



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION - FIRST MEETING

THURSDAY, 31ST MAY, 2018

SESSION – 2018/2019



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMEN TARY DEBATES

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Thursday, 31st May, 2018.

CONTENTS

I. PRAYERS

II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING, HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 30TH MAY, 2018

III. MOTION OF THANKS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, JULIUS MAADA BIO

PROPOSER: HON. SIDI M. TUNIS

SECONDER: HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA

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 FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE IN THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT ON THURSDAY 10TH MAY, 2018.”

[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 FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Thursday, 31st May, 2018.

I. PRAYERS

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

[The House met at 10:33 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown].

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

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S.O 5[2]

I. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 30TH MAY, 2018.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Wednesday, 30th May, 2018. Like I said yesterday, any issue relating to the names of Honourable Members should be taken to the Clerk's Office for further action. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3?

HON. WUYATTA B. SONGA: Mr Speaker, I was absent with excuse. I would like that to be corrected sir.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Clerk, please take note. Page 4?

HON. SAHR CHARLES: Mr Speaker, Page 4, the same concern raised by Honourable Wuyatta B. Songa. I was also absent with excuse.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, did you write a formal notice to that effect?

HON. WUYATTA B. SONGA: Mr Speaker, you will agree with me that whenever somebody falls ill, it is very difficult for the person to make a formal complaint through writing because you have no prior knowledge of what is going to happen to you in the next minute. However, I called the Clerk of the House to inform him.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, did you write a formal notice?

HON. WUTATTA B. SONGA: The answer is no, Mr Speaker, but I called the Clerk.

THE SPEAKER: In future, you have to write formally to the Speaker and copy the Clerk's Office.

HON. WUYATTA B. SONGA: Noted, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I want to advise Honourable Members to do same. Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? If there are no other corrections or amendments, can somebody move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Wednesday, 30th May, 2018 as amended?

HON. ALUSINE KANNEH: I so move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. NENEH LEBBIE: I second the Motion.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

*[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the Parliamentary Sitting, held on
Wednesday, 30th May, 2018 has been adopted as amended]*

**II. MOTION OF THANKS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, RTD
BRIGADIER JULIUS MAADA BIO**

PROPOSER: HON. SIDI M. TUNIS

SECONDER: HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA

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 FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE IN THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT ON THURSDAY, 10TH MAY, 2018”

[FOURTH ALLOTTED DAY]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, before we proceed, I wish to reiterate regarding the recording of proceedings. I want to inform those in the gallery that they are not allowed to record the proceedings of Parliament. Mr Clerk, I hope all the ministries are represented here? Please ensure that those that are represented sign a register.

HON. ALUSINE B. KAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Hold on Honourable Member. The Leader of the Paramount Chiefs, please approach me.

HON. ALUSINE B. KAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio for this wonderful Speech he delivered in this House. I also want to use this opportunity to thank His Excellency for appointing a very powerful son from my district, Karene District in his government. The people of my

Constituency appreciate this appointment and they promised the New Direction that the good sons of my Constituency will perform to his expectations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a lot has been said about education, but I would like to refer the House to Paragraph 53, Page 13. The statement in Paragraph 53 shows no evidence to indicate that the 6-3-4-4 system of education has not improved the educational system. I want to remind this Honourable House that there is evidence to show that the 6-3-4-4 system of education improves learning in this country. I would start with the admissions made in 2011/12 Academic Year. In the Institute of Public Administration and Management [IPAM], for instance, the numbers of males and females admitted in 2011/12 were 2,107 and 1,321 respectively. In 2005/2006 Academic Year, admission into the IPAM was 313 males and 147 females.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is an increase in learning during the 6-3-4-4 system of education. I want to draw the attention of this Honourable House that before 2007, the salaries of teachers in this country were nothing to write home about. It was during the reign of the All People's Congress [APC] that we started seeing rapid increase in the salaries of teachers in this country. There was also a morale booster for teachers during the reign of the APC because every teacher was forced to open a bank account. Teachers in this country never experienced a situation wherein they were paid through the bank. This was done through the introduction of the banking system.

Today, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the teachers are respected in their homes. They now have the capacity to take loans from their respective banks. I want to thank the former Minister of Education for introducing these innovations. If my memory serves me correctly, people used to call teachers S.O. 2 'botoe' 'botoe.' That means teacher can only take one pair of shoe to school. If you visit the schools, the teachers now have code of conduct to guide their operations. Today, we have teachers who go to school with cars. Majority of them wear coats and ties.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I spoke about morale and I want to support His Excellency the President's statement, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, when he said that government would provide free education to three children of every teacher who has

taught for ten years and above. I want to call on the attention of the Minister of Education and the New Direction Government to teachers who have taught for more than ten years without children. We have teachers who have taught in this country for ten years without a child. We all know that child bearing is a blessing from God and there are teachers who have taught for more than twenty years. My recommendation...
- *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we need perfect decorum.

HON. ALUSINE B. KAMARA: Thank you Mr Speaker, for your protection. I want to recommend to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to consider those teachers who have no children.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Speaker of this House, Honourable Dr Abass Chernor Bundu, who has provided the first secondary school in my Constituency. When somebody does something good, it is worth mentioning. He was a very developmental in my Constituency.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to draw the attention of the Minister of Education to certain issues. The APC led Government created examination centres for National Primary School Examination [NPSE] and the Basic Education Certificate Examination [BECE] in my Constituency in Gbinti. I want to remind the Minister that we are no longer part of the Port Loko District because Karene is now a District on its own, but external exams like the West Africa Senior School Certificate Examination [WASSCE] is still conducted in Port Loko District. I am therefore asking the Minister to create an examination centre for WASSCE exams in Gbinti. We have all the facilities you can think of. As we speak, the past Government is constructing over six classrooms buildings with all the facilities required of a modern school.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the President for mentioning the construction of road from Bo to Matru Jong. As a fervent Muslim, that road happens to be the most terrible road in this country. Therefore, I want to say bravo to His Excellency the President. I also want to draw the attention of the Minister of Works to consider the Kaseh Road that leads to Gbinti, Batkanu and Foroloko. It is the oldest

road in this country. I want to inform the Minister of Works that if you want to get an easy access to the new headquarter town in Karene District that is the most preferable road. Also, that road has agricultural potentiality and there is also a short way to get to the new district, which is the Buya Road.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to conclude my speech with the energy sector. The past Government installed solar light in all districts and Chiefdoms. I am calling on the Minister of Energy to utilise that facility which has been left by the APC Government. I want also to thank our Speaker who has just provided solar light to ten communities. He has also constructed a bridge in that part of the country. I think that has to be said here. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank God for this opportunity to thank His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, for presenting to us this Address, which is described as 'an opposition focused Address.' It is 'an opposition focused Address' and I have no problem with that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having gone through the Address, it is abundantly clear that the President failed to acknowledge the good work of the APC led government. If we are to be true to ourselves, it is practically not possible for a government to rule for ten years without doing anything worth acknowledgement. In Paragraph 2, Page 1, the President spoke about inheriting the worst Economy since independence. In Paragraph 5, Page 2, he spoke about Agriculture, which he said it has not produced the desired results. Paragraph 17, Page 5, he said that tourism is underdeveloped. Paragraph 24, Page 6, he said this country benefitted nothing from our mineral resources. Paragraph 58, Page 15, he said that university subsidies are not sustainable. The list goes on and on. I would have loved to mention everything, but time is not in our favour.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to thank the President for acknowledging one thing in his Address. We were rated as fairly good, but I want to thank him for that. That is noted in Paragraph 103, Page 27 of the Address; i.e., the

refurbishment of the Lungi International Airport. It is the only area where he said it is fairly good. Mr Speaker, with your leave, I read: **“International connectivity is served by Lungi International Airport [passengers and light freight] over 200,000 passengers pass through Lungi yearly. Overall, the runways, taxi ways and aprons are fairly good, but need repairs.”**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to thank him because in as much as he acknowledged nothing good in his Address during the APC regime, but he refused to abandon projects and programmes that were initiated by the APC led government. Therefore, I thank him for that. He rated only one area of development as ‘fairly good.’ For the records, you can go through Paragraph 53, Page 13, where he spoke about the 6-3-4-4 system of education. Well, that has been replaced with the old 6-3-3-4 system of education, but he chose to maintain all other programmes and he promised to build on them. Mr President, I thank you for that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having gone through this Address, I am still convinced that we are still the ruling party as far as this debate is concerned. In other words, the SLPP is still in opposition as far as this debate is concerned. Therefore, we would continue to do good things for this Nation by continuing to defend the APC as the ruling party. You will not have that privilege in the next Address. I will start to defend by pointing to you what the previous Government did in the telecommunication sector. We on this side of the Well will present facts and figures and not ordinary claims. NATCOM is now under your purview, so when I give you the facts and figures, you can go and crosscheck and reply tomorrow. You have 24 hours to reply. The document I have here is titled, ‘The Status of Telecommunication Sector in Sierra Leone as at December, 2017.’ I will give the summary of this document.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please keep your undertones as low as possible.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I will quickly tell you the summary of the mobile and internet penetration rate from 2007 to date. I want to tell you that it is a graduating process. Please look at the figures and you would find out that we have been graduating from time to time. Please take note of what I want to

present to you. In 2007, mobile penetration was **10%**, **12%** in 2008, **24.7%** in 2009, **34%** in 2010, **43%** in 2011, **50%** in 2012, **62%** in 2013, **69.6%** in 2014, **72.9%** in 2015, **69.9%** in 2016 and **73.4%** in 2017. Internet penetration in 2007 was **0.26%** and moved to **0.36%** in 2008, **1.0%** in 2009, **1.0%** in 2010, **1.0%** in 2011, **2%** in 2012, **2.5%** in 2013, **4%** 2014, **6.06%** 2015, **6.7%** in 2016, and **18.8%** in 2017. As far as the telecommunication sector is concerned, this is what we have done. I want to remind you that you are no longer in opposition. Therefore, stop crying and do your work because you are now in charge.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have one minute. Except you want to tell me my time is wrong. Please do not mistake me for the Chief Electoral Commissioner.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, I will never mistake you for the Chief Electoral Commissioner. I want to plead that you add few minutes for me. This is for the benefit of this Government. When I was listening to FM 98.1 Radio Democracy this morning, the Minister of Energy did acknowledge the rampant blackout in the city. But he said the reason is because of bad policies. He said he would create new and good policies. I was reminded in a split of a second and I want this message to reach the President that he should be careful of people who hide under the rubric of policies. Mr President, you did not promise the people of this country policies, but electricity. I want to bring to your notice the views of the people because if you fail in this aspect, you will fail woefully. As a responsible opposition, we thought it fit to bring this to your notice. In the words of Chernor J. Bah, he said: **"Too much blackouts in this month of Ramadan is a grave concern."** When I read this statement, S.O 2, 'mi bodi rise,' I think we made a wrong choice and we really missed the APC. Some of your good works will still remain, but we missed the APC.'

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, your time is up.

HON. P.C JOE KANGBAI MACAVORAY III: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I wish to thank His Excellency the President, for his Address to this House on the 10th May, 2018. It was indeed a comprehensive Address. It is a 40 page Address with 44 headings and 149 paragraphs. I have known the President for a very long time as a

man of his words. I know he would deliver the promises he made to the people of this country. I only wish to admonish the ministers that they have **90%** responsibility if this country fails. They must be on the right track to ensure that things happen as expected. I am representing 401,000 people in Bo District, including 11 Members of Parliament who are under my ambit in this Well. It is our duty as Paramount Chiefs to give pieces of advice to Government.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to start with the Minister of Agriculture. In the first instance, **90%** of the people of this country live in the rural areas and they are still practicing traditional farming. In view of that, I will want us to deviate from the previous methods to what is happening now. Fertilisers and seeds must be supplied to the farmers at the appropriate time. This is because agriculture is time bound.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would also like to talk about the feeder roads. The Paramount Chiefs and their chiefdoms should take ownership of their roads. We should stop bringing contractors from Freetown or other places to the provinces. We can manage our own situations. Some of the Paramount Chiefs are technocrats and as a result, they know exactly what to do. What we need is the tools to do the work. You have to count on us and we are ready to prove ourselves. We have had arm-chair agricultural officers who sit in the offices in Bo, Freetown and Makeni for a very long time. This time round we want to see them in the field, giving appropriate advice to farmers, so that we can maximise our products. Furthermore, this country has about 300 Agricultural Business Centres [ABCs], but they are under-utilised. Mr Minister of Agriculture, it is high time we started utilising these institutions to the best of our abilities for food production. We have no reason to go to bed hungry.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have been hearing about the free primary and secondary school education, which is around the corner. It is coming very soon and I want the Paramount Chiefs to be involved at every level of its implementation. We want to be part of the monitoring process. I want to caution all Members of Parliament, including the Speaker of this House to work towards promoting this gesture. Every

