



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIFTH SESSION –FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 31st JANUARY, 2023

SESSION – 2022/2023



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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Tuesday, 31ST January, 2023.

CONTENTS

I. PRAYERS

II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON THURSDAY 26TH JANUARY, 2023

III. LAYING OF PAPER

HONOURABLE MATHEW S. NYUMA, LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS AND HEAD OF THE SIERRA LEONE DELEGATION TO ACP-EU PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLIES SIXTH REPORT OF THE 61ST SESSION OF THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN, PACIFIC STATES [OACPS] PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY AND 42ND SESSION OF THE ACP-EU JOINT ASSEMBLY FROM 25TH OCTOBER TO THE 2 ND NOVEMBER, 2022 IN MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE

V. BILL

THE SIERRA LEONE NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL ACT, 2022

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SANITATION SECOND READING, COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SANITATION



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Tuesday, 31st January, 2023.

I. PRAYERS

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

[The House met at 10:40 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]

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

The House was called to Order

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON THURSDAY, 26TH JANUARY, 2023

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Thursday, 26th January, 2023. We shall start with Page 5. Do you have any amendment on Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Speaker, the last page reads, 'Mr Speaker adjourned the House to Tuesday, 31st January 2023. The House rose at 11:40 p.m. It should be 11:40 a.m.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member.

HON. ALIEU I. KAMARA: I so move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. MOHAMED KANNEH: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Thursday, 26th January, 2023 has been adopted as amended]

III. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, every day we meet we crave to receive the heavenly wisdom from above, but I do not know how many of us actually receive it. I have two announcements to make. The first one I will make will be done with a very heavy heart. I announce the demise of two former Members of Parliament, Honourable Joe Amara Bangali and the Honourable Dr Jengo Stevens. Honourable Joe Amara Bangali passed away on Wednesday, 11th January and the Honourable Dr Jengo Stevens followed suite on the 18th January. May I now invite all of us to stand and

observe a minute of silence in their memories? May God forgive their mistakes on Earth and grant their souls eternal rest in his heavenly kingdom. Amen.

Honourable Members, the second announcement I have has a bearing on the first one. The Executive in March, 2022 announced a new policy on State supports to national and international funeral of deceased Sierra Leoneans and foreign dignitaries. That policy is contained in this document and I would invite all of you to get a copy and read it because sooner or later this policy would affect you and me of course. We can help to embellish what the Executive has done. Therefore, in addition to the Policy of Government on State supports to National and International Funerals of deceased Sierra Leoneans and Foreign Dignitaries declared in March, 2022, I hereby declare that by virtue of their membership of Parliament, all former Members of Parliament, who have served in Parliament for at least a minimum of five years, shall be entitled to a parliamentary laying out in the State Hall of Parliament. I was expecting some acknowledgement. I demand an acknowledgement [*Applause*]. The last announcement is not a new one. I simply want to draw your attention to the perennial problem of absenteeism or lateness. I know this is the last lap, but I want to continue to encourage all of us to pay some attention to the need for punctuality. Just look at the time, it is almost becoming the norm that the Chief Whip, for every commencement of a sitting would have to draw our attention to S.O 5[2]. I look for the day when you would not have that onerous of duty to perform. So let us start by ensuring that we start our sittings at 10:00 a.m. I know that the Opposition Members of Parliament have been busy with their democratic elections. Congratulations Honourable Mohamed Bangura to have you back. I see you have come after a very long absence. He is the Member of Parliament from my district, so it is a special welcome for you.

HON MOHAMED BANGURA: Mr Speaker, you know that our party is currently engaged in democratic process.

THE SPEAKER: Indeed, for the first time.

HON. MOHAMED BANGURA: Mr Speaker tomorrow is our district convention.

THE SPEAKER: On behalf of the entire Parliament, I extend our very best wishes for all of you.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I just want to know because he had an intention of being the flag bearer. I want to know if that intention still stands.

THE SPEAKER: He actually informed me that when he finally makes that decision, we shall hear an announcement in this Well. I keep saying that democracy can be likened to the beautiful game of football. If you want to be a good player, what do you do? You practice and the more you practice, the more you perfect the art of football. So, it is with democracy; the more you practice it, it becomes second nature and you do not have to struggle with it the next time. So, we wish all of you well. This country is a democratic state. With that, let us proceed with today's business, please.

HON. ALUSINE KANNEH: Mr Speaker, not too long ago you said Members of Parliament who served five years going forward even if they live 100 years or more they are entitled to be laid in Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: I did not talk about the age.

HON. ALUSINE KANNEH: Mr Speaker, I have something to say. Mr Speaker, there are Members of Parliament who came here through bye-elections and some of them are here for two or three years and they also serve as Members of Parliament. I am sure they should also be accorded that respect. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, my response to you is that get a copy of this policy statement and then you would appreciate the import of the additional announcement that I had just made. Read this first and compare it with what I have just said. I think you would thank me all the more for having made the announcement that I had just done. I can lend you mine provided you undertake to bring it back.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I want to say a very big thank you for the amendment you want to do. As far as that document is concerned, it is stated that you have to serve as Member of Parliament for two terms before you are qualified to be given a State funeral. So, if you say five years, then I want to thank you and like you

said, that document should come to Parliament because it affects us directly. We have to look at it and do some amendments.

THE SPEAKER: The policy of the government is the policy of the government, it is a policy, it is not here for enactment. Have we been asked to translate it into law? You should be content with the announcement that I have just made. It is an addition to what is contained in the policy statement.

