paid. Secondly, what makes this system very good is the fact that Government has the option to pay in the next one year. This means if government wants to invest in other development areas, it can use that money and invest, and make the toll payment later. It can be paid at any time as and when the government deemed necessary.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the question is how will this Agreement be reviewed? We have corrected the mistake we made the last time in this Agreement and we will never commit such a mistake. We had to beg for the exchange rate to be reviewed. We have frowned against it and it would not happen again. The toll fees will

be reviewed as and when it is deemed necessary. So, when you say as and when necessary, it can be downwards or upwards and that will have no problem.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for the sake of consistency, I think the toll fee should be the same. If this is done, there is no need to fear for any future increase with regard the toll road fee. What is in existence now must be the same with future levies, so that the people will use to this condition and it will not create any problem. For this particular Agreement, the President wants this road to be constructed immediately because it stands to benefit his people and Sierra Leoneans. I believe if the Falaba Road would have been made a toll road, **70%** of it would have been completed by now. Again, if the Mano Kowafe Road has been tolled, it would have been **70%** completed by now. There is a road construction from Kono to the Guinea border that is still going on; and if that road had been tolled, it would have been completed by now. That road will not cost the government. Therefore, this Parliament cannot sit here and allow such a good opportunity to slip from our hands. I want to thank the Minister for his hard work. He is indeed a very hard working man. We would have lost this opportunity by tomorrow if we failed to ratify it today. This is because the donors want to make quick interest. If we do not want to make use of the money, they will send it elsewhere for them to make interest. We would have lost it. I believe that State House, the Ministry of Finance, Sierra Leoneans and the peoples' representatives will be happy today. This is a landmark achievement and I want to encourage every one of us here that if you know any investor who has money and he/she is ready to invest, please open up to us; we will reward you. I thank you and God bless you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Leader of Opposition.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Having heard from the Opposition Leader, I will just say thank you, Mr Speaker. He has almost done my work because whenever an Agreement that has to do with the government is brought here and the Opposition Leader supports it, that means the Minister and the government have done due diligence. Mr Minister, I want to thank you very much for this Agreement. You have listened to the Opposition Leader that the mistake we have made sometimes in 2016 has been corrected in this Agreement. You would agree with me that when the Wellington/Masiaka Concessional Agreement was brought here, it met stiff resistance; but today, we have an Agreement that is being supported by both sides of the aisles. Like the Honourable Member from Moyamba said, this document is not controversial and it has been here long before now, even before we went on Christmas break in December. It has been laid long before this time and it was the last document we laid before we went on recess.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a toll road and it is going to pay for itself. However, unlike the current toll road that we do not know its cost because we were not provided with the Agreement, this particular Agreement revealed everything to us and the Government is taking the lead. As soon as the construction phase is complete, the Government will be informed that this is the loan Agreement and that we have paid completely. This means nobody is going to fry us with our own oil. It will be a Government property and the Government has given itself a period of ten years to pay and a grace period of two years. So, the only correction I would like to make is on the area of Corporate Social Responsibilities. For instance, healthcare centers, hotels, schools and markets will be constructed. For some of us who are opportune to travel out of the country will attest to the fact that once you have covered eighty to hundred miles, you will meet a resting place. When I travelled from Dallas Texas to San-Antonio, we had to rest like two or three times. Instead of building hotels, they constructed resting stations and there are provisions where you can pack your vehicle. They have restaurants, rest rooms and even washrooms in those places. You can get food, drinks, relax a bit and then continue your journey. For those with the recent cars, you will find out that even after driving for some hours, the dash board will tell you that you need to take tea break. This means you should not drive from Freetown to Kailahun without resting. It is difficult for our people even before now to drive from Freetown to Bo without resting. That is why we have Masiaka and Moyamba Junction. It was a norm that you have to rest either at Masiaka or Moyamba Junction, where you will get refreshments and then continue your journey. This is still practicable because when you drive from Bo to Freetown, you could stop at Mile 91. There is a fuel station at Mile 91 where we usually buy drinks and use the restroom before we continue the journey. As per this Agreement, resting stations will be constructed. You would agree with me that continuous driving without resting increases the risk of accidents. Sometimes the drivers get tired and sleep off while driving. That is one of the major reasons accidents occur. If there are resting places, it is expected that drivers should not be in a rush; they should be driving on comfortable roads and when they get to a resting place, they should rest in order to revive the mind before they continue the journey. This will help to reduce the accident rate in the country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is 86 Kilometers road and the Government is going to pay for it. That is why the Government is going to appoint people who are going to manage the toll. It is our property and if we mismanage it, it is our business. We want Sierra Leoneans to own it. This is not just linking Port Loko and Moyamba districts; it is linking the North and the Southern Regions. Like what the Honourable Member said, there are alternative roads. For instance, if you want to go to Moyamba, but you do not want to pay the toll fee, you can use the Masiaka Road through Mile 91;