Member of Parliament must have come from a chieftom. This means you are our subjects. Let us work to develop this country. I have been hearing that the Teaching Service Commission is a bit dormant. Let it be revived to meet the test of time within the next four months. The teachers have to be induced to go to the rural areas to teach. When I was listening to the 'Morning Coffee' Radio Programme two days ago, there is a school in Kenema District that has only one teacher. This is not only an unfortunate situation, but very unfair on our part. I want the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education to take note.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to suggest that the Education Act of 2004 be reviewed. I am saying this because that Act has created some controversies among the proprietors and government functionaries. We have built a school with our own sweat and I do not see any reason why somebody would become a chairman of that school because of one reason or the other. Let us show ownership, so that things would happen as expected.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would also like to talk about local governance in this country. The Ministry of Local Government is the focal point for other ministries as far as paramount chieftaincy is concerned. If officials of the Ministry of Agriculture want to go to the chiefdoms, they have to go through the Ministry of Local Government. Government used to give allowances or salaries to Paramount Chiefs. If the desirable is not available, let the available becomes the desirable. We want our backlog to be paid. I want to remind this House that our destiny is in our hands and we need to prove our mettle to upgrade our standards to the level we may want it to be. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I came into the Well of Parliament a little late than required. I was in a meeting with the delegation from Germany and we had a very fruitful meeting. They are our friends and they are here to visit us. At this point, I wish to recognise the presence of Mr Ottmar Von Hocht. He is a Member of the Green Party of the German Parliament. We also have Mr Wiethoff, who is the German Ambassador

to Republic of Sierra Leone. Madam Linda Butcher works in the office of the German Parliament. You are all welcome *[Applause]*.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to begin by thanking His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Wonnie Bio, for graciously delivered to this House this Speech. The Speech has all the ingredients for the development of this nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I was coming to this Well, I thought Members of Parliament from the other side would just stand up and say thank you Mr President. This is because having read this Speech, there is nothing to criticise. This Speech outlined many aspects of development that this country should achieve. Therefore, there is nothing to criticise here. We only need to say thank you and sit down.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to join His Excellency to thank the people of this great country for electing the Sierra Leone People's Party [SLPP] and the President into office. I want to thank the people of this Republic for believing in the 'New Direction' agenda. When we were campaigning on issues, our colleagues were campaigning on flag-bearership. They were busy talking about Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio. Today, look at where they are. We were telling the people about the bread and butter issues, whilst they were talking about Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio. The people needed solutions to their problems and not Maada Bio. So, you should learn from this election and campaign that people want solutions to issues, instead of personalities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, few months back, I was on that side. I sat on that side for five years, from 2012 to 2017. I have listened and read five speeches delivered in this House by the former President and I had the privilege of critiquing those speeches. I proffered pieces of advice or solutions, but they politicised those solutions. We told them that if you are going to politicise the bread and butter issue, you would find yourselves on that side. Anytime I stand to speak in this Well, I used to say, 'posterity would judge us.' I vividly remember the now Minority Leader who was the Deputy Speaker of this Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, we do not have a Majority and Minority Leaders in this House any longer. We have Leader of Government Business and Leader of the Opposition.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition was the Deputy Speaker of this House and he debunked that statement. Today, what I have been saying in this Well has come to reality because 'posterity has judged them.' My colleague on that side who spoke before me said that information and communications have improved. I want to tell him that when we handed over power in 2007, the SLPP led government left many mobile companies. For instance, we left Mobitel, Celtel, Africel, Comium, Green Net and Datatel. Today, we are inheriting Orange and Africel. What happened to the other companies? There is no competition at all, Mr Speaker. I am very happy because our colleagues on that side can now articulate and critique documents. They were on this side playing sycophancy, whilst some of us were critiquing documents and proffering advice. They were here praise singing.

HON. CHERNOR R.M BAH: Mr Speaker, I want to urge that the word sycophancy be expunged from the records.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, withdraw that word.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: I withdraw the word 'sycophancy,' Mr Speaker. Whilst we were critiquing and providing solutions to problems, they were praise singing. If the ideas they are proffering now were provided five years ago, they would not have been in opposition. Let me just highlight some of the issues that were raised. The Speaker then was urging Honourable Members to sit down. We have been telling them about the bread and butter issue, but they chose to ignore that. When they brought the Toll Road Agreement here, I was on that side. I told them that the toll road 'is not good for the people of this country,' but they forced it on us.

Again, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, they sacked the Vice President without recourse to this Parliament. I stood up, but the Speaker then urged me to sit down and never to talk about that issue. Also, brothers and sisters who graduated with a Law

Degree from Fourah Bay College were not admitted into the Law School and we brought that issue to their attention, but the then Speaker told us to keep quiet.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all of us held the view that the Finance Act was not good for the people of this country. This Parliament collectively rejected, but the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, forced it on us. It brought hardship to the people of this country and that is why they are now paying the price. You will permanently remain in opposition because you failed to listen to the cries of the people. You failed to sympathise with voters. I used to call your attention to certain issues affecting the livelihood of the masses. I used to say, 'look at our people we are representing,' but you failed to listen to them. You were laughing at them and they voted you out. You lost the elections and you would continuously remain in opposition.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very confident that we are going to deliver. The President has selected a team of professionals who are not going to learn on the job. In other words, we have professional ministers and technocrats. Honourable Osman Timbo is very pessimistic that the free education project will not start in four months. Well, I want to assure him that we will deliver. We are very happy to listen to your criticisms and these are issues we are going to take note of and work on them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President spoke about disciplined leadership. For the past five years, we struggled to bring Ministers to this Parliament to come and listen to us. Today, look at the Ministers seated in this Well, listening to us. The former Speaker called them to come and listen to us, but they never came. Today, this Parliament is a disciplined institution.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, your time is up, but I will give you one more minute.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. In the last Parliament, we told the APC led government that you 'cannot buy hundred Chinese Buses for **\$10mln.**

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, Point of Order.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please wait a minute.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, I rise on S.O 32[5]. Mr Speaker, everything the Honourable Member has said was out of the Presidential Address and we want him to confine his observations within the Presidential Address.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I do not agree with you.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. They will remain in opposition. When we were giving ideas, they were sleeping and clapping. We are going to empower the Ministries, Departments and Agencies [MDAs].

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, your time is up.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

HON. MUSA FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by thanking His Excellency the President for his speech delivered to this noble House. I am going to focus my contribution on water. From the Coalition for Change [C4C] point of view, our dynamics for coming to this House is to debate objectively. We want to believe that water has been a problem in this country for decades. We want to make some points very clear that water has continued to be a problem in this country. This is because after the war, we had very important projects across the country. For instance, we had the DE Grimond Project and the people of Sella Limba can attest to that. We have one in Koidu City, Yonibana, Kalasomboya in Bumbuna and Yileh. Again, the people in Jimmi Bagbo, Bo District, have one. We have those projects across this country, but I think the former Minister of Water Resources did not pay much attention in the rehabilitation of those facilities. Instead, they were focussing more on the construction of new water wells, boreholes and artificial gravity systems that are not working at all. I want to make it very clear to my colleague Members of Parliament that we are here to represent our people. Water is a problem across the entire country. The same problem we face in Freetown for water is the same problem the people of Koindu, Bo and Kenema are facing. Of course, we have got fake contractors who are constructing hand dug water well under the supervision of the Sierra Leone Water

Company [SALWACO]. They are not really respecting the steps the involved in construction. As we speak, the construction of hand dug water wells is ongoing in entire country. How can you dig water wells in the rainy season? This is peak season for bore holes.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go to Kono District or other districts or chiefdoms, we have potential of gravity systems that have been in existence for years. I can assure this noble House that these systems have never undergone any rehabilitation process. They are still old and they are collapsing, and SALWACO is constructing new water wells. The contractors do not even know how to dig water wells. In Freetown, you can see 3000 Milla tanks connected to the borehole wells, well equipped with a solar system. But let me tell you why these tanks are not working. It is because no survey was done before they dig water wells. You need to conduct a geological survey or a geophysics survey with a geophysics machine. This machine is capable to tell you that these cracks are possible to give enough water to the number of people who are living in each community. You cannot dig a hand dug well without a survey to know how many people are living in that community. The survey will help the technician to determine whether it should be four metres casing or five metres casing. One metre casing is like 800 to 900 litres. So you need to divide these litres according to the population in that community. This is why we still have water problem in Freetown and in the provinces. Our contractors are neither water engineers nor water technicians, but they are always benefiting from water projects. They always do the wrong thing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to remind the Minister of Water Resources that we still have a problem with these old systems. If you go to Magburaka, you will see the DE Grimond Project. Those projects need rehabilitations or you bring new machines to fix them up, so that the people will benefit from pipe borne water. Our contractors are just focussing on borehole wells, using drilling kits and harmers without survey. This is why the ruling and opposition parties are arguing among themselves about water. We are also from the opposition side, but what I want to tell this House is

that we need to know that the goodies in the Speech of His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, are for all of us. If the aspirations in this Speech are not realised, it means we are part of the failure because our responsibility in this House is to say the truth, irrespective of the political parties we come from.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have one minute.

HON. MUSA FOFANAH: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I will end with these few words. I want the Minister of Water Resources to pay attention to the contractors. With these few words, I thank you very much [*Applause*].

HON. MOSES E. EDWIN: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I must render my sincere gratitude to His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, for providing us a very good direction. I am not here to embarrass any Member of Parliament, but rather I am on oath to serve conscientiously and diligently. I am here to perform my duty as a Member of Parliament for the betterment of my constituents and the general good of the entire country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, please permit me to borrow two words from our local parlance to inculcate them into the queens language for the purpose of this debate, i.e. 'tongbolisation' and 'paoparism,' S.O.[2]. I will be dwelling on those two words as I progress.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the guiding principles of this document is based on disciplined leadership, integrity, efficiency, professionalism and delivery. That is what we stand for. Any human being who is not disciplined or lacks integrity is not worth his/her salt. So, I am going to direct my contribution to agriculture. I now refer the House to Page 2, Paragraph 5, the fourth sentence. The 'Global Hunger Index, 2017' ranked Sierra Leone as the third hungriest country in the world with percentage of population that is undernourished estimated at **38.5%**, compared to **28.6%** in Guinea and **16.2%** in Ghana.' We are far below what is expected. Let me quote from the reggae singer from his debut, Mr Bob Marley. He once said, "**In an abundance of water the fool is thirsty.**" We have large hectares of arable land to cultivate in this

country, but we have been ranked as the third hungriest nation. Are we really serious about putting food on the tables of our constituents or on the table of our fellow Sierra Leoneans? The blame goes to successive governments, with particular reference to the erstwhile Government. Lip service is placed on agriculture, but we need to move from that. The tractors are taken to areas that are not agriculturally productive.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now go to the Economy. Those on the other side have been saying that they left a buoyant Economy. I can call that 'Coconomics' S.O [2]. 'Coconomics' is the deliberate refusal of a person or a group of persons to adhere or to ignore the basic norms and principles of economics. Formally, they called it 'Voodoo Economics' S.O [2], which you people recently redefined as 'Tolomgbonised Economics.' It is only in the 'Tolomgbonised Economy' people will say there is economic boom, when teachers are not paid on time. Teachers are paid in every forty-five days. It is only in the 'Tolomgbonised Economy' people will say the Economy is booming, but contractors are not paid; it is only in the 'Tolomgbonised Economy' people will say we have the fastest growing economy, when we do not have enough to feed our people; and it is only in the 'Tolomgbonised Economy' people will say we have the fastest growing Economy, but with two digits inflation. The Minister of Finance needs to examine the Economy of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the electricity the APC led government left is epileptic. The bogus contract signed with Aggrego could not meet our expectations. You said you are doing business, but the people of this country did not benefit. You buy at 38 cents, but you sell at 16 cents. Every issue is highlighted, but we would discuss that in our Committees. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

HON. SALIEU O. SESAY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Let me seize this opportunity to thank His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, for performing his constitutional duty in this Well of Parliament. I have listened to various contributors to this debate. I was with the opinion that after my learned colleague, Honourable Daniel B. Koroma has made his point that we on this side were forced to be the opposition and those on the other side as the ruling party, colleagues would have

stopped opposing and start proffering solutions or defend the Speech. I want to be brief and straight to the point.

HON. NENNEH LEBBIE: Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O 32[16]. The Honourable Member keeps referring to his colleague by name. We should not refer to any of our colleagues by name. He mentioned a colleague Member by name. We should refer to our colleagues by the Districts or Constituencies he/she represents.

THE SPEAKER: What were you trying to say Honourable Member?

HON. NENNEH LEBBIE: Mr Speaker, I stood on S.O 32[16].

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you said S.O. 32[16]?

HON. NENNEH LEBBIE: Yes, Mr Speaker. The Honourable Member was referring to his colleague by name.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please advise yourself accordingly.

HON. SALIEU O. SESAY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I think my colleague is finding a way to distract me, but I will not be distracted.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I would grant you an extra two minutes.

HON. SALIEU O. SESAY: Thank you very much for being so neutral and objective. The debates on the Presidential Speech mostly centred on the Economy. Most colleagues have made their analyses based on little or no fact, particularly colleagues on the other side. However, convention holds it that if you want to assess, analyse or judge a situation, what you need to do is to look at the situation before and after the intervention. This means that if you are to analyse or judge the economic situation of this country, particularly during the reign of the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, you should look at Dr Ernest Bai Koroma's presidency before 2007 and after 2017 or 2018. With your leave, when the President was presenting his farewell Speech in this Well, he gave us statistical analyses of the state of the Economy before he became President and the current state of the Economy when he was about to leave

office. The first analysis he made centred on the monetary value of the Sierra Leone Economy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during the presidency of the late Dr Ahmed Tejan Kabba of blessed memory, the monetary value of the Economy was **Le1.1bln**. In 2018, it increased by **141%** and the value was **Le 5.1bln**. I am saying this because in analysing the Economy, you have variables and those variables are key. For instance, we have the exchange rate, inflation and the GDP variables. My colleague from Tongo can attest to this fact. Yesterday, I heard him struggling to explain some issues on the 'pet' but the most important thing is when you assess the Economy, you look at certain variables. These variables can only be influenced or actualised after a period of time. This is why the analyses of Dr Ernest Bai Koroma were in place. For example, the revenue generated in 2007 was **\$170mln**. This was what we inherited, but with our efforts and increased in Direct Foreign Investments, Sierra Leone became a business friendly place. We attracted many investors or business tycoons who came to Sierra Leone to invest. We increased our revenue base by **\$550mln**, representing **224%**.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Direct Foreign Investment is very important because the Government of Dr Ernest Bai Koroma ensured that between 2007 to 2018, we attracted the highest investors in this country and the investment rate we inherited was **\$96.6mln** but that increased to **\$570mln** which is **150%**.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable from Bo was talking about bread and butter issue. I would give you this simple economic analysis. The minimum wage we inherited as a Government was **Le21, 000** and at that time, a bag of rice was **Le60,000**.

