

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

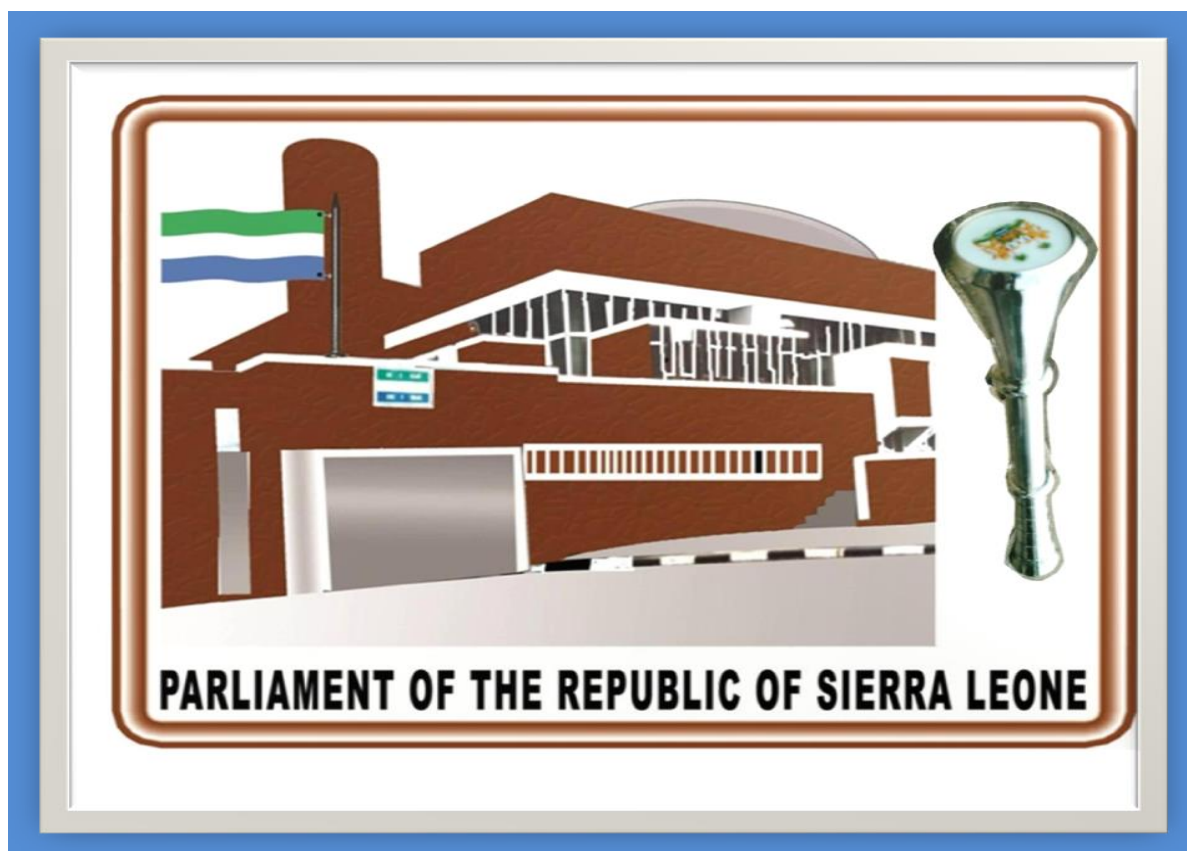
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION –FIRST MEETING

THURSDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 2024

SESSION – 2023/2024



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

VOLUME: I

NUMBER: 1

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
held Thursday, 8th February, 2024

CONTENTS

I. PRAYERS

II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY 30TH JANUARY, 2024.

III. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

IV. WITHDRAWAL OF MOTION BY THE MINISTER OF EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

V LAYING OF PAPER:

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**[i] THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY [ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT FEES] REGULATION 2024;**

THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY ACT 2022, [ACT NO 15. 2022]

STATUTORY INSTRUMENT NO.2 OF 2024;

**[ii] THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY [AGRICULTURAL AND AGRO-
BASED INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES] REGULATION, 2024;**

THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY ACT 2023, ACT NO. 15 OF 2023

STATUTORY INSTRUMENT NO.3 OF 2024.

