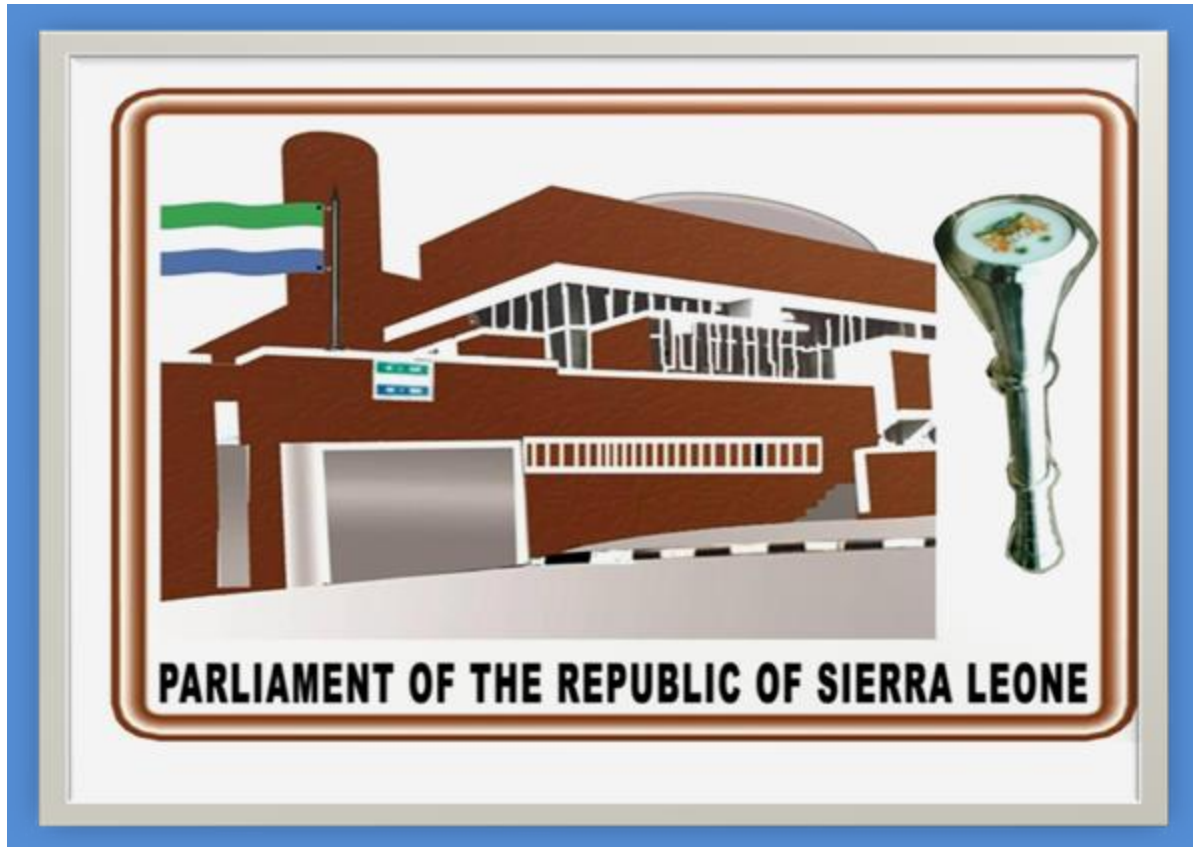


*POSL /Dept/Hansard/vol,1/No 46/7/5/24*



# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

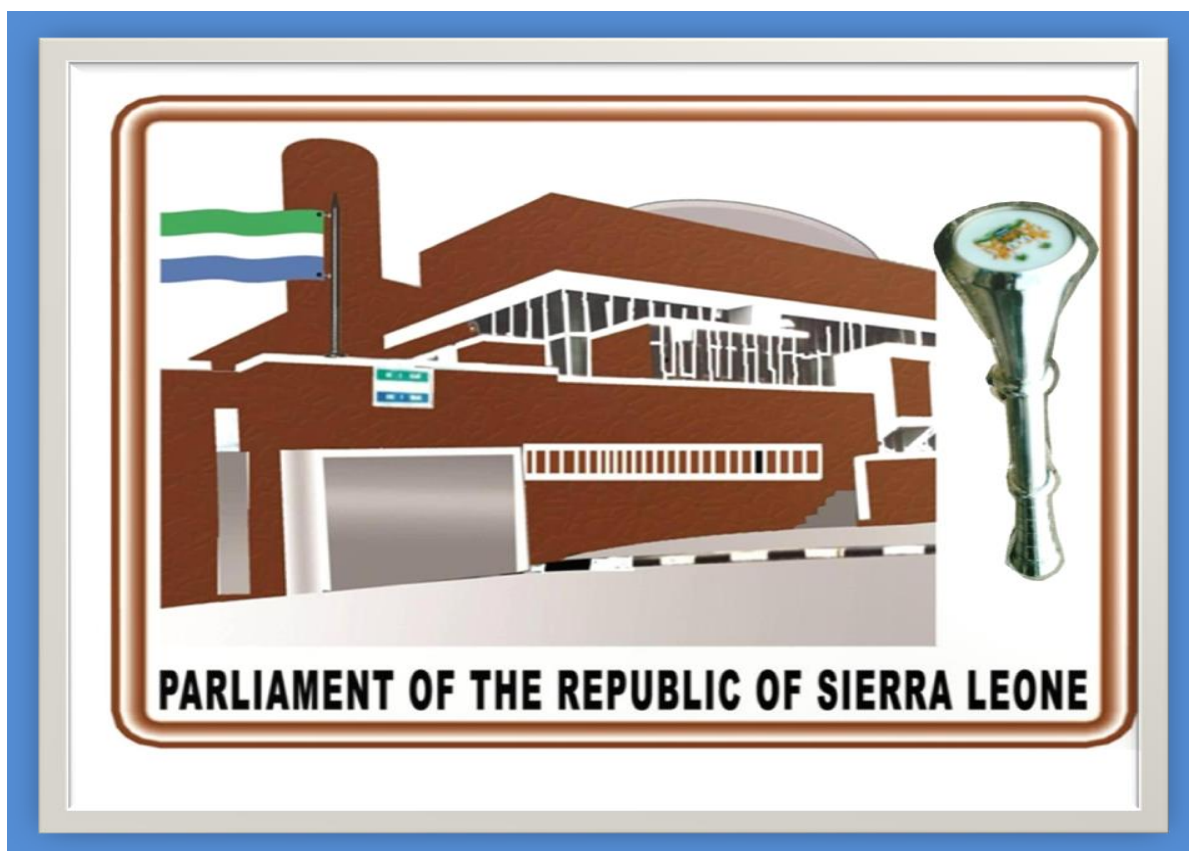
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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**FIRST SESSION –FIRST MEETING**

**TUESDAY, 7<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2024**

*SESSION – 2024/2025*



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**VOLUME: I**

**NUMBER: 49**

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House  
Held Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2024.

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## **CONTENTS**

### **I. PRAYERS**

### **II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON THURSDAY 25TH APRIL, 2024**

### **III . ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER**

### **IV. FELICITATIONS TO MR SPEAKER AND DEPUTY SPEAKER**



*THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE*

## **Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House**

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

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**Tuesday, 7th May, 2024.**

#### **I. PRAYERS**

*[The Table Clerk, Alimamy Lincoln, Read the Prayers]*

*[The House met at 10:05 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]*

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

The House was called to Order

*Suspension of S.O 5[2]*

**THE RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THURSDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup> APRIL AND THURSDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> MAY, 2024 RESPECTIVELY.**

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, record for votes and proceedings Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2024. Pages one, two, and four? Page five? Page six? Page seven? Page eight? Page nine? Record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2024. Honourable Members, pages one to four? Page five? Page six? Page seven? Page eight? Page nine? Page ten? Page eleven? Page twelve? Can a Member, please move for the adoption of vote and proceedings for Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2024 and Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 be adopted?

**HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN:** Mr Speaker, I so move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

**HON. FATMATA BINTU BOCKARIE:** I so second Mr Speaker.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[The votes and proceedings for Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> April and Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2024 respectively, have been adopted]*

**ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER.**

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, I am to inform you that on the Government bench, we have the new Deputy Chief Whip II in the person of Honourable Nenneh Lebbie, the new Female caucus Leader is now Honourable Bernadette Wuyatte Songa, I now call on you to occupy the front seats. At this point in time, I wish to inform the opposition bench that immediately after sitting, Honourable Ayodele Thompson, are you here? Please see me immediately after the sitting together with Honourable Mohamed Kamara and Honourable Cathrine Zainab. I want to see those three Members of Parliament, immediately after sitting from the opposition bench.