III. PAPER LAID

HONOURABLE MATHEW S. NYUMA, LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS AND HEAD OF THE SIERRA LEONE DELEGATION TO ACP-EU PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLIES

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Colleagues, first there is a typo here, it should be The Fifth Session of the Fifth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone. Having made that correction, I beg to lay on the Table of this House the following:

SIXTH REPORT OF THE PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE DELEGATION TO THE ACP-EU PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLIES, THE 61ST SESSION OF THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN, PACIFIC STATES [OACPS] PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY AND THE 42ND SESSION OF THE ACP-EU JOINT ASSEMBLY FROM 25TH OCTOBER TO THE 2ND NOVEMBER, 2022 IN MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE [*Applause*].

V. BILL

THE SIERRA LEONE NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL ACT, 2022

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SANITATION

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

MRS PRINCESS DUGBA [*The Minister of Health and Sanitation*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, 'The Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council Act, 2022' be read the first time.

[Question Proposed Put and Agreed to]

[The Bill entitled, 'The Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council Act, 2022' has been read the first time]

[SECOND READING]

MRS PRINCESS DUGBA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled 'The Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council Act 2022' be read the second time. Mr Speaker, I have the honour and privilege to present, on behalf of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, the Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council Bill, 2022 to this Honourable House of Parliament for ratification. Mr Speaker, this Bill seeks to;

- i. provide for the training, discipline, enrolment and license of nurses and midwives throughout Sierra Leone;
- ii. provide for the licenses and registration of nursing and midwifery institutions;
- iii. provide for the regulation of the practices of nursing and midwifery generally and provide for other related matters.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council Bill 2022 when enacted, shall have a Council consisting of the Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services, the president of the Sierra Leone Nursing Association, the president of the Sierra Leone Midwives Association, the Chairperson West African College of Nursing Sierra Leone Chapter, the Principal Public Health Nursing Officer, the Solicitor General, the president of the Association of Nursing and Midwifery Training Institutions and the president of the Interreligious Council of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Council shall be a body corporate having perpetual succession and capable of acquiring, holding and disposing of property whether movable or immovable and of suing and being sued in its corporate name and subject to this Act of performing all such act as body corporate may by law performs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Bill has been developed through wide consultations with stakeholders in the country and it is my pleasure to introduce and present the Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council Bill 2022 for first reading in

Parliament. I move that the Bill entitled the Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council Act 2022 be read the second time.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation. Before I put the question, I would like to make a very simple correction. What the Minister is asking Parliament to do today is to pass into law the Bill that she has just presented and not to ratify the Bill. A Bill passed into law is an enactment and it is different from when you ratify treaties and agreements. Treaties or Agreements ratified would have to be adopted into domestic laws, so that they can take effect within the domestic jurisdiction of Sierra Leone. You would agree with me that enactment of laws that is the primary function of Parliament. The Executive proposes and Parliament turns that proposal into law. So, we are not ratifying Bills, but instead enacting Bills.

[Question Proposed]

HON. MOSES B. JORKIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. This is a very nice Bill. My nurses in the Health Department have been behind me for this Bill and today it is before Parliament. It left with us to do the needful. The only unfortunate aspect of this is that it is only now I am getting this Bill. I came late because I had a breakdown while coming from Bo. Mr Speaker, when I realised that this Bill will be discussed today, I decided to be in this Well. I do not think whether I have much to say on this Bill because I was not fully involved. I should have been the one to champion a Bill of this nature before presentation in this Well in my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on Health. I do not know if the Leadership would want to say anything, but I am not aware that this Bill will be discussed today until the eleventh hour. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Well, it is rather unfortunate that there seems to have been break in communication between the Ministry and the Parliamentary Committee on this important matter. I will allow further consultations to take place between the Minister and the Honourable Member, so that you will be on the same page on this matter.

This proposal I am making is very important. I refer you to S.O 37. Somebody can easily come up with a dilatory Motion and put the proceedings to a halt. I am not

asking you to do that now, I am simply underscoring the importance of communication being kept alive at all times between Parliament and the Executive.

HON. DR KANDEH K. YUMKELLA: Mr Speaker, this is about parliamentary procedures. We constitute select Committees, so that they can do due diligence by helping to make good laws. So, if there is no communication between the Chairman, the Committee Members and the Executive, then we stand the House down. This is not about negotiation because parliamentary Committees are meant to help make good laws. Some of us, even if we come late, we rely on the sectorial Committees to start the argument before our intervention. I am sure we should postpone consideration of this Bill for a week, so that the Committee examines. We would want the Committee to educate us during the debate. I thank the Chairman for being honest and frank.

THE SPEAKER: In light of what we have heard from the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Health and other Members, I will stand the House down for half an hour, so that there can be proper communication between the two branches of Government. Hopefully when we return, they will report to me that an amicable settlement has been reached to enable us to proceed.

[The House stood down at 1:35 p.m., and resumed at 2:05]

The House stands down for half an hour

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, after very extensive consultations, we have taken the considered position that we should proceed with this Bill to its final conclusion. I know it might surprise a few of you who stated earlier that you have seen this Bill only this morning, but I have been able to establish that this Bill was circulated a few days ago. Well, it is unfortunate, if you saw the Bill only this morning. I saw it yesterday and I dutifully took it home and read it early this morning before coming to Parliament. It is a very short Bill. I want to state here that this Bill is not controversial and if it were, I would have acceded to the request that we take a longer adjourning to give everyone an opportunity to read it. I am sure even within the last hour that we will be consulting, if you spend time to read the Bill, you would have gone through it from page to page

and you would have completed reading it by now. On that note, I implore all of us to be indulgent and proceed with the consideration of the Bill to finality. I hope that captures the sentiments of the Honourable Members.