VI MOTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE

PROPOSER: HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:

SECONDER: HON. AARON A. KOROMA

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THE TWELFTH REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE BE ADOPTED

BY THE HOUSE AND THAT THE RECOMMENDATION CONTAINED THEREIN BE APPROVED.

VII GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE HEREBY RATIFIES THE FOLLOWING CONVENTIONS WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON THURSDAY 25TH AND TUESDAY 30TH JANUARY 2024, RESPECTIVELY:

[i] CONVENTION ON JUDICIARY COOPERATION IN CIVIL, COMMERCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS BETWEEN THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO AND THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

[ii] CONVENTION ON CYBERCRIME

[iii] AFRICAN UNION CONVENTION ON CROSS-BOARDER COOPERATION [NIAMEY CONVENTION]



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Thursday, 8th February, 2022.

I. PRAYERS

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

*[The House met at 10:10a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]
SUSPENSION OF S.O.5[2]*

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

The House was called to Order

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I was expecting a Motion from one of the Whips, but in the absence of both of them, I will entertain a Motion from any one of you.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Sorry Sir, based on your comment of what you are saying is a real testament of standards dropping down and of which I have earlier made my positions clear and there was some form of improvements. I was really determined today to bring that to your notice that standards are dropping; and in fact, in the absence of both Whips is a real testament to that and we cannot continue in this way. It is a House of Parliament and I will start raising counter Motions even if I am frustrated on the way.

THE SPEAKER: I thought we have just continued.

II RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY 30TH JANUARY, 2024.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, on behalf of the House, it is my pleasure to welcome in our midst, the presence of the Acting Chief Justice [*Applause*]. With that, let us get on now with the day's business we have not got much time, I intend to rise from the Well at 12pm for another engagement which all of you know. At 12pm when we rise, I am inviting the entire House to go to the State Hall in order to pay our last respect to one of our former colleagues, the Honourable Ambassador who apart from being a Minister of Government, he was also a Member of this House from 1996-2007. You do not need to be invited in your own House, I am only reminding you and I am asking all of us to please go and pay our last respect.

Honourable Members, we shall now consider the Votes and Proceedings of the 33rd sitting of this House, that took place on Tuesday 30th January, 2024. We shall skip pages 1 through to 4, and start our consideration from page 5. Are there any amendments on page 5? Page 6? Page 6, I have a small correction to make; in the middle of that page, the observation is attributed to Mr Speaker. The word 'precedent' ending with 't' should be changed to 'precedence', 'ce' instead of a 't' and in the third line in that same paragraph, please do the same correction. Page 7?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, page 7; it is full of comments. Right from the opening paragraph, you did identify as you said because I am quoting 'unforgiveable' error by the Government Printer certain provisions from the Constitution were "doctored" or "changed", which I believe is a serious offence and in response to that one of the Honourable Members, Honourable Alpha Amadu Bah, made a suggestion that all previous amendments to the Constitution be brought before this House for a total review; but thank God you were able to identify that change of the Constitution, of which only Parliament has the authority to do so. So it is even worrying; it was unanimously agreed that we withdraw that consolidated copy which we have done, but who knows if there are other changes by any individual whether knowingly or unknowingly and for this House to sit down and allow the ground norm, our Bible, to be changed by any individual or group of individuals cannot be taken lightly. We really need to do further follow-up on this otherwise, there may be other changes that we are not even aware of. So on that note, I submit that we consider the suggestion made by Honourable Alpha Amadu Bah. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I did not suggest by any stretch of the imagination that the changes made were deliberate and intentional; they may have been done inadvertently by the Government Printer but nonetheless, they cannot be tolerated. They cannot be tolerated because of the provisions of Section [108], Sub-section [9], and this brings me to the correction that I want to make, the section quoted again, Section [109], that is wrong. Section [109] deals with a totally different matter, so please that correction should be made on page 7. What we agreed upon as you rightly pointed out was that, the first draft of the corrected version would be made available to us and I will constitute a cross-party Committee of the House to examine that copy before it finally goes out to be printed. I believe that was in consonance with the proposal that your Colleague on your side made. That ruling stands even though it is omitted here, I would like to see it repeated in the Votes and Proceedings. With that, can I have a Motion please for the adoption of the Votes and Proceedings?

