

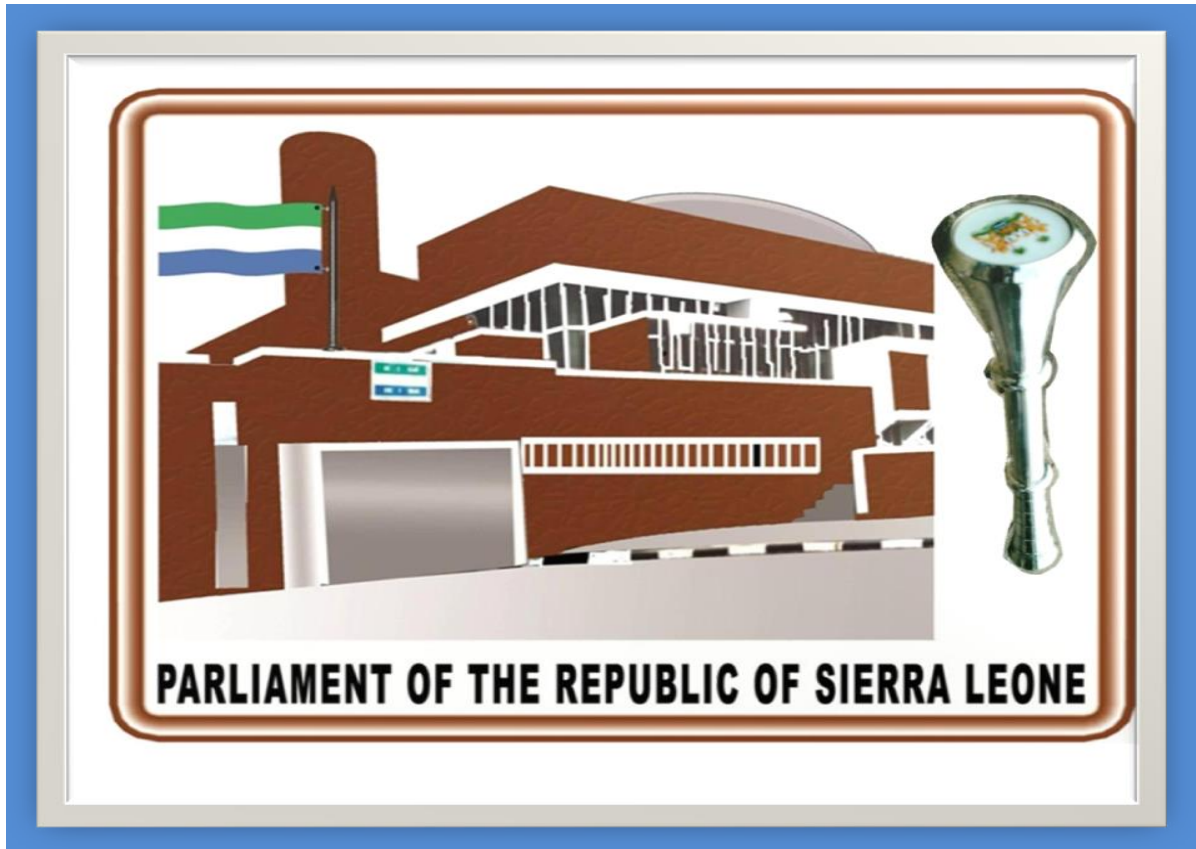
OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE

[HANSARD]

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
FIRST SESSION – FIRST MEETING
THURSDAY, 17TH AUGUST, 2023**

SESSION – 2023/2024



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

VOLUME: 1

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Thursday, 17th August 2023

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PROPOSER: HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA
SECONDER: HON. EMMERSON S. LAMINA

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THE FIFTH REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE BE ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE AND THAT THE RECOMMENDATION CONTAINED THEREIN BE APPROVED

V. MOTION OF THANKS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT DR JULIUS MAADA BIO

PROPOSER: HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA
SECONDER: HON. BASIRU SILIKIE

BE IT RESOLVED:

"THAT WE THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT HERE ASSEMBLED WISH TO THANK HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT FOR THE ADDRESS HE SO GRACIOUSLY DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF THE STATE OPENING OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE IN THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT ON THURSDAY 3RD AUGUST 2023."

[FOURTH ALLOTTED DAY]



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Thursday 17th August 2023.

I. PRAYERS

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

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

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

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 16TH AUGUST 2023

Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Wednesday, 16th August, 2023. As usual, we shall skip pages 1-4 and start with Page 5. Any amendments on page 5? Page 6? Page 7? If there is no amendment or correction, can someone moves for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Wednesday, 16th August, 2023 as presented?

HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW: I so move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any Secunder?

HON. ALICE K. SANDY: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put, and Agreed to]

[The record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Wednesday, 16th August, 2023 as been adopted as presented]

III. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I have a brief announcement to make and it is addressed particularly to the Members Elect of the All People's Congress Party. We may all recall that on the 25th July, 2023 I addressed a special appeal to the Members Elect of the opposition All People's Congress Party to accept the necessity of coming to take their seats in Parliament to which they have been duly elected. There is no evidence of compulsion on anyone to stand for election. On the contrary, you stood for the election voluntarily and freely made promises of all sorts to their supporters, thus demonstrating your willingness and determination to represent their people. On the basis of those promises the people voted for them as their representatives to Parliament, by failing thus far to come and take their seats they must know they are in breach of their contract with the people who voted them to Parliament and they must also know that there are consequences for such a breach. Whichever side of the argument you espouse, remember that aside from the Court of Justice, there is no better platform in our system for an Elected Member to

ventilate their grievances, concerns, and interests than within the hallowed walls of this Chamber.

In this regard, my sympathy is unlimited, especially for the young MPs who have been waiting for years for the opportunity, sacrificing labour and sweat and spending their last cent just to become Honourable Members of this House. I say to them, please come and exercise their right of representation and you will receive the full protection of this noble House. Two of their colleagues in the APC are already with us. I therefore want to take this opportunity to thank Honourable Mohamed Bangura and Honourable Alfred Thompson. I also want to thank those progressives within the ranks of the APC Party, and they are many, who have so far joined me in trying to persuade the other elected MPs to see reason and come to take their seats in the House. They are just too many to recount their names here, but let me assure them all that they carry with them the honour and admiration of the citizens of this country for their good deeds. May Allah continue to shower them with His boundless mercies and blessings.

Honourable Members, I also want to extend the same compliments to our revered Honourable Paramount Chiefs in this House for their enhanced involvement in this matter. They have consulted with me and I have given them my blessing to proceed with the assignment they have willingly undertaken to convey the strong voices of their subjects nationwide who are anxious to see their elected MPs of the APC Party take their seats in this Sixth Parliament. For those elected Members of the APC Party who are yet to come, I want to say to them not to relent but to continue to persevere until common sense is allowed to prevail and the Rule of Law is allowed to reign supreme. Nations which today appear to be better, stronger and mightier, have attained that status not by succumbing to the Law of the Jungle or the Law of the deepest pocket, but rather by yielding to the Rule of Law. The law is greater and mightier than any individual or group of individuals. So, let me end this admonishment with yet another reminder that the clock of thirty sitting days is ticking. To date, we have twelve plenary sittings and seven sittings of the Sessional Committees. I am counting. Just as the internal democracy of political parties had to be addressed in ways necessary to bring them in line with the national Constitution,

it is equally pertinent to address decisions taken by political parties to see if they are squared with the national Constitution.

Honourable Members, again I say 'a word to the wise is sufficient.' For those of you with friends on the other side, please convey my heartiest compliments and my best wishes and expectations to welcome them to the Well of this House. I thank you for your kind attention.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, considering the importance of the announcement you have just made and looking at the impression people have, I am sure the absence of our colleagues has an adverse effect on governance. Let us establish the fact that the Constitution of Sierra Leone reigns supreme and it reigns over every emotion or impression people may have outside the Law or the Constitution. Sub-section 3 of Section 94 makes the process titling an activity of Government and an activity of this Sixth Parliament in this First Session valid and effective. Again, we must not lose sight of the fact that Sub-section 1 of Section 94 of the Constitution gives this Parliament the power to regulate itself. This is in tandem with Paragraph 'e' of Section 77 and 77[2] of the Standing Orders. You reminded Members of Parliament elect that the clock is ticking. However, we must also make it clear that we on this side are not apprehensive or living in fear of discharging our functions as Members of Parliament because we are doing it under the guidance and protection of the Constitution. It must be known, like you stated in your statement, that it is a moral responsibility for our colleagues to come and represent their people. This is because whatever we are doing here is for the people who voted for us. Section 97 [a] of the Constitution gives us the power not only to represent our districts, but to represent the people of Sierra Leone. So, whether they are here or not what we are doing here is validated by Sub-section 3 of Section 94.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, they must be mindful of the fact that the people elected them and they must come and represent their people. They must do so within the ambit of the law. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member and I endorse his statement in its entirety except for one issue. I do not think your duty is entirely or can be left entirely within the realm of morality. I am beginning to see the possibility of that

duty being elevated to a legal duty of representation, but that is for another day. Constitutional jurists may wish to look into that question of whether the duty is purely moral or whether it can be elevated to a level higher than morality. Be that as it may, we shall continue with the day's business. Thank you for your support and for your kind observations.

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

PROPOSER: HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA

SECONDER: HON. SAHR EMMERSON LAMINA

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. R Speaker, before I present the Report, I want to thank you for bringing our colleagues to speed. I am happy you brought the issues of constitutionality. I also want to add to the fact that when you are elected, you have a moral duty to perform based on Section 83 of the Constitution on the election of Mr Speaker. I am sure this is the second time you are calling on us to fully perform our responsibilities as Members of Parliament. I just want to acknowledge the fact that as a Presiding Officer of this Chamber and Head of Parliament, you are on the right track and you are taking us as people who are supposed to serve the interest of the state. I thank you very much.

Having said that Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I present to you the Fifth Report of the First Session of 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, in tandem with its constitutional obligations, met on Tuesday, 15th August, 2023 and interviewed Eight Presidential nominees for the following positions: two proposed Deputy Ministers of Mines and Mineral Resources and Internal Affairs respectively, the Director of Public Prosecution and five Members of the Anti-Corruption Commission Advisory Board.

2. Procedure

The Committee maintained its usual consistency and established procedure and interviewed the aforesaid nominees on issues pertaining to their educational background to ensure that they have the relevant education and necessary backup experience to lead such important offices of state. Probing questions covered wide ranging issues relating to track records pertinent to their declared assets, tax obligations and visions for a sustainable and productive tenure. Issues of unsuitability or otherwise were also strictly looked into by the Committee.

3. Seventh Sitting of the Committee on Tuesday, 15th August, 2023

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

- i. Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma Esq., Proposed Deputy Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources*

Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma Esq, holds a Master's degree in International Disputes Resolution with specialisation in International Commercial Arbitration and International Investment Law from the University of London, United Kingdom. Prior to this appointment, he served as Chairman of the National Commission for Privatisation in 2018 - 2020 and Deputy Minister of Justice of the Republic of Sierra Leone. He is the National Secretary General of the governing Sierra Leone People's Party, the position he has held with diligence and admiration

As Deputy Minister of justice, he led many government delegations on multilateral agreements including Sierra Leone's delegation to the United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements leading to the Singapore Convention on Mediation. He was also part of a team of lawyers that worked with other international Law firms successfully to resolve the dispute between the government of Sierra Leone and the Gerald Group following government termination of the Mining Lease Agreement with the SL Mining.

Responding to the Committee, the erudite legal professional said he was grateful to His Excellency the President for the confidence bestowed on him to serve in his cabinet and his appointment to the mining sector was a strategic move to critically

review most of our mining lease agreements in the best interest of the country. The nominee was praised across party lines for his astute leadership over the years.

ii. Mr Osman Ibrahim Kanu Esq, Proposed Director of Public Prosecution [DPP]

Mr Osman Ibrahim Kanu Esq is an erudite lawyer with outstanding track records in the Legal system of Sierra Leone. Until his recent appointment by the President to serve as Director of Public Prosecution, he was Principal State Counsel in the Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, a position he has held since 2005 with utmost credibility.

During his tenure as Principal State Counsel, he successfully represented the Government of Sierra Leone on several international cases, including SL Mining Vs. Government of Sierra Leone [2018], Cymain Ghana Vs. Government of Sierra Leone [2017] under the International Chambers of Commerce [ICC] Rules, the London Court of Arbitration Rules and the International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes [ICSID] Rules. He was also Lead Counsel representing the Government of Sierra Leone in matters against the Sierra Leone Government before the Regional Court of the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS].

Responding to what he would add to this office, he said the role of the office will speak for itself; ranging from giving legal advice to representing government in all legal matters. He continued that his long presence within this corridor would help him achieve as expected. He was praised by the Committee as an “actual round peg in a round hole.”

iii. Mr Moriba Surbon Koroma, Proposed Deputy Minister, Ministry of Internal Affairs

Mr Moriba Surbon Koroma is a skilful politician of no mean standing that has served the Sierra Leone People’s Party as Chairman of the Kenema District. He is a cultural and traditional leader held in great esteemed commonly referred to as “AGBA” especially by the teeming masses of the Hunting and Orjeh societies across the nation. He is a peace maker, fast decision maker and has the ability to quickly mobilise crowd with rational intent.