HON. KANDEH K. YUMKELLA: Yes, Mr Speaker. We are fully aligned with you. Mr Speaker, apart from the fact that the Honourable Member said most MPs only saw the Bill this morning, this is a bigger issue he raised. This is just for the future, but we are ending our term very soon. Let us make it a practice that Ministers should respect our Committees. The MDAs should understand that our Constitution was mirrored along that of the United States. We have to empower our Committee Chairpersons by letting people know that if they bring a Bill, even if it goes to the Leadership of Parliament, the Leadership should send it to the Committees. The purpose of these Committees is to examine the document of such nature first before plenary consideration. The Committees have a wealth of knowledge about the institutions they are overseeing. The Chairman was making a very important point. I am just saying that for best practice, we should empower our Chairmen. It will help them in their Oversight functions; otherwise people will believe that you bypass them and you do not respect them. So, best practice demands that before such matter is brought to the Well of Parliament, it has to be sent first to the Select Committee. I think he made an important point and it is accepted.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I think we have not circumvented any law or we have not done anything wrong for MPs to vet their documents. For the records, we have instituted best practice, but we have had this problem on several occasions relating to Members of Parliament failing to retrieve documents from their pigeonholes. Mr Speaker, I told you in your office that we distributed the document on time. It is the responsibility of every MP to retrieve same from his/her pigeonhole and read. This is the document they signed on the 24th January, they signed for the document, if you have not read the document, easily say so, but we cannot waste the time of Sierra Leoneans. I do not want to react to what the Chairman said, I consider him as the Chairman of the Committee, but I will deal

with that later. I am the Chairman of the Supervisory Committee which means there is a superstructure. However, to allay your fears, we have not done anything wrong. Even when you are not around, I used to update him. Therefore, I want us to continue the debate on this particular Bill because they have received their Bill.

Suspension of S.O. 5[2]

HON. NENNEH LEBBIE: Mr Chairman, for over twenty years I have been in the pharmacy business. I am not a 'pepper doctor,' but I am a proprietor of a small pharmacy and I have a technician. There are times when the technician asks some of these nurses to go and prescribe. There was a particular time my technician told one of the nurses to write a prescription for a particular treatment and the nurse could not even spell syringe and needle correctly. So, I want to allude to what my colleague was saying about the need to improve on the standard. This 'Dominion' education is letting us down. It is not everybody that is performing that duty, especially when it comes to the aspect of quality. The lady spelt Panadol as 'p-e-n-a-d-o-l.' She spelt the word the same way she pronounced it. So, quality and ethics are very important. You must love the job, so that you can take good care of somebody's life. When you love it, you will perform well and you will perform in the interest of your people.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, It is often said that medical people bury their own mistakes, but when a carpenter makes a mistake, even the layman will notice the mistake. When you joke with somebody's life and the person dies, at the end of the day there is nothing you can show except to say sorry. We have already lost the person. So, most times we bury the mistakes of doctors and nurses. We love the job you do and we do appreciate, but let us be very passionate about it and let us make sure that we do it diligently in the interest of our people. Our lives are in your hands, no matter your status, you must get sick one day and you need somebody to take care of you.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I know this Bill is not a controversial one at all. We only need to improve on the ethics and the standards. We however have quality nurses and midwives who understand and love the job. When someone is in pain or in labour, you have to love and care for that person because it is very difficult when someone is in

labour. I want to appreciate you so much for giving me the time and I implore all my colleagues to enact this Bill. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member; I give the Floor to the Leader of C4C in the absence of the Chief Whip who was next on my list.

HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Bill as I said earlier is not controversial. The nursing field is so noble to the extent that one considers nurses as blessings to the nation. However, it is sad to note here that the passion that nurses of those days used to have is gradually fading away like morning dew. It is important that today they are having a very important Bill. They have set a mark for other noble professions like teachers, etc. This is going to guarantee nurses and midwives as real professionals. The Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council Act 2022 will guarantee our young scientists to yearn for the field of nursing. I believe that my late mother who was a midwife nurse will have a gentle spirit for a profession to which she invested over forty years. I guarantee that in future the welfare of these nurses will be thoroughly looked into.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just want to draw your attention to a few clauses. In Part 2, Clause 5, it is saying that 'it should be appropriate for their seal or the licence should have overseas seal.' I begin to wonder in a situation wherein they are not opportune to have this overseas seal. Do we say that it is 'Dominion' or counterfeit? Let us take note of this very seriously. I want by the time this Bill is committed as per S.O 51[1], we would have taken appropriate action on this point. It says: **"In appropriate cases, the seal may be affixed to documents outside Sierra Leone."** We have to take note of that and we can also take note of Clause 3 [j]. We have seen different people in this particular Bill, but we noticed that the PS, who is supposed to be the custodian of all documents, is not included. The PS is not in the Council.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we also noticed that Clause 4 [d] also talks about proven misconducts before a disciplinary action is taken against a nurse. In the case wherein the misconduct is so grave, but there are no proofs or no CCTV cameras or nobody to prove that this nurse misbehaved, what will happen? Do you think the nurse