Honourable Members, let me take this opportunity once more to thank this House generally and, I mean those on my right and those on my left a very big thank you for electing me as your Speaker. I was not elected by the Sierra Leone People's Party

bench alone, I was elected by the All People's Congress Members of Parliament and the Paramount Chiefs Members of Parliament. I am one of the most popular Speakers that has ever lived. So, I thank you very much for that gesture and I want to assure you Members of Parliament that I will not take you for granted, I am going to respect your opinion right down the line. It is my fervent hope that this House will be united, I am not going to spare any effort to ensure that we are united as a House and that we do the work of our people. Even as we do the work of our people, let us try as best as possible to push matters that relate to us as a House. What do I mean matters relating to us? I mean our welfare because this Nation knows that Members of Parliament are mostly hunted by our people. We are the most hunted even when we do not have money we squeeze out of our nothing to build schools, community centres, hospitals, toilets and all of those, even where we have not got enough resources on us. So if not for anything, this Nation has to be grateful to Members of Parliament, since sometimes the Government will focus on the Macro, Members of Parliament go to the Micro and deal with community affairs. So, they should be respected and Members of Parliament should be catered for. If you give forty million Leones salary to a Minister of state, he does not need to share it with anybody, if you give fifty or hundred million to a head of Parastatals, he or she does not need to share it with anybody But if you give a Member of Parliament, thirty or forty million, that amount is shared with the entire Constituency and the entire District. So, the people of Sierra Leone must sympathize with Members of Parliament, even if we do not want to use our resources to do anything we are being forced to, this is because no Member of Parliament, will come to this House and do not want to return, for as long as you want to return, then you have to go all out to use out of your nothing to seek the welfare of your communities.

Honourable Members, so going further as Members of Parliament, we must be united to see how we can push matters relating to our welfare, maybe as a House, we need to push a National conversation around Members of Parliament, we need to push something that the whole public or the citizens of Sierra Leone would have to engage in otherwise, most people do not even understand how we live. I can say without scruple

that Members of Parliament, are the most indebted people in Sierra Leone. We go all out taking loans here and there only to satisfy the needs of our people, so instead of going after Members of Parliament, we should be used as objects of sympathy. The kind of way we live our lives, this Nation should be sympathetic with us.

So, I thank you very much for that display of unity. Some people will say "oh you did not get the two-thirds majority." As far as I know, I was elected by one hundred and twenty eight Members of Parliament, and that is more than the two-thirds majority. So, I thank you very much and I want to thank you on behalf of the Deputy Speaker, and together with my Deputy, we will steer the affairs of this House with the fear of God in our hearts. I am going to preside briefly maybe an hour or two and I will allow the Deputy to take the seat. Thank you very much. Yes Leader.

**HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE:** Mr Speaker, your statements have shown exactly why we have amended Section [79] of the Constitution, it used to be somebody that comes from the Judiciary as a retired Judge to be Speaker of Parliament, but today we have amended that Section that one of us should be the Speaker whether you are a legal practitioner or not, this is because if one of us be the Speaker, that person will exactly feel our pains. You will know the struggles that we are going through. You have been a Member of Parliament, so as you speak, you are resonating yourself with us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, that was the reason we amended Section [79] of the Constitution in this House. We have had Speakers who have never darkened the Wells of this Parliament who come and sit on top of us and torture us anyhow. They addressed us and took decision anyhow on us. This is why we said no because we want one of us to be the Speaker. When we wanted to amend Section [79] of the Constitution, we went to the former President and said Mr President, we want one of us to be the Speaker of Parliament, He called the Judiciary and they interpreted Section [79] wrongly. They said, it is only a Judge, a person who is qualified to be a Judge that is supposed to be the Speaker, it was on that note that we said even if you are a lawyer you are not going to be qualified. That is also why we said, that if you want to be a Speaker and if you are coming from outside of this Parliament, you should have served

this Parliament for at least two terms. If you are coming from within, you should have served for at least one term that should qualify you. Who amongst us that have served for five years and cannot be the Speaker? Of course, we can, it is just about the procedures, just the Standing Orders and the Constitution, and it does not require a legal person. You have shown us that what we did sometimes in 2015 -2016 is the right decision that we took, and today you are there and you are one of us, you consider our welfare and you talk to us with respect, that is what we wanted as Members of Parliament, we hope it will continue that way and we hope that the decisions that you take on behalf of this Parliament will positively affect Members of Parliament and for the good of all of us. Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much Honourable Leader. Yes Honourable Dickson.

**HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS:** Mr Speaker, I thank you. In your statement, you said something that I want the press to catch up very well. When you said that you were not only voted by SLPP Members of Parliament but by A.P.C and the Paramount Chiefs Members of Parliament. Mr Speaker, that is very critical and crucial because I want this Nation to know that the Speaker, we have now was elected by both parties including Paramount Chiefs. That is to say, you are not only voted for by the S.L.P.P even the Opposition accepted your nomination that is my take. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much Chief Whip. Yes Acting Leader of the Opposition.

**HON. KEMOKOH CONTEH [*Acting Whip*]:** Thank you very much. Without much I do, I want to crave my indulgence in congratulating you and it is not any iota of doubt, you have shown it. From your academia to where you are today and from what you said speaks volumes because you are well acquainted with the dispensation of Parliament and since you know the problems of this Parliament, I believe we should all synergize, work as a team to create an avenue that will sustain our comfort in Parliament. Mr Speaker, I believe you will do it. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes Honourable Latiff.



**HON. ABDUL L. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much. I want to use this moment to congratulate you and also congratulate other colleagues that have been promoted more so Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh. I was to be the party agent during the election and I can confirm that indeed, you won the election. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Okay, Honourable Members, we go to the second item, third or fourth. Under facilitations, you will all come up. Yes Clerks.

## **ITEM II**

### **FELICITATIONS.**

#### **FELICITATIONS TO THE SPEAKER AND DEPUTY SPEAKER**

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes Honourable Alice Kumabeh.

**HON. ALICE J. KUMABEH:** Mr Speaker, thank you for allowing me to contribute to this very important event. First of all, I want to thank God for giving us a Speaker that is from Bonthe District. Also, I want to thank God for giving us Sierra Leoneans a new Speaker and a fine Deputy Speaker, Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas is my Bonthe brother, we came from the same District and I am happy for you. Today, you are not just serving the people of Bonthe Island as you used to represent them in the Well of Parliament over the years. Today, you are the father of this Nation and you are the father of Sierra Leone. At the age of forty eight years, you are going to serve the five regions in this Country.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, Alice Kumabeh, I am still forty-seven, an old man now.

**HON. ALICE J. KUMABEH:** I pray to God to give you the knowledge, wisdom, understanding and strength to carry this mantle of leadership and to lighting every burden that will befall you. Without much ado, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate you and your Deputy Speaker, in your various offices. I know you are

going to enjoy the job but it is a very heavy task that you have taken in order to decide the future of this Country. So at this time, I want to admonish you so that you can do your very best together to bring everyone on board as you have said. I think we will work in unionism so that you will succeed in your office. I thank you all.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes Honourable.

**HON. ALUSINE BASH KAMARA:** Mr Speaker, I thank you very much I know you will be comfortable when you hear the voice of the Honourable Member, from Karene District particularly from Gbinti. On behalf of the people from Karene District, particularly from the people of Gbinti, I want to extend our congratulations to you for a successful election as the Speaker of this House. Mr Speaker, you deserve it, you have worked for it, and you served our brother when he was on that Chair, I want to assure you that the people of Karene District and the people of Gbinti will serve you diligently.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a warning to all of us that when you are Deputizing in an office, make sure you serve your boss with all sincerity and honesty, and be humble.

Mr Speaker, I want to extend with the leave from my boss, that we will invite you to Gbinti so that we can offer you our prayer to show you that you have been succeeding well, we will pray for you. For the Deputy Speaker, he is a nice Leader, he is a honest Leader, he is a Leader which I believe everybody would like to work with. So, I want to say keep it up Mr Deputy Speaker, your works have shown what you believe in. Therefore the Nation and the people of Sierra Leone have paid you for your honesty and your open-mindedness. God bless you and thank you.

Mr Speaker, as I said, be fully assured that we the people from Gbinti are with you. Thank you very much and God bless you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Marray you have the Floor.

**HON. MARRAY S. CONTEH:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much. It has been done the Bonthe way. So I think we have to respond in a Western style.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on behalf of the people of Western area urban and rural, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate you and your Deputy on your successful election into your various offices. The House is blessed like what the Honourable Deputy Leader said earlier to have sitting Members of Parliament, to occupy these positions, you have been there and you know our stories, you have been identified with our problems, so you are in a better position to champion our struggle. Mr Speaker, I have known you to be a gentleman of style, substance, charisma and discipline and an outstanding lawyer, a soft spoken but seasoned politician, you are always straight to the point, you know exactly what to do whenever you stand up, we have respected you for always championing the welfare of Members of Parliament, and I think you will be remembered as the welfare Speaker.