but if you want to do it faster to Rutile or Gbangbatoke, you can pay the toll fee. For the Wellington/Masiaka toll road, we were struggling with providing alternative roads. The beauty of this road is that it is totally new and it is not in use. It is difficult for any vehicle to use that road at this time. Unlike the one that we use to have, this one is virtually new road. Mr Minister, as you have heard from the Opposition Leader, I want to thank you and the President. I know that the President is passionate about road infrastructure and this particular road leads to the home of the Speaker, the President and other senior Government Ministers, including some of us that come from Bo. Instead of using the long route, we can use the short route and spare twenty to twenty five minutes. Thank you very much, Mr Minister.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as the Opposition Leader said, we want serious investors. These roads will pay for themselves. We have the Yele and Matotoka Road as well. That road could be tolled and it can even open the country. We have the Tongo/Kono Road and SLRA should look for funds for these roads. We have serious Members of Parliament who are ready to work with you. The Honourable Helen Kuyembeh was one of our best in this Well and I know that she will use her expertise to support Management and the Minister. You have to work as a team. She has lots of experience from the civil service. She was a member of the civil service before she travelled to America. When she came back, she joined us as a Member of Parliament. The Committee on Works is here and we are always in support of you because our success relies on what you do. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much Leader of Government Business.

DR DENIS SANDY [*Minister of Works and Public Assets*]. Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is not going to be a classroom because I am going to summarise my presentation. This is because everything has been said by Members of Parliament. The Ministry of Works, in consultation with the SLRA and the Ministry of Finance, has drawn a matrix of all the pricing roads in this country. I am pleased with the knowledge that Honourable Members have in the road sector. We have the Mano Junction, going through Bumpe, and as far as Kono; we have Bo, Yele, Matotoka and then Petifu, as well as Batkanu. I want to assure this House that we are in the peak of discussion with many patriotic Sierra Leoneans and other investors who want to come and invest in the road sector. This is because of the level of confidence we have demonstrated and the Government of President Bio has taken great strides to ensure that this happens. I am pleased to say I love working with the Honourable Members of Parliament from both sides of the aisle. This shows that when it comes to national developments, all of us are together and this is what makes us proud Sierra Leoneans.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure before we leave here today, we will have more roads before 2028 for the good of this country. Again, all the facilities the Honourable Umu Pyne indicated have been explained by the Leader of Government Business and Honourable Hindolo Gevao. For me, it is a pleasure to work for the people of this country. Therefore, on behalf of His Excellency the President, I want to thank you very much Honourable Members. With regard to oversight, let me reiterate that this is not something that is going to be limited to the parliamentary oversight Committee, but every Member of Parliament here present. I want to welcome all of you to my office. Whenever you have the time, my office is always open and SLRA is open. When you come to us, we will give you all the information that is available. We are ready for us to work together, even in terms of providing the necessary logistics, we will be there to help. We will ensure that you beautiful ladies and handsome men are comfortable in doing your work. I am saying this because SLRA has a budget line called 'operations.' I was told by the Director General that the Honourable Members of Parliament will be comfortable.

THE SPEAKER: Interestingly, the Director General is here and he is listening.

DR DENIS SANDY: Indeed and he needs to note this down. The Director General is here and he knows exactly what he is supposed to do. I have great confidence in him and we are going to deliver this project successfully. Let me end by thanking my Deputy Minister, Madam Fofanah; she has been very supportive throughout this process. I also want to thank the new Chairperson of the Board, Honourable Helen Kuyembeh, the Minister of Finance, the Speaker of this House and the Attorney General's Office. I am certain that had it not been for them, we would not have been here in terms of having a Concessional Agreement which all of you have supported.

Therefore, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Friday, 20th December 2024: Concessional Agreement for the Reconstruction of the Magbang, Moyamba, Gbangbatoke Roads Project, 86 Kilometers between the Government of Sierra Leone, represented by the Ministry of Works and Public Assets and Society International, the Equipment and the TRAVOCS CITRA, December 2024.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, before I put the question, I would like to inform Members of the Parliamentary Service Commission that we were supposed to meet immediately after the sitting, but because of time, we are rescheduling that meeting to tomorrow at 1:00 p.m. prompt.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, you know that tomorrow is Friday and people have to go to the mosques for the Juma Prayers and people will be travelling to the provinces as well.

THE SPEAKER: In that case, let us meet at 10:00 a.m. We are expected to meet with UNOPS. UNOPS will also be in attendance to brief us as to the current status of the renovation of Parliament. I think the Deputy Speaker has been leading the process. Mr Deputy Speaker, you are expected to be present in that meeting, so that you properly brief Members of the Commission. I am sure Members of the Commission have several questions to ask. Please endeavour to be there before you allow yourself to be told.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Government Motion by the Minister of Works and Public Assets has been ratified].