should go unpunished? The conventional language I normally hear legal people use worldwide is 'gross misconduct' rather than 'proven misconduct.' So, by the time this Bill is committed to Committee Stage, I will appreciate if that statement 'gross misconduct' is used rather than 'proven misconduct.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the nurses have given assignment to the teachers to also go for licences. You would not know when somebody's licence is withheld until you live overseas. You have people who are well to do, but they still use trains, taxis or buses because their licences that qualified them to drive have been withdrawn. So, you see nurses here are also having a situation wherein their licences will be withdrawn for proven misconduct or misbehaviour. Mr Speaker, one thing that is so admirable about this particular Bill is found in Clause 30, Sub-clause 2. It talks about the Ethics Committee. They have to rigorously vet the individual who has misbehaved. If the Ethics Committee fails to bring peace to the conflict, then that licence will be revoked, but that is subject to the High Court. This means democracy is at play. This practice is the same in overseas, wherein if somebody is challenged to be terminated or revoked, he/she can challenge you in a court of law. This implies that the High Court may have the final decision to revoke the licence. Therefore, I congratulate the nurses in advance because this Bill is going to add to their dignity and respect. Overseas nurses cannot make carelessness in any case because you will be afraid that you might lose your licence. If such a practice is introduced in Sierra Leone, the passion and the respect for the lives of patients will increase, especially for the PHUs that are in the peripheral and rural areas wherein a midwife nurses will be deployed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my late mother was a midwife and she was so passionate about this profession before her death. Today, they have a document that we enjoin and in subsequent Bills we will advocate for more remunerations or benefits that will be added to this noble profession. I read a magazine that John Kufuor's wife was a nurse and by the time he became a President, nurses salaries quadrupled in Ghana at that particular moment. I am yearning to see same here because of the

nobility of your job. I want your remunerations, respect and benefits will be quadrupled. I thank you very much for this opportunity.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member. I was actually going to skip you for late coming, but I give you two minutes.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like all other colleagues have said, this Bill is not controversial. It is good that the Bill is coming at this time because this is the time this Parliament has passed the Gender Bill. That is why some of us are so passionate about this Bill. However, in as much as I am going to be a beneficiary of this Bill, let me start by thanking Sister Mary Fullah and Sister Mansaray because they have been behind us or me particularly for over three years for this Bill. They even went to the extent to have a land to construct an office for this Council. Today, when this Bill is passed, they will be very happy to see their handiwork.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague from Bombali spoke about the activities of nurses. If we are talking about the activities of the nurses, this Bill will not even take five minutes here. In fact, this is the only profession you can find nurses and midwives in every chiefdom. We have PHUs in every corner of this country. The sacrifice they are doing for this nation except God pays them, but we cannot adequately pay them. So the best we can do for them is to make sure we take care of their welfare, and this Bill is talking about some of those issues.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Member spoke about 'Dominion' nursing, but if you look at Part 10 of this Bill, one thing that is very important is the fact that they now want to regulate some of these mushroom colleges. I was ashamed when I took the qualifications of some of the nurses to be pin coded. Mr Speaker, when Sister Mary Fullah looked through their certificates, she discovered that some of those colleges are not even among the accredited colleges for nursing. This is why this Government finds it extremely difficult to give pin codes. We just open those colleges and people go there and train as nurses [the Chinese Farm SECHN], that is how we call

them. After their graduation, they want jobs, but they are not up to the required standard.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Bill is coming at the right time and it is so important. This is why this House should pass it into law, so that we take care of some of these anomalies. It is really a headache for the Ministry in awarding pin codes to these nurses. I do not want to talk about the negativity of the nurses' behaviour because I am suffering from that. Again, I do not want to blame them because if we increase their remunerations and give them other facilities, I am sure they will change their attitudes. I hope by the time this Bill goes through the different stages, the Minister would make sure that we have another Bill in this Well that will address the welfare of nurses and midwives. I think their welfare needs to be taken care of. Sometimes, we blame them even though it is not proper. If you have signed to be a nurse, you have to make sure that you work with the ethics of the nursing profession, but some of them that attended these mushroom colleges are not properly trained at all. I am sure the Director of Nursing is here. We have to take care of the nurses. Like what the Honourable Member from Kono said, I think we have a provision that will take care of some of those nurses that have bad attitude towards patients. It is true that some nurses do not even regard patients.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe this Bill is a novelty for this country and for this Parliament. This Government is trying to make sure that we improve the lives of women. We have just passed two Bills recently that are supporting women's activities and I feel this should be one and it is exceptional. Mr Speaker, I want to join the other colleagues to say this Bill is not controversial and we should not waste time in passing it into law. I thank you very much.

HON. EMILIA L. TONGI: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the nurses for being here today to see that their labour is going to be paid and before they say Halleluyah it is going to be enacted into law. I want to say few things. I am sure after God, we have the nurses and doctors. Mr Speaker, if you go to the Western World and get into an operation room/theatre, you will see the quality of nurses. When a

doctor removes the baby, it is immediately given to the nurses. The life of that child now is the responsibility of the nurses. It is at that particular point the nurses will have to prove their know-how to bring that child to life. I know you are doing a great job in this country and in the world at large. I have however noticed in this country that when you graduate, you take an oath to take care of lives, but in my constituency, they will do the necessary swearing-in and get their diplomas, but it ends there. They do not take their know-how to their offices. You see a lot of women in agony and the nurses will be there discussing other things or looking at their phones or doing something else. I think there should be a committee to make sure before those licences are given, these people are adequately qualified to start their work. You should not just graduate from college and gain full employment into the hospitals. They have to go through the committee for proper scrutiny, either through examination or other means before they are given licences; otherwise you people are actually despatching weapons to those institutions, especially in the provinces. As I said earlier, you are doing a great job because the lives of people are in your hands. The doctors are working, but you do the rest and that is why you are so important in these institutions. My advice to you is to create a Committee of Licences before you start absorbing qualified and well-mannered nurses.