Mr Moriba Surbon Koroma won a seat as Councilor in the Kenema City Council where he rose to acting Deputy Mayor in 2009. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree with

honours in Business Administration from the Eastern Technical University of Sierra Leone and hosts other certificates to his credits

Responding to probing questions, he promised to work in close collaboration with his superiors to establish administrative structures that will enhance the objectives of their assignment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Anti- Corruption Commission [ACC] Act of 2008 clearly elucidates the relevance and powers of the **ACC Advisory Board** as in Section 22 [4] which says “the Advisory Board on Corruption shall in addition to any other function- [a] advise the Commission on any aspect of the mandate and functions of the Commission; and [b] annually assess the work of the Commission and advise the Commission on relevant matters. In this vein after the expiration of the tenure of the previous Board, the following proposed nominees were appointed to perform on this Board.

iv. Mr Edwin Foray Gondor, Proposed Member, Anti-Corruption Advisory Board

Mr Edwin Foray Gondor is an educationist, mental health care specialist and Housing Estate management expert spanning over two decades. His adept administrative skills as were executed both at public and private institutions would no doubt aid this Board to advise the ACC Commissioner accordingly. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the Fourah Bay College, USL [1984] and many other certificates to his credit.

He promised to lend support to the Anti-Corruption Public education sector in expanding messages to all facets of society about the menace of corruption.

v. Mr Chernor Jalloh, Proposed Member, Anti-Corruption Commission Advisory Board

Mr Chernor Jalloh is a seasoned public administrator in International Political Economy, Public Affairs and Finance. His broad knowledge in data analysis, organisational theories, economics and political science will equip this nominee to look at the diverse landscapes of ACC operations and advice accordingly. He holds a Master of Science in Political Science and a Master of Arts from the University of Texas of Dallas, Richardson, Texas, respectively

Responding to Members of the Committee, the socio-political scientist said “this responsibility demands collaboration and I promise to work with my colleagues to meet the expectations of the institution and the government”, he concluded.

vi. Alhaji Oshoba Aberdeen, Proposed Member, Anti-Corruption Advisory Board
Alhaji Aberdeen is an indigene of the touristic Aberdeen Community in the Western Area. He is a revered Muslim and Community councilor with proven track records in community building and guidance spanning over two decades. He is currently the Assistant Imam of the Kaabatullah Masjid Jamaat at Aberdeen.

He holds a Diploma in Engineering from the former Congo Cross Technical Centre now the Milton Margai Technical University and worked for several years as supervisor at the Sierra Leone National Workshop, Cline Town and other private Construction entities. On his inputs to the Board as a seasoned Islamic Cleric, he responded that prayers with faith would help the Advisory Board to deliver on the mandates and with oneness they would stand tall to the challenges.

vii. Hon. Josephine Makieu, Proposed Member of the Advisory Board, Anti-Corruption Commission.

Honourable Josephine Makieu is a medical practitioner with several years of experience with outstanding performances in the health sector operations including the Ebola control programmes, Sexual and Gender Based Violence preventions at the Medicine San Frontier [MSF] Belgium et al.

Honourable Makieu was a Member of Parliament for the Sierra Leone People’s Party in the immediate Fifth Parliament representing Constituency 014 in the Kenema District. During her tenure, she diligently served on various Parliamentary Committees including Deputy Chairperson, Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Health and Sanitation.

Responding to Members on her contributions to the Advisory Board, she said she would work accordingly as a previous law maker to understand the tenets of the laws governing the operation of the ACC.” I will work collaboratively with my colleagues to help the institution achieve its mandates.”

viii. Dr Joseph Gaima Lukulay Moiba, proposed Member of the Advisory Board, Anti-Corruption Commission.

Dr Joseph Gaima Lukulay Moiba is a renowned clergyman, academician with lofty professional research experience that reflects problematic situation solving. He commands a broad autonomy of judgment and leadership that leads to organizational change and development. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy Degree from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, UK, October 2016 and several other Degrees in humanities.

The nominee has served in various walks of life to name but a few:

- 2023: PhD Thesis External Examiner for Management, Science and Technology Research, India
- 2022: Curriculum committee Chairman [Voluntary work], UMUSL. 2022: Curriculum committee [Semi Voluntary work) Member, MCSL. 2022: Head of Department [semi Voluntary work] United Methodist University.
- Senior Lecturer in Education, Milton Margai College of Education and Technology, now Milton Margai Technical University, Freetown, Sierra Leone.
- SLPP "President of Sierra Leone", Flag bearer Aspirant - 2011
- 2000 to 2002: Regional Supervisor for Peace and Civic Education, Eastern Sierra Leone.
- 1999 to 2005: Lecturer with Advanced University education, Trondheim City Council, Norway 1997 to 1999:
- Clergy in Charge of Segbwema Circuit, Kailahun District

Doctor Moiba promised to use his academic prowess and research ability to advice the Board in promoting the work of the ACC .He said the work would require profound collaboration and commitments which he promised to uphold.

4. Recommendations

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

- i. Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma Esq.: Proposed Deputy Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources;

- ii. Mr Osman Ibrahim Kanu Esq., proposed Director of Public Prosecution;
- iii. Mr Moriba Koroma, proposed Deputy Minister, Ministry of Internal Affairs;
- iv. Mr Edwin Foray Gondor, proposed Member, Anti-Corruption Advisory Board;
- v. Mr Chernor Jalloh , proposed Member, Anti-Corruption Advisory Board;
- vi. Alhaji Oshoba Aberdeen, proposed Member, Anti-Corruption Advisory Board;
- vii. Hon Josephine Makieu, proposed Member, Anti-Corruption Advisory Board; and
- viii. Dr Joseph Gaima Lukulay Moiba, proposed Member of the Advisory Board, Anti-Corruption Commission.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Fifth Report reflects the unanimous view of the Committee. I therefore move that the Fifth 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. Mathew S. Nyuma [JP]

Chairman and Leader of Government Business

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, before I put the question, I would like to take the opportunity to recognise a few eminent personalities in our midst this morning. It is not often that we have the privilege of seeing the Honourable Chief Justice in our midst in this Chamber, aside from the State Opening of Parliament he seldom comes to us in this Chamber. He has however taken the opportunity for very good reasons to be here today. We recognise him. The other one is an illustrious son of this House, a very important servant of the Fifth Parliament, the Honourable Alusine Kanneh. As you can see, there is a certain terminology that is missed which he has brought to light again with his presence here today.

I would want to see how many people wish to take the Floor for me to be guided as to the length of speeches that I will entertain. Today is the Fourth allotted day of the Presidential Address debates and I will give the Secunder of the Motion on the Committee on Appointments to first take the Floor.

[Question Proposed]

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I will be very succinct and brief. We want to thank His Excellency the President for judiciously using Section 51 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, which gives him the power to hire and fire.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the President for these nominations and to also congratulate the nominees in advance. I want to believe that they will receive the fortune from this House for their approval, which will automatically give them the mandate to work with the people of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to implore all the nominees to take a very good example from the Fifth Parliament. The last Government focused attention on education, including civil or political servants. All of them were working towards achieving that goal. This means education was the number one priority and we saw how we successfully campaigned on the platform of education.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in his second term of office, the focus will be on 'Feed Sierra Leone.' Whether directly or indirectly, nominees have a responsibility to contribute towards 'feed Sierra Leone.' I am sure successive Governments have wasted a lot of money on agriculture because they failed to study the topography of our land; and as a result, they went on tractorisation. Tractorisation did not succeed because they failed to study the topography of the land. How will you contribute towards feeding Sierra Leone in your various domains, whether in the mining sector, internal affairs, the ACC, etc.? How will you collect money from corrupt politicians and bring it to 'Feed Sierra Leone?' It is high time we began to engage in joint ventures. The last time I checked, China is still the highest producer of rice, followed by India.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am beginning to see why Sierra Leone did not employ joint ventures. We have about 190 or 191 Paramount Chiefs across the country with fertile soils in their districts. We have bolilands and inland valley swamps that are good for cash crop production. If we begin doing joint ventures, we will succeed in feeding Sierra Leone. What does it mean? It means you have to hire those that have the expertise and the technology. I am sure the Paramount Chiefs

are ready to give their land for cash crops cultivation. I am certain that joint ventures will enable us feed ourselves.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to first of all address the proposed Board members to serve on ACC Board. I want you to know that ACC has made a name because they have contributed a lot for Sierra Leone to attain 82%. You would agree with me that the former administration of President Earnest Bai Koroma only scored 49% at MCC. President Maada Bio's first term scored 82%, which would not have come by chance. It was due to the hard work of the ACC. This is the work you are going to do after you would have been approved today by this House. The first thing you are going to do is to recruit competent staff; and second, assist in instilling discipline. The ACC should consult the Board on all critical decisions they would want to take. You should not sit by and allow the 82% to drop. You have to work very hard, so that you can maintain the good name already attained.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, many West African countries are copying the blueprint of the ACC Commissioner because of stronger regulations. He came to this Parliament and Parliament empowered him with stronger regulations. He has succeeded in recovering moneys from corrupt politicians and those moneys are going to be used to further our socio-economic gains. So, I will not actually address you one by one, but your task is to maintain the banner. You have a seasoned lawmaker in the person of Honourable Josephine Makieu. She has been a fine lawmaker and knows the processes, starting from gazetting, pre-Legislative hearings, First Reading, Second Reading, Committee Stage, etc. If you are in doubt of how you can make an addendum or stronger Statutes and laws, you can consult her. As a seasoned lawmaker, she will give you all the pieces of advice, so that the ACC can lift the banner higher and higher. I know you are going there to make Sierra Leone proud.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, permit me to look at the contribution of Moriba Koroma, alias 'Agbao.' President Maada Bio is proving to this nation every now and then that SO [2] 'when monkey work, mek monkey eat,' especially qualified monkeys. President Maada Bio is disappointing his naysayers that indeed SO [2] 'when monkey work leh monkey eat,' especially qualified monkeys. This is the man

called 'Agbao' who goes the lengths and breadths of Kenema District, bringing seasoned lawmakers and Councillors together. He is very good at bringing people from far and wide even those on the fence or in the Opposition in Kenema. I can confirm to you with all alacrity that he contributed a lot in bringing them over to the SLPP. Today, he will serve as Deputy Internal Affairs Minister if this House approves his nomination.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sections 155 and 156 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone are very clear about your roles. You are simply going to assist your Boss to look after the Prisons, Fire Force and the Police. The Police will be responsible for maintaining the peace and serenity within the State. It was unfortunate for the people of Sierra Leone that the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs advised the substantive Minister in 1978 to ensure that a policeman occupied a seat in this Well. It was a bad precedent. We were told that the 1978 Constitution gave the Police the right to sit in the House of Parliament. They should have no business in this Parliament. Again, the 1978 Constitution of Late President Siaka Stevens gave the Army a seat in the Well of Parliament. It was a bad law because they were supposed to be neutral and professional. They shouldn't have had any business with this sacred House. It was at that time that the Police started politics and they became corrupt before 1992. Had it not been for the intervention of Kit Biddle, a British trained Police who professionalised the Police, I wondered how we would have been.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want Mr Ibrahim Sorbon Koroma to know that he has a role to assist his boss. I want to make it clear that deputies are not slaves; they have a role to support their superiors. You have to respect your Boss, but respect is also reciprocal. You should not consider yourself to be slaves to the substantive Minister. I want to believe, as a strong soldier, faithful and focused gentleman you will make the Sierra Leone Police proud.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Mr Osman Ibrahim Kanu, proposed Director of Public Prosecution [DPP]. He is definitely going to be the nation's lawyer. The role of a DPP is very critical because you will be having sleepless nights. You have to work hard in order to make the Government proud by winning cases. Those

who are still in doubt about our Judiciary, I want to state here that under President Maada Bio's Presidency, the Judiciary has been very independent. They neither work under duress nor been coerced to take certain decisions. The life of any State lies in the Judiciary because when justice is delayed, definitely that nation would not be happy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it would surprise you to know that under President Maada Bio's, out of five Supreme Court cases, the APC won four and the SLPP won one. That tells you about the independence of the Judiciary under his watch. In this nation, the APC won thirty-two election petitions, the SLPP won only twenty-eight. The ruling Government lost more cases to the Opposition. This tells you that President Maada Bio did not interfere with the independence of the Judiciary. He allowed the Judiciary and the Legislature to work freely. The Fifth Parliament enacted so many laws. We enacted about eighty-two laws, whether new, repealed or replaced without any interference.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I hope the DPP will critically examine cases before prosecution because we do not want the Government to continue to lose cases. I am sure the proposed DPP is very close to Mr Napoleon Koroma, a man who served as the Deputy Justice Minister and he is very good in arbitration and negotiation

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Secretary General of the SLPP is best described as the Ban Kim Moon of the ruling Sierra Leone People's Party. His name is Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma. I am sure he deserves a standing ovation.

THE SPEAKER: You know what will happen if you fail to give him a Standing Ovation. He will not sign your papers.