HON. ABU KEMOKAI: Mr Speaker, I rise on S.O 3[2]. The Honourable Member was not speaking from the seat allocated to him.

THE SPEAKER: Is that correct? Honourable Member, I thank you for drawing my attention. As it is, I will pretend as if I did not know that.

HON. SALIEU O. SESAY: Mr Speaker, our Government increased the minimum wage to **Le500, 000**. In real terms, it makes the worker feels better than what he/she used to earn before 2007. A worker used to receive **Le21, 000** and a bag of rice then was **Le60, 000**.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me move quickly to the exchange rate. Before the 2018 Presidential and Parliamentary elections, the Minister of Finance was on different radio stations, telling the people that he would fix this Economy. I am surprised when up to this time he is still pointing fingers at the APC. With these few words, I thank you very much.

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank His Excellency the President for the wonderful Speech he delivered here on the 10th May, 2018. Having gone through the Speech, I realised that it is a road map that shows where we are coming from, where we are, and where we are heading to. Therefore, refer to this book as a book of truth because all what he has said in this booklet is the gospel truth. Therefore, I refer to it as the book of truth. In that regard, it is good to say the truth here because only the truth shall set you free.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on the 14th December, 2012 the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma mentioned in his Speech... - *[Interruption]*.

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

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: I am focusing on two sectors; i.e., education and youth. In that regard, I refer you to Page 1, Paragraph 3 of the Address delivered by the former President on the 14th December, 2017. With your leave, Mr Speaker, I read: **“I will empower human capital with appropriate education to be part of programmes implementation.”** This shows why the former Minister of Education, Science and Technology kept hunting ghost teachers until he got his eternity. On Page 14, Paragraph 57 of the Address under discussion, His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, has promised to establish teacher training campuses in all the districts, and expand and improve on distant learning for teachers and providing

free tuition for teachers' education. The 'New Direction' is also going to introduce student loan scheme that would provide loans to deserving students to access higher education. This is for us to understand that our teachers need this moral boosting for them to deliver professionally. Again, the 'New Direction' will increase budget allocation to education by **20%**. We are on a very good footing as far as education is concerned.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I take you to the youth as mentioned by the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. He said in this House in 2012 thus: **"...I pledge to this country and my attention will be to the youth and therefore I will lay my life for the youth."**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my brothers and sisters in Kenema District, particularly Constituency 021, did not realise that someone laid his life for them because they were marginalised and neglected. The 'New Direction' identified about **67%** unemployed youth in this country. The New Direction is saying that the youth problems will not only receive the utmost priority, but will be viewed as a human development agenda. We believe that the 'New Direction' will enhance the human capacity. No wonder why our late brother 'Salone Trump,' may his soul rest in peace, was saying that human beings are his greatest assets. I refer to this book as a book of truth.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you do not need to criticise this document at this time. You should wait after 2023, when President Bio would have come back to deliver his second term Address. I want Honourable Members on the other side to criticise constructively or make special recommendations to this particular document. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

HON. P.C. SAHR YOUNGAI KONTANDAY MBIRIWA II: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to join the previous speakers to thank His Excellency the President for the maiden Address he made in this Honourable House on the 10th May, 2018. I would like to observe that the President's Address was profound and wide ranging, as it touches virtually all sectors and the challenges he has inherited as well as the remedial measures he intends to take to address those challenges. In this regard, I would like to make certain comments on some of the issues he highlighted.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would begin with the education. Sierra Leoneans in my view should be happy that the President has placed education at the fore front of his development agenda. The issue of education, as we all know, has to do with human resource development, which is the most important aspect of every nation. Education helps a country to curb ignorance and poverty. It is also important to know that education is not only empowering people, but also liberating them from shackles of ignorance and illiteracy. I refer to the free educational initiative by His Excellency the President because he has made efforts to deal with the numerous challenges that were inhibiting child learning in this country. I think this is a significant move, but what I would want the Government to do is to clarify the policy. In other words, I would like the Government to clearly tell us what the policy entails for the Members of Parliament, the District Directors of Education, Local Councils Chairmen, the Paramount Chiefs and other stakeholders who will be expected to explain the obligations of the Government to the people and the communities. We also want to know the obligations contained therein for all stakeholders. I think this is important.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to look at teenage pregnancy because it has bearing on education. I am saying this because if the state is going to undertake education of all children in this country, I think teenage pregnancy should be a concern. Currently, it is a major concern in this country. The Child Rights Act of this country makes provision for imprisonment and a fine as a penalty for the crime when a boy or a man impregnates a school girl. If you take this into consideration, you would agree with me that the Child Right Act, which has provided the penalty of sentence or imprisonment and fine, is too lenient and without potency to serve as a deterrent for the perpetrators of this crime. I would wish to suggest to the Government that the Child Rights Act should be strengthened by making provisions for a sentence of not less than seven years with no alternative as opposed to what we have in the Parent Act. There should also be a clause to read, 'two years or not less than two years for parents who would want to compromise this Act.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to infrastructure. The development of our trunk and feeder roads, the provision of electricity and pipe borne water in the cities will definitely have positive impact on our Economy and the livelihood of the people. I therefore commend the President for highlighting the development of these areas as goals of his administration. It is particularly pleasing to know that he has identified certain roads for construction; i.e., Bo/Matru Road, Bo/Matotoka Road, Kailahun/Kenema Road, Pujehun/Bonthe, North/North West Province, Mano Junction/Bumpeh Road that links Kenema, Kono [the headquarters of the eastern Province], and Kenema/Zimmi Road that links North East to Liberia. I would be inclined to believe that the President made these selections based on our limited economic and financial circumstances. I however want to suggest that in the selection of his next set of roads for construction when circumstances permit, he should consider the following roads; Segbwema/Koidu Road that links Kenema, Kono and Kailahun districts in the East, the Koidu City that connects Kono to Guinea, Mali, Liberia and Ivory Coast.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will now go to the Judiciary. We are aware that the President has pledged his commitment to enhance the performance, integrity and effectiveness of the Judiciary in this country. We are all aware that we have lost confidence in our Judiciary. The delay in deciding land cases is one of the few examples of the problem in the Judiciary.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to boundary disputes in this country.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, your time is up. I call on Honourable Catherine Z. Tarawally to take the Floor.

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to join my colleagues in this Well of Parliament in congratulating our wonderful President, your President, my President and everybody's President, His Excellency Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, for a well delivered Speech. I come from Constituency 037, Makeni City, the hometown of the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. Remember it was a city of light and we are hearing now that it is a city of darkness. Please try to give us what we called light [*Undertones*].

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank His Excellency the President for prioritising education and agriculture. Agriculture and education are key to the development of a nation. Over **20%** of our national budget has been allocated to education, which is a very laudable venture. However, I want to pay attention to what we called the reverse method of 6-3-3-4 from 6-3-4-4 as an abnormal change. For me, it is very abnormal. In 2007, the late President of blessed memory, Dr Ahmed Tejan Kabba, made recommendations in his handing over note to the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, that the basic education system needs to be reviewed. It is crystal clear and it is there in the handing over note. In his effort, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma decided to constitute the Professor Gbamanja Commission. Professor Aiah Kpakima here can attest to the fact that Professor Gbamanja's Commission was commissioned to look into the lapses, loopholes and problems in the 6-3-3-4 System. They submitted a report and it was recommended that a year should be added to that particular cadre of our educational system. The Former President, in his wisdom, decided to include that particular recommendation which led to the formation of the 6-3-4-4 System of Education. The Honourable Bashiru Silikie has explained the distinction between students entering universities before and when the 6-3-4-4 was passed into law. We have been encountering massive turnouts and the number of passes at WASSCE level has significantly increased. The West African Examination Council [WAEC] can attest to that. I refer you to WAEC to compare the results of 2001 to 2007 and 2007 to 2017.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have seen rapid increase in terms of admission of students into tertiary institutions. Before now, professor Kpakima can attest to this again, that because of the lapses in the 6-3-3-4 educational system, we had problems with entrance into the universities. In view of this, the two universities in Sierra Leone created a programme called the 'Access Programme,' which allows students entering both Fourah Bay College and the Njala University to read access courses. The records are there to prove what I have just said. But with the inception of the 6-3-4-4, we experienced rapid increase of young girls and boys entering the universities. My recommendation is that we should set up a committee to look into the lapses or

loopholes. We have to examine what went wrong and how to deal with those challenges. For me, I am not convinced that the 6-3-3-4 is better than 6-3-4-4.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Agriculture. I want to thank His Excellency the President for his wonderful Speech. He pays credence to Agriculture. I am a master farmer in Safroko Limba Chiefdom and I am farming in a very big and vast land 'Tacumbina' in Limba S.O [2]. Agriculture needs keen attention as the President has done. With the leave of Mr Speaker, Paragraph 7 of the Presidential Address states: **"...investment in agriculture, including animal husbandry will be a pre-condition for holding political office."** For me, this is a wrong approach because every Sierra Leonean has his/her basic human rights, which are enshrined in Chapter III of the 1991 Constitution of this country. The 1991 Constitution makes it clear that we have the right to belong, to participate and to associate. If the President wants us to take the lead in Agriculture, especially Members of Parliament and Ministers, he should make agriculture very lucrative. Agriculture should be made lucrative and attractive. It should be the business of everybody without making it compulsory. I want to recommend that low interest loan scheme be provided to commercial farmers and also review the Land Tenure System, which is a problem in Sierra Leone. That is barring our Creole brothers and sisters to farm up country. Again, we call on the Government to buy farm products, particularly the high perishable ones that our brothers from Kono, Kailahun and Koinadugu are suffering from. Also, we want this government to construct more feeder roads.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank His Excellency the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. He has done so well in infrastructure, especially road construction in Sierra Leone. We need to do more if we want Agriculture to thrive. Tractors should be provided on hire purchase for Members of Parliament and Ministers, so that they can undertake mechanised agriculture.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Page 30 of the Speech of His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Dr Julius Maada Bio states: **"...again because of political meddling, NATCOM's role as an independent regulator is under threat."** He

promised us here faithfully that he would depoliticise NATCOM. He said that because of political interference into NATCOM's activities, it is not effective. I am a bit surprised to see His Excellency appoints the National Chairman of the ruling SLPP as Chairman of NATCOM. Can NATCOM not be more political now than it was before? That is my question and I want to leave you with this question. I thank you for this opportunity.

HON. BERNADETTE W. SONGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to start my contribution by thanking the people of Sierra Leone. The people of Sierra Leone knew what they wanted and they have boldly done that through their votes, which is their lives. S.O. [2] 'Tolongbo no dae sidom nar ya' and indeed they did not. Now, I want to thank His Excellency the President for putting this Speech together. This is a Speech I consider to be holistic and all encompassing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Speech delivered by Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio in this Well explained the fact that he has listened to his people over the years. This Speech was prepared to make a difference. Therefore, this Speech is holistic and all-inclusive. His Excellency's Speech looks holistic to me because it is prepared to solve the problems we have been facing in this country. The Speech suggests remedial actions to solve these problems.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to start my submission with Page 40 of his Speech. His Excellency looked at a particular topic of interest to me and that is why I have nothing personal to object because the Speech is holistic. However, I would like to comment on the importance of what His Excellency said on Page 40; i.e., dual citizenship.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I refer the House to Section 5, Subsection 4, Section 56[2] and Section 76[1][a] of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone. The three sections of the Constitution explain the qualifications for holding public offices or positions of trust in this country. Now, the first section talks about the qualifications for being Head of State in this country. Dual citizenship is in two phases; first, if you were born outside this country but your parents are citizens of this country, automatically you are a citizen of this country and you are not affected by that clause; second, if you however became

a citizen of another country voluntarily, it means you cannot become a Head of State of this country. Also, you cannot be a Member of Parliament and you cannot be appointed as Minister of this country. When I was reading those provisions in the Constitution, I was wondering why my colleagues on the other side, for the past ten years, had Members of Parliament and Ministers who had dual citizenship but decided to ignore that aspect of the Constitution for their benefits. After they have satisfied themselves at the detriment of other people, they brought up the issue of dual citizenship. The only thing that came to my mind was the fact that they wanted to disqualify people like Honourable Kandeh Kolley Yumkella and myself. It was intentional, but I want to remind them that if they have once ignored that provision in the Constitution and then all of a sudden, for their benefits, they decided to bring it up, we are determined to stand against it. I knew what my people wanted and I was determined to show the APC Government that having a British citizenship cannot deter me from becoming a Member of Parliament. I am a living witness that despite being a British, I had to go back to renounce my citizenship in order to serve my people. I have to do that because I believe in what I believe. I have lived in the UK for the past eighteen years.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know what I want. I have my career as a practising nurse for twelve years. I had to overlook that to practice what I believe; i.e., serving my people. I am here today as a Member of Parliament, but we have hundreds and thousands of Sierra Leoneans out there in the diaspora who have wealth of knowledge and expertise to offer to this country. They cannot participate in the politics of this country effectively because of those clauses. Sierra Leoneans saw how the Constitution was being abused by the Ernest Bai Koroma led Government by unlawfully removing the Vice President. It was the diaspora that stood firm to protest against that unlawful dismissal of the Vice President. It was the diaspora that took the petition to 10 Downing Street to the Prime Minister of Britain to look at the injustice being meted on our people. In his hand over speech, His Excellency Dr Ernest Bai Koroma mentioned that the diaspora members from the UK were inviting war in this country. He was referencing that aspect of the incident with emphasis on how he was a democratic

President. But when I read the Speech, I came to the conclusion that he was referring to that incident. There is nothing to hide from the fact that we are the highest contributors to any political activities in Sierra Leone.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have one minute.