Mr Speaker, on that note I don't actually want to spend much time as this Bill is not controversial. We are going to enact it but please put it in action.

I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for her contribution. We are going to wind up the debate and mercifully I have a veteran MP who has just entered to stand in the shoe of the Leader of the Opposition.

HON. MOHAMED BANGURA: Mr Speaker, this Bill is very good because it gives respect to our nurses. We will want this Bill to address the welfare of the nurses because what they are going through is nothing good to write home about. We have nurses in this country whose take home pay is pittance; a pay that cannot even served them for a week. This is a very important Bill. I stand on behalf of the Leader of the

Opposition to say that the nurses and midwives are very important in this country. I am saying this from the bottom of my heart that our nurses are very important and for far too long they have been suffering. They have not been properly catered for very long time. Mr Speaker, the situation with the nurses is still the same. I come from a family of nurses because my wife will soon be a nurse *[Applause]*. What we are discussing here is very important.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, We have to be serious about the nurses because if you go to the hospitals now, the only people you will meet there are the nurses. They are doing the job of the doctors *[Applause]*. I am happy that this Bill addresses the area of withdrawing their licences on the basis of misconduct. I think we should also do that for the lecturers in the universities and colleges. It is good that we are taking steps to address some of these issues. I am pretty sure that after the nurses, we will also think about the lecturers. I do not want to say certain things about the lecturers here, but we should also think about them. This Bill will seek the welfare of the nurses.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I call on all my colleagues to unanimously enact this Bill. I thank you *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I call on the Leader of Government Business to make his own contribution.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will not say we are flabbergasted with what we have done today by presenting this wonderful Bill to the Chamber of this House. We have passed transformative legislations in this Well and I want to say kudos to all of you in this House. This Bill is not an exception to what I have said, but just part of our drive in empowering institutions. This Bill is not about the welfare of the nurses, but it seeks to regulate the Midwifery profession.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me read the long title, so that we can understand exactly what we are doing. We are talking about the Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council Act, 2023. It says: **"Being an Act to establish the Sierra Leone**

Nursing and Midwifery Council to provide for the education, training, discipline, certification, registration and licences of nurses....” Mr Speaker, this is exactly what this Bill is seeking to address and when it is enacted into law, it is going to regulate this particular sector. The nurses are doing a very good job, but we have to regulate them properly because sometimes they are disadvantaged. If we do not take them in high esteem in terms of regulating them, there will be more disaster.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Bill makes provision for the establishment of various committees in different areas, such as education, training, etc. I want to refer you to Clause 9, sub-clause 2[a]. With the leave of the Speaker, I will endeavour to read. It says: “Standard and Ethics Committee, Registration and Licensee Committee, Education, Research and Examination Committee...” The main reason I decided to read this provision is because the sector is so important because the nurses are dealing with human beings that is why they should be properly regulated. How do we ensure that they are properly regulated? The Bill seeks to ensure proper certifications, licenses, education, training, research and periodic review of their licences. This is what we are seeking to do but how do we do it? This will be possible by giving more powers to the Council. These committees will look into the various activities of the nursing and midwifery Council.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the most interesting clause is Clause 11, sub-clause 2[a]. It says: The Council shall be responsible for the licence and registration of nursing and midwifery institutions. My colleagues mentioned all these in their presentations. They said licence examination for registration of nurses and midwives and maternal and child health assistants. The final one says to prescribe standard for nursing and midwifery education, ethics and scope of practice.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Chief Whip was talking about the mental status of the nurses and their ethics. What are they going to do? Have you examined their research methodology? What about their practice? What about their training? So, this Council is going to look at the entire nursing and midwifery profession. So far this Council will be training, licencing, examining, periodic review of what they

are doing, etc. My colleague was talking about a particular nurse who did not even know how to spell 'Panadol.' This could be attributed to lack of trainings.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, nursing is not only about women because if you go to overseas countries, you will find out that more men are in the nursing profession than even women. In Sierra Leone, we always say, S.O.2, na uman work. This is not about women alone, it has to do with men and women. Again, there are those looking at the profession as quick way to make money. This why is we have quack nurses in this country. I am actually happy for these people to have taken the driving seat to regulate these nurses, irrespective of what you are. They should be regulated because that is the only way we can give respect to this profession.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the area that talks about accreditation should be a concern to all of us. In other words, the procedures someone would have to go through to have this accreditation is what we need to look at carefully. I want to draw your attention to the general provision in Clause 20[a&d]. Mr Speaker, I may not be around during the Committee Stage for obvious reasons, but I would want to make some corrections on Clause 20[a]. The words on that clause are not separated, but the Chairman of the Legislative Committee will take care of that. Meet the standards of Human Resource requirement. Mr Speaker, Clause 20[a] talks about Human Resource requirements of Nursing and Midwifery, professional education system prescribed by the Council. So, the Council is going to be very powerful and it is the cornerstone of this particular Bill.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Clause 20[d] talks about providing physical facilities, clinical trainings, resources and information technology. I am very keen about information technology because we need ICT to do many things. This is why we need periodical trainings for our nurses all over the country. Those who will be engaging in this profession should be well trained. They need to be well-resourced, structured and modernised trainings. The trainings some of them went through in 1986 and 2000 are different from those that we have nowadays. The Minister should ensure that trainings are conducted for the nurses and midwives; maybe there are modern ways midwifing.