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Mr Speaker, indeed he deserves a standing ovation. A man who took the party from Opposition to ruling deserves a standing ovation. He studied the skills and the techniques of politics since his days in the University. I first came across him during the National Union of Sierra Leone Students [NUSS] elections in 2005. We were in opposite camps, while he fought hard to become the NUSS Chief Justice. I was also fighting hard to make Honourable Paran Umar Tarawally as Chief Justice. In other words, Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma was

pressing hard to become the Chief Justice of NUSS, while I also presented Honourable Paran Umar Tarawally as my candidate for that position. We were at Fourah Bay College, campaigning, but at the end of the day, we made Paran Umar Tarawally Chief Justice of NUSS in that particular year. I am certain that the mining sector will contribute to the 'feed Sierra Leone' agenda.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am the ousted Chairman of the Committee on Mines and Mineral Resources in this Parliament. I want Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma to know that it took ninety years without an Artisanal Mining Policy in this nation. I am sure mining activities started in 1930, but it was only in 2019 under President Maada Bio's regime that Cabinet ratified the first Artisanal Mining Policy. Can you imagine that, Mr Speaker? I am not saying that there were no ad hoc arrangements to steer the ship of the mining sector, but I am talking about a comprehensive Artisanal Mining Policy. It saw the light of day in 2019, which is the history. Three policies were put in place by the Bio Administration: the Geo-data Management Policy, Sierra Leone Mineral Policy, and Artisanal Mineral Policy. That is the achievement you are going to inherit.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to remind Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma that under President Bio's first term of office, the Extractive Industry's Revenue Act was enacted and it boosts Sierra Leone's revenue base and even the mining companies. If you ask NRA, they will tell you exactly what I have just said. We have also enacted the Mines and Minerals Development Act. That Act makes provision for mining communities to receive **1%** as Community Development Fund. I want to believe you were a contributor to most of these provisions. In other words, working in the Office of the Attorney General before this time means that you were pivotal to these agreements. I am certain that you are going to work hand-in-hand with Julius Matai to make Sierra Leoneans feel the sweetness of their minerals. The Botswana scenario will tell you that "If you take our land; you take our hearts; and when you take our hearts; you take everything away from us." We want to benefit from the minerals and all it takes to ensure that we benefit. The minerals are very important to the people of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma to also know that the NMA has a Strategic Plan and he should work very hard to ensure that it matches with the mineral sector. This is because I want the benefits of these minerals to go to the people of Sierra Leone, especially the mining communities. The current Act makes good provision for those in the mining communities. This is the time in the history of the mining sector we have designed a Mining Development Fund. The Act makes it clear that it is not necessarily the chiefdoms where mining activities take place will benefit, but also those chiefdoms that are not miners. This means that whether the chiefdoms are cocoa, coffee, kola, banana or orange producers, they will also benefit. Mr Speaker, first in history to see transparency under the Bio Administration.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me tell you one secret about the 2017 Audit Report. I read that Report and it clearly revealed that those moneys called CDA were never accounted for. I am not the one saying it; it is the Audit Report of 2017. The CDA moneys were never accounted for. President Maada Bio told the people of Ferengbeya that first in history, he has paid twenty-five billion Leones. He deserves a standing ovation or applause. President Maada Bio pays about forty billion Leones to the people of Marampa and Maforki. So, we saw transparency under President Maada Bio and that is the office Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma is going to manage.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to make this humble appeal to DPP. Many International Communities want to intimidate Sierra Leone and you have a pivotal role to play. We cannot be intimidated because we are a sovereign State as spelt out in Chapter Three of our Constitution. We want this to be known to the International Community that we respect the bilateral relationships; we honour them; and we cannot deviate from them. As a Government Lawyer, you have to ensure that the International Community respects Article 41 of the Vienna Convention which prohibits Diplomats from interfering in the domestic politics of a nation. You have to make it very clear that in as much as we respect the sovereignty of other Nations, they should also do likewise. I have never heard a Sierra Leonean Ambassador meddling in the affairs of Germany or any other country. Germany also practices a Proportional Representation System. I have not heard Sierra Leonean High

Commissioner poking his nose into British elections. So, the DPP's role should be made clear that we are a sovereign State and we should not be intimidated. Diplomats should keep to the bilateral relationships we share.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I call on all of us to speedily ratify the lady among them, so that they can work for the people of Sierra Leone. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. Let me give a snapshot of the work programme I want us to go through today. I have tentatively twenty-one speakers on my list who want to take the Floor to debate on the Presidential Address. I plan to adjourn for lunch not later than 12:30 p.m. So, we have exactly one hour to complete this particular Item on the Order Paper and then adjourn for lunch. We will come back and start the debate on the Presidential Address. Inevitably, this means I have to limit the length of speeches. I would not want to figure it as yet; I just want to see if you can apply some self-denying injunctions on yourselves. If I notice the necessity to limit people, then obviously I will do the needful. So, let me get the indication of those who wish to take the Floor. I want you to know that I cannot accommodate all of you. Those who would give up on this one would hopefully have a chance to contribute on the Presidential Address if your name is already on the list. Let us be fair and reasonable. I would give preference to those from Kenema, Koinadugu and Falaba. Let's start with Koinadugu and Falaba. If you know you are not from those two districts, please take your seats. I want to accommodate as many people as I possibly can. I want to see the Falaba and Koinadugu MPs.

HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will be very brief. I want to thank His Excellency the President for choosing these fine nominees to continue to serve in their various capacities. I want to talk about the proposed DPP. You are going to a challenging office; an office that is challenged with so many cases. We have citizens waiting in detention centres and their files are in your office. It is only you who can determine their fate, whether to be charged or discharged. That power is within your remit.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will emphasise on Article 41 of the Vienna Convention which the Deputy Leader II spoke about. No Foreign Diplomat has the right to interfere in our internal politics. With your leave, I will read that provision for the edification of the general public. It says: **'It is the duty of the one receiving immunities, and privileges to respect the laws of the receiving State.'** This goes to those who are citizens of Sierra Leone that are relying on those who are receiving immunities in this country. There was a Diplomat who was emphasising what the Opposition was projecting. Let it be known to the world that that particular Diplomat breached this provision.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to a son of the soil, a brother and a hero, Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma Esq. He has served as the National Secretary General of the SLPP without fear or favour. He has represented the young people in that capacity very well. I was not privileged to talk to the young people who were here for approval. He is a young man and I know he will provide the necessary leadership. I just want to admonish the young people who have been appointed, including Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma to know that they owe a duty to the young people of this country. I know he will mentor the young people of this country. It is a duty that we cannot afford to breach. This is because if that duty is breached, there will be consequences. The consequence is that we will not be entrusted with leadership again. No President will want to entrust leadership to the young people of this country and we cannot afford to disappoint the majority who are waiting.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the nominees to the ACC Board. The previous Board did extremely well and they scored the highest in history of this country. So, you have been challenged and that is why you have to ensure that you do more. We cannot afford to go below that percentage we scored in the last five years. The highest we scored previously was below 50%, but we have that figure above 70%. We want to see 90% or 95%. In the enrolment to Basic and Senior Secondary School, we scored 100%.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it would interest you to know that the ACC has served as another Bread Basket for this nation because it is with trust and confidence in the judicious use of what is disbursed to the State that is prompting

other donors to continue to support us. The speaker before me told this House that the President said S.O 2 'Monkey woke, Monkey eat.' Well, I want the SLPP Government and advisers to the President, without prejudice to Section 61, to know that we have so many qualified 'monkeys' in Falaba who can equally perform if given the chance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have qualified and suitable Sierra Leoneans in Falaba District that can be appointed. I cannot wait to see them here, Mr Speaker, especially our District Chairman. It would interest you to know that Falaba District is the only district in the whole North where the SLPP won the District Council Chairmanship, ten Councillors and two Honourable Members. We want to see that reflected in the appointments. We have done a lot and I think we deserve better. We have qualified youths, men and women who could be appointed to some of these offices. We want to see them continue to support the activities of the Government in our district. This will enable the activities of the SLPP to be known in the district. It will also enable us to deliver the 18 Councillors and the four Honourable Members to the SLPP. It will be difficult if this is not done.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we heavily rely on the National Secretary General who has served as our father in that district. He has been very supportive. The Vice President has also done a lot for us, but the appointment of Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma Esq. is a very good idea, but the burden will be heavy on him. Support him to have other people that would help him. Mr Speaker, you and I know that for the SLPP to penetrate into the North has always been a difficult thing. We have however done marvellously well in the just concluded elections. Again, without prejudice to Section 61 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, we want a fair representation in this Government. It is a plea and this is the suitable platform I can use to say it. I think it will reach those who can hear this better and action is needed, Mr Speaker. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution to the debate.

HON. ALPHA F.M. JABBIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity to have a say on this approval of the presidential nominees. I want to thank the President immensely for sending us these fine nominees for approval by

Parliament. I am sure he has taken his time to scrutinise each and every one of them and they have also gone through the Appointments Committee in Parliament that vetted them. They have gone through all of those stages and I think as far as I am concerned, they are qualified for approval.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to admonish the nominees by referring to a quotation in the Holy Quran, Chapter 33, Verse 72 Suratu Lahzab, which says: **'Truly, we did offer Al Amana that is the trust of modern responsibility of honesty and all the duties which Allah has ordained to the Heavens and the Earth, and the mountains but they declined to bear it. Bear trust and we are afraid of it, afraid of Allah's torment, but man bore it. Verily he was unjust to himself and ignorant of its results.'** Mr Speaker, this is talking about 'Trust.' The people of this Nation voted His Excellency the President on the 24th of June 2023 to give him another mandate because of the trust placed in him. The President in turn has decided to call on these nominees and given these trusts to them, so that they can help him carry that trust the people of this Nation has bestowed in him. The mountains refused to carry it because the true significance of it is that the burden of trust is so heavy that when you place it on top of a mountain, the mountain will crumble under that weight. It is so heavy that the President has decided to give part of it to you. Can you carry it without crumbling? Will you maintain that trust that the people of this country have placed in the President and by extension in you? Please, as you go into these offices, try to remember this verse in the Quran. You should not fail the trust reposed in you by the President and by extension the people of this Nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about our National Secretary General of the SLPP, Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma Esq, a son from the twin districts of the land of powerful mixtures and the land of milk and honey. He is the son of Mr Farah Yegbeh Koroma and Adama Kamara, a Mandingo woman. She is my own sister. He is the grandson of Bambafa Konkofa Koroma. He has been reappointed from one sensitive position to another sensitive position. You performed very well in your previous position as Deputy Minister of Justice. You carried yourself well and that is why you won the trust of the President and this Nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma is going to a Ministry that is very important to this Nation, especially in the area of revenue mobilisation. This Nation relies on the Ministry of Mines for revenue, so that they carry out their responsibilities. We are working towards feeding Sierra Leone and that is why the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources is very key. We want the Government to be able to successfully carry out that task. Therefore, you have to work hand-in-hand with the substantive Minister, so that the country benefits.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all the nominees have my supports and I want to congratulate them in advance. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member. Now is the turn of the Kenema District. I think Falaba spoke for Koinadugu. You are twins though not identical. Let me take the opportunity to recognise a number of personalities in our midst before we proceed. We have in our midst the Learned Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Mohamed Lamin Tarawally, Honourable Justice M. C. Brown-Mark Justice of the Supreme Court, Hon. Justice E. E. Eku-Roberts. Let me now give the floor to the Honourable Member from Kenema.

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, the nominees as presented are qualified. They have been adjudged by the Appointments Committee to be suitably qualified for their appointments. They have been presented to the plenary for our consideration.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, without wasting time, I wish to comment on the proposed Deputy Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources, Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma Esq. He is also the current National Secretary General of the SLPP. I am certain that he is the reason the President has appointed a lot of young people into positions of trust. This is because he exhibited leadership qualities and performed extremely well. He is a young man to serve as a National Secretary General for the oldest Political Party in Sierra Leone. This is his second term he is serving in that capacity. It is not a small job, especially when it comes to Lower Level Elections and the award of party symbols. Despite the pressure from the party executive, the national Chairman and others, he always stands tall.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma has also served in other capacities, such as Chairman of the National Commission for Privatisation [NCP] and Deputy Minister of Justice. This is another huge responsibility for him. The substantive Minister is qualified in Strategic Minerals and the proposed Deputy Minister is a Lawyer and holds a Master's Degree in Arbitration. The Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources will be dealing with Direct Foreign Investments. So, a huge chunk of money from companies will be going there. There will be Lease and other Agreements. So, the nominee is a Lawyer with a background in arbitration and that makes him qualified for that position.

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

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: Mr Speaker, Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma's appointment is apt and I am sure he will work with his superior to ensure that we have the required results.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleagues who spoke before me talked about interference by foreign diplomats. I am sure this is happening probably because we rely on other countries for resources to manage our affairs. If we can manage our resources well, particularly our mineral resources, I am sure we will have the required resources to pay for services. If you have political independence without economic independence, you will always have interference from those countries we receive support from. So, we are hoping that we will begin to get the required resources from our mineral resources under President Bio. We want that to continue. I have no doubt in Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma's ability to perform. The current Minister of Mineral Resources is ready to work with him. I wish him well in his endeavours.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, proposed Members of the ACC Advisory Board will be there to provide the policy guidelines. The ACC has done so much already in the area of corruption perception of Sierra Leoneans and that perception has dropped drastically. They are doing very well and we hope they will continue to work with the Commissioner and all other stakeholders in making it very expensive. Those who will be found corrupt will be dealt with. I wish them well in their new roles.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to the Chairman of the SLPP in Kenema District, Mr Moriba S. Koroma, a.k.a. 'Agbao.' The 'Agbao' name is not a nickname at all; he is called Agba because he is the head of a Traditional Secret Society known as Ojeh and Hunting Society in Kenema. He is a very courageous man. He has defended the SLPP in Kenema District all this while.