HON. BERNADETTE W. SONGA: Mr Speaker, I believe I have been disrupted quite a few times.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member. I will give you additional one minute.

HON. BERNADETTE W. SONGA: Thank you Sir. The APC led Government would attest to the fact that most of their supports come from the diaspora. The SLPP, NGC and other political parties also get their supports from the diaspora. Our people in the diaspora contribute hugely to the development of this country. They also contribute to electioneering process in this country. I personally believe that it is a divisive attitude. It is not important and therefore this particular provision in the Constitution should be repealed.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, if you want to raise a Point of Order, please rise

HON. ABU B. FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O 36[1]. With your leave, I read: **“Debates upon any Motion, Bill or Amendment shall be relevant to such Motion, Bill or Amendment except in the case of substantive Motion for the adjournment of Parliament.”**

THE SPEAKER: You are overruled.

HON. BERNADETTE W. SONGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wanted to emphasise the fact that health is wealth; but because of time, I would like to talk about the sanitary aspect of Parliament. As a health practitioner, I would like to remind this House that the sanitary aspect of Parliament does not reflect on us as Honourable Members of Parliament. If you go to the toilets, you will see what I am trying to talk about. Look at the chairs of Honourable Members. I think more attention needs to be paid to the welfare of Honourable Members.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just want to echo the saying that behind every successful man, there is a woman. And I want to remind this House that behind His Excellency success, there is a wife, Mrs Fatima Jabbie Bio, who is championing women's empowerment in this country. I think it is the first time we have a First Lady rather than a First Mama. So, I am admonishing the women out there to believe in His Excellency's dream. Mrs Fatima Jabbie Bio is here to empower us. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

HON. AMADU M. KANU: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker for catching my eyes. Let me use this opportunity to thank the Almighty Allah and the people of Ribbi and Bumpeh Chiefdoms for voting me again to this most Honourable House. Honourable Members, I am representing Constituency 093, Moyamba District. For clarity, I was referring to the ten sections in Ribbi Chiefdom and a cross-section of the thirteen sections in Bumpeh Chiefdom. I represent five sections of those sections and my colleague on the other side of this Well, the Honourable Member from Constituency 094 is representing the rest of the other sections in Bumpeh Chiefdom.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me at this juncture lend my voice to the ongoing tradition in acknowledging the 1991 Constitution, consistent with the revised Standing Orders of the Sierra Leone Parliament and as stated on the Order Paper; i.e., Motion of thanks to His Excellency President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me use this opportunity again to thank His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, on my personal behalf and on behalf of the people in the Southern Region of this country. I am doing this because for the past fifteen years, I continued to be the only APC Honourable Member from the South. Implicitly, I am representing His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio by extension on this side.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having examined the statements contained in 149 Paragraphs, let me start with Parliament. I am doing so because 'charity begins at home.' I humbly request that we revisit the Standing Orders of the Sierra Leone Parliament, especially Standing Orders 82. I am saying this because as legislators, it is our constitutional responsibility, among other things, to adhere to the dictates of our

own creation. The Standing Orders is our working document and I am making this clarification because you will agree with me that Sierra Leoneans at home and abroad...
- *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please take note of S.O 36. Save that for another day.

HON. AMADU KANU: Mr Speaker, what I am saying is consistent with the Speech because the President spoke about integrity and leadership with example.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I have ruled.

HON. AMADU KANU: As it pleases Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me take you to Paragraph 27 of the Speech, which talks about 'improving the Management of Oil and Gas Exploration.' With your leave, it says: **"Oil and Gas Exploration in Sierra Leone has had a very chequered history from 2009 to 2013. Sierra Leone drilled three successful Exploration Wells and one highly prospective Appraisal Well. By 2015, due to an undisclosed reasons, all operating Oils and Gas Companies in Sierra Leone, except African Petroleum, had backed out of their contractual commitments and abandoned their operations."**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before I comment on this, I want to give you a brief background of what transpired between 2009 and 2013. Mr Speaker, between 2009 and 2013, the Oil Exploration Companies [OECs], under the supervision of the Petroleum Directorate in 2013, drilled five wells off shore. Mr Speaker, I need your protection.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, on my right. I can understand your exuberance, but please allow the Honourable Member to make his point. I crave your kind indulgence.

HON. AMADU M. KANU: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Oil Exploration Companies drilled five off shore wells with four of the wells commercially viable. The point I am trying to make has to do with the statement made by President Bio, when he

said that ‘...for undisclosed reasons, Oil Companies had to abandon the wells.’ Honourable Members, between 2013 and 2015, oil prices collapsed from **\$110** to **\$29** per barrel. Mr Speaker, when this happened, oil exploration companies in Sierra Leone suffered too.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, your time is up. Honourable Members, let me address this issue. There are certain people who cannot talk when there is the slightest distraction. We have people, as long as you are distracting them, they cannot land safely. So, you have to give him time to conclude. Honourable Member, I will give you time after lunch to conclude your debate. I call on Honourable Abubacarr Fofanah before we proceed for lunch.

HON. ABUBAKARR FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I represent the people of Constituency 016, Nongowa Chiefdom, Kenema District. With the leave of Mr Speaker, I take this opportunity to thank His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, for the wonderful Speech he delivered in this House. I also thank the Speaker for giving me this opportunity to be part of this history making event. I said history making because today is the first time I am commenting on a Presidential Debate delivered in this noble House by no less a person, but the most erudite and astute President this country has ever produced.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I may want all of us to look at this debate. It is a fiction and it is for us Honourable Members to visualise it, so that at the end of the day, we will make it an actual event. I am saying this because this Government took over a country whose Economy is very weak. This is what Page 1 of His Excellency the President’s Address talks about. On Page 9, Paragraph 35 states: **“For the period 11th April to date, a total amount exceeding Le300bln has been collected.”**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the role we play will reflect on the lives of the people we represent in this House. I thereby applaud all Honourable Members to be prudent in the decisions we make because they reflect on the lives of the people we represent. On the Economy, the President highlighted the declining state of the National Economy, including the declining of real economic growth of **3.5%**, coupled with high

depreciation of the Leones against the United States Dollar. That has inevitably led to the poor living standards of the people we represent.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to education. In 1827, the first University was established in Sierra Leone. Since that period to date, our education has fallen because of the negligence of successive Governments. I want to put it to this House that the introduction of the 6-3-4-4- is responsible for the increase in 'teenage pregnancy.' How can a responsible Government introduced one year to the educational standards of a country without providing adequate teaching facilities? I want to say that the 6-3-4-4- is responsible for the increase in teenage pregnancy. This Government is ready to revert to the 6-3-3-4 because it is good for this Nation. I want everybody to know that education is the driving wheel of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Agriculture. Despite the large acres of land, Sierra Leone remains to be a high importer of rice, which is our staple food. This President has stated in his Address that Agriculture is going to be a criterion for political appointment. That is holding political appointment means holding a farm. It is going to be a criterion. As far as I am concerned, I believe we are moving towards the 'New Direction.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President also mentioned the Judiciary. He has promised to overhaul the Judiciary. Honourable Dr Kandeh Kolleh Yumkella was unfairly treated by the APC Government. This was their aim to destroy his political career. This was why the APC Government lost a good number prolific Members of Parliament who are supposed to be here today. When I came to this Parliament, I used to hear the name of Honourable Kombor Kamara. He is very good and fine APC Member of Parliament. I want to put it to this House that this Government is going to work towards making education a priority. We are going to provide free quality education as it is stated in Paragraph 52 of this Speech. This is why **20%** of our national budget will be allocated to the Ministry of Education. I want to implore Honourable Members to come together and support the New Direction of His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on behalf of my constituents, I want to use this opportunity to congratulate the President. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, it is time for lunch. The sitting is adjourned to 1:45 p.m.

[The House was adjourned at 12:00 p.m. and resumed at 1:45 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: With my special leave, Honourable Members, I take this special opportunity to plead with you to allow Honourable Amadu Kanu to make his presentation. In the circumstance, I want to use this opportunity to withdraw your right to undertones whilst he will be making his presentation. Honourable Members, do not allow me to invoke the relevant Standing Orders to withdraw any Member that interrupts the Honourable Member.

HON. AMADU M. KANU: I want to thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me a second chance. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was going to proffer reasons that precipitated the departure of investors from 2009 and 2013; i.e., International Oil Companies, under the supervision of the Petroleum Directorate. The companies were able to make a discovery of four of the Wells geologically successful. I think this is good news for us. What transpired then 2013 and 2015 was that Oil prices collapsed from **\$110** to **\$29** per barrel. When this happened, Exploration Budget, especially for frontier area, where Sierra Leone is exploring suffered. This is a global challenge. It is not just common in Sierra Leone. The aim of business people is to maximise profit. They could not continue under that circumstance. It will also interest you to know that even exploration companies that were almost at the end of their exploration, decided to relinquish their operations. The drilling spectators that did not meet their work programmes and their financial obligations had their contracts terminated. I think that sent a very serious message to the outside world that Sierra Leone is serious about its commercial oil exploration exercise. I was trying to explain the reasons that led to the departure of investors for an undisclosed reason. Well, it was because at that material time, the price of oil collapsed.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I still want to crave the indulgence of Mr Speaker for us to be mindful of the fact that Sierra Leoneans at home and abroad must have surely supported and voted us into various elected positions for diverse reasons. Some must have surely supported us for the love of their party. Like what happened in Makeni and of course the famous Kailahun Court Barray, where Sierra Leoneans from those parts of the country supported and voted for their parties blindly. Others must have supported us for political gains, but the point I want to make is that majority of the people of this country voted and supported us for no other reason other than for change *[Applause]*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us set aside our differences and push this country forward. I look forward to having a good relationship from both sides of the Well. What is important for us as Sierra Leoneans is to set aside our differences, our interests and put 'Mama Salone' above all else.

With that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to once more thank His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio and wish him well. Thank you very much.

HON. DOMINIC J. LAVALLIE-TSHOMBE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take this opportunity to express my delight in giving my first presentation in this noble House. I want to start by expressing my unreserved thanks to His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, for leading the SLPP to victory and putting this guiding document. He is going to ensure that we remain in power for more than five or ten years. Somebody was talking about campaigning and leaving out the bread and butter issue. I want to remind this House that the 'New Direction' is poised on solving three thematic problems of this Nation; i.e., indiscipline, corruption and acute poverty. Mr Speaker, indiscipline has to do with the character of persons and His Excellency has clearly expressed in Paragraph 66 that he would introduce civic education. That has to do with teaching individuals their roles and responsibilities as good citizens.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on the issue of corruption, the President has devised ways of handling it. In Paragraph 37, bullet point two states that 'he would implement

all audit findings and recommendations.' I will emphasis on the poverty situation. People have been questioning how poor are Sierra Leoneans or whether we are indeed at the thresh-hold. I will just highlight few characteristics or attributes of a poor Nation. This explanation will help you to know if you are poor. We have high unemployment rate, hyperinflation which is uncontrollable inflation, unfavourable exchange rate, unfavourable interest rate and dualism. Dualism is a situation where you develop a particular community or part of a nation, leaving other areas unattended [*Applause*].

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, why do you think the 'New Direction' was voted to rule this country? First, it was because of acute poverty and people needed subsidised education. That brings us to the flagship programme, which is free, quality, accessible and marketable education. There is high level of dropout because of the level of poverty. People are not able to cater for their children to continue accessing quality education. The people need skills development and capacity building. There is high level of unemployment because people do not have the requisite skills to compete for jobs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we talk of promoting civic education and enabling the business environment to thrive. What do we mean by enabling the business environment? There is unfavourable interest rate; i.e., the cost of acquiring loans or borrowing moneys from the banks is unfavourable. Therefore, this Government is devising solutions to create a favourable business environment. Once that is done, people will be able to generate income for themselves to enable them improve their living standards.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to refer the House to Paragraph 33, which talks about the problems this Nation is facing. This Nation is facing imbalance fiscal deficit. This means that our domestic revenue is far below our expenditure. Now the Government has designed mechanisms to handle this ugly situation. The President has devised the following measures: first, he has suspended all tax-waivers; and he has endeavoured to divide external or public debt ceiling. That is to say, there will be a ceiling. If the Government says we will not take any debt beyond one million Dollars, then that will be the ceiling. He has decided to control the financing of our overseas

travelling, especially for social activities. These are fiscal measures he has outlined. The President is trying to bring inflation to single digit. The standard of living has become unbearably frustrating because the cost of living is acute and this country is suffering from imported inflation. To handle this, he has devised a mechanism to reduce the contractual or the process of the cost involved in importing and clearing goods from abroad. Once that is done, you will have cheaper cost of imported goods, because tariffs are transferred cost. They increase the cost of other goods and services needed for either construction or otherwise.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, somebody was talking about negative inflationary rate yesterday. Now, if it is not in your domain, please tread cautiously. I have tried to devise some recommendations. I have made tremendous input in the area of education, and I have devised some recommendations. First, I am advising the education ministries, if we are to succeed in the 6-3-3-4, especially with the Free Education, the SSS1 must commence in September in every academic year. For that to materialise, I am suggesting that the BECE Exams be taken in May instead of August, so that we can meet the academic calendar.