So, technology is very important for our nurses and midwives. Medics should also be given the required trainings.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in as much as we have talked about accreditation, there is also a provision about cancellation of these licenses. If you are given a license, but failed to meet the conditions, Clause 22 is very clear on that. Your licence can be cancelled, but Honourable Emerson S. Lamina spoke about the principle of natural justice or fair justice. You have the right to appeal to the Appeal Court or the Supreme Court.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Clause 24 talks about registration and Clause 23 talks about qualification for someone to be registered. With the leave of Mr Speaker Clause 24, sub-clause 2[a] states: **"A person shall not be registered as a nurse, midwife or mental and child health assistant under Sub-section 1 unless that person has successfully completed a genuine programme being approved by the Council."** Therefore, we do not want the Council to be a 'wishiwashi' business. If this Council indulges in any illegal activities, then there is no need for the existence of this Act. I said earlier that the Council is the cornerstone of this Act. This is why we need to look at the Council very well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Clause 20 [C] also talks about individuals in possessions of other qualifications. My colleague spoke about people in possession of fake qualifications or pretending to be nurses. This Bill has all the provisions needed to ensure that procedures are followed to the letter. If someone falsifies documents or earned a certificate from illegal institutions, this Council will investigate and act accordingly through verification and certification.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is not only considering you for registration that you have to do some clarifications for registration, but there is a very important clause, which is Clause 28, that has to do with internship. This clause is saying that if you do not do internship under the supervision of this Council, you will not be allowed to practice. This is clearly stated in the Bill. There is a provision that talks about the penalties. During the Committee Stage, we are going to make some of them

homogenous and we make slight increase in other areas. If you employ an unregistered nurse, you can be fined **NLe 20,000**. This particular provision can be reviewed, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is also a provision on falsification under Clause 34. We have to make sure of the available legislation in terms of putting things in place, so that the Council is properly functional. This will also ensure that institutions are properly regulated. We have the midwifery, maternal and child health assistant, but we need to put them in a proper context because we do not want to disadvantage anybody.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have seen people campaigning for pin codes. It is good to campaign for pin code, but it is also good for us to have qualified nurses. If this Council is in place, I am sure there will be no administration that will just look at the nurses at the Connaught Hospital, for instance, because of infested interest in some of the nurses working there, I can promote some of them on political basis or those who have served for a very long time. Some of them are suffering from that right now, as I speak. They can promote those who have served for a very long time and those who have just served for a limited time with the same qualifications. So, if this Bill is enacted into law, the Council will be in charge and also make sure that proper licences are given. We are going to create a register for all the nurses.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is a provision that needs the Minister's clarification. It is found on Page 15, Clause 3[b] and it talks about temporal register for the registration of nurses, midwives and maternal health child assistants who intend to practice for a period of not more than three months. This other one says, 'the Council shall establish and maintain the following categories of registers.' We want to know why three months? Again, the provision for those staying in Sierra Leone is different. Three months is a limited period of time. I am sure the provision is not so clear to us. Therefore, we need some clarifications on this provision because we want to know the intended purpose, otherwise Honourable Members will vote for its removal.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as my colleagues have been saying, this Bill is not a controversial Bill at all, but we need certain clarifications to be made. The health sector has been polluted for a very long time. People think the sector is a money making sector. The health sector is meant to save people's lives, nothing more. I want to thank the Deputy Minister for presenting this Bill to us. I thank all for your contributions.

THE SPEAKER: Madam Minister, please respond to the concerns and issues raised by Honourable Members.

MRS PRINCESS DUGBA: Thank you, Mr Speaker and Honourable Members. Today is a history making day. For me, it is a day I have been looking forward to as a nurse practitioner, nurse prescriber and now as an Honourable Minister. It is a day Sierra Leone will be proud of, especially the Nursing and the Midwifery Council because without this Council, I think we all need to go home because if we do not have a Council that will be able to serve as watchdog in terms of regulating what is happening it will be very difficult for us to produce the best health service in this country. This Bill, if passed into law, it will give us the mandate to educate our nurses and our midwives.

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

MRS PRINCESS DUGBA: This Bill will enable us discipline both nurses and midwives. Mr Speaker, majority of Honourable Members spoke about indiscipline in the health sector. I think the reason for indiscipline in the health sector is because we do not have a body to regulate and look into those complaints. This is why if this Council is established, it will serve as a watchdog to instil discipline in the sector. The Council will checkmate those who are doing things that are out of context. I remembered as a nurse in England, every day I finish my shift, I pray to God that nobody filed a complaint against me. This is because if you are found wanting, they would take your licence. If our nurses and midwives know that there is a Council that will take their licences on account of indiscipline, definitely they will behave themselves.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want this Bill to be passed into law because it would help greatly. The Honourable Leader of Government Business was talking about

internship and I want to state here that if this Council is in place, there will be apprenticeship and mentorship. You will not just qualify from nursing school and start administering drugs. That will not happen in the first world. You have to be under mentorship for six months before you are qualified to administer medication on your own. So, if we have this council in place, definitely we will have internship and mentorship.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in England, there are nurses who can prescribe and give medication because they have been trained to the highest level to act as doctors. So, we have this in mind to put things in place, so that when there is shortage of doctors, the nurses can step in and augment. The nurses can prescribe and administer treatments. This Council will ensure that nurses give out the best services we are yearning for.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the area of cancelation of licences, if you are found wanting, definitely we will not give you the licence. When we have a register for nurses, it makes life easy. For example, if I work in a hospital and somebody wants to be employed, I would have to go through the Nursing and Midwifery Council and search if your name is in the register. If it is not there, definitely you will not be employed. Somebody came to me for employment, but I never knew there was a disciplinary action against him. When I searched the website about him, I discovered that he was not supposed to do anything in the hospital at that moment until what he was accused of is acquitted.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want this House to give us this opportunity by enacting this Bill into law because it deals with human lives. This is not just something for business, but something that can affect each and every one of us. If you get sick when you are alive, you will definitely die, and when you die even in the mortuary, if we do not have systems in place, your corpse will not be dignified. So, I want Honourable Members to please look into these issues. I have learnt so much from you. Please give us this opportunity to enact an Act on Nursing and Midwifery Council. I thank you.