My brother Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh, the Deputy Speaker, we have so many things in common, our parents from Kambia came to Freetown, survived the hardships and we were born here, you started at Zonal level, Constituency, Region and now you are my Deputy Speaker, you are somebody with a fervent belief of instincts, high level of patriotism, he is somebody who is a problem solver. These are attributes that you have really brought to the Deputy Speakership. The most important aspect of my short speech is going like this, your inheritance in Parliament, where Members of Parliament are struggling with their welfare problems, you inherit a Parliament, where Members of Parliament are still struggling for place to be called their offices, and you inherit a Parliament which I think is still struggling with the Administration of staff. So, the question is, how do you want to be remembered? What are you going to do? What value are you going to add to the lives of the Members of Parliament, and even the staff? In as much as we are happy that you are part of us, we are also looking up to you to be the problem solvers. It is a serious challenge but with dedication, commitments and passion you have shown in your previous activities, we are strongly convinced that you will make the difference. I also want to encourage you Mr Speaker, the sixth Parliament started where the fifth Parliament ended, what do I mean by that?

By passing Progressive laws that will lead to National development. So, in as much as we are struggling with our welfare problems...

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, we are not happy especially when we are going to invoke S.O [26] Welfare business, you cannot be here with the little resources we have, the Energy Chairman, with all the jargons he has been given us in this Chamber, We do not want to talk but let him be quiet sir. We have planned to reshuffle under your Leadership Sir, this is a new Administration. To start with, maybe under your directives, we are not even expecting you to give a felicitation. Mr Speaker, we are serious, the little resource we are not going to spend it on fuel.

**HON. ALUSINE B. KAMARA:** Mr Speaker, Deputy Speaker, soon the honey moon will be over and our expectations are high knowing you to be straight shooters, straight forward speaking gentlemen, I know you will let us know that you cannot solve all our problems but you will do what you can.

On behalf of the Western area both Rural and Urban, we congratulate you and together with our Colleagues from all the Regions. We will work very hard to support you and from your speech, you stated that you are going to lead us together with your Deputy in God's direction. So, may God see you through. Thank you very much and God bless you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Let me hear the voice of a Lady. Honourable Rose-Marie Bangura.

**HON. ROSE-MARIE BANGURA:** Thank you. Mr Speaker today, I stand not only as a Member of Parliament of Sierra Leone but also as a Member of Pan- African Parliament and Member of the Western caucus. I want to congratulate you on behalf of the Pan- African Parliament more especially the Western caucus. They said that I should convey their warm felicitations to you and they wish you a successful tenure as a Speaker of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today, I join Colleagues to congratulate the Deputy Speaker and also my other Colleagues that have assumed new positions in this House

of Parliament, Honourable Nenneh Lebbie and also Honourable Bernadette Wuyatta Songa, I congratulate you all.

Today, is a significant milestone in this House of Parliament because we have the youngest Speaker and the youngest Deputy Speaker since the beginning of this House of Parliament of Sierra Leone. So, kudos to the young people. I want the youth of this Nation to have hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Mr Speaker, Deputy Speaker, as you have assumed your offices today, I pray that you will lead us in the fear of God, and wisdom, that you will lead with fear, that you will lead with your good consciences for the good of all Sierra Leoneans. Much is expected from you and they say to whom much is given, much is expected. As you uphold your new offices, I pray that God almighty will steer you to lead this House for us to be able to achieve our core values which is integrity and service to the people of Sierra Leone. I also pray that your tenure will be marked with fruitful deliberations and decisions for the good of all. I thank you all and God bless us all.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, this sitting is stood down for five minutes. Deputy Speaker, please come and take the seat.

#### **THE DEPUTY SPEAKER TOOK THE CHAIR**

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much Honourable Members, please be seated.

*The House stood down at 11:00 a.m. and resume at 11:05 a.m.*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, before we continue the proceedings, may I join my Speaker to thank the Membership of this House for unanimously electing us to serve you, this is a service that came on unexpected time. I never in my wildest imagination dreamt of being Deputy Speaker at this time, reminiscence on the role and the fact that I am presiding over Parliament today particularly taking into consideration it was 33 years ago that the last Limba man sat in this Chair, but today I sit in this Chair as a Limba man under the Sierra Leone People's Party, I want to thank His Excellency, the President and I want to thank the Leadership of the SLPP and the Leadership of the APC for coming out and showing that democracy is what we should practice and

democracy is the order of the day. Thank you very much and we may continue with the proceedings. My revered Paramount Chiefs, they are the guiding symbols of this House, they are the voice of wisdom, they have been here for us and we will continue to encourage them to guide us through these difficult paths. It is not easy to lead at this particular point in time but we believe with their wisdom they will guide us to keep the House together and to engender Parliamentary unionism for the good of Sierra Leone and for the good of Members of Parliament. Thank you. The Honourable Mamoud Kamara, you have the Floor.

**HON. MAMOUD KAMARA:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much. This is not a surprise, we wanted the history to continue that is why when the Deputy Speaker takes up the seat as Speaker, it is now on record that I am the first to be called to give a contribution in this Well. Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, let me start by thanking the Honourable Member, for the opportunity given to us in Lumley to elect my elder brother and Co – Member of Parliament from Lumley as Deputy Speaker of Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone. I have absolutely no doubt that the Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh will live up to the expectations for the benefit of the people of this Country especially the people of Lumley. So, on behalf of the people of Lumley, let me congratulate the Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh on his new appointment as Deputy Speaker of Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone. I wish you well my Deputy Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me as well on behalf of the people of Lumley, congratulate the Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas of Bonthe District as Speaker of Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone. This to me is not a surprise, I firstly came to know the Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas when I was a solicitor Clerk to my late uncle of blessed memory lawyer Mustapha Santigie Turay, liberator Spanchie and the Spanchie Chamber. Equally so, I have no doubt that the Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas will make a great Speaker and I wish him well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are here on the trust and confidence of the people of Sierra Leone. Our main purpose as Members of Parliament is to seek redress

of grievances in our respective Districts. So Mr Speaker, now that it has been accepted on both sides of the aisle to be Speaker in this sixth Parliament, I wish you well and let the Lord's wisdom befall upon him so that he will preside without any favor of either SLPP or APC, let him preside judiciously.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas, who is just 47 years old, is now on record as the youngest Speaker that has ever presided and occupied that seat in our Nation's history. So, age and energy are on his side to ensure and make right for all the sins this Parliament has committed for the past five years so that we will never again in our Nation's history witness where Members of Parliament are beating and are being thrown out of Parliament, so we will never again in our Nation's history witness when the elected Members of Parliament are replaced with non-elected Members of Parliament, also we will never again in our Nation's history witness when laws that are bound to the development of this Nation are being decided by minority voices in the Well, we will never again in our Nation's history witness when opposition Members of Parliament are being the only one that are punished for an act that is committed by both sides of the aisle, so we will never again in our Nation's history witness when laws that do not serve the general interest of the people of this Nation, are being bulldozed and forcefully laid in the Well of this Parliament. So, we will never again in our Nation's history witness when the Audit report is being slapped with a back hand, now we are expecting it to be debated in this Well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have absolute faith in the Speakership of both the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker, I have absolute faith in them. That is why I will be looking up to them throughout this sixth Parliament with their bigger voices to help me amplify the concerns of the people I represent which I will be conveying to this Honourable House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the people of Kanigo especially Timaya ground, Marinbo, Hamburger Hill, Kondi farm, Pentagon and Jack Kingdom with a combined populations of over fifty thousand are facing an untold suffering on daily bases to access their homes after the day hustle as a result of abandoned, neglected and

deplorable road condition. These are the concerns that I will be looking up to the Speakership of the sixth Parliament to help me amplify.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I continue to pray for wisdom for you and Allah's guidance throughout your tenure. I thank you for the opportunity.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Honourable Member for his contribution and I want to assure him that this House is a democratic House and it is a House that is going to uphold the dictate, spirit and interest of the Constitution of Sierra Leone. Honourable Members, I intent to rise at 12pm so we are going to make our contributions and felicitations very brief. So the Honourable Joseph Williams Lamin, you the Floor.

**HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much. For me, I want to start my felicitation by calling the right Honourable Speaker seated there as the P.F.M Act. I call him P.F.M Act, because he was in the Fifth Parliament when that particular Act was enacted here I was forced to acquire that Act so that I will be acquainted with the content of that Act and the individual that stood out to be the person that repeatedly called to that Act was the Deputy Speaker who is currently sitting as the Speaker of Parliament.

Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh of Lumley, originally from Kambia District, I respect your opinion Sir as it was stated by your boss the Speaker, Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas that you are going to lead us with the fear of God in your hearts, I respect that and I know that you will perform and you will live to fulfill that particular promise that you have made in this House. This is not a surprise to me, I have met you on several occasions, I have seen the issues that you have presided over in some of your communities, I have participated in some of them, I do remember when you summon the Ministry of Agriculture and some Agricultural Expertise at Njala where the professionals said that the soil of Sierra Leone is very acidic, I said to them that if this soil in Sierra Leone is acidic why do we have Magbass Sugar Factory booming in Tonkolili District over the years? Also I asked them why do we have Sahn Malen that is producing many things in our Country, does that mean our knowledge has been



restricted to the offices or the classrooms or the theory that we studied whether it was in the research of quantitative or qualitative that we did in our submissions before we got qualified as University graduates? Mr Speaker, you proved to us in that meeting that it was not like that, you have proved yourself over the years at Committee Room one where contentious issues have been discussed over the finances of this House. We hope and believe that, those issues will be withheld by your boss and your very self. When we came to the Parliament of Sierra Leone, it was not a secret, the budget of Parliament was only fourteen billion Leones but today we are talking about over sixty billion Leones in the old Leones which is equivalent to sixty million new Leones, that is quite adequate for us to take our activities, our Oversight and some of the things that we need to deliver to the people of this Nation.

Mr Speaker, I trust in your Leadership and I also trust in the Leadership of your boss and be rest assured that on behalf of the people of Bo District in conjunction with the people of Bongoh, Njiama, Wundeh that we will stand with you and be rest assured that we will support and give you the best credence you need to succeed in your office. The critical issues that we have dwelled in this Well were personal issues that you have dealt with in your office and also in the corridor where best decisions are made. I want you to think about those issues and it will be better if we consider it this way and I know you will heed to the advice. So, keep growing and know that no man is a reservoir of knowledge...

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, please let keep our undertones low. Honourable Members on my left.

**HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN:** Honourable Speaker, I want to assure you that you have my full support in your Leadership, we wish you the very best and we pray that what you and your boss have just told us that you are God-fearing persons, we want to assure you that we will support you and we will stand with you in difficult circumstances in the representation of our people in the Republic of Sierra Leone. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Honourable Member from Bo District. The Honourable Rosy, you have the Floor.

**HON. NENEH LEBBIE:** Honourable Speaker, since you have told us that you will be raising by 12 p.m. can we please have a time line for contributions or felicitations?

**THE SPEAKER:** Can we keep it at three minutes? Let it be three minutes so that we can give many Members of Parliament the opportunity to speak.

**HON. RUGIATU R. KANU:** Mr Speaker, it takes courage and vision for one to achieve his or her dreams and today, the Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas and your very self Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh have fulfilled their dreams. As they embark on this journey, I wish to assure you that we on this side will support and collaborate with you to create a conducive working environment in this sixth Parliament. I say congratulations to both of you for your victory and best wishes on your incredible success as you take up these responsibilities.

Mr Speaker, as both of you take up this new responsibilities admits lots of challenges, I want to advice you that you superintend this House with consultation, engagement and consensus so that we will have a very strong team to advocate for our people. Both of you are here as Speaker and Deputy Speaker, of this Parliament, I say once again congratulations. But then, be rest assured as you sit in that Chair to rule with your conscience and with the fear of God so that whatever Bills or whatever laws that we are going to pass in this Parliament, it be for the betterment of our people in this Nation, we pray as you sit on that Chair, you will represent the Nation of Sierra Leone and not SLPP, we pray as you sit on that Chair, we will advocate for loans that will bring peace and stability in this Nation, we pray as you sit on that Chair, young as you are, you will never experience chaos in this sixth Parliament.

Mr Speaker, as you take up this responsibility I congratulate you and I pray to God especially Honourable Tawa, you have been a strong advocate for women in this House of Parliament even though it was not exhibited during the elections but you are a strong advocate, you are one of the 'HE for SHE' and you have contributed

tremendously in ensuring women's issues are included in this House of Parliament. I was filled with joy during the last sitting when Honourable Emerson Lamina was given tribute about you. This brings me to the African proverb it says "when a child washes his hands clean, he will eat with kings and princes." Yes Honourable Tawa, you washed your hands well because you were humble according to Honourable Emerson and I can attest to that you are humble, you were studious and you were loyal. Today, you are on that seat because of your loyalty, your studiousness and your hard work. So, I pray that you continue to be humble, loyal, and studious and to also continue to work for the people of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, on behalf of the people of Western Urban area, I want to toe the line with Honourable Marie that we will give you all the support and we say congratulations to you and the Speaker Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. I am going to call down the following Members, in this order; Honorable Musa Fofanah, Honourable Unpha Sorie Gbessay, Honourable Jalloh, Honourable Tarawallie and the Honourable Veronica Kadie Sesay.

**HON. MUSA FOFANAH:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am Honourable Sahr Musa Fofanah from Kono District. I am here this morning to thank the almighty God and to thank the Leadership of this great House across the aisle, and to thank the Members of Parliament for the new Leadership that we have created for ourselves.

Honourable Members, on behalf of the people of Kono District, even our forests in Kono, rivers, hills, sent their felicitations to the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker. It is no doubt that Kono District is a rich mineral District. Honourable Momoh with all due respect if you go to Kono District, we will give you diamonds.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, some of us are proud today because we have worked with the former Deputy Speaker, who is today the Speaker and the current Deputy Speaker. When we were pushing the Parliamentary welfare Bill, these two

Leaders and the rest of other Leaders told us they are behind the Parliamentary Welfare Bill. They stood with us and we want to appreciate them for that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our traditional Leaders from Kono District, our youths from Kono District, our mothers, our fathers, our Religious leaders across the Muslim community and the Christian community sent their salutations for this day today. The right, Deputy Honourable Speaker, we know that you are a North-West region son, a son from Kambia District as well as Freetown. This is what our President is talking about National cohesion. Thirty years ago, a Limba man was sitting on that Chair and today the right Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh is sitting in that Chair. This is demonstrating the Leadership quality coming from the SLPP angle of governance. We want to thank His Excellency, the President Retired Brigadier Julius Maada Bio for treating this House with respect and also, for treating this House as one of the strongest Arm of Government to support development and National cohesion. On that note Mr Speaker, you being a battle tested Leader like your boss, we really want to see a new dynamic going forward in this Sixth Parliament. We trust in the changes that you are going to make but S. O [2], wae nef shap, nah for shap am mor so e go du al tin wae e wan for du for you.

Mr Speaker, on that note, on behalf of the people of Kono District, we are happy, we want to congratulate you and your boss, we also want to congratulate the right Honourable Nenneh Lebbie, for taking this seat and we want to also congratulate the right Honourable from Kailahun District who is my sister, for taking her seat. We believe that the Leadership will open more doors and they will give you more voice so that this House will change its narrative. Thank you very much. God bless the people of Sierra Leone and God bless the House of Parliament.

**HON. DR UNPHA S.G KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, today we are giving felicitations to you and the substantive Speaker. As the word goes "Felicitas" which is a Latin word and it means "happiness" We are expressing happiness for your success, we are expressing joy for the success done. In as much as we are expressing joy and happiness for your Honourable self and the substantive Speaker, we want to

salute this House for ensuring that we as Members of Parliament in this sixth Parliament will allow the people to experience what the Constitution speaks. We have exhausted Section [79] and Section [80] of the Constitution.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think it is a blessings for Members of Parliament in this sixth Parliament to be headed by a Speaker and a Deputy Speaker that are products of the Fifth and Sixth Parliament respectively. As what the previous Members of Parliament, have spoken you have all been tested of recent times and the experiences of the previous Speakers that have served in this Parliament in the 80s and 90s alongside with my late father was far different from what you have experienced. You have experienced a Parliament under a Multi-party dispensation, you have experienced a Parliament that you have been part of, and you have been part of fighting your way to come to Parliament. Also, the Speaker fought his way to come to Parliament for the third time and you have made your way to Parliament for the second time. Across this Parliament, yourself and your substantive Speaker have earned the respect of all Honourable Members, and we believe with that respect, it will be reciprocated with your delivery to this Parliament. I am taking note of the statement made by the Speaker and also the statement made by your Honourable self that you will ensure that this Parliament makes a history.

Mr Speaker, I want to use borrowed words of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow which states that; "the height by great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flight, but while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night." In your humble self, you and the Speaker have done that, you have been diligent in this Parliament.

The Honourable Member from Bo stated on how you created his curiosity in ensuring that he became au fait with the PFM Act. Members of Parliament, have followed your diligence in your debate.

But before I conclude and sit down, under your dispensation, I believe I am not asking that this sixth Parliament make history in ensuring that whatever that is captured in those Auditor general's reports year after year, to face this Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in trying to be diligent with the time and base on the exigency of time, I want to conclude by congratulating you on this incredible feat and I pray that you deliver for yourself, your family and your Country as expected Speaker. I thank you very much.