Also, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister of Finance must ensure that the transfer of funds into the Single Treasury Account should be timely to enable the institutions or MDAs to function very well. Again, the Ministry of Agriculture should support agricultural activities, including the supply of seeds or seedlings and that must be done timely because agricultural activities are time bound. Therefore, I want to implore this House to take this document as a working document. This is why the people voted for a change and it is good for this Nation. I thank you very much.

HON. MOHAMED BANGURA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Speaker for giving me this opportunity to talk on this all important document. I am appealing to Members of this House to please keep your undertones as undertones. I will tell you why. I am the former Minister of Information and a former Presidential Candidate like Honourable Dr Kandehe Kolleh Yumkella. So, when I speak, everybody should be quiet.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to refer you to Page 40, Paragraph 147. With your leave, Mr Speaker, it says: **“Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my administration will take immediate step to repeal the Seditious Libel Law, support the School of Journalism and other institutions to train journalists.”** Successive Presidents have come to this House and made similar promise to repeal the Criminal Libel Law, but they have failed in that direction. President Ahmed Tejan-Kabbah of blessed memories came to this House and promised to repeal the Criminal Libel Law, but he failed to do so. Again, President Ernest Bai Koroma promised that in this House, but he failed. I do not want to see President Maada Bio fail in this area. This is because it will be an injustice to the Media. In six months, I want Mr President to please repeal this law.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my own contribution will be short. I want to thank two people of this country. I will first say thanks to His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio and the former President, His Excellency Dr Ernest Bai Koroma.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I start with Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. This man has done good things for this country and that is why it is human for us to thank him. That will not, in any way, make you an APC if you are an SLPP. You can still be SLPP and say thank you Dr Ernest Bai Koroma for what he has done. I will tell you why. I will start with Justice and Law. There was a time in this country when Justice was very difficult to access, particularly in the provincial areas. As we speak, we have resident Magistrate in every district headquarter town. For that, I thank Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. He also helped to bring the Legal Aid Board, which gives poor people access to Justice. I thank President Koroma for that. For you on that side, please help to thank President Koroma. Take the Airport for example, there was a time in this country when our International Airport was nothing good to write home about. Today, we have twelve International Aircrafts that are coming in and out of the Airport. Thanks to President Koroma.

HON. SIDIE TUNIS [Leader of Government Business]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Motion we have before us is the Motion of thanks to His Excellency

President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio and not President Earnest Bai Koroma. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: So, Honourable Member, please be advised.

HON. MOHAMED BANGURA: In that case, I go to tourism. There was a time when our tourist sector was appalling. The President talked about tourist sites. I want to state here that there is nothing much he has to do with our tourism industry, apart from bringing tourists into this country. As we speak, the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs has an international funding to the tune of **\$18.5mln**. As we speak, the Ministry of Tourism is doing well due to incentives that are given to them. They have been able to secure funds for this ministry. If you go to the Lumley Beach, you will see host of hotels. We can even host, at this point, the World Cup.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Energy. Before the elections, we had uninterrupted Energy supply in Freetown. For the past fifty days or more, the people are crying. S. O. [2] 'if ar bin know.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move to youth empowerment. We are very pleased that our President spoke about empowerment. Our women and youth have been left out. The former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma came to power under the platform of youth and women's empowerment. That was the time we had the first female Chief Justice in this country. Today, the Auditor General is a woman and she was appointed by Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. We had ambassadors who were women. The National Revenue Authority [NRA] boss was a woman. We had young people in prominent positions in this country. I was appointed as Minister of Information and Communications. If President Bio says he is going to focus on this aspect, I salute him for giving us young people to serve in this country. I know that to govern a country is a collective responsibility. It is a collective work that has to do with the APC, SLPP, C4C and the NGC. Now we have a President we must support... - *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, your time is up.

HON. MOHAMED KANNEH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, permit me to say 'Salamalaikum waramatulaitaala wabarakatu' to my Muslim colleagues because this is the month of Ramadan.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to change the debate to a different level. I want to start by encouraging Members of Parliament to observe that we have been given the ticket to come to Parliament to represent our people. We should note the fact that we are on oath. I have observed that most of the discussions are directed at pleasing their political parties and their leaders; and in the process, they are unjust to the people they are representing. I will want to refrain from that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I represent the people of Malema and Dea Chiefdoms in Constituency 006, Kailahun District. The people of Constituency 006 have long been abandoned. The people of those chiefdoms have long been neglected. For the past ten years, we were not fortunate to see the President of this Republic visiting those communities with the exception of the former Vice President, Victor Bockarie Foh. Unfortunately, he was there to tell us S.O. [2] 'fodom for mi en ar fodon for u,' which means 'vote for the APC and you will get your roads, vote for the APC and you will get health and sanitation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is an opportunity for me to thank our President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, for providing us this foot path, which I will prefer to call the only road or the only way to the development of Sierra Leone [*Applause*]. I call it the only road to development of Sierra Leone because in Paragraph 2 of this document, he made it very clear that all what he has in this document will be done through five principles. You will agree with me that previous Presidents, especially speeches of former President Ernest Bai Koroma, for the past ten years had very good messages, but what was lacking as ingredients as we have here are the principles upon which Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio has decided to run through in order to achieve all these beautiful ideas he has stated in this document. He mentioned disciplined leadership. You do not have to be an NGC supporter to know that we lack 'fiscal discipline' in this country. We have had situations wherein moneys were thrown through windows of

Presidential vehicles to people in the streets all in the name of political campaign, when the Njala University and the Eastern Polytechnic were demonstrating for salaries and subventions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you do not have to be a supporter of the SLPP to know that most of the corrupt practices were done without paying any attention to the integrity of the people who were holding those offices. If Members of Parliament, including Ministers, do what we are supposed to do, we would have done much for this country. We should have at the back of our minds that we have integrity to defend, efficiency to promote, professionalism to demonstrate, and exhibit quality delivery. If we have those at the back of our minds, Honourable Members will agree with me that all the information stated in this document will always be achieved. Well, I can understand the fury on your faces and I can also understand the problem with my colleagues on the other side. They know very well that where discipline is mentioned, which has been lacking in this country for quite some time, many people are jittery. With the assurance that we now have disciplined leadership, we are rest assured that the technocrats selected to lead the various ministries and parastatals will achieve their objectives.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to education. I come from Kailahun District, where we had the Bunumbu Teachers' College. You will agree with me that the college used to be one of the institutions that helped in the provision and training of our teachers. That institution was displaced during the civil war and was relocated to Kenema, which is the regional headquarter town. Over the years, through the help of the SLPP led Government, that institution was transformed into a polytechnic with many other institutions in the country. To your dismay, even with the hard work done by those institutions, the Eastern Region is the only region without a university.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I implore the Minister of Education, especially for Tertiary Institutions to ensure that before it takes too long, the Bunumbu Teachers College, which is now transformed into the Eastern Polytechnic be transformed into a university. The Eastern Region has been waiting for this opportunity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Agriculture. I refer the House to Paragraph 10 of the Speech. The President mentioned cash crops. We cultivate cash crops in the area I come from, especially cocoa and coffee. Sometimes I ask about the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board [SLPMB]? That Board used to help our farmers in terms of training. That has been abandoned and the cash crops and the farmers are left in the hands of Lebanese business men. We are crying that the foreign exchange is hard to come by. Our farmers used to be trained by the SLPMB and their produce were bought by agents of the SLPMB. Those produce were sold by the Government of Sierra Leone and great deal of foreign exchange were earned.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, your time is up

HON. MOHAMED KANNEH: Thank you, Mr Speaker [*Applause*].

THE SPEAKER: I call on Honourable P.C. Bai Farama Tass Bubu Ngbak IV.

HON. P.C. BAI FARAMA TASS BUBU NGBAK IV: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am Honourable Paramount Chief Bai Farama Tass Bubu Ngbak IV of Magbema Chiefdom, representing Kambia District. On behalf of my people in Kambia District and myself, I would like to thank His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, for presenting to us on the State Opening of Parliament on Thursday, 10th May, 2018 this Speech. I have read the Speech and I am impressed with it because it has a lot of proposals we hope the present ministers who have been appointed and approved here and their deputies would strive very hard to achieve at least **80%** of it. I am sure the House will be ready to judge them after six months or one year based on these proposals.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to comment on a very important part of these proposals. I refer the House to Page 32 Paragraph 123. It says: “**...establish independent agencies for disaster management and meteorology to improve the knowledge base and expand actions for early warning and disaster risk reduction.**” We have seen disasters in our country for the past three or four years and that has created a lot of problems for the government in terms of managing these

disasters. In other countries, they have specialised agencies that are handling natural disasters. They do not have to be ad-hoc committees like the ones we have now. That was why when disasters struck, we had lots of calamities and fatalities. I hope that the President will fast track the formation of these agencies, especially Disaster Management Agencies. We already have a unit in the office of National Security that is managing this, but it is too small. I think it has to be separated.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in 2016, 53 of us were selected and I was the only Paramount Chief among the team to attend intensive training course in Ghana on Disaster Management. Since then, I do not know if the expertise of those people who were trained were utilised. I think it was as a result of the Ebola outbreak that we were chosen to go for that training. One of the recommendations made in Ghana was to set up Disaster Management Agency and that has to be done through legislation. I hope that will be brought to this House very soon. The Ebola devastated our country, we had political crisis in the 90s. Of course, we had the mudslide last year. We have been experiencing flooding in the last two decades.

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

HON P.C. BAI FARAMA TASS BUBU NGBAK IV: I strongly support the formation of this Agency and also to revive the Meteorological Department. This is because we cannot predict the weather in Sierra Leone and it is not even good for tourism. On the area of environmental management, we do not have a clear policy although we have the Forestry Department. People are cutting down trees in the name of getting charcoal, which is rapidly destroying our forests and increasing the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, thereby causing Climate Change. These activities are going to increase our problems, especially the rainfall. Rainfall is getting lower and lower over the years and you can observe that in the month of May. We do not have more rains and the water levels are so low that we cannot provide water for our people to drink. Most of the water wells have dried in the provinces and even in Freetown because of the less rains *[Applause]*. We have to control the level of deforestation in this country.

Also, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we do not have to continue increasing the greenhouse gases which causes the climate to heat up, resulting in Climate Change. I know that the country and governments in the past have signed a lot of conventions. Therefore, we have to take that seriously. Quite a good number of the vehicles that are entering into this country usually give out poisonous carbon monoxide to the atmosphere on a daily basis. I think we have to do something very fast, otherwise we will encounter more problems like rising sea level, flooding in the seacoasts and some islands will disappear very fast. One of the islands that is experiencing similar problems is the Yeliboya Island in Samu Chiefdom, Kambia District, as a result of Global Warming. That is affecting Sierra Leone seriously and it will affect the fishery sector, internal movement of people and even the agricultural produce.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other issue I want to bring to this House is stated on Page 33, which talks about building and promoting regional cohesion. This is great and laudable. But we have problems that have not been solved in the past ten years. I was crowned in 2011 and I experienced boundary dispute with another chiefdom. I inherited that problem from my late father, who was the Paramount Chief. The problem started three years to the end of his life. So, it is now ten years and it has not been resolved. The problem is between Magbema Chiefdom and Briama Chiefdom. This is not a good example of national cohesion. Of course, we have this problem throughout the country. If this issue is not resolved, it will create bad blood among section or paramount chiefs who are governing those chiefdoms. As explained in Paragraph 125, I hope the President will speed up this peace-building initiative, wherein he wants to launch Presidential Initiative and not to repeat what have been happening for the past five years without solving these problems.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have one minute.

HON. P.C. BAI FARAMA TASS BUBU NGBAK IV: I am almost done, Mr Speaker. These are the two issues I wanted to bring to this House. On behalf of my people, we support the formation of the Disaster Management Agency and also to try to solve the problems of Chiefdom boundary disputes in Sierra Leone. Thank you *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member. At this stage, I wish to recognise the presence of Dr Prince Harding, Chairman and Leader of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party, which is the Ruling Party *[Applause]*. He has been nominated to serve as Chairman, National Telecommunications Commission. I want to believe he is here to listen to your concerns and he is certainly going to address them once he is approved by this House *[Applause]*. You are welcome, Dr Alex Prince Harding. I call on Honourable Khadijatu Davies to make her presentation.

HON. KHADIJATU DAVIES: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am representing Constituency 110, covering part of Goderich, right through to Tokeh and Banana/Ricketts Islands. I must tender my thanks to His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio for this comprehensive Address he delivered on the 10th May, 2018. I would like to deliberate on tourism and Health. My constituency is well-known for its beautiful beaches and other touristic areas *[Applause]*. So, I would like to admonish the Ministers of Tourism to please complement the community's activities in terms of boosting the tourism sector. I would like the Ministry of Tourism to set up committees that would regulate these tourist activities because they have the potentials to create jobs for the youths within that vicinity. That will also increase the income of the people living in those areas, thereby increasing government's revenue base *[Applause]*. If these activities are regulated, it will also help to curb foreign influence, so that issues like drugs and anti-social activities like prostitution will be discouraged *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to the health facilities in that part of the country. In the Peninsular area, for example, we have been suffering from health facilities for quite a long time. I must, however, tender my appreciation to the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, for providing us health facilities in that area. Those facilities have helped to alleviate some of the health problems in the Peninsular area *[Applause]*. I would also like to draw the attention of the Minister of Health to please add the number of hospitals in that area. This is because most people are migrating to the Peninsular area, thereby making the health facilities not commensurate or

inadequate to take care of the population in that area *[Applause]*. So, I want to admonish the Minister of Health to provide more health facilities to save lives.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would also like to remind this noble House that governance is all about continuity. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the late President, Dr Ahmad Tejan-Kabbah of blessed memory for providing a well-constructed road from Waterloo to Tokeh *[Applause]*. I would also like to thank the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma for substantively constructing a four-lane road from Lumley to No. 2 River. I am saying this because governance is all about continuity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to admonish our President, His Excellency Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio to also intervene and complete the remaining 6km road from No. 2 to Tokeh. If that is done, it will help to expose the potentials within the Peninsular. I have a message from my constituents. The labour of children in that area is of importance and I would like the Minister of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs to ensure that the issue of child labour in that area is reduced. Most of them are engaged in stone and sand mining. If the Government intervenes and constitutes committees to look into those issues, that will not only alleviate those problems, but will help to generate revenue from sand mining and other areas to boost government's revenue base.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would also like to tender my appreciation to the Minister of Lands. We are aware of the problems we have been encountering. For example, land grabbing is on the increase. If we are talking about 'free education.' it entails a lot of things. For instance, we have to erect structures, train teachers and approve community schools that have been in existence for quite a long time. I believe we are aware of our functions and we should work in the interest of the people. We have to do all we can to make sure that whatever is written in this Presidential Address succeeds *[Applause]*. I call on the Minister of Lands to pay attention to this, so that land would be used to promote the 'free education' agenda.