THE SPEAKER: So, the position of Baba Agba is vacant there?

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: I would not like to comment on that, because I am not a member. I know that he is a defender of the SLPP in that district.

THE SPEAKER: Well, I have an applicant.

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: In that case, I will liaise with the Chairman and the Agbao and get back to you on that. He is a courageous man and has put the SLPP together in Kenema. He used his position as the Agba to mobilise young people for the right reasons and not for the wrong reasons at all. His appointment as Deputy Internal Affairs Minister has been hailed by the people of Kenema. This is why you can see lots of people in galleries, shouting Agbao! Agbao!

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to assure this House that under his watch, Kenema will gain peace and serenity. What has been lacking, for example, is probably an appointment like this. This one came at the right time when everybody will now be satisfied. You can sit in your quiet corner and participate in the governance of the country. So, his appointment will equally give hope to other SLPP grassroots supporters. You only have to be patient for your own time and nobody will stop it. Without this appointment, he had other job to do, mobilising people and gave them jobs. He has been giving them jobs in many other spheres of life. I am sure with this appointment, he will do more.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I wish him well and will continue to guide and support him as stakeholders in Kenema. I thank you so much.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, let me recognise the following personalities on behalf of the House. I start with the one and only Chairman of the SLPP, Dr Prince Alex Harding, Honourable Emmanuel Sahr Gbokie, Former MP; Honourable Manso Abu Dumbuya, Former MP; the Chairman of Falaba SLPP, Yayah Wanu;

Former Chairman, Bo District, Joseph Munda Bindi; Alhaji Mohamed Bailor Jalloh PRO Eastern Region; Mr Cyril Juxton-Smith, Former Director of the Public Relations Office in Parliament; and Former Women's Leader, Madam Fatmata Sawanneh. Let me now give the Floor to the Honourable Ibrahim Koroma from Kenema.

HON. IBRAHIM KOROMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: No, Honourable Member. Let me take note. This is Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: I take your point without saying a word. You are a new Member of Parliament. Read your S.Os well. Parliamentary language is totally different from the language outside of this Well. We have language that is decorous. It is simple, straightforward and civilised. You referred to your colleague in that manner is totally un-parliamentary.

HON. VERONICA K. SESAY: Mr Speaker, I always say that this is a place of learning. When you come to Parliament, you have to learn. Certain things you say to your colleague outside this Well are not mentioned here. When you are here, you have to respect the seniors and the Honourable Member you asked to sit down is your senior. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: The lexicon here is different. I think the point is well-made and over time they will get adjusted to it.

HON. VERONICA K. SESAY: On that note, please withdraw.

HON. IBRAHIM KOROMA: I am very sorry sir. Mr Speaker, thank you very much for giving me the podium. I want to say thanks you and appreciation to His Excellency the President for these nominees. They have gone through the Committee on Appointments and it has been ascertained that they have confidence in them. Today, they are here for approval by Members of Parliament. I want to say congratulations in advance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want the nominees to go home with two things. The first one has to do with the Presidential Agenda of His Excellency the President, Retired Brigadier Julius Maada Bio. Today, you are first among equals. There are many Sierra Leoneans who are qualified to man such offices. Please think of

President Bio's Agenda to change this country and transform the lives of Sierra Leoneans. The second one is to ensure that you work diligently to serve your conscience and God. When you do this, you are always on the right track. I want you to take note of that. This will help you achieve your purpose. Also, make sure that when you go to those offices, try very hard to justify your confidence, so that His Excellency the President will not regret for appointing you. Again, you will prevent yourself from Section 61 of the 1991 Constitution in which the President has the mandate to appoint and terminate such appointment. I want you to always think about this advice.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to the proposed Deputy Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources who happens to be the National Secretary General of the SLPP, Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma. The meaning of the word Koroma in Madingo or Koranko tribes is that you are 'Fakoli' S.O[2], a very strong person with a natural instinct.

THE SPEAKER: What is the meaning of Napoleon?

HON. IBRAHIM KOROMA: The meaning of Napoleon Mr Koroma is a man with probity, rectitude and always maintains respect. He is very respectful and trustworthy. As National Secretary General of the SLPP, which is one of the oldest political parties in the sub-region, he always meanders his way to ensure we get victory. His appointment is not a surprise to us. We pray that President Bio will elevate him more than this position.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the District Chairman of the Kenema District, aka Agbao. He is a second term district Chairman and that tells you he is a very hardworking man, He always brings together our political differences to ensure that we support Retired Brigadier Julius Maada Bio for a very good outcome. His appointment as Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs and a man with a political strategy is not a surprise to me at all. I could recall before 2018, when APC was in power, he was victimised, humiliated, and embarrassed. In spite of all the embarrassments, he stood firm and brought the SLPP together and in 2018 we won the elections.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before 2018 elections there was an Assistant Inspector General of Police in Kenema who used to beat SLPP leaders in that district. He usually lay them on the floor and flog them mercilessly. He did everything humanly possible to suppress the survival of the SLPP in the East, but the Agbao stood firm to ensure the survival of the SLPP. I want to say thank you.

With that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say congratulations to all the nominees and may God guide and protect them in their various offices. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I will take one more from Kailahun District.

HON. BERNADETTE W. SONGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, let me tell you something that you did not know. When you said you are just taking from Kailahun and Koinadugu, Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma is also from Kailahun. As my colleague on the other side who is not here today will say, we are here again today. Today again we have some fine gentlemen and a lady to be approved. We thank His Excellency for nominating them. They are all qualified and I wish them well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start with Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma. Mr Speaker, history will not forget him for what he has been doing for us. If I were on the Appointments Committee and asked by His Excellency the President, I would have said Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma deserves more than this one. I am certain that he will shine more than what he has been doing. He deserves more than this position. I know he will be given more because 'monkey woke, monkey eat.'

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O. 34. It is not the Business of the Appointments Committee to determine who the President should appoint to any position. The Appointments Committee is only responsible to vet presidential nominees. The President has the sole Executive Powers to put people in places he feels. We do not have control over that at all. This is just a simple correction I wanted to make. So, even if you serve on the Appointments Committee, I will stand on a Point of Order if you raise that issue because it is not our responsibility to determine the position the President should appoint someone. The Committee only vet presidential nominees. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

HON. BERNADETTE W. SONGA: I thank the Leader for that observation. That was why I said if I was given the opportunity, I would have advised otherwise. I did not say I would appoint. If I am given the opportunity, I will advise accordingly. That is my view and I am entitled to that view, Mr Leader.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to talk about my brother, Mr Foray Gondoh. I have not met you personally, but after reading your resume, I know you can do well in the department that you are going to serve. I want to wish you well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to pay tribute to a special sister, someone I have worked with in the Fifth Parliament. I am sure all of us worked with the Honourable Josephine Makieu. She is a lady with great qualities and good interpersonal relationship. She was all that this Parliament needs. We worked tirelessly in the Fifth Parliament to get the Gender Empowerment Bill enacted into law. She was one of the pioneers of that Bill. It was our hope that she would be in the Sixth Parliament, but she is not. I want to state that she is not here today because she did not debate well; she is not here today because her people do not love her; she is not here because she was not a good Member of Parliament; she is not here mainly because of internal party politics.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Josephine Makieu has been remembered by His Excellency the President. I know she is going to do well in the office she will be serving. This country will continue to remember you. Your services to this nation will not go unnoticed. You served this Parliament and this Parliament will one day repay you back. I thank you for what you did for this nation. I am certain that you are going to that office as an adviser. Please do your best for the people of this country. You have been like a mother to many of us and I want to thank you for what you have been doing. When you go to that office, do not be over motherly because I know that people will be pleading with you not to be prosecuted on corruption cases. You should not be over motherly at all. Please go there and do your job diligently.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sierra Leone is fighting corruption; we are scared of corruption; we are running away from it, but corruption is still chasing us. Let us be careful as a country and as citizens. Again, I want to wish Honourable Josephine

Makieu and the rest of the nominees well. Please go and serve the people of this country as expected. This country and Parliament are looking up to you and we wish you all the best. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable lady for her contributions.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I refused not to obstruct the Honourable Member, but political parties are meant to to shape political ideologies. Political parties act as vehicles for our democracy. So, if you are not given the opportunity to serve in Parliament, you can be given the opportunity to serve in another capacity. She is now going to serve in the Executive Arm of Government. Questioning the political party in this Chamber is not good at all. I want us to distance ourselves from that, Mr Speaker. Of course, we have inter-party democracy and we should respect that. We should not reduce it to another challenge. We signed documents when we are about to do assessment.

THE SPEAKER: You are reacting to some innuendoes that I do not quite appreciate. Let me recognise Mr Hindowa Bindi, Deputy Minister of Gender and Children's Affairs. I wanted to move on but Kenema seems to have such a powerful magnet that every time I try to move away I am drawn back. I really do not know why. Is it maybe because of the Agbao? I give the Floor to Honourable Ella Goba.

HON. MARIAMA E. GOBA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my name is Honourable Mariama Ella Goba representing Kenema District. I want to start with the proposed Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs, Mr Moriba S. Koroma, commonly known as Agbao. This is a name that will never melt in silence in Sierra Leone or Kenema to be specific. The SLPP both in Kenema and Sierra Leone as a whole will never forget the impact of this young man in a hurry. He has sacrificed a lot in terms of ensuring that Kenema District maintains sanity. I am confident that this country is in safe hands with Mr Moriba S. Koroma as Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs. I watched him control one of the largest political rallies in this country with peace. I am sure the same can be adopted in ensuring that this call to national duty is accomplished successfully. I thank you all.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for her contributions. I want to thank you especially for being very brief and directly to the point. You know you remind me of the old adage: **'brevity is the soul of wit.'** You do not have to be so laborious to deliver. Well done, Honourable Member. I hope the other Honourable Members from Pujehun will follow your example.

HON. MARIAMA ELLA GOBA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Let me recognise the presence of the Presidential Spokesman, Honourable Alpha Khan.

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I do not normally like to shower praises on nominees, but some people should be recognised and celebrated. Today, we want to celebrate some distinguished gentlemen. I will start with our own National Secretary General of the SLPP, Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma. We want to celebrate him because he has done extremely well. He learnt a lot from Dr Alex Prince Harding. I have no doubt in your ability to perform. You have proved your mettle before and I am confident that you will continue to do so in whatever capacity. You did very well as Deputy Minister of Justice and the Chairman of NCP. I have no doubt in my mind. I wish you well, Mr Koroma and continue to do the best for the SLPP.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if I fail to recognise and celebrate the man known as Mr Moriba S. Koroma, aka Agbao, it will be a disservice.

THE SPEAKER: If you fail to do that, you will forget your ambition for 2028.

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: Mr Speaker, my family and I paid special gratitude to Agbao. For me to be here today as a Member of Parliament, he did extremely well and he stood by me to ensure that I achieve my goal. I have no other platform to thank him other than this Parliament. Thank you very much. He is a brother and always loyal. Mr Speaker, when you have good people in your life, you have to recognise and celebrate them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, after the elections in 2018, Mr Koroma was not appointed, but he still had confidence and trust in the President. I am sure he knew he would be appointed someday. Today, Mr Moriba S. Koroma has been appointed

as Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs and I am confident that he is going to perform well. I have no doubt in his ability. If you look at the gallery, you will see the number of people who came to support him from Kenema. This shows that he is a good man. In fact, he is the Governor of Kenema District. I thank Dr Alex Prince Harding for giving us the support to celebrate this young man.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to celebrate Honourable Josephine Makieu. She is our sister and mother. She did well when she was here as Member of Parliament for Constituency 014. You are not here today because your people do not like you. It is just the matrix of politics. You can be here today and I will be here tomorrow. I want you to know that the same SLPP that gave you the symbol to be in Parliament is the same SLPP Government that has appointed you to serve on the Board. We want to thank you and be rest assured that you have our support. To the rest of the nominees, I want to thank you and I wish you well in your various endeavours. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contributions to this debate. We shall now windup the debate and the next speaker on my list is the Acting Leader of the Opposition, Honourable Mohamed Bangura.

HON. MOHAMED BANGURA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Article 41 of the Geneva Convention spells out the roles and duties of Sovereign States. I am sure no Ambassador has gone against this provision.

THE SPEAKER: No Ambassador?

HON. MOHAMED BANGURA: I said no Ambassador.

THE SPEAKER: In this country?