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, your Agreement has been ratified. I want to thank you for bringing it to this House. You have to come back to collect your certificate of ratification. Honourable Members, the Deputy Speaker is going to take the seat, but we will have to stand down the House for an hour to enable Members of Parliament to have their lunch.

[The House stood down for five minutes]

VI. BILL:

THE REPORT ON THE BILL ENTITLED THE SIERRA LEONE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY ACT, 2024.
MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND AVIATION.

[THE HOUSE RESOLVES INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE]

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I present to you the Sixth Report of the Legislative Committee, Second Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone, on the Bill entitled 'The Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory Authority Act, 2024m presented to Parliament on Tuesday, 4th February 2025.

1. Introduction

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory Authority Act, 2024 being an Act to provide for the establishment of the Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory Authority with the responsibility to develop and regulate railways and cable car transportation in Sierra Leone, to monitor and coordinate activities in the railway and cable cars sector, to administer enactments on railway and cable cars transportation and to provide for other related matters." This Bill, having gone through the Second Reading, was committed to the Legislative Committee for scrutiny, pursuant to **Standing Orders 51[1]**. Subsequently, the

Committee met on Tuesday, 11th February 2025 in the Speaker's Conference Room, Parliament Building, with the following objectives:

- ❖ To scrutinise in detail, the principles and provisions of the Bill and to make amendments if necessary.
- ❖ To ascertain the constitutional and legal implications contained therein.
- ❖ To report to the Plenary for consideration by the Committee of the Whole House in line with S.O.53.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, in attendance were the Chairman of the Legislative Committee, Members of the Legislative Committee, other Members of Parliament, the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Transport and Aviation, and a Senior Adviser.

2. Recommendations

The Legislative Committee, having scrutinised the Bill line by line and Clause by Clause, recommends the following amendments to the House for approval:

The Short Title of the Bill be amended to read, '**THE SIERRA LEONE RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY ACT, 2025.**'

The Long Title of the Bill be amended to read: "Being an Act to provide for the establishment of the Sierra Leone Railways Development and Regulatory Authority to develop and regulate railways and cable car transportation in Sierra Leone, to monitor and co-ordinate activities in the railway and cable cars sector and to provide for other related matters."

PART I – PRELIMINARIES:

CLAUSE - 1 INTERPRETATION: the word '**Authority**' be amended by adding letter '**s**' to the word '**Railway**' on the first line. To now read, '**the Sierra Leone Railways Development and Regulatory Authority established under Section 2.**'

CLAUSE 1: INTERPRETATION: the word '**Board**' be amended by adding the letter '**s**' to the word '**Railway**' on the first line. To now read, '**the Sierra Leone Railways Development and Regulatory Authority Board, established under Section 3.**'

PART II – THE SIERRA LEONE RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY: be amended to read, '**THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SIERRA LEONE RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY.**'

CLAUSE 2: SIERRA LEONE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY: The side notes be amended by adding the letter '**s**' to the word '**Railway.**' To now read, "Sierra Leone Railways Development and Regulatory Authority."

CLAUSE 2: SIERRA LEONE RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY: Sub-clause [1] be amended by adding the letter 's' to the word 'Railway' on the second line. To now read, 'There is hereby established a body to be known as the Sierra Leone Railways Development and Regulatory Authority.'

CLAUSE 2: SIERRA LEONE RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY: Sub-clause 3 be amended to become Clause 3, with a side note to read, 'common seal.'

CLAUSE 3: COMMON SEAL be inserted to read: 'The Authority shall have a common seal, the use of which shall be authenticated by the signature of-

[a] The Chairman or other member of the Board, authorised either generally or specially by the Board in that behalf; and

[b] The Director-General or some other person authorised by the Board in that behalf.

CLAUSE 3: SIERRA LEONE RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY BOARD be renumbered to become clause '4.'

CLAUSE 4: SIERRA LEONE RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY BOARD: The side notes be amended by adding the letter 's' to the word 'Railway.' To now read 'Sierra Leone Railways Development and Regulatory Authority Board.'

CLAUSE 4: SIERRA LEONE RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY BOARD: Sub-clause 2[b] be amended by inserting the phrase, 'not below the rank of a Director' at the end of the sentence. To now read, "a representative from each of the following institutions, not below the rank of a Director"

CLAUSE – 4 CLAUSE – 4 SIERRA LEONE RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY BOARD: Sub-clause 2[c] be amended to read, '4 persons, 2 of whom shall be women with proven knowledge and experience in public transportation administration or management.'

CLAUSE 4: TENURE OF MEMBERS: be renumbered to become Clause '5.'