Once again, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the entire House for allowing me to make my maiden speech. I thank you all *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Musa Lahai.

HON. MUSA LAHAI: Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity to add my voice to the ongoing debate. I would also seize this opportunity to extend my thanks to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is no gainsay that the Economy inherited by His Excellency is worse, if not a failed Economy from a strategic financial management point of view. I will show you all the indicators of economic failure which this President has inherited. If you look at the Bank of Sierra Leone Bulletin from the last quarter and first quarter of 2017/2018 respectively, it gives us this indication which I will now highlight. This President has inherited a high rate of debt, referencing Page 1 of this Address, amounting to **\$2bln** and local debt amounting to **Le4tln**. There are huge arrears to contractors, high rate of overdraft for salary payments [reference Bank of Sierra Leone Bulletin the third quarter and first quarter of 2017/2018 respectively].

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we now have a sober Government that is headed by Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio and that is why he has introduced quick Economic Recovery Strategy; which includes two actors; i.e., the Treasury Single Account Management System and Cost Management and Control System. I will start with the Treasury Single Account System. The President introduced the Treasury Single Account System so that entire revenue generated can at a snapshot be viewed by the President and the entire finance team. This is what the APC failed to do when they were in power. They rather brought untold sufferings on the people of this country by introducing 'Austerity Measures.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to the Cost Management System. In order to ensure proper governance, His Excellency the President paid keen attention to the cost drivers and one of the key cost drivers in state governance is salaries and administrative cost. One of the Honourable Members on the other side was talking about the Chief Minister sacking some of the staff in the Office of the Chief of Staff. I think the Chief Minister is a disciplined and professional leader and he knows that most

of the staff who were attached at State House were under project. They were not employed by the Public Service Commission [PSC] *[Applause]*. That was why he sacked them because he did not want to compromise the system.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to the financial sector. This is the area where the APC led government failed and that is why they are on the other side of this Well *[Applause]*. The financial sector of the Economy must focus on the bread and butter issue. I thank the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma for constructing some roads. We thank God for that, but again, most of the road contracts were awarded to foreign contractors *[Applause]*. The only local contractor we have is Gento Groups of Company, which was initially owned by a foreign company. What are the implications? Most of the finances are taken away from Sierra Leone, leaving Sierra Leoneans very poor and penniless. I thank the 'New Direction' and President Bio. The President will empower the Bank of Sierra Leone, Community Banks and the FSAs and that is why most of the people on the streets are saying S.O[2] 'dis Government ya na paopa' for the ten years after paopa na SLPP dae cam dae' *[Applause]*. This is because President Bio knows what the country needs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to education. I want to remind this House that education is one of the key drivers that engender economic development of a nation. I am from Constituency 009, Peje Chiefdom and Yawei Chiefdom. The Bunumbu Teachers College is in my constituency, Kailahun District. I am therefore calling on the Minister of Higher Education... - *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have one minute.

HON. MUSA LAHAI: I call on the Minister of Higher Education to ensure that the Bunumbu Teachers College is relocated to Constituency 009 *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Defence. Yesterday, I looked at the organogram of the Ministry of Defence and it was a surprising thing to me to see nine Generals out of eleven who are Northerners. Only two are Easterners. I asked myself a question, 'where is the national cohesion.'

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, your time is up.

HON. ALHAJI MUSA B. F. JALLOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to lend my voice to the Speech so graciously delivered by the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio on Thursday, 10th May, 2018. Let me on behalf of my constituents in Tonkolili District congratulate His Excellency the President, for his election victory. I wish him a successful tenure of office. I also want to thank him for a Speech well delivered in this House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will focus my contribution on two areas: i.e., agriculture and mineral resources. It will interest you to know that **80%** of my constituents are engaged in farming because of huge support from the previous Government. I am happy that our President placed agriculture at the top of his agenda and he has promised to ensure that this country attracts and increases investments in Agriculture for us to be able to feed ourselves. My constituency comprises Kalantumba, Upper Masaya, Sambaya Chiefdoms. My people are ready to embark on agriculture if given the opportunity *[Applause]*.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, point of order!

THE SPEAKER: Hold on, Honourable Member. Proceed, Honourable Member.

HON. ALHAJI MUSA B. F. JALLOH: As I was saying, my people are interested in tractors, fertilizers, seedlings, loan to farmers, etc. *[Applause]*. Also, my people are interested in improving the roads linking to the market centres. I refer the House to Paragraph 25, Page 6. It says: **"...the Mining sector suffers from extreme lack of transparency and weak institutional capacity. The 2009 Mines and Minerals Act was enacted to regulate the industry. There are however huge gaps which serve as disincentives to serious investors."** Our country is blessed with natural resources, but we have not benefited as a country due to lack of structures and laws that promote transparency and accountability. Our people in the mining communities are suffering because there are no strong laws to protect them *[Applause]*. As we speak, my community have been used, misused and abused

[Applause] by the African Minerals Mining Company, which we now call Shandon Steel Group. These companies are not adhering to their corporate and social responsibilities in the various communities they operate.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to make this humble appeal that elections are over, irrespective of our political interests and affiliations, let us work together to develop our country. God bless Sierra Leone and thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I call on Honourable Mohamed Kassim-Carew.

HON. MOHAMED S. KASSIM-CAREW: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take this opportunity to thank my constituents in Constituency 122 for electing me as Member of this great House. I have sat here for couple of days, listening to my fellow Honourable Members making their contributions to the Motion before us. This is a great Speech, regardless of what we might think about it. As a responsible Opposition, I believe the President has this great Nation in mind to do great things. I want to remind this Honourable House that we have talked about tourism, professionalism and many other things.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that we cannot succeed as a nation if we do not change our attitudes. The elections are over and we now have a President and Honourable Members. We have also elected Councillors and Mayors. We need to move as a nation for the development of our people. I am pleading to Honourable Members to look at this booklet critically to sensitise our people. Some of us have travelled to the United States and we have seen good things in the United States. Anytime you go the United States, they always show you the good part of United States. They do not show us the ghettos in the United States. In Sierra Leone, we usually criticise our country as if it is garbage. We should be proud of Sierra Leone. We should be proud of our Nation and we need to start selling Sierra Leone, so that tourism will grow. If we keep telling people negative things about Sierra Leone, how can we grow as a Nation? How can people come to this country to support us? Let us examine what the President said about education.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am a product of this country with good education. We have to learn to disagree. My father used to tell me, 'you cannot be truthful to others if you are not truthful to yourself.' So, we need to start to be truthful with ourselves, so that we will be truthful to others. I am not going to criticise this new Government. I am not going to criticise what our ex-President has done because I believe even with the naked eyes, you can see the developments [*Applause*]. We are here laughing, but when we go out there, we tell them the wrong message. The time for politics is over and it is time for development. It is time to put aside all these hate messages. We should stop saying, S.O [2] 'watin ubin don do mi ar go du am bak.' Now is the time for us to work with the ministers and other technocrats the President has appointed. We have done that, but without our support, they cannot do their work. The SLPP alone cannot make this nation grow. Everybody has to make this Nation great.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we start criticising this government at this early stage, we are not ready to help this President to succeed. We do not have to rush to judge him like what we are doing. Some people usually rush to judge others. I have spoken to some of my colleagues APC Members of Parliament and we have decided to support the SLPP's 'New Direction' agenda. However, I want to remind my colleagues on the other side that this government belongs to us all. We are going to help the little we can to ensure that all of us succeed. In my Constituency, for instance, I will award scholarships to ten teachers to teach pupils who will be writing their WASCE Exams. They have to prepare before schools reopen in September.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is not about the Free Education. Let us be realistic about the future of children. They are our future leaders. Both sides are claiming to do something for the youth. We are coming as youth in this House and we have to make sure that we deliver to our people. Let us put political differences aside and pray for this country. Let us make sure that we do the right thing.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will look at the health sector. For me, the only reason we are talking about the health sector now is because of the Ebola outbreak. We know that it was deplorable. The SLPP lost the elections in 2007 because

they were not able to articulate the NASSIT programmes for the local people to know the benefits NASSIT would provide to the people of this country. It was a very good idea, but it was not sold to the people at the right time. The same mistake might be repeated if we do not sell the new education policy we are talking about. We need to support the President. We know that continuity is what we are asking for. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I call on Honourable Ahmed Mansaray to make his contribution.

HON. AHMED MANSARAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is a moment I have been waiting for and now that I have got it, I must thank the Speaker. I am here to congratulate the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio for delivering a gracious Speech in this Well on the 10th May, 2018. When I perused this Speech, I was able to compress it, not to suppress it. I juxtaposed it with the government Budget of 2018.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I refer the House to Paragraphs 6 and 9 of the 2018 Budget. It states: **"...however, significant medium term challenges remain amidst persistence economic fragilities we still need to continue to improve road infrastructure, energy and water supply. There is also the urgent need to provide housing for the poor, continue to improve health and sanitation facilities and ensuring food security. However, addressing these challenges, require improvement in our revenue generation despite significant efforts to raise domestic revenue in recent years, the key structural issue of low fiscal revenue remains."** This is telling you we were cognisance of the fact that even though President Koroma has done so well, there are still challenges we have to address. I will read the 2018. It says: **"...implementation of sound micro-economic policies; intensifying domestic revenue mobilisation; continue to diversify the economy through investment in agriculture, fisheries and tourism; scaling up investment infrastructure, roads, electricity, water supply; building human development, expanding social protective system and protecting the environment and strengthening disaster management."**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is on this note I will build my presentation. I will start with infrastructure; i.e., electricity, roads and water. I want this Honourable House

to know that no country can function or can grow or develop without developing the infrastructure of that nation. The developed nations are still building infrastructures because life and society are dynamic. Therefore, I want to encourage the President and we are going to give him the maximum support to ensure that he builds on what President Koroma left undone *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, politics is service to our people; but in most cases, we the politicians promote our self-aggrandisement. We try to promote our egoistic tendencies and build empires, such that we become the untouchables and the unshakeable. This is not correct in the modern days politics *[Applause]*. Therefore, we should start setting good examples here and now. I am admonishing all politicians here that the truth will always take us to the next level.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to education. Most speakers have said so much about education, but I want to bring new ideas to it. If the Minister of Education is here or representatives from the ministry are here, I want to remind them that some of the curricula we are using in schools are out-dated. I think we should bring new curricula to the school programme, such that at the end of the day when someone goes through that schooling, he comes out with options. First, should I work for Government or myself? I think we need to develop the Technical Vocational Schools in our country. If this is not developed, we will not grow as a Nation. The Ministry of Education should call all principals of schools, so that they can hang their heads together to develop new policy directions which will help us to achieve the goals of the Free and Quality Education System in this country. You will all agree with me that in some cases, principals and teachers connive to exploit parents. Therefore, it is necessary for the Ministry of Education to call on the Conference of Principals; heads of schools and stakeholders concerned so that they can help the Free Education to succeed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I must thank former President Ernest Bai Koroma because when he took over power from President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, he continued from where we left. One typical example he took over from the late Ahmed Tejan

Kabba was the construction of the Hillside Road. That road was initiated by the late President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah. It was supposed to be a two-lane road, but President Koroma revisited the contract and it is now a four-lane road. Another example was the construction of the National Electoral Commission office. Initially, it was supposed to be a two-storey building, but former President Ernest Bai Koroma revisited it and constructed a modern edifice. This is how government works and it is not about criticising. It is about taking from the weakness and build on those weaknesses, so that the country can move forward *[Applause]*.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about 'the gateway;' i.e., the Sierra Leone Lungi International Airport. We should be ashamed of ourselves because we are talking about a 21st Century Airport; but we still have an archaic 18th or 19th Century Airport, which is not correct. What President Koroma did with the help of the Chinese was that, he signed a project to renovate and modernise the Airport. I want Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio to continue on that trend, so that Sierra Leone can be a better place for all of us. I thank you very much.