HON. MOHAMED BANGURA: Mr Speaker, please allow me to land. You would agree with me that democratic values are universal; whether you are in Kenya or Pakistan or USA or Sierra Leone, the same values we enjoy here democratically are the same values they enjoy in Pakistan. That is why they are universal and unique. The Ambassador we are talking about here today is still under the confines of the democratic values.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are here this morning to approve nominees of the President. I do not want to waste your time to talk about Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma because that name is a household name in Sierra Leone. We all know him and what he stands for. He is a man that cuts across tribal and party lines. He has been called upon by the President to serve in sensitive positions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about a gentleman who has been called upon by the President to serve as Director of Public Prosecution. This man is very soft-spoken and an erudite Lawyer of long-standing. His name is Mr Osman Kanu. He has always been there for the APC and SLPP. He is one of the few civil servants in this country that respects the principle of neutrality. Mr Osman Kanu is going to be the new DPP, but I want to tell you about the problems of that office. I am sure being a Director of Public Prosecution is a very complex job. I am certain that for the past twenty years, police officers would have to seek advice first before a case is charged to court.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, most of the political cases that are usually sent to that office are always charged to court, whether in the days of SLPP or APC. In fact, even the police officers who normally process such cases, they sometimes give feeble reasons, but because they are political cases, they expect the DPP to sign. This is the kind of office my brother is going to serve. When I heard him being nominated to serve in that position, I expressed happiness. I am sure his neutrality and soft-spoken nature will allow him to do the right thing. He will not allow police officers to confuse him with the numerous files they bring before him. He will ensure proper scrutiny of every file and advise the Government, especially the Attorney General on the next line of action. I wish you well and I will monitor your steps.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Josephine Makieu was one of us. She has been nominated to serve on the ACC Advisory Board. We will miss your soft-spoken voice and beautiful smiles in this Well. When I heard that your name was not among the Kenema MPs, I was not happy at all. I however have the believing that God always protect good people. There is a way he always elevates good people. Honourable Josephine Makieu is a mother and we believe she is going to treat that office in a motherly fashion. You would agree with me that the ACC is

the envy of the world in terms of fighting corruption and the Commission has got another main player to continue to fight corruption.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, much has been said about Agbao of Kenema. I know him when the APC was in power. He is very steadfast and a wonderful warrior. To some extent, we have similar attributes. I want him to know that the office he is going to serve is a very complex office, but I know that with the help of the Minister, he will deliver. We need total peace and security in this country, especially at a time when the young people indulge in Kush intake. I know you will put a team together with your Minister to chase those Kush sellers. We know them and you should go out and get them. They should stop bringing Kush drug into this country. You have the support of this Parliament to clampdown the drug importers.

With these few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that we on this side are 100% in support of the approval of these nominees.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Acting Leader of the Opposition for his contributions.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank my colleagues on the other side. There is a difference between trying to distract someone from the natural environment and trying to satisfy a minute group of people; and someone standing at a very strong position, defending his position in the Constitution. That is why I like to praise him not for any other thing, but to talk about your position in the Constitution. Section 97[b] of 1991 Constitution is very clear. You did not want to betray the people who voted for you and that is what you have done exactly. It is in this Constitution. Thank you very much for bringing us to speed on certain issues we are supposed to know about these nominees.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will steadfastly try to react to one point the Deputy Leader II raised and I want you to listen to me attentively. This is not the first time he has done it. He was in my team in the Fifth Parliament when we went for a meeting to Strasburg and where he raised the issue of the Vienna Convention of 1961. We have signed and ratified the Vienna Convention a long time ago. Diplomats are bound to respect Article 41 of the Vienna Convention. We have stated that times without number. I also informed the Minister of Foreign Affairs about it.

We have to respect Vienna Convention because it is coming from the United Nations. So, I thank you very much for your contributions and I believe they have heard it clearly.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have read out the resumes of the nominees. We have interacted with them very well during the interviews. It is good to have young people in certain positions, but they should be very responsible. The President is trying to promote the young people of this country. I am sure promoting young people by giving them State responsibility is a very good thing. It is not the first time he has done this at all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma was elected National Secretary General of the Sierra Leone People's Party at a very young age, probably in his mid-thirty. He is an erudite Lawyer and worked very well with the Chairman of the SLPP seated here. He was a young man, but very respectful. He is a comrade from the Auradical Club of which I am a member. He is here not because he is called Napoleon, but because of his dedication. He was given the position to serve as National Secretary General and went unopposed during the Bo Convention. You do not need to like him because he is Napoleon, but for the work he is doing. He is very humble and respectful. Dr Alex Prince Harding has always been on his side, directing him on what to do and he in turn would humbly accept corrections. He sometimes felt embittered, but he would listen to those he thinks he has worked with under difficult circumstances.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma is very loyal person and knows exactly what to do. He has travelled the lengths and breadths of this nation and he represents the Sierra Leone People's Party. When he was outside the SLPP, he was a Lawyer. He provided pro-bono services from the Brewah Chambers, representing our people when we were arrested by the APC. He was representing us in courts. He knows what he is doing and his pathway is very clear. You would agree with me that comrades like to come from difficult situations, but when we achieve, it is very difficult to bring us down. This is why we are strong comrades of Auradicals Club. It is difficult to defeat us because you cannot even predict us when we appear. Our actions speak loud and clear.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Appointments Committee Report reads: **“Responding to the Committee, the erudite professional said he was grateful to His Excellency the President for the confidence bestowed on him to serve in his Cabinet and his appointment to the Mining Sector was a strategic move to critically review most of our Mining Agreements.”** He informed the Committee that he was aware of the consequences of the Agreements we have signed and ratified in Parliament. Owing to the fact that you are aware of this, you must have the skills and professionalism. I know what you can do. He said most of these Agreements are in the interest of the people of this country. Some of them can be reviewed. He is also mindful of Section 62 of the 1991 Constitution. I would admonish him to work with his substantive Minister. He did well when he was at the Law Officers’ Department. Today, he is going to the Mineral Sector and we expect good things for this country. We have to review some of these Mineral Agreements.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during the approval of the first set of Ministers in this Chamber, I did refer this House to Section 62 of the 1991 Constitution. This Section talks about Ministers, Deputies and Permanent Secretaries working together. You need to work together for the achievement of common goals. We have witnessed situations where Ministers and Deputies are at each other’s throats because of the administrative maladministration of Permanent Secretaries. Sometimes they tend to meander around for their own personal interests. So, we have committed ourselves, with the Chief Minister’s approval, to be very clear. Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma has served in different capacities with some amount of dexterity. He promised to serve in that capacity and we want to thank him very much for what he has done for himself and for ensuring proper reforms in the Mineral Sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about a very decent politician, a man who can mobilise people within the shortest possible time. He is a true Sierra Leonean and a traditionalist. He is commonly called Agbao. He is a grassroots man. Bob Marley once said, ‘He who feels it, knows it.’ He feels for the common man and that is why he is a grassroots man. He feels for the people and he knows what to

do. He is a very popular figure and he is known even beyond the lengths and breadths of Kenema District.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go to Kenema, the least man will tell you something about Agbao. People have tried to tempt him on several occasions, but he conquered those temptations. It is naturally not easy to bring a good man down. Agbao is a good man, whether you like it or not. Those who go about saying negative things about him have failed because President Bio is a listening man and a visionary leader. You can say what you feel like saying, but he knows what to do for the interest of this nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am certain that appointing Agbao is the right step in the right direction. He did not miss his words that 'monkey work monkey eat.' It is good for some of us to talk about people's nature like Agbao. People tried to turn it in different ways and forms. Somebody said Agbao was going for the second time as District Chairman. In fact, for the second time he went unopposed because people went after him unnecessarily. I used to tell that S.O.2 'if you suffer, you for enjoy the enjoy.' When times were tough, he was the man who brought all the delegates to President Bio and said 'these are my delegates, Mr President-to-be. He asked them to openly pledge their loyalty and support. He did that in the hall. There is no way you are going to write the history of SLPP without Agbao. I said in my opening statement that it is not good to be a sycophant. If you love your leader, stand tall and fight for him. The success of your leader is paramount. Agbao is not a sycophant; he is a strong man; and has supported President Bio throughout.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are talking about Kush in this nation. The Honourable Mohamed Bangura said we should go after those who are importing Kush into the country. I support you on that, but Mr Moriba S. Koroma a.k.a Agbao cannot work in isolation. He has to take instructions from his boss and other people who are also stakeholders in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. He has to listen and work with those stakeholders. The issue of Kush has to be dealt with decisively. We have laws relating to drugs and drugs abuse is now a social menace in our society. How do we want our subjects to be if we accept them to take drugs? We do not need to accept drugs of any form; it is not acceptable in Sierra Leone as by law

provides. Thank God we have the Presidential Spokesman here. People tend to blame the Government because their children are taking Kush, but parents are personally responsible for taking care of their children. The Government only provides policies and you are expected to use the policies to take care of your own family.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have the Free and Quality Education and that is only weapon you need to change a nation. Education helps a nation to survive and brings it to speed with the 21st Century. It is only education you can use to brighten your future. There is no other means you can use to achieve that. People like Dr Alex Prince Harding, the Speaker, Honourable Alpha Khan, Honourable Mathew Nyuma, Honourable Segepoh S. Thomas and many others are educated and today they are using that education to succeed. If we tell our youths to take Kush, it means we are destroying them. If you are a politician, you should not tell young people to take Kush or other drugs. There are other drugs that are more dangerous than Kush.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should take this as a national fight against drugs in this country. If you are an APC, you should criticise us positively or bring out solutions because you are also giving us support. We are in business or partnership. The days of slavery and colonialism are over. Economically we cannot be strong, but when the President said we are going to form an independent body to reform our electoral system, it means we want to shape the trajectory of our electoral system. It is not subject to any negotiation; it is subject to the transformative drives being taken to change the landscape of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Free Quality Education, as enshrined in our Constitution, is an inclusive programme. When we talk about eliminating the death penalty, it is meant to benefit every Sierra Leonean. When we talk about ensuring the girl child education, we did not ask people to come to our aid; we said we are going to do it by law and we did it. When we said we were going to review Part 5 of the Public Order Act, we did it in the interest of Sierra Leone. We are going to reform our electoral system because we have the interest of this country at heart.

Section 66 of the Constitution provides for the prosecution of those who are involved in criminal offences against the law of this nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am bringing out these issues for people to know exactly what we are doing as Government. We are an independent nation and those who are in charge of prosecution have the constitutional obligation to do so. We can only succeed as Opposition, Members of Parliament, the Executive, the Judiciary and others when we come up with good policies that will strengthen democracy in Sierra Leone. There is no perfect democracy in Sierra Leone, but we have policies to change things.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have nominees for the ACC Advisory Board. It is very clear in Section 22, Sub-Section 4. I am sure the only way we can progress as a nation is by fighting corruption. It is more than Cancer and we must come together to fight it. Today, nations are going bankrupt because of corruption. We can talk about 'Feed Salone,' but we have to ensure that we eradicate corruption from this country. Our GDP will only improve if we curb corruption. Corruption will always fight back, but together we can conquer. You are expected to provide constructive advice to the Commission. You are charged with the responsibility to fight corruption. As we speak, corruption is still roving around us and that is why we have to stand firm to fight it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank you very much for giving me the time. I also want to thank colleagues for their various contributions. I also want to use this platform to thank our Paramount Chiefs. The Paramount Chiefs are here to arbitrate and we therefore give them the support as they also give us the support.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for those who have served before in different capacities, especially Mr Moriba S. Koroma and Mr Umaru Napoleon Koroma, I want to thank them very much. I am sure they have done their best for this country. Those who will join the team at the DPP, we hope and pray that their CVs will prove them right. I also thank the President for putting the right people in the right places. There is no way we can work better if we are divided. Our political differences are very minor, but what brings us together is Freedom, Unity and Justice.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to tell people that the Honourable Mohamed Bangura is on the right track. We are not asking you to praise us, we are just asking you to take up your constitutional responsibility. Criticise us if it is positive and we will accept it. However, if it is not positive, we can challenge it. Again, nobody can challenge the Honourable Thompson. You are here to fulfil a constitutional mandate and nobody is bigger than the Constitution. Thank you very much for joining us in fighting a genuine course for Sierra Leone. It is a genuine course to bring us together because we believe there is only one country we have. The unity of Sierra Leone is paramount.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Fifth Report of the First Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service be adopted by the House and the recommendations contained therein be approved. Thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Leader of Government Business and the Acting Leader of the Opposition for their contributions to this important debate. I think these will be the last approvals of nominees of His Excellency the President the House will be making before we go for our recess tomorrow.

Honourable Members, before I put the question, let me advise both the nominees and their supporters in the galleries that the rules here do not permit you to leave your seats before I rise. You should only rise after I would have moved out of this Well. So, the same decorum you are demonstrating now should continue until I take my exit. Thank you for your understanding.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

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

THE SPEAKER: It is now my very pleasant duty for me to add my own voice of felicitations to those of the House in its entirety. When I see nominees like Umaru Napoleon Koroma and the other Koroma, I feel good. We have a warrior as I have heard from Honourable Members. This reminds me of somebody from my own part of the country, once a warrior is always a warrior. So, the Koromas are warriors. In

this case, we have two Koromas, one from the North and the other from the East. I want to take the opportunity of paying my own personal obeisance to the other Koroma [Agbao] because he and I belong to the same society. The only thing I want him to recognise is that there is a 'Baba Agba'. I think the spokesman who is with us understands what I am saying. The Honourable Manso Dumbuya will also understand that language better than most of you. Frankly speaking, I want to take this opportunity, on behalf of the House, to thank His Excellency the President for these fine nominees that we have before us today. They are eminently qualified and that can be no question. Mr Kanu has served in the Law Officers' Department for more than a decade. You cannot have a finer and more erudite Lawyer than Mr Kanu. I am sure he is going to excel in his new position as the Director of Public Prosecutor.

Honourable Members, what else can one say when you have beautiful and nice people who are eminently qualified for the positions they have been appointed to, except to say welcome to governance, and we wish you well. We join everybody else in asking for God's blessings, and guidance and direction for the discharge of very onerous responsibilities in your new assignment. Good luck and God bless.