CLAUSE 5: TENURE OF MEMBERS: Sub-clause 2[d] be amended to read: 'if he is convicted and sentenced for an offence involving fraud, dishonesty or sexual offence.'

CLAUSE 5: RENUMERATION OF MEMBERS: be renumbered to become Clause '6.'

CLAUSE 6: RENUMERATION OF MEMBERS: be amended to read:

[1] The Chairman, members appointed under Paragraph [c] of Sub-section [2] of Section 4 and persons co-opted by the Board shall be paid such remunerations, fees and allowances approved by the Minister.'

[2] Members appointed under Paragraph [b] of Subsection 2 of Section 4 shall be paid sitting fees approved by the Minister.

[3] Members shall be reimbursed by the Authority for expenses incurred in connection with the discharge of their functions as the Board may, with the approval of the Minister.'

CLAUSE 6: MEETINGS OF BOARD be renumbered to become Clause '7.'

CLAUSE – 7 MEETINGS OF BOARD: Sub-clause 1 be amended by deleting the letter 's' from the word 'times' after the word 'such' and before the word 'as' and inserting the phrase 'and place' after the word 'time'. To now read, 'The Board shall meet for the dispatch of its business at least once every 3 months and at such time and place as the Chairman may determine.'

CLAUSE 7: DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST: be renumbered to become Clause '8.'

CLAUSE 8: DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST: Sub-clause, 2 be amended to read, 'A member who contravenes sub-section 1 shall be liable to disciplinary action, including removal from the Board.'

CLAUSE 8: IMMUNITY OF MEMBERS be renumbered to become Clause '9.'

CLAUSE 9: IMMUNITY OF MEMBERS be approved.

CLAUSE 9: COMMITTEES OF BOARD be renumbered to become Clause '10.'

CLAUSE 10: COMMITTEES OF BOARD be approved.

CLAUSE 10: FUNCTIONS OF BOARD be renumbered to become Clause '11.'

CLAUSE 11: FUNCTIONS OF BOARD be approved.

PART III – FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF THE SIERRA LEONE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY: be amended by adding the letter 's' to the word 'Railway.' To now read 'FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF THE SIERRA LEONE RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY.'

PART III – FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF THE SIERRA LEONE RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY

CLAUSE – 11 FUNCTIONS OF AUTHORITY: be renumbered to become Clause '12.'

CLAUSE 12: FUNCTIONS OF AUTHORITY: sub clause **1[b]**, be amended by replacing the word '**licenses**' with the word "**licensees**" and adding the letter "**s**" to the word '**railway.**' To now read, 'regulate and monitor the activities of licensees, concessionaries and operators of railways.'

CLAUSE 12: FUNCTIONS OF AUTHORITY: Sub-clause **1[e]**, be amended by adding the letter '**s**' to the word '**railway**' on the third line. To now read, 'implement and ensure compliance with this Act and any other legislation relating to railways and railway services and cable car transportation operations.'

CLAUSE 12: FUNCTIONS OF AUTHORITY: sub clause **1[h]** be amended by adding the letter '**s**' to the word '**railway**' on the second line. To now read, 'set and enforce safety and security standards for the construction and operations of railways and railway services and cable car transportation.'

CLAUSE 12: FUNCTIONS OF AUTHORITY: sub clause **1[k]**, be amended by adding the letter '**s**' to the word '**railway**' on the third line. To now read, "advise the Government on matters relating to the development and management of railways and railway services and cable car transportation;"

CLAUSE 12: FUNCTIONS OF AUTHORITY: Sub-clause **1[L]** be amended by adding the letter '**s**' to the word '**railway**' on the second line. To now read 'carry out transactional functions necessary for the growth and sustainability of railways and railway services and cable car transportation.'

CLAUSE 12: POWERS OF AUTHORITY be renumbered to become Clause '**13.**'

CLAUSE 13: POWERS OF AUTHORITY: Sub-clause **1[a]** be amended by deleting the phrase '**for the payment of the charge imposed**' after the word '**procedure**' on the second line and before the word '**prescribed**' on the third line. To now read, 'impose surface levy on the procedure prescribed by statutory instrument made by the minister.'

CLAUSE 13: POWERS OF AUTHORITY: sub clause **1[b]** be amended by deleting the word '**and**' at the end of the fourth line. To now read 'obtain information required for the performance of its functions under this Act, by notice in writing, requiring a person to give information in the form and manner within the specified in the notice.'

PART IV – ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

CLAUSE 13: DIRECTOR GENERAL be renumbered to become Clause '**14.**'

CLAUSE 14: DIRECTOR GENERAL: Sub-clause **2** be amended to read, 'A person shall not be appointment as Director General unless he:

[a] is a holder of a master's degree in transportation engineering, planning or operation from an accredited university.