HON. ALIMAMY O. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I represent Constituency 078, Bo District. I must say and hasten to say that I am here on the mandate of my people. Therefore, whatever I say here, it is on their behalf. I have a message from my people; i.e., to show gratitude to His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, for his election victory and for delivering an Address that is so comprehensive and inclusive. Unless we want to be critics, but this is the best Speech I have ever read. I have compared the maiden Speech of former President Ernest Bai Koroma to this one. If you look at the content and the quality of former President Koroma's Speech, there is nothing to write home about. I have it here with me and it is a 19 page Address with vague content as compared to the Address made by Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio. Let me hasten to say that this Address is a strategic plan for the next term of Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio's Presidency.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to be thankful to the President in his choice of ministers. These are technocrats. During our campaign trail, we told the

people of this country that when we shall have assumed power, we would hit the ground running. I only regret to observe that there are impediments on our way. I am sure the ministers and the other heads of parastatals will overcome these impediments in a jiffy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have already listened to what my colleagues have been saying and I am surprised that my colleagues on the other side have done nothing but to defend what their past President could not do. Well, I was expecting you to criticise or comment on the Address delivered in this House by Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, whom I call 'the terminator.' I call him 'terminator' because he has not just taken over the helm of affairs, but he is going to terminate all the evils or ills that would be found in the calibre of ministers and the heads of parastatals.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleagues on this side, have almost exhausted what I wanted to say, but I must hasten to state certain things that affect my constituents. On that note, I want the Minister of Education to give special attention to my constituency. Somebody spoke about how government abandoned certain secondary schools. He mentioned Koiyema and Jimmi Bagbo. These places are in my Constituency. If you go there now, you will mistake that secondary school for something else. It is like a very old primary school. I am sure the Minister will take note of this and work towards rehabilitating it.

Also, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma's regime, my constituents suffered from non-approval of schools and teachers. As we speak, I have been personally providing stipends to those teachers who have volunteered to teach in my constituency. I hope the new Minister and this government will take care of this issue immediately.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my Constituency is surrounded by three other chiefdoms with no Technical and Vocational Centre. The APC led government introduced the 6-3-4-4. I want to inform you that this was a deliberate ploy to suppress education in this part of the country. There is concentration of universities/colleges in the North. We cannot boast of one in Kenema or Kailahun. I want to assure you that by

the end of this five term, when we shall have been elected into power for the second time, my government will provide one university in the Eastern province *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to transportation. I am disappointed because during the Presidency of Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, there was this scandal about the procurement of a ferry by the National Social Security and Insurance Trust [NASSIT]. I am sure people deliberately damaged the less expensive ferries to ferry people across and encouraged the expensive speed boats for people who can afford. My village was not mentioned, but there are economic activities going on in my constituency. It links Tormabom to Koribondo. I am sure the Minister of Works will also consider rehabilitating or constructing new roads linking Sumbuya to Tormabom. We used to have a motorised ferry because of the importance of that river to my Constituency. We realised that the motorised ferry was commandeered by the APC led government in the days of late Siaka P. Stevens. We are appealing to the Minister of Works to consider either replacing that motorised ferry by constructing a bridge that will link Mattru Jong to Serabu, which has a standard hospital. We are suffering from lack of quick transportation between the two towns. I thank you very much.

HON. P.C ALIE BADARA SHERIFF III: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me take this opportunity to thank the Almighty God for making us what we are today and to congratulate His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio. Mr Speaker, the intentions of the President are embedded in his Speech to provide a positive 'New Direction' for the benefit of the people of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President has selected his ministers to help him carry out his mission. They are emissaries of the President and whatever he has stated in this Speech, he will ensure that it is realised. I want to remind this House that where there is no competition, selfishness and greed will take the centre stage; but where there is competition, selfishness and greed will have no place in society.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to the Paramount Chiefs. The paramount chieftaincy institution is the oldest institution, but it has been the most neglected

institution in this country. It has been neglected by all and sundry. We have been stripped off, most of our powers because of political reasons. This is not attributed to a single political party. If my memory could serve me well, in the days of the late President Tejan Kabba, series of promises were made to upgrade the positions of paramount chiefs, but they fell on hard rock.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I must say that since I became a Paramount Chief, I have seen about three or four Ministers of Local Government and Rural Development. However, the most outstanding one that all the paramount chiefs accredited was Honourable Finda Dianna Konomanyi. She has been the iron lady for the Paramount Chiefs. She moved the Paramount Chiefs from a position of insignificance to recognition and respect. This is why when women are fighting for 50/50; I think we should give them chance. I am saying this because some women can perform more than some men.

As I stated earlier, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it was Honourable Finda Dianna Konomanyi who lifted the position of chiefs from insignificance to significance. I must confess that she treated and accorded the Paramount Chiefs with respect. We gave her a lot of attention, but she was transferred to the Ministry of Lands and that turned the table. We were awkwardly treated. What I want to say is that at that time, we had about one hundred and forty nine Paramount Chiefs in all the chiefdoms. She did so well that she almost visited every chiefdom and we appreciated her. However, when her successor took over the affairs of that Ministry, that was the time we started having backlog payments for about five months. We used to get our salaries and other emoluments regularly. Those were the things that made us so sociable and acceptable in our respective chiefdoms or communities. However, that came to a standstill. If the Local Government Minister or his representative is here, the message I would like to send is simple and clear. We need our backlogs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to remind officials of the Ministry of Local Government that Paramount Chieftaincy institution is the oldest institution in the World, but it receives less attention. It is the backbone of this country and we have to

continue to preserve it. If a country is to be developed, the chiefs must be developed. It goes simultaneously. Over the years, the chiefs and their chieftain committees have been appointing court chairmen in their chieftains, but after we have appointed our chairmen, we saw other people who were in fact not interviewed, but they were also appointed and then the danger came. Well, they used to say, 'I was appointed by this and not by any chief and I owe obligation to the person who appointed me.

Again, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Native Authority Police are uncontrollable because they are directly paid through the banks and when you want to threaten them, some of them go away for months. So, I want the Local Government Minister to review this issue and treat it seriously.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, somebody on my right mentioned the road linking Matru Jong to Bo. It is rather unfortunate, Mr Speaker. When I heard him, my heart bled and I was almost in tears. Bonthe District is the most viable district in this country, yet the most neglected district. To substantiate the validity of my statement, Bonthe District has all the potentials. I believe if those potentials are harmoniously developed and judiciously utilised in the interest of Bonthe District, it will become the richest district in this country. There are many activities in Bonthe District. For example, we have an oil palm plantation. We are second in the whole of West Africa with about 8,000 and more acres. Secondly, we have the best Rutile. According to world market rating, we have first class. We also have Bauxite, which is also first class and it is mined at Bongeh Hills. Where are all those proceeds? I am sure if a percentage of those proceeds is maintained for the development of Bonthe District, we will surely become the richest district.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about those who have been nominated and approved in this House. This is just a word of caution. According to His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, he would be a President for the Green, White and Blue and not a particular set of people. In similar manner, I want to remind the ministers that they were appointed to carry out his mission, in order to achieve the goals set in the 'New Direction' agenda. In discharging your duties, I want

you to do so equitably. You should make sure that a particular set of people are not left out or neglected. Please, do not exempt any region or section of this country. Bonthe District has been neglected over the years, which is very disheartening and frustrating. The neglect of Bonthe District has resulted to positivity, but that reward should go across the board without discrimination.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would conclude by allaying your fears that what the President said in his Speech would be fulfilled. There is no doubt about that and we should support him positively. His Excellency the President has done a possible thing which we are enjoying today. The President is a man of deeds and not of words. If I say he is a man of words and not of deeds, it is like a garden full of weeds. Let me give you this adage that will go in line with what he said. **"It is better to die at youth and be remembered than to die at an old age and be forgotten."** I thank you very much.

HON. OSMAN W. JALLOH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, for delivering a wonderful and well-articulated Speech in this Well of Parliament on the Thursday, 10th May, 2018. I have sat on my seat quietly over the past few days, listening to my colleague Honourable Members making their contributions on this Speech. I must applaud all of you for your wonderful contributions, considering the fact that **80%** of us are new Members of Parliament.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to deviate a little bit from all the bickering and personal attacks or bitter arguments that have been presented in this Well. I want to remind this House that our country is faced with problems that we the politicians must stand and face those challenges headlong if we are to relieve our country from these difficulties. We must not shy away from the fact that there are problems presently facing this country. Some of the challenges we are facing today are even older than some of us. However, successive governments have failed to address

these problems simply because we have been playing politics with the lives of people of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to limit my contribution on youth, children, sea transportation, rail way transportation, water supply, peace building and national cohesion. Having gone through the President's Speech, I have no doubt that the President has good intention for this country. The Speech is geared towards promoting the youth of this country. If you look at this Parliament, I am proud to state here that all the political parties are represented by youth and I am confident that the future of this country is bright.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I start with the youth, which the President mentions on Page 20, the first paragraph. With your leave, Mr Speaker, it says: **"...Sierra Leone's population is mostly youthful. Youth, that is person from 15 to 35 years, account for about 33% of the country's population and represent about 67% of the economically active population..."** This clearly tells us that this is where our strength lies as a Nation. We keep talking about minerals, diamonds, gold etc, but our strength lies on the youthful population of this country. I stand to be corrected, but we have the most youthful population in the West African sub-region. If that is true, it is sad for me to tell this Honourable House that we are losing our youth. Our youth are dying out there. This is a problem that cuts right across, irrespective of the party you belong.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is a specific drug called tramadol, which is killing our youth. There are other cheap alcohol drinks that are killing our youth and these drinks are manufactured by Shankadas. In fact, that has contributed to the low agricultural productivity in the interior, where the youth are expected to engage in farming. The tramadol and alcohol are weakening their potency to do work. They sleep for the rest of the day. We cannot move as a Nation if we do not rescue our youth. Therefore, I recommend to the Minister of Youth Affairs to work in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, so that we can establish a rehabilitation centre in every district in this country. This is the only country where, instead of us taking these youth who are

being affected by drug abuse, we throw them into prisons. We have no rehabilitation centres where we can rehabilitate these youth, so that they can contribute to the society. I am therefore imploring the ministers to look into this issue.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move to children. Anytime I am coming to Parliament or driving around Freetown, I usually see children as young as seven or eight years, selling water on the streets. These children are as young as seven years, Mr Speaker. If you go to the quarries, you will meet lots of children with sledge hammers, breaking stones and destroying their future. To me, we cannot move forward as a Nation if we keep ignoring this reality. I thank God because the Minister is seated here. I want to remind her that this is something that affects the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs directly. The level at which we are abusing children in this country is unacceptable, Madam Minister. I was listening to a radio programme the other day and I was moved when a woman said that ten of her children were taken out of this country to Italy by a neighbour for greener pasture. My question was where were the authorities concerned; i.e., the border security agencies, customs and immigration? How could someone travel with ten children out of this country through Lungi International Airport without interrupting that individual, in terms of finding out where he was taking those children? Madam Minister, please pay great attention to this issue. We cannot be proud as a Nation, no matter how many houses you build or motorways we have constructed if we do not pay attention to the youth and children of this country. If we fail to do that, it means we have failed this Nation irrespective of our political affiliations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move to sea transportation. I was a little bit disturbed when I read the Speech of the President and realised that he did not mention sea transportation. My people are suffering in Lungi due to lack of adequate sea transportation. You need to take a walk along the Government Wharf or Ferry Junction and see how the people are suffering to go to Lungi. The vast majority of the population living in Lungi are peasant farmers. They are poor farmers who usually bring their goods to Freetown. They have no proper means of transportation between Lungi

and Freetown. Are we going to wait for a disaster to happen? This cannot be tolerated in this country anymore. Therefore, I want to appeal to the Minister of Transport and Aviation to look into this issue as a matter of urgency, particularly the issue relating to the ferry plying between Freetown and Targrin.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move to railway transportation. Having read the Speech, this area touches me more than the others. I was not around when we had railway in this country, but I have heard stories about it. Apart from that, I have also travelled out of this country and I have seen how advanced countries have developed and improved on their railway transportation. If Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio transforms this into reality by reintroducing train network in this country, that will be the biggest achievement of his Presidency. I hope all of us in this House will work towards that and we will give the President the required support to actualise the construction of railway.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the next issue I would like to talk about is water. The problem of water has been with us since the colonial era, but no Government has been able to solve this problem. However, I have an advice for the new Minister of Water Resources. We all know that Guma Valley Water Company cannot sustain the growing demand for water in Freetown at the moment. This is no secret and it is a fact we have to accept. Therefore, I urge the Minister to look for alternatives or possible ways to establish water processing plant at the Magbere River. If we can construct a proper water plantation there with pipe running down to Waterloo and Tombo Junction and connect it to the peninsular and finally interconnect it to the city centre, I believe the water problem in this country will come to an end. Presently, SALWACO and other agencies are doing quite well in the interior. I have been to Bo, Kenema and Makeni, and I must applaud them for that. The water process is ongoing in those places, but Freetown must not be neglected if we are talking about development.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know my time is up, but I want to emphasise on how to rebuild national cohesion. Our democracy is twenty years old now and we have tried all forms of government in this country, but they never worked well

for us. We have tried one party rule; we have tried military rule; we have tried rebel rule government; and we have tried junta government, but none of them worked for us. As a Nation, we must realise that the only alternative we have is democracy. Therefore, no political party must undermine the principles of democracy. I want to applaud the President for taking a bold step in terms of constituting a committee that will work towards ensuring cohesion amongst politicians. My appeal is that Members of Parliament are grassroots politicians and must be part of this Committee. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

HON. SIDI M. TUNIS [*Leader of Government Business*]: Mr Speaker, I want to move that item IV on the Order Paper be expunged.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Item IV has been unanimously expunged from the Order Paper]