Honourable Members, we will conclude this morning's work with certain recognition to a young person. The Initiative in Capacity Building Association International has given an award to a young Sierra Leonean Ambassador, Isha Lucy Lawson who excelled in a spelling competition in Dubai in the year 2022, representing Sierra Leone and getting a Global Award for that. I want her to please rise. Shall we all please acknowledge this worthy Sierra Leonean and give her the recognition she deserves? It is all an aspect of the Free Quality Education of His Excellency the President. We are seeing it alive right here. With the indulgence of the House, I would like to give the young lady the opportunity to address you for a few minutes.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Speaker, can we give her the pedestal?

THE SPEAKER: Yes, if that can make her more comfortable.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Yes, so prepare the pedestal.

AMB. ISA LUCY YEAMA LAWSON: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, members of the Fourth Estate and distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the Spelling bee family in Sierra Leone extends our warmest greetings to you all. My name is Amb. Isa Lucy Yeama Lawson. My family extends thanks to you all for this opportunity to articulate to respected individuals and esteemed Members of Parliament. I am a global ambassador for the Spelling Bee Institution in Africa. The African Spelling Bee consortium which comprises twenty-two countries is an institution that celebrates the power of words and language. Sierra Leone has a counterpart institution which is called ICBAI [Initiative in Capacity Building Association International]. This organisation, on several occasions, has been invited to participate in the international Spelling Bee also known as the Inter-Continental Spelling Bee in various parts of the World. Last year, Sierra Leone was invited to participate in the Inter-continental Spelling Bee that was held in Dubai and I successfully emerged as the winner. I was awarded a trophy, medal, plaque and certificates for my outstanding performance.

Having heard the Presidential Address, we all see that all the nominees have a high-standard education system. It was very dispiriting that I was the only participant who was registered from Sierra Leone whilst other knowledgeable children were well prepared to witness and participate in such an event in their numbers from different countries.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is also worthy to note that we have also failed several times to participate in other Inter-continental Spelling Bee Competition, especially the last Africa Spelling Bee Competition in Ethiopia, which we could not participate due to lack of funds as we do not have consistent partners to be funding these trips. We would love to take you along our national spelling journey that is done across districts and regions annually. As such, we are humbly requesting all parliamentarians to help us facilitate the next Spelling Bee Competition across the districts as this is what will qualify your children to be exposed to the international platforms. It is obvious that there are very outstanding kids, especially in the provinces that can do better than some of us residing in the cities. We would also love to mention that the Spelling Bee is not all about spelling and being the best, but

it is a platform that helps children showcase their talents and build confidence in their abilities. Yes, it is challenging yet it has a rewarding experience that encourages a love for learning and literacy. We have been inspired after witnessing the dedication and hard work that go into preparing for these competitions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is therefore imperative for the Government of Sierra Leone, local and international NGOs, the private sector and other humanitarian agencies to support this venture as it goes a long way in paving the future of our beloved nation. We are on our knees pleading to this noble House to knock on doors on our behalf. We hope that going forward, we will not be crying as a result of a lack of funds to participate in future competitions, but we will be jubilating after we have flown the Sierra Leone flag high on the international platform. Yes, we can!

In a nutshell, we have no doubt that this noble House to support us financially and morally to upkeep our laudable vision and venture. I would love to conclude by saying that we do not intend to miss out the future opportunities after our humble plea to this esteemed House. Sierra Leone has started making a great impact on the educational system globally, and we ought to accelerate what we have started. Thank you all for your rapt attention as we look forward to your utmost collaboration.

THE SPEAKER: On behalf of the House, I would like to congratulate you for flying the Flag of Sierra Leone so high in Dubai and for being the winner in the competition that you participated. Thank you for coming and good luck next time. I cannot promise what this House would give, but your request will be given the due consideration it deserves. Thank you. Honourable Members, the advice we have is to catch them young.

[The House stood down at 12:30 p.m. and resumed at 2:50 p.m.]

V. MOTION OF THANKS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT DR JULIUS MAADA BIO.

[FOURTH ALLOTTED DAY]

CONTINUED TODAY

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I have a very long list of 22 names of Members who want to debate. I will however give preference to those who have not spoken yet and whose names are on my list. That is the prize you would get that I am dishing out for you being faithful to your time and to your calling. For those of you who have already spoken on this in the last three days please rise let me see you. Please do not rise again to catch my eyes. Well, I do not know whether these names are exclusively of those who have not spoken.

HON. ALFRED A. THOMPSON: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to make a brief contribution to the presidential Address. I would want to look at two critical areas in the Address. I think His Excellency the President hits the nail on the head when he makes 'Feed Salone' his top priority. 'Feed Salone' must work and must work at all costs. This has nothing to do with party lines, whether you belong to the green or the red is a must. Actions need to be taken to eradicate hunger from this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Paragraph 24 falls under the Food and Security and Feed Salone. You would agree with me that overfishing in our waters by foreign trawlers has destroyed the fishing industry. This is about taking a stand by chasing the Chinese from our waters. We have to get them on our farms, so that they can help us with farming activities. We also need equipment to help the Sierra Leone Navy to be well equipped because overfishing is destroying our fishing industry.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Article 3 also needs to be taught to our navies because the trawlers are encouraging them with Dollars and this foreign currency is affecting our country. The Chinese, the Koreans and the Vietnamese are experts in rice production. We must ask them to help us on our farms, so as to ensure that 'Feed Salone' works. We used to export rice and commodities to other countries. All the farmers have moved to the cities to sell DVDs and drive 'Okadas.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what has happened to the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board [SLPMB]? Why are we struggling with rice production? These are the questions we need to ask ourselves. Of course, businessmen interfere with SLPMC and many farmers are moving away from their farms into the cities. We pray that the 'Feed Salone' the President has brought succeeds. There is no party line

when it comes to feeding our people. Again, duty-free concessions need to be implemented, especially the agriculture products.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am a man of few words. I do not like talking a lot because I am a man of action. I go to the National Peace and Reconciliation. I refer to Paragraph 8 on page 2 of His Excellency's Address. It says: **"By fostering collaboration, cooperation, and negotiation, we can transcend the political divide for the ultimate benefit of our people."** As you can see, none of my colleagues are here because my party and some people feel that the ECSL did not do the right thing. The party even refused to go to court, but I have decided to come to Parliament for my voice to be heard. I want the World to know that the APC was not happy with the outcome of the elections. I am not saying the elections were rigged. I am simply saying that they were not transparent. My party wants an independent international review of the elections process. My party is not happy with the results.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am here to speak my mind. ECSL was not transparent, but again for the betterment of our country, Sierra Leone must move on. I will never stand here and bash at the President. He is the face of our nation and he deserves respect. I will stand by him because of my country and I take the Constitution very seriously. I will pray for him to have a soft heart towards our people. I pray for unity between the APC and SLPP. I personally believe we must not fight each other. Look at other countries and how they have moved on. We will restore the state of Athens of West Africa. Countries like Ghana and Rwanda have moved on and we must emulate their examples. We are still breaking and fighting ourselves. We need to get ourselves together and forget about party colours.

To conclude, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Paragraph 56 on page 10 states: **"The need to dialogue and negotiations resonate with the utmost urgency. We must find the common ground within the political divide."** Again, our most urgent need in Sierra Leone is political reconciliation. Former American President, Barrack Obama once said: "Process of reform will not succeed without national reconciliation. **Reconciliation is not a matter of ignoring a cruel past, but a means of confronting it with inclusion of truth.**" S.O. 2, 'wi get for say

watin wi mean for help wisef. We get for show watin wi mean for our country.' We for take this step in the right direction.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I first entered this House in 1982 and you better respect the old edition. Without the old edition, there can be no new edition. I will describe your maiden speech as an eloquent speech. By eloquence I mean, the substance of what you have said resonates throughout the lengths and breadths of this House. We all agree it is not how much you say, it is the quality of what you say that matters.

HON. ALFRED A. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Inclusion and compromise with the All Peoples' Congress party will guarantee national peace.

[Suspension of S.O. 5[2] being 3:00 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: Take your time and deliver the substance of what you want to say. That is what matters and that is what makes your speech an eloquent speech. It is the substance, not the form.

HON. ALFRED A. THOMPSON: I asked that our political prisoners are released. We need to stop the ideology of saying, this is your party because my grandparents belong to that party. We need to move beyond this pettiness. We need to put our Constitution first. The damage is done, but Sierra Leone will rise again. I want to thank and I appreciate you.

THE SPEAKER: I want to say thank you, on behalf of the House, for your very eloquent speech. It has more substance than many speeches I have heard in this Chamber. This is your first speech and I want to say the sky is your limit.

HON. JOSEPH A.B. KAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker for accorded me the privilege to speak on the presidential Address. I want to acknowledge the profound sense of humour and gratitude expressed by the President to the people of Sierra Leone for giving him a second term to continue with his assignment. I think is always good to show appreciation when people do something for you. I thank him for that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to refer the House to Paragraph two [2] of the Address. This Paragraph clearly expressed his commitments to the people of Sierra Leone. He also mentioned parliamentarians and I want us to know the reason why a particular emphasis was made to parliamentarians. He said in Paragraph 3 that I owe this institution in the highest regard. He said Parliament is not merely a forum for legislation; it stands as a vanguard of democratic ideals and possesses the life blood of the nation. This is very key, Mr Speaker. It is very true. It is like saying we are pivotal in whatever he is doing. Our genuine and sincere contributions will help him achieve whatever he wants because what we have here is a mere document of commitment. It is not a success story of what he has done so far, but intentions and therefore needs our genuine advice.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, another thing that resonates from his speech is the fact that he wants Sierra Leoneans to work as a team. We want us to collaborate and dialogue. It is sad to note our colleagues have still not returned to the Well of Parliament. He is calling on every parliamentarian in acknowledgement of our relevance to be here, so that we can contribute and help him steer the ship of Sierra Leone. In Paragraph 8, the President said: **“The absence of a two third majority of any political party necessitates constant engagement, encouraging us to amplify all voices and endangers a more harmonious, stable and prosperous Sierra Leone.”** That means he is still making clarion call, especially our colleague MPs to come and represent their people. He needs them and we all need them to come. He is encouraging us to extend an olive branch to our brothers and sisters to come and work as a team to promote this country *[Applause]*. I thank him very much for that call.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President identified key pillars he has prioritised. What does this speak to us? He is so sincere to tell us that he made a lot of commitments in difficult circumstances in the last five years and was able to deliver most of those commitments. We all know that education and other areas were prioritised, but he still believes that there are areas we have challenges. We have not been able to put bread on the table and that is why he has prioritised the agenda Feed Salone. To me, Feed Salone is not so different from the other speeches

he has made in relation to Agriculture. I think we need to reflect because we have the personnel and the lands to undertake farming activities. As a Parliament, we need to appeal to the Chief Minister to help us mobilise the Ministry of Agriculture and other sectors so that we can reflect on where things are going wrong or where things have gone wrong.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, lots of inputs were made into the Agriculture. We have got tractors, established youth farms and we have also got fertilizers. We have ongoing research, but what has come out of all these frantic efforts and commitments that have been made? It is worrisome and that is why we have to be serious. We need all hands on deck when it comes to agriculture. We can develop a pathway to address this food issue.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Parliament performs oversight activities. Why are we going on oversight? I think we need to look at these commitments and put them into actual work plan. We have to develop them into indicators, so that when we go on oversight, it will be easy for us. When we go on oversight activities, we will be able to know what the President wanted to do and what has been done already. The various players in the Ministries, Departments and Agencies [MDAs] should help the President achieve his agenda.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have achieved a lot in the area of human capital development. The International Community can attest to the fact that the education sector has produced results, but we also have the other sectors that can boost the middle level man power, which is where we have a crisis today. The youths are going astray, but a commitment has been made for us to have vocational and technical institutions across the country. I think when we have these structures well-established; we will be able to capture those that could not make it to tertiary institutions to acquire the necessary skills needed to improve this country. These are facilities we need to advocate for the improvement of this country. We need to do this, so that we can help the President to achieve his promises. He relies on all of us and every Sierra Leonean to make his/her input. We can only deliver if we come together as a nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President spoke about the Youth Employment Scheme. I want to describe the characteristics of the Sierra Leonean youth. I am sure the bulk of the Sierra Leone youths are insane, untrained, unqualified and therefore unemployable. This is the characteristics of the Sierra Leonean youth. If you are not trained, it means you are not educated and how can you be employed? I will give you a short scenario. I went to address a crisis situation relating to the mining sector and the youths said they were not employed to work at the mines. We went to a Barray and asked how many of them were drivers. We also wanted to know how many were plumbers. Mr Speaker, I could not find any plumber or driver. I said if these people lacked these various skills, how are they going to be employed? It was a shame on their part. We made frantic effort to cater for the youths.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have the menace of drug addiction everywhere in this country. The question is, who is responsible? Is it the police? No, but every Sierra Leonean. We have legislations on drugs, but they are silent on drug peddlers. The police can arrest those that are selling these drugs and even charge them to court, but we do not have adequate provisions in our legislations to punish these people. There must be punishment that will deter people from engaging in this kind of business. I think we need to review the legislations on drugs. I am sure we know where these drugs are being sold in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we know the places or houses where these youths assemble to buy drugs, but we are scared to reveal to the police where these drugs are sold. Are we helping the situation? If we do not tell the police, they cannot perform magic. We know where they sit, but we need to inform the police to go there and arrest them. Mr Speaker, few days ago, a colleague was appealing for medical services to be provided to these people. I think it is a matter of urgency, so that the situation will not get worse. We cannot abandon them; we need to remedy the situation. It cannot be left in the hands of the Drug Enforcement Agency or the security forces alone, but every one of us here should be involved.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Youth Employment Scheme is there for the youths. They should be supplied with rice seedlings to undertake agricultural