Thus, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled 'The Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council Act, 2022 be read the second time. I thank you.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Bill entitled, 'The Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council Act, 2022 be read the second time]

[COMMITTEE STAGE]

Parts 1 to 5, Clauses 1 to 18 stands part of the Bill.

Parts 1 to 5, Clauses 1-18 Proposed

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we shall go through this Bill page by page, starting with the short title. Do you have any comments on that? We go to Page 2. Do you have any comments on Page 2? Page 3? Page 4?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Chairman, under 'g' we are going for a representative from the Interreligious Council of Sierra Leone, and then 'j' a representative from... - *[Interruption]*.

HON. NENEH LEBBIE: Mr Chairman, still on Page 4. Someone mentioned about the absence of the Permanent Secretary and the Permanent Secretary is the custodian of the documents of the Ministry. I am sure he must be part of the composition of the Council. I am making this comment on Clause III, Page 4. We need the Permanent Secretary because he is the custodian of the documents of the Ministry. Therefore, I am sure the Permanent Secretary should be part of this Council or a representative.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman, I do not think whether we need the Permanent Secretary. This is because this is a Council we are trying to enact into law. This Council will ensure that people are independent and if we start involving the Permanent Secretary, it means subjecting them to the wishes of the Ministry. Thus, I am not sure if the presence of the Permanent Secretary is needed in this Council. The Minister can help to clarify this proposition.

MRS PRINCESS DUGBA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I think we do not want the PS to be part of the Council because we want to be independent. We have been yearning for independence.

HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA: Mr Chairman, we use the conventional language which is gross misconduct rather than proven misconduct.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, Honourable Member. I am sure 'proven misconduct' is the language we have been using and we should continue with that. Honourable Member, you want to open another Pandora Box. We have done it in many other laws we have passed here and we should keep proven misconduct. The only one I will allow is 'd,' if he is convicted and sentenced for an offence involving fraud or dishonesty. That correction should be inserted. Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8?

HON. ABDUL S. MRRAY CONTEH: Page 8, Clause 11. We have registration of licences and discipline of nurses, midwives or maternal and child health assistants. I think there is something wrong with that. We have to remove 'and midwife' because I think it should read midwives or maternal and child health assistants throughout Sierra Leone. So 'midwife' should be deleted.

THE CHAIRMAN: Granted, Honourable Member. Page 9?, Page 10? Page 11? Page 12?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Page 12, Clause 20[a].

THE CHAIRMAN: No, we not going that far the Motion before you stops at 18, but the top of that page I think is child health assistants. It should be plural in sub-clause 3. Madam Minister please move.

MRS PRINCESS DUGBA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 1 to 5, Clauses 1 to 18 stands part of the Bill as amended.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Parts 1 to 5, Clauses 1 to 18 formed part of the Bill as amended]

Part 6 to 10, Clauses 19 to 37 stand part of the Bill.

MRS PRINCESS DUGBA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 6 to 10, Clauses 19 to 37 stand part of the Bill.

Parts 6 to 10, Clauses 19 to 37 Proposed

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, Page 12?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Page 12 sir. I stated earlier 20[a]. It is a typographical error. It should meet the standards of human resource requirement. You only need to separate the two words.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 13? Page 14?

HON. ABDUL MARRAY CONTEH: Page 14, Clause 24, sub-clause 2[a]. It should be successfully completed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member. Page 15? Page 16? Page 17? I have a problem between Page 16 and 17 Madam Minister. If you look at Page 16, Clause 2[b], the validity is for a period of two years of a private practice or the validity is for one year. Please, can you explain the difference or the rationale?

MRS PRINCESS DUGBA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the reason is that private is one year and public is two years. I think it is because with private, most times are very urgent and that is why you have to look at it critically before you can give it; but with the public, you do not have time. Therefore, you give them two years.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you not considering the recipient or the people they deal with, i.e., the general public? They are both dealing with the same public channel. You have to satisfy us and there is a difference here. Why should the licence be different?

MRS PRINCESS DUGBA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I think it is because for the private, most of them are foreigners and for the public they are Sierra Leoneans. I am sure that is the difference, but I know you want to say what is good for the goose is good for the gander.

THE CHAIRMAN: Absolutely, Madam Minister.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman, think we have to do some adjustments.

THE CHAIRMAN: Whether we maintain two years or one year, we cannot justify it.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: This is because they are also serving the general public whether private or public.

MRS PRINCESS DUGBA: I think we can leave it to two years for both public and private.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Page 18?

HON. MUSTAPHA SELLU: Mr Chairman, Page 17, Clauses 3 and 4. It says: 'a person agrees by the decision of the Council under this.....' appeal to the High Court. In other Bills, we said in certain committees where they appeal, but this one is talking directly to High Court. I think it is an oversight.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is not an oversight, Honourable Member.

HON. MUSTAPHA SELLU: Okay, but other Bills talks about committees instead of the High Court.