[b] Possesses at least 5 years' experience in any of the fields of transportation engineering/planning/operation, public transportation administration, or business administration or a profession relevant to the operations of the Authority.

CLAUSE 14: DIRECTOR GENERAL: Sub-clause 3 be expunged.

CLAUSE 14: FUNCTIONS OF DIRECTOR GENERAL: be renumbered to become Clause **15.**'

CLAUSE 15: FUNCTIONS OF DIRECTOR GENERAL: Sub-clause **3** be expunged.

CLAUSE 15: DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL: be renumbered to become clause '**16.**'

CLAUSE 16: DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL: Sub-clause **2** be amended to read, 'A person shall not be appointed as Deputy Director General unless he:

[a] is a holder of a degree in engineering, public transportation administration, or business administration from an accredited university.

[b] possesses at least 5 years' experience in managerial position in any of the fields of engineering, public transportation administration, business administration, or a profession relevant to the operations of the Authority.'

CLAUSE – 16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL: Sub-clause **3** be expunged.

CLAUSE – 16 FUNCTIONS OF DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL: be renumbered to become Clause '**17.**'

CLAUSE 17 FUNCTIONS OF DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL: be approved.

CLAUSE 17 COMPANY SECRETARY: be renumbered to become clause '**18.**'

CLAUSE 18 COMPANY SECRETARY: be approved.

CLAUSE 18 OTHER STAFF: be renumbered to become Clause '**19.**'

CLAUSE 19 OTHER STAFF: Sub-clause **1** be amended by replacing the word '**appoint**' with the word '**recruit**' on the second line. To now read, 'The Authority may on such terms and conditions as the Board may determine, recruit other employees required for the efficient discharge of its functions under this Act.'

CLAUSE 19: DIRECTORATE: be renumbered to become clause '**20.**'

CLAUSE 20: DIRECTORATE: Sub-clause **2**, be amended by inserting the word '**the**' after the word '**on**' and before the word '**advice**' on the second line. To now read, 'A department under sub-section 1 shall be headed by a Director appointed by the Board on the advice of the Director General..

PART V – FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

CLAUSE 20: FUNDS OF AUTHORITY: be renumbered to become Clause **'21.'**

CLAUSE 21: FUNDS OF AUTHORITY: Sub-clause **1** be amended by separating the word **'funds consisting'** at the start of the second line. To now read, 'The activities of the Authority shall be financed by funds consisting of...'

CLAUSE 21: FUNDS OF AUTHORITY: Sub-clause **1[b]** be amended by adding the letter **'y'** to the letter **'b'** at the end of the second line. To now read, 'a levy by metric ton of cargo transported by rail as the Minister may, by Statutory Instrument prescribe.'

Clause 21: ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT: be renumbered to become Clause **'22.'**

CLAUSE 22: ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT: Sub-clause **1** be amended by replacing the word **'Agency'** with the word **'Authority'** at the start of the third line. To now read, 'The Authority shall keep proper books of accounts and records in relation to the activities, property and finances of the Authority in a form approved by the Auditor General, and shall prepare, in respect of each financial year, a financial statement which shall include...'

CLAUSE 22: FINANCIAL YEAR: be renumbered to become Clause **'23.'**

CLAUSE 23: FINANCIAL YEAR: be approved.

CLAUSE 23: ANNUAL REPORT: be renumbered to become Clause **'24'**

CLAUSE 24: ANNUAL REPORT: Sub-clause **2** be amended by deleting the phrase **'by the records'** after the word **'submitted'** and before the word **'under'** on the first line and also changing the number **'21'** to **'22'** on the second line. To now read, 'An annual report submitted under Sub-section 1 shall include the accounts and annual financial statement prepared under Section 22 and the report of the audit thereon.'

CLAUSE – 24 ANNUAL REPORT: sub clause **[3]** be amended by separating the word **"beforeparliament"** at the start of the second line. To now read, "The Minister shall lay copies of the annual report before Parliament within 2 months after he has received the report."

CLAUSE – 24 ANNUAL REPORT: Sub-clause **4** be amended by separating the word **'all stakeholders'** after the word **'to'** and before the word **'within'** on the second line. To now read, 'The Authority shall make copies of the report available to all stakeholders within 30 days once it has been laid before Parliament.'

PART VI – MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

CLAUSE 24: REGULATIONS be renumbered to become Clause **25.'**

CLAUSE 25: REGULATIONS be approved.

3. Conclusion

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Legislative Committee, having scrutinised the Bill entitled **THE SIERRA LEONE RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY ACT, 2025** recommend these proposals to the House for approval. The Report reflects the consensus of Honourable Members of the Committee. I therefore move that the House pass the Bill entitled, **THE SIERRA LEONE RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY ACT, 2025** through Committee Stage, Third Reading and into Law.

I thank you for your attention.