activities. This is my own personal view. They used to cultivate the land and even used to have good harvest, but the crops perished because they did not have adequate tools to harvest the rice. If we want to invest in the youths, we must also invest in agriculture. We have to make sure that people are given the required equipment. If you are given seedlings and at the end of the day you have good harvest, but you do not have a harvester, the rice will perish. So what are we going to do? I think this is very urgent for us to look at the youth farms. Moneys are being sent on youth farms, but nothing positive is happening. We need to re-examine these things.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to the public sector. Mr Speaker, I want to thank you and your administration for accorded us the privilege to go through the orientation. I want this House to know that charity begins at home and if we are talking about the public sector, let us reflect on our home. Mr Speaker, if you go to the offices of the stenographers, you will feel pity for them. They do not have enough computers at all. Sometimes we shout in this Well, but staff are not okay. Sometimes S.O 2 the Votes and Proceedings nor dae komot. The staff are frustrated and I would want you to take a moment and visit the offices of the stenographers. This is part of reforming the public sector. How do we enhance their performance? How do we get the real results? I also want the Deputy Leader to visit the stenographers office. We have to provide the basic facilities that will enhance the performance of people in the public sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have been talking about salary harmonisation and that is very important. Somebody could be deputy secretary, while the other secretary, but the difference in our salary is so huge. These are the issues that demotivate people. What help to promote educational sector? We can all attest to the fact that teachers are not well paid, although a lot of money was poured into the educational sector. Let us look where things are going wrong and try to correct them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to congratulate the Minister of Lands. He has put mechanisms in place to track every document that goes to the Ministry. This is very important because we have had instances where files got missing. Mr

Speaker, S.O 2; we no no husai dis document dae. Which desk e dae? These are the things that are hampering performance. We need to put systems in place and make sure these systems work.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all of us need to put hands on deck and support the President. I am sure the only way to support him is to look at areas that still have challenges. We can bring these challenges out and find ways of addressing them. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution to the debate.

HON. P.C FODAY S. K. FABA: Thanks to His Excellency the President for his tireless effort he has made to bring all he has done to this Well of Parliament. I want to also thank my colleagues Paramount Chiefs in Kenema District. They played a great role in my election to this Well of Parliament. It is a good privilege given to me and I want to thank them, including the President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to add salts to the sauce prepared by the President to move Sierra Leone forward from the huddles. As an Arm of Government, we are working side by side with the Government. We are supposed to direct and advise the Government of the day, even though the two giant political parties, SLPP and APC look at us with different eyes. When in governance, they called us a bad Paramount Chiefs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I speak, I know what to say and what not to say. When in Opposition, they look at us as threat and with different lenses. They want to know what we will be saying. The President promised to establish a wage support for some people, but what about the conditions of service for Paramount Chiefs? Has that been recognised or talked about? What are we going to do? During the electoral process, all the stakeholders, including the police, military, etc. went to our chiefdoms and knocks at the doors of the Paramount Chiefs. We took the responsibilities to take care of them, but we do not have conditions of service. This is the problem because we are left out. We should be included, so that we can develop zeal to move this nation forward.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about agriculture. We had a challenge in the last farming season that I would like to bring to your attention. In the last agricultural year, a team was moved to Kenema City and held a meeting with all stakeholders in the region. In that meeting, news broke out to the community or to the elders that Government has allocated funds for the youths to make a Chiefdom Youth Farm in every chiefdom. The news reached us and even the youth leaders were represented there. They promised to provide stipends, but nothing was given to them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the chiefs volunteered to ensure that the money is given to the youths. In fact, every chiefdom had a quota of the money, but interestingly, the money was sent with code and you could not access it without the code. The code was not disclosed to us by the Ministry of Agriculture. It was noted that only the Ministry knew the code. The money that was sent to my youth leader in the Chiefdom came and informed me that the money had disappeared from the phone. This is another challenge, Mr Speaker. There is no farming this year because of what happened last year. They do not want a repetition of what happened last year. I want the Ministry of Agriculture to look into that problem and make some adjustments.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now go to the Ministry of Trade and Industry. That Ministry is the livelihood of all Sierra Leoneans. We are having monopoly in the trade specifically the motorbikes. I am sure only one person is importing motorbikes into the whole country. The prices of motorbikes are skyrocketing minute by minutes. This has to be handled urgently. This information is for the Minister of Trade. We have to make our people comfortable. Development should come with good intentions. Again, the costs of rice and petrol are alarming. Petrol dealers have a forum where they decide price increment. There is no price control and is high time this issue is dealt with *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if the chiefs are to be neutral in this Parliament, I want to suggest to the President and his Government, the Acting Minority Leader and his party, the Leader of Government Business and the Clerk for the creation of a House of Chiefs. The land tenure was passed in the Fifth Parliament and that was a

good move by our National Council of Paramount Chiefs, chaired by Honourable Fasuluku, the Paramount Chief of Sandor. We were moving from district to district to have a position paper. I am sure the Speaker of this House got the letter to hold on the Bill that came to this Well until we have given a position paper and that was done. I want to thank the Speaker, the Clerk of Parliament, the Whip and everybody for that decision. You held the paper back until we meet in the various district headquarters towns.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this will ensure the forceful preparation of a House of Chiefs in the district headquarters. We were able to have a position paper and it was approved by the President and his Government. We are very happy to have that Bill passed for our own convenient. I am convinced that with the approval of an office for every parliamentarian, we will be okay. We are not competing with this Parliament at all. We are going to ensure that the Bill is well structured and properly vetted before presented to Parliament for ratification. Paramount chiefs take time to talk because we do not want to be indicted.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to say something about the roads. The road from Mano Junction to Kono is very bad and needs rehabilitation. The road from Panguma to Blama has been given to SLRA, but ten years ago it used to be extremely bad.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would also like to talk about the Dodo Hydro. Twenty or thirty years ago, when they asked you in an exam to list down the hydros in this country, if you failed to mention Bumbuna Hydro and Dodo Hydro, you would fail. The Dodo Hydro was claimed and we took thirty-eight years on that case. We have won the case, but the problem has not been solved completely. We were given the right and allowed as the host of the dam. It was supposed to be registered four years ago, but that has not been done. I want to plead to this Parliament to join me in ensuring that the dam is registered.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Dodo Government Secondary School is the only Sababu Secondary School being approved. That school has been given all the privileges in the district apart from the Government School in Kenema. The only challenge the school is facing is that we have not secured the electric poles to supply

electricity to the school. We have already got electricity from Ivory Coast, but no poles from Dodo to the school. I want to plead to the Minister of Energy and Power, Mr Kanja Sesay to ensure that the needful is done. We need his assistance, so that we can have the poles from Dodo to the secondary school. This is my humble request to the Minister.

I thank you very much sir [*Applause*].

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Paramount Chief for his contribution to the debate.

HON. RUGIATU T. MUSSAFFA: Thank you, Mr Speaker for this opportunity. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members. I would like to refer the House to Paragraph 17 of the Presidential Speech, under Technology and Infrastructure Initiative. With your leave, it says: "Technology and infrastructure initiative will serve as an engine for sustained economic growth, enhancing the power of innovation and robust infrastructure to propel Sierra Leone to middle income status. I have been an ICT professional for thirty-five years. So, this falls directly in my domain. I look at the President as more of a patriot than a politician. This is because giving the chance to President Bio, he will propel this country to first class country or first world overnight. Mr Speaker, like he said before, S.O 2 saful, saful. The world has gone digital, but where is Sierra Leone? It is like we stood still while the world was moving forward.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, people think that when you know how to operate your telephone or mobile phones or tablets, they know about technology. This is not the case at all. There is more to it than what they think. There has been a 50% increase in connectivity to the internet, even in the rural areas due to the broadband expansion. The problem we have is the e-government solutions. It is not enough at all. Thirty per cent [30%] transformation in the way Government does business is not enough; we can do better than that. A lot of people or workers in the Government offices cannot even type a simple word document. This means training is eminent because the world has gone digital. We are still dealing with papers. If you go to some of these offices, you will see lots of papers littered around. This is why files get missing. They will tell you, I cannot find your file or documents. This

needs to stop. We need to conduct massive trainings for the workforce. Trainings are urgently needed for workers. We have to train these Government workers in basic computer skills. We can solicit support from outside or partner with others, so that we stay on top of situations. The Government needs to do this urgently.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President talked about infrastructure. My Paramount Chief just mentioned the roads from Mano Junction to Panguma and from Dodo to Kono. Those roads are terrible and they need rehabilitation. They are nothing to write home about. I come from a diamondiferous area. This country has benefitted a lot from my area since the days of SLST, NDME and the likes. Today, diamonds are not easy to find. If you do not have heavy equipment, you will not be able to mine diamonds. Alluvial mining is almost next to nothing. My people are transitioning into Agriculture, but the roads are bad. This is a very big challenge and that is why it is difficult to get our produce to market. This is discouraging them from undertaking more agricultural initiatives.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we need trainings in the use of technology. This is because there are lots of things going wrong. The hackers are hacking into banks and Government systems. Our cyber security should be beefed up and this is very important. When these hackers get into the system, it is difficult to get them out. So, the President is on the right track with his technology and innovation. We need to have him put things in place to fast track the trainings. We cannot continue to deal with papers in this 21st Century. We know that our system is not robust, but we will get there. I thank Mr President for his short speech. The speech was short, but very sweet and we expect him to come again. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable lady for her great contribution to this debate.

HON. FATMATA S. SOUKENAH: I thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I want to look at Paragraph 10 of the speech of the His Excellency the President, Retired Brigadier Julius Madaa Bio *[Applause]*. "Five years ago, I stood before this Parliament, presenting New Direction Manifesto and pleading to honour critical promises despite facing unprecedented challenges. My Government resolutely fulfilled most of these promises amid global shocks that saw the cost of living very

high through strategic policies intervention and investments in local food production, job creation and the betterment of the public servants. We took our people out of the adverse effects of these shocks.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the big five of the President. He came here in 2018 and made a very big mark for this country when he introduced the Free Quality Education and Women Empowerment. Despite the crisis the country was going through, he was able to take Sierra Leone to this level. What I want to say here is that I have no doubt in his ability to deliver. This is why I want to thank him. I say thank you very much, Mr President for what you have done for the people of Sierra Leone. We are grateful and we will not forget that even when you stay or go, we will remember you for the rest of our lives *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if the President did what he said in 2018, I know he will do it again in 2023. He will work earnestly for the people of Sierra Leone, so that this country succeeds. I want this House to join His Excellency in achieving the big five changers, especially in the area of food security. Mr Speaker, I will be coming to your office for support because I will be going to my village for farming activities. I will need your support not by giving me money, but by talking to the authorities that are responsible for farming or food security *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you Madam for recognising that this Speaker is a very poor Speaker with no money *[Laughter]*.

HON. FATMATA S. SOUKENAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank His Excellency for this brilliant speech and I know he will fulfil his promises in Jesus' name. I thank you, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable lady for her contribution. Honourable Members, I will rise at 4:15 p.m. to give the Clerks-At-The-Table time to go and prepare the Votes and Proceedings for tomorrow's sitting. Again, tomorrow is the last allotted day and the last day of sitting before we adjourn for recess.