**HON. MOHAMED ALPHA JALLOH:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, I bring you loads of greetings and congratulatory messages from the lovely, kind and peaceful people of Falaba District. The Land of love, milk and honey. Mr Speaker, on behalf of the people of Falaba District, I pray that the almighty Allah will grant you great wisdom, knowledge and understanding as you preside over the affairs of this beautiful Nation. May he grants you the competencies that are required to carry out this diligent job of a Speaker and a Deputy Speaker of this noble House, may he guides and protects you as you discharge the duties that you have sworn to discharge.

Mr Speaker, please permit me to deliver a special message from the beautiful people of Falaba District which is in a form of a rhetorical question which is; how do you want to be remembered? The Almighty Allah has accepted that today, you will be the third and the most powerful person in the land. But in the mist of things, please note that it is only the sovereignty of the Almighty that remains, this is the reason why Speakers come and go, Deputy Speakers come and go, and Leaders come and go. Yesterday, it was the right Honourable Dr Abass Chernor Bundu but today it is the right Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas, not too long from now, it will be somebody else. How do you want to be remembered? Mr Deputy Speaker, often times we hear that if you want to solve the problems of this Nation, you have to fix Parliament. This is a statement that I fully subscribe to.

Mr Speaker, I know deep down in your heart you are a good person together with the Speaker. You want to see this Country grow and prosper, I want to tell you that, this is your time, this is your moment and this is the opportunity that you have to make this Country strive out. It is your time to show to the world that this Nation can rise again. How do you want to be remembered? Mr Speaker, few days ago after the resignation of the former Speaker, I read an article written by our noble engineer Andrew Kailie;

'Ponder my Thought.' In that article he wrote; "Paopa has eaten one of its own." I pray that the chopping block will not be your portion and that you will retire someday not like our old gallant Speaker who was not even accorded the luxury of saying goodbye to us. Mr Speaker, how do you want to be remembered?

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member be mindful of the time please. You have 30 seconds.

**HON: MOHAMED ALPHA JALLOH:** After your retirement when you are sitting at home with no power, no influence and no company only memories and certainly some regrets at the time when all the pleasantries are gone, all the praise songs has gone and all the beautiful names and the hearsay have gone. Mr Speaker, how do you want to be remembered? This is the message of the people of Falaba District. Also, the witnesses of old noble men and women in this Honourable House can attest that I have delivered the message of the people of Falaba District. Thank you so much. God bless you and God bless the Republic Sierra Leone.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Mohamed Tarawally.

**HON. MOHAMED TARAWALLIE FOFANAH:** Mr Speaker, thank you

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today I am honoured to be part of this history. On behalf of the people of Kambia specifically, the people of Tonko Limba, they are happy that one of their sons, their uncle, and their brother has occupied one of the greatest and the most enviable seats in the Country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say the victory and your success are truly earned and your achievement is truly achieved. We know Mr Deputy Speaker, you have rose to the ranks of Leadership in your entire life; from the Head boy of Services Secondary School to a Deputy Speaker in the House of Parliament. That is indeed a great achievement and success.

Mr Speaker, I want you to know that the sky is your limit. Today in this country, you are the Fourth powerful man, we want to commit you and your boss the Speaker to God Almighty and God to provide you both the fortitude, the courage, the knowledge

and the wisdom to preside over the issues of this Country with diligent and with all honesty. From the people of Kambia, I want to say felicitations and we want to congratulate you. Kambia is proud that today, we have a Deputy Speaker who hails from that District. We have a Deputy Speaker who is one of us and who is the son of the soil of Kambia District.

Mr Speaker, we want you to know that we the young and new Members of Parliament, are hopeful that today we have seen a Leader that is a young and 47 years old Speaker and a Deputy Speaker that is just around 45 years old. This is indeed a milestone. He is still under 45 years old, he can be 42 or 43 years old but he is still under 45 years old. However, that is a great achievement, we the new Members of Parliament now are hopeful because we know that, the welfare of the new Members of Parliament, in this Well are going to be considered.

Mr Speaker, they used to say, you are a senior Member of Parliament, and you are a junior Members of Parliament that is what they used to say. Please Mr Deputy Speaker, we the junior Member of Parliament as they want us to say it, we are very hopeful that this new Leadership will consider that all Members of Parliament are Members of Parliament whether senior or junior.

**THE SPEAKER:** And on that note.

**HON. MOHAMED TARAWALLIE FOFANAH:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note, I also want to say once more I congratulate you and the Speaker on behalf of the people of Kambia District and also the Members of the North-West caucus in this Sixth Parliament. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. Honourable Veronica Kadie Sesay.

**HON. VERONICA K. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, thank you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have congratulated you earlier and I will do it again. First of all, I want to say thanks to God for the Leaders that he has given to us. I mean you and your boss. I have known Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas for the past years, we have been here in this House, and we were Members of the Committee



that was very strong which we called P-26, we have been here and we saw it all. He has waited patiently and now he has attained to that level, I heard from your statement when you were addressing that you never thought of becoming a Deputy Speaker, that is how God works, no one knows tomorrow, I also heard from my other colleagues that they have hope, yes hope is yours, just work diligently, just be honest, just believe in God and just know that one day you will be there. People might want to say that you are a Member of Parliament and you seek for the 30% quota for Women. Initially, I was the only person in the Leadership as a Woman and now we have got two and again we have additional Members and that means we are growing gradually and we are grateful. We are women, we do not fight but we just raise our hands to say that we will be there one day, I want to say thank you.

Mr Speaker, I want to take this opportunity on behalf of the Moyamba District to congratulate you. If the young men have done it, I know the women will follow one day, I have no doubt because no one knows tomorrow. I am very much pleased and I am happy again because you are one of our champions for HE for SHE, both of you have fought the course and I believe the women will not be left out. Think about the women in this House, when there are problems we should not be muzzled, take us along, we are partners in development, we are pushers, we are makers, developers, caregivers, Teachers and we are powerful instrument for development. If you want to succeed take the women along. A Parliament that does not take along women is not a Parliament, now that we are forty two in this House, work with us and see the difference that we will make.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we in the Sierra Leone People's Party believed in inclusion, we have shown it and that is why we are here today celebrating you people and I have no doubt, you are God-fearing people like Honourable Segepoh, he is a God-fearing man, he is always prayerful and I hope God will lead him like what my colleagues have said, God will lead him through.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to my sisters, now that you are here with us, you were at the back and I always say, God has its own time. This is the time he has shown

and you yourself never thought of occupying the first role but you are here today, you were voted for and we have elected you to champion the cause of women in this Parliament. We will work with you and we will make we succeed. Our expertise we have we will pass it on to you. If you failed, we have failed the people, you are not here by yourself, you are here to represent the women of this Country, and you are here representing the voice of the voiceless, so we want you to prove it, if you were not doing it you would have been lethargic somehow, I want you to wake up and stand up. This is your chance, show the women, show the people that you can do it, if Honourable Veronica has done it and she has succeeded, Honourable Nenneh Lebbie has done it and she has succeeded, what about you? Show the people that you can do it, prove them wrong, and prove them that you can do it, please do the needful.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, again to my sister, you have joined me; Deputy One and two, I know when I am not there you will do it, when I am here we will do it together. So, I have no iota of doubt that you can do the needful, let us work together as a team, and let us prove them so that we will have more women in the next Parliament, we are expecting more women to be in the Leadership. So with that, I want to say thank you and I want you to send this message back to the Speaker that we have no iota of doubt S.O [2] nah fair man, he is so respectful. So, I want you to send the message to the Speaker that we the women are going to support him, we will guide him, we will give him our motherly advice and we will work together. The only thing is that, you should keep on the respect, work with your people, work with the young stars and work with the older folks.

Thank you very much for everything and I want to say thanks to my brothers on the other side for voting for the democracy. This is because we did not get the 98%, you topped it up for us. We also extend the olive branch to you by saying thanks to each and every one, we did not know who voted but as long as we have won, we know that everybody voted for us. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you to the Honourable Veronica Kadie Sesay. I want to reecho our position with a slight modification that this is a victory for democracy and this is

victory for this Parliament. It shows how decent this Parliament is and it is a show of a new trajectory that this Sixth Parliament will take. We are very close to 12 p.m. so I am going to take the following Members; Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara from Kambia District.

**HON. VERONICA K. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, sorry before the Honourable Member, speaks, I just want to say for the victory of our sisters, we have small lunch at the beach Western Padies, we the women can do it, we lead and you will follow. So please, join us for all women not only the HE for SHE. If you know you are the HE for SHE, join us there. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Honourable Member, and I want to understand her message in this way, the invitation is extended to us the men. So, I will take the Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara from Kambia, the Honourable Member from Bo, I will take the Honourable P.C Thor Thor Sheku Terenah Tongos Neya Konkoroba Fanko Lai III. I will take the Honourable Mariama Munia Zombo, I will take the Honourable Alpha Bah and I will take the Honourable Eng. Fallah Kenawah Tengbeh.