Signed:

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Hon. Abdul S. Marray Conteh

Chairman, Legislative Committee

[Second Session 2024/2025]

THE CHAIRMAN: I have been instructed by the Principal Adviser that I should thank the Chairman of the Legislative Committee for his wonderful presentation of their report. I want to thank you profusely for a job well done.

Part 1-6, Clauses 1- 24, stand part of the Bill.

Part 1-6, Clauses 1-24 Proposed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we are going page by page. If there is any issue, you already know the procedure. We start with Page 1.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: If we go back to the report, it is clear that we made some drastic changes. In the second and third lines, the phrase 'with the responsibility' and if you go to the third to last line, 'to add Minister enactment through rail,' the drastic change was made there and the whole line was read. Of course, it is about adding the word 'Authority' which was not there. If you looked at the Bill itself, it says 'Sierra Leone Railway Development and Regulatory, but the word 'Authority' was missing. It was however added.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think it was missing on the short and long titles as well.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY- CONTEH: Absolutely, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, if that is the consensus of the House, it is now the '**Sierra Leone Railways Development and Regulatory Authority Act, 2025**'. Page 2? This is an expression to ensure that the railway is properly tested. Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? Mr Chairman, is it Tertiary Education Commission or the National Council for Technical Vocational and other Awards Act that we passed here? You added 'independence of the Commission or the Authorities.' I do not know whether you want to add it.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Well, during the deliberations, instead of adding the one that has to do with 'independence,' there was need for the addition of a sub-clause. That sub-clause is meant to look at the manner in which the Authority will go about rolling out their mandate. However, if this particular mandate is not rolled out to satisfaction, the sub-clause will have to point towards expiration or the transfer of that particular mandate to another institution that will be looked at. In this case, the clause you are talking about regarding the 'independence of the Authority' was not added and it was not even discussed. Nevertheless, if at this point we think that it is necessary for us to add it, we can do so and it will cause no harm.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, do you think it is necessary to add independence? This is because we must maintain consistency. While we are passing laws that specifically have clauses that are uniformed, we should also ensure that we incorporate that in this Bill. Therefore, whenever Bills from Sierra Leone or an Acts of Parliament from Sierra Leone are picked up, people will see the trend of consistency and the patterns of the Bills or Acts of Parliament.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Thank you, Mr Chairman. The independence of the Authority is actually captured in Sub-clause 2, which states: "There is hereby established a body to be known as the **Sierra Leone Railways Development and Regulatory Authority Act, 2025**." Now, this is the operating platform. The Authority shall be a body cooperate and that indicates the independence of the Authority. We are creating a statutory component as opposed to a company that is registered.

THE CHAIRMAN: While I take your point, other Members of Parliament will agree with me that we have established lots of Authorities that would have been setup as body cooperates, but we endeavour to include the independent clause, so as to guarantee the expressed provision of 'independence.'

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: That independence is supererogatory, if I may put it that way.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have seen it in this Parliament. We have Acts passed by Parliament, but the Ministers usually rely on the provision in Section 62 of the

Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No.6 of 1991 that they can override certain provisions in the Acts.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: I bow, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your understanding.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: I think the Clerks have that rendition because it is a standard Clause in most of the other Acts we have passed here. Well, talking about control, it says: **"It is not subject to the control of any other..."** I think that is the exact rendition. It is something we are going to insert.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Page 6?

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: I just took the point from the Honourable Member from Kono and this is the first time I am seeing it in this Act. It says: **"A member of the Board shall not be personally liable for a debt or obligation of the authority."** I am a member of the Committee and we have to discuss about it. This is a statutory company. For other companies that are incorporated under the Companies Act, most times the veil is lifted. Therefore, assuming that you secured a loan, but your assets cannot meet the liability in the event you are sued. If a judgment is delivered against your Corporation, who is going to pay? In public companies or companies limited by guarantee or private limited companies, the court lifts the veil to see those behind the company and thereby, holding them responsible for the payment of the debt. However, in this situation, it is a statutory company. The question is who pays? If the assets of the company cannot upset the liability and a judgment is delivered against the company, where maybe the Board members or the Chairman who are responsible for that liability cannot be held personally responsible, who is going to pay?

THE CHAIRMAN: There are two things to this. The first is that since they are body corporates, they can sue and be sued. Whosoever the creditor is, he/she should take a joint and several guarantees on the company and the directors, so that they cannot claim immunity under a joint and several guarantees, which makes them joint liable for the liability of the company. However, if the creditor fails to take a joint or several guarantees to the Board Members or those that secure the loan, then you would be left vulnerable to the Statutory Instrument.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: I think that should have been part of the creditors' due diligence exercise. This is because if they failed to do that, I think they will have to pay the price. So, you can still be a Board Member without being personally liable.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member. Page 7? Page 8?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Mr Chairman, Page 8. This is off the records. We had this discussion on Page 8 and Page 7. Take a look at sub-clause 'f;' grants license concessions which are necessary for the operations of the railways and railway services and cable car transportation.' Also, we have on Page 7 'levy parametric tons of cargo transport.' How does that go with Agreements and Concessions, Mr Minister? We have just looked at it and in fact, you brought some of those Agreements here that talked about those that are already using the rail. Now, with your regulatory exercise, how will you navigate through this issue of concessions? This is because if they all have concessions, how would you generate revenue?