THE CHAIRMAN: We go to the High Court. Page 18? Page 19?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Chairman, Page 19, under penalty. Clause 32[1] says if an individual commits a crime such as impersonation, he or she must pay NLe 10,000. I think this penalty is too small. We are talking about human lives. When you impersonate to be somebody you are not, it is not a mistake. The penalty should be more than **NLe 10,000**.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sure two years is okay.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Page 19, Clause 33. We have institutions that are either deliberately or knowingly employing or registering nurses illegally. We can increase it to **NLe 25,000** or three years imprisonment instead of two years.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, Honourable Member. This is a very deliberate act where a person employs someone who is unregistered.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRY CONTEH: Thank you, Mr Chairman

THE CHAIRMAN: The penalty should be severe.

HON. ABDUL S MARRAY CONTEH: My first suggestion is **NLe 25,000** instead of **NLe 20,000** and two years to three years.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is very small, Honourable Member.

HON. ABDUL S MARRAY CONTEH: Well, it is up to this House to decide.

THE CHAIRMAN: We can say **40,000** to **50,000 [NLe]** and imprisonment.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRY CONTEH: We can even take it to five years imprisonment.

THE CHAIRMAN: No problem sir.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman, if we are increasing it to the from **NLe 10,000** to **NLe 15,000**, we should also increase the jail term.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we agreed on five years.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: I am talking about the first one.

THE CHAIRMAN: The first one has been increased to two years.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 20?

HON. MUSTAPHA SELLU: Mr Chairman, Page 19, Clause 33. I just need some clarifications. If a person recruits someone who falsifies documents, but is not a registered person, the penalty should go to the employer or the person who falsifies the documents.

THE CHAIRMAN: The person who falsifies the document commits an offence.

HON. MUSTAPHA SULLU: Therefore, the employee has a case because he employs someone who is a fraudster.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman, I think the employee also commits an offence because there is already a Council. Therefore, you have to make sure that you crosscheck with the Council.

THE CHAIRMAN: Absolutely, Honourable Member.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: I also want to make clarification on Clause 32. Mr Chairman, Clause 32[C] talks about the name or title of a registered nurse. I am sure that is deliberate on your part to also use somebody as information to secure a job. I am sure it is also the institution's responsibility to do due diligence by crosschecking that the person is the real owner of the certificate.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thank you for that explanation. Page 20? These are unaccredited institutions and I think the penalty is too small.

HON. JOSEPH LAMIN-WILLIAMS: Mr Chairman, under accredited institutions, I am sure under the falsification, the fine is small because this is the fabric of the Council and that their activities are regulated.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, why are you suggesting double penalty?

HON. JOSEPH LAMIN-WILLIAMS: Yes Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Five years imprisonment.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: This one will be lesser because we also have to look at the **NLe 40,000**.

THE CHAIRMAN: What are you suggesting?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Three years, Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, I think Clause 34 is even dangerous than Clause 32 because this is talking about somebody working in the office and it is saying that if I register a nurse with fake documents, I am responsible to pay **NLe 20,000** or **NLe 40,000** for the person for entering wrong information in that register. This is what Clause 34 is saying, Mr Chairman. Again, the person who will do the wrong entry will not only be fined, but will be dismissed with immediate effect.

This is why it has already been recommended that we make some slight increase.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman, there should be increment and the person should also lose his/her job due to misconduct.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, losing his/her job is administrative; let us deal with the penalties.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Agree with you, Mr Chairman, and we have to increase it to five years.

THE CHAIRMAN: It should be **NLe 100,000** and five years.

HON. ABDU S. MARRAY CONTEH: Absolutely, Mr Chairman.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman, we also talk about closure of that particular institution.

THE CHAIRMAN: That would have been administrative and we leave it to the Council to deal with it.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: We have to give that power to the Council.

THE CHAIRMAN: The institution should be closed.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: I am sure if a particular institution is not accredited, we should give the power to the Council to close it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let us leave it to the Council.

HON. MUSTAPHA SELLU: I want to suggest that if we operate and register an unaccredited institution and just to pay a fine if you want to come and make it official to regulate or to be accredited you should pay three times the cost

THE CHAIRMAN: We already agreed for **Le 100,000**.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman, does that mean the certificate awarded to students should be disqualified? Mr Chairman, there are certain things we need to make clear.

THE CHAIRMAN: We will capture that under the Regulations.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Clause 36 talks about the Minister to make Regulations by statutory instrument after consultation with the Council. So, you have to interpose the two, wherein you have the Council.

MRS PRINCESS DUGBA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 6 to 10, Clauses 19 to 37 stand part of the Bill as amended.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

Part 6 to 10, Clauses 19 to 37 formed part of the Bill as amended

[THE HOUSE RESUMES]

MRS PRINCESS DUGBA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I report that the Bill entitled, 'The Sierra Leone Nursing & Midwifery Act, 2023 [having gone through the Committee of the whole House with amendments] I now move that the Bill be read the third time and passed into law.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[The Bill entitled, the Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council Act, 2023 being an Act to establish the Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council to provide for the education, training, discipline, certification, registration, and licensing of nurses and midwives throughout Sierra Leone to provide accreditation of nurses and midwives educational institutions, to provide for the regulation of the practices of nursing and midwifery generally and to provide for other related matters has been read the third time and passed into law]

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Deputy Minister very much and I also wish to congratulate all the nurses and midwives in the House *[Applause]*.

ADJOURNMENT

The House rose at 3:40 and was adjourned to Tuesday, 7th February, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.