**HON. TAMBA KELLIE:** Mr Speaker, observation.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes Honourable Kellie.

**HON. TAMBA KELLIE:** Yes Mr Speaker, I observed we have few representatives from Kambia District.

**HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA:** Honourable Members, I see my brother struggling to pick and choose among the people that are supposed to speak and that gives you the unique opportunity that every elected Member in this Well, is looking forward to. Other people have brought you message of good will but I think, I am going to deviate a bit. It is an opportunity for us as young people to ask ourselves many questions. Have we delivered as much as what have been given to us by the people of Sierra Leone? We are not the first set of young people that have been given such opportunities, way back in the 80s, there were set of young people that were ferried from overseas to come and handle the affairs of this Country, the former Speaker happens to be one of them, we

have the best of Sierra Leonean brains that were ferried back home. But with all that experience gathered, how reflective is it to our Nation today? We thought all was lost, there was another set of young boys by then, today men, who took upon themselves in kaki colors and they changed the regime, they were energetic young men but with all their actions, how reflective is it to our Nation today?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today, we are in the Well of Parliament which if you count all the Leaderships away from the female participation in Leadership, we are all young men. In governance, in the Executive Arm of Government, we find young people but sadly enough, this is the time our Country is fighting economic turbulence. It has reached a point where people are telling us now that, even if Jesus comes the problem will not be solved. It means as young people we need to go the extra mile, maybe we need to forget a bit about our political colours that we represent and look genuinely what the issues are in our Country, maybe we need to open up the space so people can talk and find solutions to their problems, we need to look at issues that are disturbing us as a Country and we say, can we fix this particular problem at this particular time? I want to say that I am confident that we have a young Deputy Speaker. When he was named to be the Deputy Speaker, many people had different descriptions of him already. In case nobody has told you, the people out there see you as a beacon of hope, the one who stands to fight against corruption. The lone voice when every other voice was silent, the one person who will say it is wrong regardless of the colours. Today, you have the opportunity to speak at a level, an altitude in which most people in the society will envy you. Will you remain to be the Honourable Tawa that every other person expects you to be? Will you now deviate and dance towards the party's colour? Will you be pressured to look otherwise? This is how unique it has been always.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Leader, be mindful of the time.

**HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA:** I will.

**THE SPEAKER:** Because I intend to rise at 12 p.m. and it is very close to 12 p.m. I want to give opportunity to the other speakers.

**HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA:** You know, that is how unique Parliament is. My call is simple. I will not speak of the Speaker because he is not here and he will not hear me so, I will limit my intervention to the Speaker who is presiding, who happens to be the Deputy Speaker. The people of Sierra Leone are expecting much from you, the people of Sierra Leone believe with you in the Leadership, they will have the opportunity now to debate the Audit report. I have said, it is not a report that has to do with political colours, those who eat and chop from those Audit reports are not politicians, it is high time we looked and go after them now. As young people, what more do we need to ask for? At the highest realm of the Executive, you have young person. In Parliament, you have barrage of young people with energy to serve this Nation. Who are we? We are the lucky few that are here representing the majority. Many of our colleagues are still in the classroom suffering, some are drug addicts today. What can we do to save the generations behind us? Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Massay G. Amara, please keep it short. I will not go beyond quarter pass 12 p.m. because the Leaders would have to make their statements.

**HON. MASSAY ARUNA NGAHNTEH:** Mr Speaker, thank you

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I felt belong when I heard you saying that you were not voted for by the SLPP Members of Parliament alone but all political parties as well as the Paramount Chiefs. That implies you are not just a Speaker or Deputy Speaker for SLPP alone but for all Sierra Leoneans. I hope that you work in the interest of us all. The Speaker spoke about our welfare, I have no doubt of that he has fought for our welfare in the Fifth Parliament and I know you people will continue to fight in the Sixth Parliament until we achieve our goals.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am pleading that before the end of this year, please address our welfare issues and let us get what belong to us. Some Members of Parliament might not be coming back to this House, but if their welfares are being met, I think in their retirement they will be happy together with their families.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to appreciate the ladies, the Female Caucus. I want to thank the Speaker, for giving us a hard working Honourable Member, by the name of, Honourable Wuyatta B. Songa and also for appointing our National mama of the House, Honourable Nenneh Lebbie as the Deputy Chief Whip two. You did no mistake by appointing Honouable Nenneh Lebbie, you have added another feather to the wings of the Bo District. I thank you and I thank all Honourable Members. To our Leaders, we appreciate you so much for being there for us and for bringing love and peace to us all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note, I congratulate you Mr Deputy Speaker, and also the Speaker, Honourable Tawa, you have always been there and you have always been with the Women, do not forget us, you were there when you were not the Deputy Speaker, I know you will continue to stand for the women of this Parliament. I thank you all.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much Honourable Member. Before I go to the next speaker, let me use this opportunity to recognize Mr Jimmy Batilo Songa, I do not know whether he is here in respect of the President of the Female Caucus or to witness the apex point of his debate. Had it not been for him, I would not have had the opportunity to sit here as Deputy Speaker, because when I was barricaded at the Lumley police station, dress in police dress, it was his bravery that rescued me from the hands of the cold death, so I want to say thank you. Yes Paramount Chief.

*Suspension of S.O [5]2*

**THE SPEAKER:** Hononourable P.C. Please keep it short.

**HON. P.C THOR THOR SHEKU TERENCE TONGOS NEYA KONKOROKA FANKO LAI III:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament, I am here this afternoon to congratulate the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker elected. Before proceeding, I must say thanks and praise to the Talk and Do President Bio and his Vice President Dr. Mohamed Judah Jalloh for donating brand new vehicles to the Paramount Chief Members of Parliament across the Nation, bravo to the Talk and Do President Bio and

bravo to the Vice President Dr. Mohamed Judah Jalloh, now we can go to any part of this Country.

Secondly, I want to say congratulations to the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker elected. This Honourable House did not make any mistake, these Honourable Members, are very robust, energetic, devoted, committed and industrious, we hope you will take this Parliament to another level.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want you to pay attention to the Administrative building concerning the airlift. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much Honourable Paramount Chief. I will now give the Floor to Honourable Alpha Amadu Bah after him, the Honourable Munia Zombo can come in later.

**HON. ALPHA A. BAH:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think since the inception of this session, yes indeed I have been catching the eyes of Mr Speaker, on that seat. Today is a special day for me giving the fact that on the day when we were about to elect the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker, the first set of nominees for the Speakership were the right Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas who was then the Deputy Speaker and then we had the Honourable Daniel Brima Koroma who is the Deputy Leader of the main Opposition, I looked at them and I said, these are products of the Fourth Parliament, I am a product of the fifth Parliament, I began to wonder who was going to represent us in the Sixth Parliament but suddenly somebody whispered in my ears that there were two second set of nominees that is from this side; Honourable Haja Miatta Amara who is the product of the Fifth Parliament and Honourable Tawa Conteh who was also from the Fifth Parliament, and then S.O [2] mi temper cam dong.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today I see the Deputy Speaker as a representative that represents the generation of the Fifth Parliament. It is stated that, when you see one of your peers, you age mates, your contemporary assuming leadership role and assuming special responsibilities if you are somebody who believes in the development

of society and not just yourself, you must be ready to support, feel good and support that development.

Mr Speaker, on that note, I have taken the queue from the Honourable Member, from Falaba, he centered his presentation this morning with a question how do you want to be remembered after your tenure as a Deputy Speaker? Mr Deputy Speaker, how do you want to be remembered upon the termination of your tenure as a Deputy Speaker? Would you like to be remembered in the Well of this House as the darkest colour? Or would you like to be remembered as the brightest colour of this House? That question is for you. You are not going to answer it now, it remains on how you carry yourself. When the Deputy Whip two from the other side was asking for your partnership with the Women in this Well and by extension to the entire Nation, I would like to allay her fears that we are all aware the Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh, is a true replica of the HE for SHE in this Well, now you are representing the generation of the Fifth Parliament, you are here as part of the HE for SHE, you are here across the Country as a representative for the young people. So would you be the avenger of a generational break from the concerns that are raised by the Honourable AKK that since in the 1980s up to this point, we have had young people representing the people of Sierra Leone, we have young people given responsibilities to deliver this Nation. However, they were unable to break that generational break.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member in as much as I like your submission, we have to be mindful of the time.