THE CHAIRMAN: Minister, are you going to create a Clause in the Miscellaneous Clause to pass all concessions signed by the Ministry of Transport to be a new Authority to give them responsibility? This is because in each of these concessions we have signed, we have placed levies and some of these levies are levies that are being put on transportation of certain minerals that are above the threshold of their required performance in a year. For example, in the Kingho Rail and Port Agreement, they are expected to do ten million metric tons per year, but if they do anything above ten million metric tons, they are supposed to pay certain levies. The question is to whom are they going to pay these levies? Is it to the Authority or to the Ministry?

DR DENIS SANY: Eventually, when we shall have setup the Authority, it should be paid to the Authority.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, it has to be clear in the law, so that they will have the provision that is already giving them access to inherit concession Agreement that has to do with rail and ports.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Mr Chairman, let us bear in mind that this is a Regulatory Act. It is an Act that is intended to regulate and control the activities of those who will be operating the railway sector. I think the conclusion arises from the fact that licenses are actually the regulatory tools.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: They are the regular tools because it is in the license that you insert conditions they must comply with in terms of operating in the sector. If they failed to comply with those conditions, you have to revoke their license. The license is the tool used to control them. I can understand that it is also for the development of the railway, but concessions and licenses should be under different sections. I did not bring this up, but it should come under the financial provisions. The Concessions and the licenses should actually come under the financial provisions and it should be separated from licenses, which are regulatory tools.

HON ABDUL S. MARRY-CONTEH: Mr Chairman, now that he is talking about financial provisions, I am sure I stood up to say something on Pages 7 and 8. The nexus here is that when you look at the financial provisions, regardless of whatever concession you have, you still have to pay the levy per metric ton; and if that is the case, then it solves the problem. So, even if you have a concession, when it comes to levy per metric ton, you still have to pay. Therefore, concession does not apply when it comes to that levy per metric ton, as far as Page 7 is concerned.

THE CHAIRMAN: The fact remains that when we passed these Agreements, they were ratified with stabilisation clauses. How do we manage between the stabilisation clause and the inclusion of the concession that has already passed by the House into these Agreements for monitoring by the Regulatory Authority? I want to hear from Honourable Tamba Kellie, Honourable Sheridan Kamara and Honourable Hindolo Gevao. This is because we have to be properly guided as a House, so that we do not make mistakes. The Office of the Law Clerk, you have to be around, so that we can hear from you through the Speaker. We want to get a clear understanding as to how we can incorporate and not to violate the Concession Agreements that have already been ratified by this House, while stabilisation clauses were included to prevent coming into effect of any law passed after their Concession Agreements.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Mr Chairman, this envisages the fact that there being a Concession Agreement between the Authority and some interested parties to operate the railway, they will take cognizance of existing concession Agreements and make sure that whatever they do is done in line with the existing laws, otherwise the existing laws will be repealing the previous laws. So, whatever Concession Agreements are made in the future under this regulatory regime, we have to comply with existing Concession Agreements.

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: Mr Chairman, what I saw in the Agreement we have just ratified is that they spelled out the issues, items or activities for which Government concessions should apply, irrespective of the fact that they have concessions, they also itemised those areas they have to pay taxes or levies. That is what they did in the Magbang Bridge Agreement. For example, they said that for certain areas, you have concessions, but apart from that, you also have the concession not to pay GST and income tax. However, irrespective of your concession, you have to pay withholding tax; and irrespective of your concession, you have to pay other levies. So, it is clearly spelled out in that Agreement. The concession is limited to some certain extent. In the event you have just made a cash blank concession, the concessionaire will hold the view that it covers each and every aspect of his or her operations because everybody wants to cut down on the cost.

THE CHAIRMAN: This House has done that in the past. When we passed the Sierra Tropical Agreement, we gave them a cash blank concession for all tax regimes. Currently, even though demand notices were sent to them by the Bo District Council for payment, they did not pay because that particular Clause has given them a cash blank waiver on all taxes. So, whether it is local tax or not, a tax is a tax.