HON. SHAKIA SAMA: Mr Speaker, I want to thank you and this Parliament for the respect you accorded my elder brother and Paramount Chief who has been reported seriously sick. I am on my way to Pujehun District to help in the arrangement for his

medication. We are most grateful. I want to thank the President for the speech he so graciously delivered to this Parliament. Mr Speaker, since 2007, Pujehun has never had 100% seats in the Council and Parliament. I say this because I want to talk about the inclusiveness of the governance style of the President. In 2007, the SLPP had seats in Parliament, but we also had three seats for PMDC. I was one of those MPs. Therefore, the SLPP did not have 100% seats. In 2008, we had one seat in the Council for PMDC; and in 2007, we had a seat. This year, we have 100% seats for SLPP in the Council and 100% seats in Parliament *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we owe this to the President because with his intervention, Pujehun District was united politically and have all the seats for SLPP. If you look at the composition of NGC here, some of us were Independent MPs and some were C4C, but because the President has a very good heart, he was able to mobilise support for the party. He made a call for all none SLPPs to join him to move this country forward. I was one of those who decided to join the SLPP because of the good heart of the President. We are one people as a country and one person as a Pan-Africanist. I have never spoken about tribalism or regionalism negatively. I think we are a people and we have one destiny. We have to see ourselves as one people; we have to be together; we have to help our country develop and that is one reason I came to SLPP.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will talk about the flagship project of the President; i.e., Feed Salone. I have held meetings with my supporters and party mates in Pujehun and we have decided to take lead in this process. We are not only going to talk about it, but we are going to do it. We want to make a farm and hopefully we are going to invite you to visit our farm. We are not going to make a small farm; we want make a very big farm; we want to ensure that we make agriculture a business. We are not just going to involve in television farming. We are going to make a farm and invite people to go and look at it. We will invite His Excellency and Members of his Government to visit our farm. We are beginning to raise funds and we are on the path in achieving it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is not enough to come here and lavish praises on the President. We have to ensure that we feed ourselves. A very long time ago,

we used to export rice. We have all what it takes to achieve that, Mr Speaker. We can make Sierra Leone great again because we have fertile soil. We have abundant rain fall and we have the human resource. What we need is to work harder and we have decided to take the lead.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to talk about the 30% women representation in governance. When I heard the women talked about the 30%, I think they have missed the point. I am sure the President has given them more than 30%. When we did as landlords, we included at least 30% of every gender. This means the women can get as much as 70%. We cannot go beyond 70%. So, this President is the first President in history that has made this possible. We have more women than men in this country. There are at least 511% of women and there is no way we can advance as a country if we leave the women. They are the majority of Sierra Leoneans [*Applause*]. I remembered Sheku Turay said if you want to know whether a country is backward or not, you do not have to go to that country; you just have to look at the conditions of the women. If the women are kept in the backward conditions, then the country will be backward. I am happy that His Excellency has realised this fact and he is making a lot of efforts to ensure that we lift our women up.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I ran from this country to The Gambia. I led the team of Sierra Leoneans to your office then you were a business person. I walked from Senegal to The Gambia on foot. We need the security to ensure that we sustain the gains we have made in the area of security. I want to appeal to Sierra Leoneans to embrace peace and promote a peaceful environment, so as to ensure sustainable development. I want to advise all those who are thinking of bringing trouble to this country to stop. They should advise themselves not to attempt it at all. I will not go into the bush again. There is no way I will go to the bush and there is no way we are going to allow anybody to bring trouble to this country. We have the ballot box to express our grievances. I want to state here that not everybody will win an election. Somebody is going to win and when that person wins, we are going to allow him/her to govern. There will be another opportunity after five years. I want to use this opportunity to appeal to our brothers in APC to come back, so that we

will continue to engage and move this country forward. We have to maintain peace in this country. During the August 10 incident, I was in Bo. It was a very sad moment for this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am saying this because Sierra Leoneans have suffered. We are not going to allow a handful of people to make us suffer again. This is my appeal and I want our colleagues to come back to this Well and represent their people. We have to engage and move this country forward. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution.

HON. ABDULAI K. KANU: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you for giving me the platform this afternoon. It amazes me this afternoon to register my appreciation in the Well of Parliament. I am happy to add my voice on the presidential Address delivered here by His Excellency the President during the occasion of State Opening of the Sixth Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start my intervention with Feed Salone. In his speech, the President said: "We need to place attention to agriculture." He put more emphasis on the agricultural sector. Mr Speaker, before we talk about Feed Salone, we need to tackle the issue of food importation, food production and food sufficiency to sustain agricultural development. On behalf of the people of Port Loko District, we want to thank the President for his transparency and accountability. He has done extremely well in education, infrastructure, and economic development *[Applause]*. We also want to thank His Excellency for his special quality. He is very innovative and hospitable. We also thank the Almighty Allah for giving us this President *[Applause]*. He is a father figure of our nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we want to thank His Excellency for his presidential architectural design in the fight against corruption. We the people of Port Loko District want to thank the President for his ecological concern and for bringing peace, tranquillity and national cohesion in our country. The people of Port Loko District want to thank the President for his presidential foresight. He always puts Port Loko District on top of his list *[Applause]*. The people of Koya Chiefdom, especially the Paramount Chief, Kobba Bongolli III of Koya Chiefdom want to appreciate His Excellency for building a large economic foundation in Koya Chiefdom.

HON. EMMERSON S. LAMINIA: Point of Order, Mr Speaker. The Honourable Member needs protection. Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O 35[5] to talk to my colleagues. They have been very unfair and there is no decorum in the House. I can understand public speaking fright. You have to applaud the Honourable Member quietly. Again, please allow the Honourable Member to make his contribution in peace. Honourable Member, this is your day and you are at liberty to debate. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I know the culprits and one of them is sitting right there. The others are here to my right.

HON. ABDULAI K. KANU: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the agricultural sector.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I think you have exhausted your allocated time.

HON. ABDULAI K. KANU: Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you for your contribution.

HON. RACHEAL M.P. SESAY: Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me this great opportunity to debate on the Presidential Address of His Excellency the President, Dr Julius Maada Bio. I greatly believe that the big five game changer is the sustainable transformative policies that we need for a sustainable economic growth and social progress.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your leave, I would like to refer the House to Page 4, Paragraph 24 of the Address. It says: "Food security holds paramount importance in the quest of a stable and democratic society, transcending its role of a mere necessity to become a foundational pillar upon which the prosperity of a nation is built; a country that ensure citizens access to a dependable food supply, safeguard public health and foster social cohesion. This symbiotic relationship between food security, democracy and stability empowers individuals, promote economic stability and mitigate the perils of social unrest." Mr Speaker, it takes a single person not to believe the big five game changer of the President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in 2018 President Bio presented 28 clusters in his Manifesto. Twenty [20] clusters were met and 8 of them were in the pipeline. He was on the stage of implementation and he is currently trying to accomplish those 8 in his second term. With due respect to the past presidents, President Bio is the only President who has done so much for this country. He has done so much for our people and cannot be compared to the previous presidents. In Port Loko District, most of our people are farmers. My parents were not educated, but my dad was a farmer. It was through farming activities our parents educated us and was able to send the eldest son to England for education. So, he was not educated, but he was able to educate us through farming. If we embark on farming, trust me we will be able to educate our children. In other countries, farmers are the richest people. I want to encourage all of us to embark on farming, so that we will be able to accomplish the biggest goal among the big five game changers of the President's manifesto. We all saw the transformation the Free Quality Education has brought. The fight against corruption is yielding dividend. This President is someone that we will never forget in the history of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about the healthcare. From 2018 to date, we have 50% healthcare workers being added to the workforce. We have about 5000 healthcare workers have been pin coded. The President has ensured the construction of 200 healthcare facilities across the country. I have a healthcare background and it means a lot to me. I however want to encourage the people of Sierra Leone to change our mind-sets. The President has done a lot for us. We need to transform our mind-sets for the progress of this country. There are things that people may think they are not important, but they are important, such as emergency healthcare, common CPR, etc. For example, if someone falls down in this Well or someone is not feeling well, we should have a worker or staff who will be able to do a common CPR to be able to resuscitate the person.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to encourage the Government to have medical practitioners even in the restaurants. If somebody is choking, that is a healthcare situation or an emergency situation. You may think it is something small, but it will save somebody's life. We should have medics in schools, public places like

Youyi Building. There are lots of offices at Youyi Building, but there is no healthcare personnel. If somebody has an attack, there is nobody to give Aspirin that will prevent the person from heart attack. There should be somebody to administer CPR to resuscitate the person.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these are very important issues we should consider. It is left with us the people to change our mind-sets. Mr Speaker, even if we have the best healthcare, if you do not go to the hospital for check-ups, I am afraid. I want to encourage the men to be checking their health status regularly. My dad was not used to go to the hospital. I encourage all of us to be going for check-ups annually. If you are a female, make sure they examine your breast to check for lumps monthly. Women should do their mammograms and men should go to the hospitals for prostate examination. These are simple things we should be doing regularly. My dad suffered from prostate simply because he failed to go to the hospital. The earlier the prognosis, the better it is. So, I encourage us to please take advantage of these things.

THE SPEAKER: It is a very good advice.

HON. RACHEAL M.P. SESAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the people of Port Loko want to thank the President for the industrial zone in Koya. This industrial zone is going to bring a lot of jobs for the youths of Port Loko District and other parts of the country. I know the President want to empower the youths, but it left with the youths to also take advantage of it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have the Free Quality Education. Majority of our youths do not have formal or basic education. If you do not have basic education, you will not be able to benefit from these jobs. So, I thank the President for what he has done for the people of Port Loko. He has built 100 beds hospital for us and this hospital will bring people from overseas to serve Sierra Leoneans the same way people are leaving here to go to Ghana for medication.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would also like to talk to some of our healthcare workers, especially those living abroad to come and work with the President. We know some of you are there and have already retired, but you still fit and strong. We want you to come to your country and work with the President, so that we will be

able to achieve the big five game changers. I am sure we will be able to accomplish these five game changers because the President is a 'Talk & Do' President. We in this Well will continue to work with him and also make sure that we monitor those he has appointed, so that they do what they are supposed to do. We have to ensure the President accomplishes his goal. I thank you all for giving me the opportunity to contribute to this debate.

THE SPEAKER: I want to take the opportunity to thank the Honourable lady for a very good speech. It is an amazing speech and a very good one. If my information is correct to wish you safe landing, safe and smooth landing and we hope the story that I have been told is not true, but if it is, you go with our deepest condolences and please get in touch with us when you are there.

HON. SARTY BANYA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by thanking His Excellency for his credible speech he delivered to this House. I guess all of you will testify in this House that I have always stated here that the President happens to be one of the leading Presidents that always radicalises his manifesto commitments into action. I am going to limit myself to key areas of the Address. Paragraph 53 talks about infrastructure, roads and construction of bridges. Also, Paragraphs 24, 25, 26 and 27 talk about Feed Salone, which is the flagship programme of the President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we know that there are key institutions that are responsible for road construction and rehabilitation. We have the Sierra Leone Roads Authority [SLRA], Roads Maintenance Fund Administration [RMFA] and the National Commission for Social Action [NaCSA]. NaCSA undertakes public works programme, while SLRA deals with trunk roads. All of us can testify to the fact that during the Fifth Parliament, our Government concentrated more on the construction of trunk roads across the country. In fact, there was a time the Government approved close to 40 trunk roads across the country for rehabilitation. The Kailahun/Pendembu Road was constructed by the government. However, there is a big challenge I have observed about road construction; i.e., ensuring proper supervision by our engineers, especially those from the SLRA. The highway from Hastings to Waterloo is a clear example. Sometimes the specifications given to contractors are not strictly

adhered to. They are expected to at least tar two to three kilometres at every junction, but that is not done. When it rains, sometimes the street is being littered with stones and pebbles. This means proper supervision was not done by our engineers. The contracts on the 40 trunk roads I was talking about were not properly executed. In some instances, the contracts were abandoned by the contractors. The Kailahun Road, Mano/Sewaru Road to Mofindor are clear example. The contractors only cleared the bush and as we speak, he has not done anything on the road.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other aspect I want to talk about is the over concentration the Government on trunk roads, thereby forgetting the feeder roads. When we talk about feeder roads, these are areas where we are talking about cash crops or farming, we need to improve the conditions of the feeder roads. So, my recommendation to this Government is that we should also focus on the feeder roads if we want to achieve Feed Salone programme.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to look at bridge construction. The President made a pronouncement here that they are in the process of approving the construction of bridges on four major ferry crossing rivers. Of course, for us in Kailahun District, we have benefited from the Mano Ferry Bridge, but the road leading to that bridge needs rehabilitation. This is because if the roads are rehabilitated, then the bridge will become meaningful to us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will also want to talk about the Feed Salone Project of the President. This is very much important for us. All of us know that farming is not a novelty to the layman in the village. We have been farmers; our great grandfathers have been farmers. The questions however are, what do we have to start the Feed Salone project? Do we have the resources? Do we need to improve on our resources? Well, the natural and human resources are there, but they are not enough. My colleague said yesterday that if we really mean business, the Ministry of Agriculture should take the lead. I think we have about three ministers in that Ministry and the substantive Minister should provide supervisory role between the Western and Southern Regions. The other Ministers should take care of the Eastern Region and the third Minister take cares of the Northern Region.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think their presence and supervisory role will add value. If you look at the topography of our land, especially in the East, we do more of upland farming, while the South and North have more Bolilands. So, like what the Honourable Paramount Chief from Kambia said the other day, that Kambia alone can feed this entire nation. I want to advise the Government to do a radical inclusion. We should not only hope on the structures we have, but there are also key players in our country. For instance, we talk about the bike and Kekeh riders. Some few months ago, some of them said on radio that bike riding is not their career, but if Government is talking about the Feed Salone project, they will be interested and I think the issue of Agriculture will create more jobs for our youths in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should also look at the disabled in this country. During the Morning Coffee Radio Programme two days ago, some of our disabled in our district proudly said that they were presently cultivating IVS. Sometimes the blind will not fully participate in some of these activities, but those with minor fractures can take part. They only need support to enable them participate. So, I want to recommend to our President to give support to most of these groups if we want to achieve our aim.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when we talk about Feed Salone, is it only for this five years or is it going to continue? If it is going to be a continuous process, we have various institutions we should also include, like the military, police and Correctional Centres. They should also participate in the Feed Salone project. This is also going to help the Ministry of Education in the school feeding programme. The Government should provide lands to the Ministry of Education. We have lots of lands along Moyamba to Taiama and even Masiaka. The Government can allocate 2000 hectares of land to the Ministry of Education with a special budgetary allocation. The produce are going to be used for the school feeding programme. I think we can do that for the Ministry of Education and employ more youths who are on the streets. They will be working on the farms and I think that will help us to achieve the Feed Salone programme.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you, Mr Speaker for this opportunity.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution.

ADJOURNMENT

[The House at 4:25 p.m. and was adjourned to Friday, 28th August, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.]