**HON. ALPHA A. BAH:** To the Speaker, of course he is my learned senior, when we were debating the issue of competing the quota for the two-thirds, I can vividly recall when the Leader of Government Business said; having listened to my colleagues on my side, and one of those colleagues happen to be the Deputy Speaker, who was contesting for this election that he has decided to concede in the interest of progress. What does that mean? It shows that, it is a firm conviction that no lawyer will ever see or will ever want to be a party to the bracing breach of any law. As a lawyer, I am with that firm conviction. So the Speaker; Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas, I want to



believe as a senior legal practitioner in this Country, he must be able to at least understand that the same democracy that brought you in as a Speaker, should be continued. How will that continue? Respect the rule of law.

Mr Speaker, this is the symbol of democracy, it is a symbol of National coalition. I thank you all and God bless us all.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. The Honourable Mariama Munia Zombo, she is going to be the last speaker before the Leader's intervention, I am sorry to all those who intend to take up the Floor, I assure them that in the future debate they will certainly have the Floor. This is just the beginning of a very long journey.

**HON. MARIAMA M. ZOMBO:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of the House of Parliament, I am so excited to give my felicitations for the huge success that has come our way in the Sixth Parliament. Mr Speaker, on behalf of the people of Pujehun District, Wanjama, the beautiful land with a tasty fish and the land where the Feed Salon has anchored its root through the Gbondapi food program, I would like to say thank you to this House, thank you to the All People's Congress and the Sierra Leone People's Party Parliamentarians for building up a formidable team to carefully select, educated and carefully trained Members of Parliament. The Speaker who I know is one of those Honourable Members, who is fair, our Deputy Speaker, Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh, he is a man that I have engaged, a decent gentleman who would work from morning till night just to ensure that things happen, I know that our Speaker also Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas is an astute, trained, qualified, educated gentleman who will lead us in the right direction. So, there is a positive change in the House of Parliament, positive change in our lives and our welfare as Members of Parliament. This has to change a bit because even our allowances are not good for us, our salary is not good, and I am hoping that this team will push for equality, fairness and our welfare. Congratulations once more.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to my wonderful mothers and sisters, I say congratulations. My sister who is now the Deputy Whip two, I want to say felicitations on behalf of the people of Pujehun District and Wanjama. You are a woman of

substance and you deserve what you have received. With humility, you have led us and God has raised you to a higher height. Honourable Nenneh Lebbie, I say congratulations. Also to our new Female Caucus Leader, the powerful Honourable Bernadette Wuyatta Songa of Kailahun District, I know that she is going to excel the limit that we have set, the sky is not only your limit but the galaxy is your limit. Madam Bernadette Wuyatta Songa, I want to say congratulations as well.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, and on that note.

**HON. MARIAMA M. ZOMBO:** From the people of Pujehun District, we are extremely pleased to have such young leadership like you and also gender inclusiveness. I would like you to remember as a team that the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act is written in ink and it is written on paper but it has to be actualized but sometimes we do forget that. We are forty two in numbers that are here, we are moving with tides, we are flowing but we the women are forgetting that we have to continue advocating for other women, we have to make the Act works.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, thank you to those who have worked towards the Gender Act, the HEs for SHE, the SHEs for HE and the SHEs for SHEs as well. Thank you to the Fifth Parliament, the Sixth Parliament, we have a responsibility both women and men to make the GEWE Act to work. We should not forget that implementation is bigger than just a document that we have in our hands.

Mr Speaker, on that note, I want to say congratulations on behalf of the people of Wanjama. We wish you well, we wish you good health, and we wish you good luck and an inspiration to do more for us as Parliamentarians and the Country as a whole. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** We have reached at a convenient time where we are going to wrap up this debate. So I will call on the Leader of the Opposition.

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like what a very notable former Member of Parliament often says in this Well, I want to borrow from that common saying that says

that today again; we are here to give felicitations to people who have been elected among us. I remembered that sometimes in 2013, Honourable Bashiru and I and of course Honourable SOS, were here an amendment was done on the Constitution and that amendment was to have one of us to be elected as Speaker or Deputy Speaker. Of course, the Deputy Speaker, has always been picked amongst us the Speaker, most of the time we see people who have not been Members of Parliament are being elected to occupy that office. But since that amendment was done, we have got Members who have been elected either those who were Members of Parliament or those who are serving as Members of Parliaments. I want to state here for the records that Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas is the second Member of Parliament who has being elected as the current Member of Parliament, unlike what we had in 2013 when the Honourable S.B.B Dumbuya was elected, he has one hundred votes, he was representing Constituency 100. In fact in the election we said, it was 100 for 100. But when we computed the score into percentage, he had about 80% of Members of Parliament at that time, but for the Speaker that we have now, out of the one hundred and forty five Members that we have in Parliament, he scored one hundred and twenty eight. If you compute that in percentage, he scored over 88%, that in it self is on record that so many Members of Parliament placed so much confidence in him and so much trust in him, it is not because he is just one of us but because we have worked with him and we know he can deliver.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is a saying that says "to whom much is given, much is expected." What we did on that day is something that we should celebrate as Parliamentarians, it is something that we should celebrate as a Country because we were put to test and we demonstrated that indeed we can reposition our Country in the right trajectory, that was exactly what we did on that day, we ushered in an election that was not only transparent but also peaceful, it sent a message to everyone and that is the way it should go.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, much have been said about you, much have been said about the Speaker, much have been said about you as well. I do not want to spend

much time to repeat all of those fine sentiments, we believe if you people were not good men, we would not have elected you but because we believe you can perform well, you can do better, that is the more reason why we gave you a percentage higher than what other Members of Parliament had ever got here to be elected as Speaker or Deputy Speaker. Again, we want you to know that on this side, we are always ready to support the Government, this is because we believe we are responsible Opposition, we believe that we are part of governance, and who are you to think that because the other side has the number, you do not need the Opposition? No Parliament functions without an effective Opposition, all over the world, you do not need the Opposition based on numbers but based on the voices. I want to reiterate that we are fifty-two or fifty four as the case may be but our voices are louder than anything that you can think about. We demonstrated it on that day that no party has a Two-thirds majority but we believe we can always get what we want when we dialogue. Dialogue should be the way to go, dialogue should be the way we should get things done, it is not new to getting a hung Parliament. We have got a hung Parliament but yet, we were able to pass progressive laws. I believe we can do better this time around.

Mr Speaker, you remember Section 119[5] of the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991. When you were an ordinary Member of Parliament, you were very much vociferous in raising what Section 119[5] of the Constitution says. It says that; ***'The Auditor General Report has to be debated.'*** It is the recommendation of that debate that should be sent to the Public Accounts Committee, the public is expecting now that you are now the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee should adhere to Section 119[5]. Like I say often, the Auditor General's Report is not just a political document, most of the heads of the MDAs, the vote controllers, most of them are not even party card carriers but we as Members of Parliament often take the bullets for them. After so much misappropriation that is alleged by the Auditor General's findings, we will come here and attempt to cover them up and that will be a bigger disservice to this Nation. But one thing that I know, you are a man who says things by their names, you have proved that. There was a time when you were sent to the Disciplinary Committee; that

is the committee on ethics and privileges that was a demonstration that at times you can stand above party politics. Of course, you are a man of your own. Please note this, unlike when you were an ordinary Member of Parliament, the fact that you are now occupying that seat, you are no longer serving the SLPP, you are not just serving the people of Lumley but you are now serving this House. We want to see a Speakership that will respect the Opposition, we want to see a Speakership that will accord us the freedom of speech, and the only place where Members of Parliament have the latitude to speak their minds, to express the views of their Constituencies is Parliament. So, we want you to open up the space so that more Members of Parliament, will have the opportunity to make use of S.O [23] and also S.O [19] which deals with question time to the Ministers, that has been moribund for the longest time. Ministers ought to be coming to this Well to respond to questions that affect our people but today many wrongs are happening. The SLRS are already collecting fees on something that they were supposed to bring to Parliament, as I speak they are collecting licenses on rates that were never approved by Parliament. But if question times were fully implemented, I am sure those are things that would have been prevented. So, I want to assure you on this other side of the House that we will continue to be patriotic Sierra Leoneans, we also want to tell Sierra Leoneans that the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of this House are not just elected by Members of the Sierra Leone People Party but they were also elected by Members of Parliament of this House which include Members of the Sierra Leone People Party, the All People Congress and of course the Paramount Chiefs Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we want you to continue to be fair and democratic in the discharge of your duties, we have demonstrated that and we can be democratic. Please let us not go back to those days, wherein we bulldozed our way to get things done, we are a listening Opposition, when we see that there is a trajectory where we can see reasons for things that can benefit Sierra Leoneans, we can see how we can adjust for the benefits of our people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note, I want to congratulate the newly elected Leadership of this House, we want to wish you well and lastly, we want to assure you of our unflinching commitment to support your administration and to see that we have a Parliament that will usher in more goodies than other Parliaments. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Acting Leader of the Opposition, I want to assure you on behalf of Mr Speaker and myself, that it is our objective to keep this House together, it is our objective to be fair and our objective to ensure that basic tenets of our Constitution are adhered to. I will now give the Floor to the Acting Leader of Government Business.

**HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today, with you and Mr Speaker, Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas, it has given us hope as Parliamentarians. The Honourable Segepoh Thomas was here in 2013 when we amended the Constitution so that one of us would be the Speaker. He has gone through the ranks from an ordinary Members of Parliament to Deputy Speaker and now Speaker, it shows that any one of us will be a Speaker one day, and that is the more reason we should give the maximum support you deserve.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas is the youngest Speaker in this Republic. As I have said, he will be the guinea pig for this position, you are also the youngest Deputy Speaker. I remember when we voted for the Honourable Chernor Maju Bah sometime in 2012, he was 43 years old. Today, you are occupying that position as Deputy Leader at the age of 42, this shows that you are going to serve as the youngest Deputy Speaker, both of you are representing the young people of this Nation, if you succeed more young people would be allowed to serve in that office, if you failed you are not only failing yourself, you would be failing the young people of this Republic, and if you succeed you are succeeding for us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the positions these two people are occupying today is what God has destined for them. I could remember Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas in 2018 elections after winning the symbols, he called me and said S.O [2] ar wan for bi Leader, he did not say I want to be a Deputy Speaker, he said; S.O [2] Bash ar wan for be Leader, I could remember I was in Bo. But clearly even before dissolving Parliament of 2018, we have arranged ourselves and have decided that the Honourable Paran Umar Tarawally should be the Deputy Speaker in the case if we come back in 2018 but unfortunately, he was not able to survive the symbol battle. So when Honourable Segepoh called and said; "Bash I want to be the leader," I said no, we want Paran but Paran is not coming because he did not survive the symbol battle. I would recommend that you throw your weight for the position of the Deputy Speaker. You could imagine we were in Opposition and nobody thought that we are going to win. He wanted to be a Minority Leader or the Opposition Leader, I told him to throw his weight to be the Deputy Speaker, and he asked Bash are you sure? And I said yes, he said okay, we will settle for it, and that was how we settled for the position of Deputy Speaker for Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas in the Fourth Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I believe those that are responsible for the investigation of the Honourable Paran Umar Tarawally should be wrapping up so that we will have him here in this Well to help his colleague Honourable Segepoh Solomon Thomas to deliver the aspirations that we had in 2012. With the support of you in the Fifth Parliament, Honourable Paran and Honourable Thomas, definitely our dreams came through.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today everybody is congratulating you. Few years down the line, these same colleagues will be castigating you and that is what Leadership goes with. The expectations are extremely very high, the hopes are extremely many. We hope you will not disappoint the majority of Members of Parliament because there is no way these two men will please all of us together, even during this First sitting, you will see many of the Members of Parliament, were not fortunate to give their felicitations, this is the beginning of the issues you will be getting, we will be deciding amongst us who is going to speak, the opportunities are

small. Imagine, you will be deciding among one hundred and forty nine Members of Parliament, who will be enjoying the same opportunity, I know all of us want to enjoy this same opportunity. So these are the issues that you will be encountering.

Mr Deputy Speaker, when you were the Deputy Chief Whip two, you started by bringing serenity to this Parliament. When we traveled to other Parliaments, you will see the decorum, you will see the sanity, today even when Parliament is not sitting, the Parliament looks like a business place, no serenity and no decorum, the whole place is just scattered. For some of us who have travelled to other Parliaments, when you go to these Parliaments, you hardly see people outside everybody is busy working, we hope you will bring decorum to this Parliament. Before we came to this Parliament in 2012, when Honourable Neneh and Honourable Mathew S. Nyuma were here in 2007 and through 2012, you will enjoy the decorum, when you come to visit Parliament, you will have the desire to become a Member of Parliament because of the decorum in the House. Today, somebody ask me Honourable Bash what are you doing? S.O [2] Parliament all man dae go dey now. During those days even to come to Parliament, people are scared to do so but today, even our securities do visit the Well, even at the Member's Lounge where Members of Parliament should be seated if you go there now you will see people, even some people come and sleep at that Lounge, we do not have privacy as Members of Parliament, we do not have offices, the Member's Lounge is our offices, it should be for Members of Parliament, where we discuss our issues, that is why everything we arrange and decide on here is outside, even our private conversations are recorded.

Mr Speaker, Deputy Speaker, please bring serenity to this Parliament, make this Parliament enviable again, make this Parliament the supreme Arm of Government, you do not just work into State House to keep company like that, Just go to our canteen there are people who sit in that canteen they have no business in coming to that canteen. When Members of Parliament are talking, you will see staff and other intruders there, there is no privacy. In fact, Members of Parliament are now running away from the canteen and Lounge leaving them to non-members.



Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know like you said, you might have this dream but not in this shortest period. This shows what God has destined for you and that is what he has given you, others wanted it but they did not get it. Congratulations and I wish you well. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Honourable Acting Leader of Government Business and I want to share the sentiments of colleagues Members of Parliament. Unlike the Speaker, I am still a Member of Parliament. So, I want to share the sentiments of colleagues Members of Parliament and to assure you that it is our strongest determination in this of our dispensation to take a giant step forward to ensure that offices are established for Members of Parliament. It is also our strongest determination to ensure that the welfare of Members of Parliament is catered for. We intend to restore the old serenity that the Acting Leader has mentioned and we want to take it to a notched above of what he used to know. I know after the felicitations today, it should be cleared to every Member of Parliament and to our colleagues in the service that the honeymoon is over, the business as usual has come to an end, the work has started and everybody should brace up for the change.

On that note, I want to use this opportunity on behalf of the Speaker, to say thanks to colleagues for electing us once again and for your confidence in us. I assure you that your confidence is not misplaced, we will deliver on the target that you have in mind and we will deliver on the points stated. Thank you. Any announcement?

**HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA:** Mr Speaker, before the announcement, like what the Honourable Member has said, I am sure most colleagues could not make it to Parliament because as we sit here the fuel crisis has continued into the second week. The interesting part is that, the Petroleum Regulatory Agency that is responsible for the fuel regulation in Sierra Leone, are saying that we have fuel in stock and the fuel dealers have the fuel but I drove this morning from 7 a.m. to almost 11 a.m. I could not get fuel, the stations were all closed. Interestingly, we cannot continue like this as a Nation, if Government regulatory Agency is saying there is fuel but the fuel dealers are not selling the fuel our people are constrained. If you go to the business places, they

are closing before time, if we are struggling with electricity we must not also struggle with the alternative source which is fuel, otherwise the situation will be more disastrous. I will not accept by saying we will leave our case to God, this is not a religious matter, this is an issue that we can fix as a Nation.

Mr Speaker, let me also bring to your notice that for almost two months, the Honourable Member, from the Western area Honourable Unpha has raised the issue of Goderich street, there is a big hole right in the middle of Goderich street by Eastern police and it is very dangerous because almost every day accident occurs in that hole, we cannot continue like this. One of the things that we want to see moving on in this Parliament is not just to say let us invite these people who are responsible but we want to see tangible actions that are being taken. I want to beg your office, with the issue of the fuel can we have the P.R.A as soon as possible? Let them come and tell us what is the situation of the fuel crisis in the Country? It is unbearable, children cannot go to schools on time because transportation is a problem. Mr Speaker, thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, thank you very much. Sorry Honourable Member, please resume your seat. I have taken your concern and I want to assure you that, as it is said by the P.R.A that there is fuel in the Country, they are rationing because there is a delay from the expected fuel boat that was supposed to be landed or to arrive around Friday but it is expected that by tomorrow the fuel would have been in the Country and it would be distributed immediately for free flow of supply. However, I will refer the matter to the Committee on Trade so that the P.R.A will come to Parliament and give us indebt details as to the time table and what is expected.

**HON. KOMBA QUEE:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much. I want to bring to your notice that we the new Members of Parliament are...

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, I will encourage you that if you want to take the Floor, you must stand on the appropriate Standing Order.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

**HON. KOMBA QUEE:** Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O [23] I want to bring to your notice that we the new Members of Parliament and the young Members of Parliament, are facing a whole lot of embarrassments in this Country. Since we came here as Members of Parliament, we have not got our Identification cards which signify authority. Mostly in many occasions that we go, when we are ask for our identification cards in order to identify ourselves, we do not have that proof. It becomes an embarrassment to some of us. So, I want to bring it to the notice of this House, that those who are responsible for our identification cards, let them please prepare them and submit them to us. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** That is noted.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

*Mr Speaker adjourned to Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2024*

*The House rose at 12:35 P.M at 10: am*