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: Mr Chairman, going forward, we have to limit the granting of concession to a specific Clause as was done with the Magbang Agreement, wherein the concessionaire was required to pay corporate tax over a period of time as stated in the Finance Act, 2013. Also, it is stated that the concessionaire shall pay the withholding tax to the payee for the expiration period. So, even though they have given them concession, they have qualified the concessions and areas they can import services for which they cannot pay taxes. It has been stated that they have to pay taxes. So, the concession is limited and not cash blank. If we do that, it will bring some benefits to the state.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let me hear from the Honourable Mohamed Sheridan Kamara. Please, you can lend your voice. If you are part of the Committee, please allow us to discuss the report you have brought to us.

HON. MOHAMED S. KAMARA: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. What is very clear is the fact that I want to take the queue from my learned senior, Honourable Hindolo M. Gevao. For concessions, it must be specific and limited. We cannot give a blank concession for them to do whatever they want to do. We must indicate what is the concession and what they must do and what they must not do. So, I wholeheartedly support the position that if we are giving concession to a corporate institution, it must be limited and specific. In other words, we must state clearly the concession that is being given to that particular corporate institution.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, my thought is that we separate from what Honourable Kellie has said concerning the regulatory part that comes into the licenses and bring the concession into the financial provisions. I do not know if this makes sense.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Mr Chairman, if you looked at 'f,' it says grant licenses, concessions and leases. I am sure it is referring to Agreements and not pecuniary matters. A lease is an Agreement; a license is an Agreement and a Concession is an Agreement. Concession simply means I allow you to take maybe from Kono to Kailahun through the railway and I give you concession or monopoly to do that. That is what it means. It is not referring to pecuniary matters. So, we must not be joking with these issues.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Mr Chairman, I think it is going to be simple from now. Most of those Agreements were ratified in the absence of the Regulatory Authority. We now have Regulatory Authority that takes care of granting licenses and concessions. So, I think the law is clear and if at all you have an Agreement, except your Agreement says otherwise, but... - *[Interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, we have not given expressed responsibility to the concessionaires to work with the Regulating Authority that we are going to setup. So, we must capture it somewhere in the miscellaneous Clause in this Act. I am sure that will take care of all concessions that have to do with railways and cable cars.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Mr Chairman, I think that is administrative.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have to make it express because if you leave it as administrative, do not forget that the regulatory Authority that you are about to establish will be under the supervision of the Ministry. I could vividly remember when we passed the National Protected Area Authority Act here. We left a particular area in the hands of the Ministry of Environment. This means we gave a blank Cheque to the Ministry of the Environment. So, we have to be specific, in order to ensure that we tie the supervisory role of the Ministry to the function created in this Act.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: The function is now clear; i.e., grant licenses or concession leases. I want to see a situation wherein, the Ministry of Finance will go and make an arrangement without including the Regulatory Authority.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is a Rail Agreement that is already in force. Therefore, my suggestion is that we have to make sure that the existing Concession Agreement comes under the direct supervision and management of this Regulating Authority; otherwise, you have not given them any job; you have just enabled them to find a job for themselves. Already, there is an existing job under the sector they are going to operate.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY-CONTEH: Except otherwise, but it is very clear in Clause 11[b] that it regulates and monitors the activities of licenses, concessions and operators of railways. Automatically, those are under their purview, whether the Agreement has been created before or not. However, as soon as this Agreement is ratified, they are automatically going to regulate all those activities and they are under their supervision. It is clear under the functions of the Authority.

DR DENIS SANDY: Mr Chairman, I am sure that is the spirit behind the creation of this Authority and that responsibility will be given to them.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we are in agreement. Paragraph 'b' of Clause 11, Sub-clause 1 gives me the comfort that we do not need to make it superfluous. Let us proceed with Page 9. Page 10? Page 11? Page 12? Page 13? Page 14?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY- CONTEH: It is Page 13, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is Page 14 at the back.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: That is memorandum of object.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. You have to include the signature of the Minister. So, I still stand by Page 14.

HON ABDUL S. MARRAY COPNTEH: Agreed, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Except if you want to expunge the signature of the Minister.

DR DENIS SANDY: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 1-6, Clauses 1-25, stand part of the Bill as amended.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Parts 1-6, Clauses 1-25 formed part of the Bill as amended]

[The House Resumes]

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minster, please report on the Bill.

DR DENIS SANDY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I report that the Bill entitled the Sierra Leone Railways Development and Regulatory Authority Act, 2025, having gone through the Committee of the Whole House with amendments, I now move that the Bill be read the third time and passed into law.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

The Bill entitled, the Sierra Leone Railways Development and Regulatory Authority Act, 2025, being an Act to provide for the establishment of the Sierra Leone Railways Development and Regulatory Authority, to Develop and Regulate Railways and Cable Cars Transportation in Sierra Leone, to Monitor and Coordinate activities in the Railway and Cable Cars Sector and to provide for other related Matters, has been read the third time and passed into law.

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at 3:45 p.m., and was adjourned to Tuesday, 25th February, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.]