HON. SAIDU BABAH KAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will join the cue in thanking His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, for the Speech he so graciously delivered in the Well of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, The President, in his Address, exhaustively and with alacrity pointed out many issues, programmes, proposals, and intentions for this country. But for the purpose of time, I will limit myself to just few issues. I will refer you to Page 36, Paragraph 132. The President mentioned the Civil Service and stated that Parliament is one of the factors responsible for the poor performance of the Civil Service. In other words, Parliament is responsible for the ineffectiveness of the Civil Service because Parliament failed to perform their oversight role. Well, to a very large extent, I agree with him. That is neatly put and he is correct.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, oversight function is a constitutional mandate of Parliament. It cannot be downplayed and it cannot be given a blind eye. Over the years, the past Government of Dr Ernest Bai Koroma did tremendously well in improving the standards of this House. He increased the salaries of Members of Parliament considerably; he empowered the Leadership of this Parliament of which today my

colleagues on the other side are enjoying; and he also constructed an administrative building for Members of Parliament. However, I will agree with him that the oversight functions of Parliament were ineffective. If you go to Page 36, Paragraph 133, you will notice that solutions were proffered to combat the ineffectiveness of the Civil Service, but Parliament is not mentioned. Parliament, which is a key factor to the ineffectiveness of the Civil Service, is not mentioned in the solutions provided. I am calling the attention of His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, through the Leadership of this House as an institution and as a whole Organ of Government, to take note of certain things I would highlight. For the 'New Direction' to succeed, the following should be considered:

- there should be capacity building for committee members. For instance, the proposed Chairman of Finance Committee is a Linguist. He has not got any capacity building to oversee these MDAs;
- there is no allowance for committee sittings; and
- one clerk is attached to two or three committees. If for instance, two of those committees sit at the same time, what do you think will happen? These are the ineffectiveness His Excellency mentioned in his Address. How can our oversight roles be effective when these challenges engulf Parliament?
- insufficient office space for committee sittings and lack of follow-ups on committees findings and recommendations. Day-in-day-out, Members of Parliament go on oversight to oversees MDAs and reports containing findings and recommendations were laid here, but the follow-ups were very poor; and
- again, funds were not enough for Members of Parliament to go on oversight activities. Sometimes the very MDAs we go to oversee are the ones that are supporting our activities. What do you expect? As the saying goes, he who pays the piper calls the tune. For the generality of the House, Members of Parliament do not have office space. How do you expect a Member of Parliament to be efficient or effective when Members of Parliament usually sit in the Parliamentary Canteen? The

New Direction should take care of this. If you want to succeed, you must address some of these issues.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Members of Parliament do not have vehicles, fuel, official drivers and no wardrobe allowances. The other day, a colleague asked us when the wardrobe allowance was going to be made available. I said, 'Honourable Members, who told you that you have wardrobe allowance?' I told him that such is not available in this Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the most widely condemned project of the APC led government by the SLPP and other political parties is the Toll Road. This is widely condemned as bad Agreement. It is not good for this country. In this Speech, the President did not even mention a single word about the Toll Road. Why the silence? Silence means consent. It was a good project, and it was a very viable project. But I know the reason for the condemnation and I will tell you. The reason His Excellency was silent on the Toll Road is because the SLPP are now busy collecting the Toll fee.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, we are all Honourable Members in this House and when you make allegations, you have to be sure and support your statement with evidence.

HON. SAIDU BABAR KAMARA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this allegation has been made against the APC many times. However, I have noted your advice. Thank you Sir.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, another very important issue that is absent in this Speech is the ongoing construction of the Mammah Airport.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, your time is up.

HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for letting me break my silence in this Well. I must first of all thank the Almighty Allah for making this dream come true to stand in front of this galaxy of individual Honourable Members and in a House where the laws of Sierra Leone are made. I am here to represent Falaba and Koinadugu. None of the previous speakers who have spoken is a representative of Falaba and Koinadugu.

They were representing their parties and I want to thank them for that. Thank you for representing your political parties and forgetting that the people who elected you are listening to you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Member from Karene said we should say thanks to the former President. Thank you to the former President for promising the youth of Koinadugu a Youth Village, but you withdrew it and later killed them for asking for their rights. Thank you, Mr former President for the unlawful arrest of Njala University students because they asked you to come to their aid. They were asked to pay **Le 8, 000, 000** as bail. I thank the former President for prioritising the North at the expense of other parts of this country. As a youth, I spent four years in the East, Njala University to be specific, and we were neglected because the University was deemed as an opposition university not as an institution of learning in this country. Thank you, Mr former President for intimidating me in my constituency because I hailed from the North and campaigned for the SLPP which you deemed as Eastern political party... - *[Interruption]*

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O. 32[5]. When the Honourable Member from Karene spoke about thanking the former President, the leader from the other side stood up and said, we should not say thanks to the former President. He advised us to confine our contributions on the present Presidential Speech, but Honourable Mohamed B. Shaw is referring to the former President.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please advise yourself.

HON. MOHAMED B. SOW: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable Members, I am not from Karene, but from Falaba. Another Honourable Member from Portloko made a salient point and for me she has been the best speaker from the opposition side. She spoke professionally and about the youth. I am very concerned about the youth. This cheap alcohol in the streets is a public concern and we must take prompt action. The youth are accessing alcohol at cheap prices. In fact, **Le1, 000** can buy you **7%** to **30%** alcohol. A sachet of alcohol that contains **30%** alcohol is affecting our youth and

the future of this country. If we want to combat this menace, the issue of tramadol should be our concern. I am concerned about them and we should try to protect them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move to Agriculture. If the Minister of Agriculture or a representative is here, I would want you to consider the Musaia Town, which used to be a national park for animal husbandry. Please, Mr Minister, I want you to consider that very seriously. My Constituency is made up of four chiefdoms; vis-à-vis, Sikunia-Dembelia Chiefdoms, Folasaba-Musaia, Folasaba-Kamba, and part of Kambia. These chiefdoms have been deprived for the past ten years. There is no footprint of any government development. All what the past Government has been saying is road. I think some of you went to Bentu. I know my elder brother on the other side of the aisle went there and there is no health centre in Follasaba-kamba Chiefdom. The distance between that Chiefdom to where the health centre is located is about twenty three miles. So, if a child is sick or a pregnant woman is in labour, it will be very difficult to take that individual to the health centre. Sometimes it is very difficult to get there due to poor road network. I want the Minister of Health to consider this issue.

Again, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is poor water facility countrywide, but I want my constituency to be considered. It is one of the few deprived constituencies in this country. It is a new district and that is why it should be given attention. I am agitating for Falaba to be precise. What the then Government did was to divide Koinadugu District into two and name the most deprived district as Falaba District. It is a village. If you can make it a city in 2023, I will make sure you win four seats in Falaba District. I will give you four seats in Koinadugu. It is a promise I am making. If you give us the Youth Village and construct it in Koinadugu, the four seats will definitely go to the SLPP because you mean business for the people of this country and not for yourself.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a colleague from the other side said we have inherited fibre optic. Yes, we inherited fibre optic, but is it effective? If you go to Fourah Bay College for example, and ask the students about it, they will tell you different story. If the IT man is here, he knows what I am talking about. In fact, ten students cannot

even access the internet concurrently at Fourah Bay College. The materials they sent to these institutions in the name of ICT are substandard. You know what I meant because you did that work, especially Njala University internet facility. We were using 2mega watts from an internet service provider from the United States of America. We were able to build on it and develop our own system, which provided the best internet facility in the country. You can go and prove it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, somebody asked a question about how we are going to sponsor teachers who do not have children. Well, I do not want you to worry about that because the facilities that will be provided for teachers are not attached to the DNA, but to everybody. I am talking on behalf of my government and I know we will deliver.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have a lot of mineral resources in this country. Anywhere you go, you must see mineral resources. There are mining activities all over the country and these activities have been ongoing since independence. As a youth and as a young man representing the youth here, I suggest we consider our minerals and reserve them for our children. We have to engage in other activities that are more productive, especially Agriculture. The USA and other countries have moved from agricultural age. There are three eras; i.e., the agricultural age, the industrial age and the information age. They are now in the information age. If we can manage and start from agricultural age and move onto the industrial age, it will help us to be less dependent.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one thing that is very clear is the fact that we are always begging and we are tired of it. Since independence we relied on our mineral resources. I therefore suggest that we follow the Indian pattern. This is because the Indians practice the best way, which I think, we must follow. Let us engage ourselves in research, develop our agricultural institutions, and develop our youth, including their mind-sets. Our leaders should set brighter examples, so that the youth can follow their footprints.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank you very much for your attention.

HON. DR N'PHA S. G. KOROMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I represent the people of Constituency 114, Calaba Town, Wellington and Tassor Island. I want to take this opportunity to thank His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, for giving us this Speech which has been praised and applauded by all and sundry in this House. It has been critically examined and I have the opportunity today at this moment to highlight few issues.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on the day the President was delivering his Speech, he presented a picture which I initially thought was not fair for our country. I want to draw your attention to a paragraph in his Speech which is well referenced. It is one of the thematic areas in this Speech. I will talk about integrity and professionalism. What constitutes integrity and professionalism is honesty. Regrettably, I want to say, with all due respect, that this Speech is not honest to the people of this country. I know it is politics as usual, but sometimes we have to be honest with the people of this country. Well, some of you are perplexed over this statement. They saw electricity, economic development, improvement in the health sector, equalisation and empowerment of women and young people in this country, but what happened? Mr Speaker, do you think this was the glooming nation that the APC led government left? I will beg to differ from that Speech.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to draw your attention to the validatory speech of the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, made on the 7th December, in this House. In that Speech, the President described the Economy he left as a bigger Economy. Why did he say it was big Economy? The monetary value of Sierra Leone Economy and business activities were **Le5tln** or about **\$1.7bln**. By 2013, his Government changed the economic activities to **Le22tln** or **\$5.1bln**. Mr Speaker, the economic value of every citizen in this country was improved. The people of this country were able to contribute to national development. How do you contribute to

national development? Jobs were created in the private sector and the dollar value of our investment soared.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a lot of speakers have spoken about economic development and that is why I will like to draw your attention to one of the areas I have knowledge of. What really touched my heart in what Dr Ernest Bai Koroma did for this country is the Free Health Care Initiative. Under the Free Health Care Initiative, Mr Speaker, within a year, nearly two million women and children visited health facilities for consultation. I would like to also state here that pregnant women visited health centres and the number continued to increase substantially. Was that not a desired effect of the Free Health Care system? Immunisation coverage for women and children was at **67%** in 2006 and by 2011, one year after the initiation of this programme, the immunisation of children increased to **82%**. Was that not a desired effect? We have seen what has been happening in this country, women were lying on beds and doctors demanding money before given medical attention. Women were not allowed to deliver in a health centre until full payments were made. The Free Health Care System had its desired effect.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the former President of this country was very honest that... - *[Interruption]*.

HON. OSMAN W. JALLOH: Mr Speaker, I think the Honourable Member should focus on the Presidential Speech delivered here by Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio and not the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we should not forget that even as we debate, we are in the presence of the gallery and we must be mindful of the fact that the gallery is present. This is not a close session. What do you want to say Honourable Osman W. Jalloh?

HON. OSMAN W. JALLOH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on S.O 32[5]. With your leave, Mr Speaker, I read: **"A Member of Parliament must confine his observation to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter**

irrelevant thereto.” The Honourable Member keeps referring to the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma’s Speech. We are here to debate on the Speech delivered by His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio and not the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. The Honourable Member keeps referencing the Speech delivered by former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma on the 7th December, 2017. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I do not think I have a definite ruling on that as yet, but please be advised.

HON. DR N’PHA S. G. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to draw the attention of the Honourable Osman Wurie Jalloh to Paragraph 68 of the President’s Speech. It says: “**...the figures above indicate that the Free Health Care Launched in 2010 has not created the desired impact...**” Mr Speaker, if I may proceed I want to state here that the Free Health Care produced the desired effect. The former President also mentioned an increase in mortality rate during that period. I want to tell this Honourable House that the former President did extremely well in Free Health Care.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the Presidential Address, I do not think the President mentioned anything about the labour force in this country and the health workers are the backbone of the labour force in this country. There are six building blocks of the health system in this country. Mr Speaker, amongst those building blocks, we have service delivery, health work force, health information systems, access to essential medicines, and financing and leadership. Under the leadership of Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, we saw leadership in governance, financing the Free Health Care System, we saw how the health workers were incentivised, we also saw that service delivery or access to essential medicines were created. I agree that the system lacked adequate health workers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I became a registered Pharmacist in this country in 2013. I was baffled to discover that I was the 300th Pharmacist in this country. When I was a Pharmacist in 2003 in the United States, I was the 6,715th Pharmacist, which is almost the size of Sierra Leone. This means we have a lot to do as a Nation.

Governance and leadership should give preference by increasing labour workforce in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before I conclude, I will proffer some suggestions. There is what is known as SMART; i.e., a project has to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound. Unfortunately, I do not see that in the proposed Free Education agenda this Government is trying to put in place. My suggestion is that we needed a blueprint. If we have a blueprint, we would have something we called SWORT analysis. We want to take that moment to assess the strength of the Free Education programme, the weaknesses that this programme might pose, the opportunities that may be lagging or the opportunities that may be available to us. This programme could be a threat to us because this is a poor Nation. Sierra Leone has the potentials for resources, but we are still a poor Nation. We have to accept this because it is fact. I always say that I will like to be a rich man in a rich country and not a rich man in a poor country. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I want to take this opportunity to thank all Honourable Members who have contributed to the debate. I want to say it has been a great day and your contributions were all wonderful and beautiful. I hope and pray that the respective MDAs will take note of all the concerns raised here. In the circumstance, therefore, I wish to invite this House to recognise the leadership structure of the Paramount Chief Members of Parliament as follows:

Leader, Honourable P.C. Alie Balansama Marah III;

Deputy Leader, Honourable P.C Alie Badara Sheriff III; and

Secretary, Honourable P.C Kangbai Joe Macavoray III;

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at: 5:20 p.m., and was adjourned to Friday 1st June, 2018 at 10:00a.m.]