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: I move that the Votes and Proceedings be adopted by the House as corrected.

THE SPEAKER: Any Secunder?

HON. REBECCA Y. KAMARA: I so second Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, you know me now without paying credence to somebody's intolerable rubbish about being a predator but I do have a soft spot for voices coming from the vincula vender *[Applause]*. I hope you will understand.

Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to

[Record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday 30th January, 2024 has been adopted as amended]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I have just been informed that the draft revised version is now available, and has been made available to my office although I have not seen it yet. Before we rise today, I would give Notice to both sides now to begin to think of the Honourable Members that might wish to serve on that cross-party Committee to look at that version and report back to us as earlier as possible. You do not have to give me the names now; you can do it afterwards, but think of the Membership of that Committee before we rise from the Well. I thank you.

III ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: I do not think I have any substantive announcement to make and considering also the fact that we are short of time, we have to rise by Noon, whatever announcement there is, I will preserve for our next sitting.

IV. WITHDRAWAL OF MOTION BY THE MINISTER OF EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

MR MOHAMED L. DUMBUYA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with the pleasure of this Honourable House, I beg to withdraw the Paper entitled: The Work Permit [Fees Regulation 2024], The Work Permit Act 2023 Act No. 11, 2023, Statutory Instrument No.1 of 2024 which was laid on the Table of the House on Thursday 25th January 2024. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, apologies from the Honourable Minister and the entire Leadership of the Ministry of Employment, Labour and Social Security. After the laying of the paper on the 25th January 2024, we had been inundated with a lot of concerns; as a Ministry, we work

with tripartite partners – The Employer Federation and the Sierra Leone Labour Congress and it has come to the realization that the Employer's Federation is not as inclusive as it is so most of the Industries and Corporate bodies are not part and parcel of that Board that we consulted and therefore, the decision to increase the work permit as was presented was not fully communicated but that does not mean that we are not going to increase it. We have had several meetings with the Leadership and they have also communicated their plan to contribute to the job creation of His Excellency the President of the **500,000** jobs. We have also looked at the issue and the time frame, the transfer of skills; we cannot transfer skills within the shortest possible time, we will do it with your support. We are now discussing their succession plans to see how they would train our citizens to be able to fully transfer the skills and ultimately the jobs that we want them to do.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with these few words with the pleasure of this Honourable House, I beg to withdraw the Paper entitled: The Work Permit [Fees Regulation 2024], The Work Permit Act 2023 Act No. 11, 2023, Statutory Instrument No.1 of 2024. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Minister for that announcement. If I may borrow his own word 'inundated', it is quite appropriate. The Leadership of this House including my humble self, has equally been inundated by representatives from outside bodies from the population who were expressing concern about that particular issue so we hope that the Ministry will now take the opportunity to now widen the scope of consultations to embrace all of those who were originally left out of the initial consultation so that they can feel being part and parcel of the process and indeed also if possible, take ownership of the new measures that we would be bringing back to this House. So on that understanding, we would accept your request for withdrawal and hope that it would not take too long for you to come back with the new Instrument; which we would embrace as many views as possible. Thank you Mr Minister, you may now take leave off us if you do not have another thing to present.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, the withdrawal Motion today, I don't know you were given the proper edification on how to do it; let me rely on S.O [31] to move a Motion for the withdrawal but you have done that already.

MR MOHAMED L. DUMBUYA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, pursuant to S.O [31] [i] which reads: A Motion or an Amendment may be withdrawn at the request of the Mover.

THE SPEAKER: It is just a Motion that you read, not quoting from the Standing Orders.

MR MOHAMED L. DUMBUYA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, pursuant to S.O [31] [i] with the pleasure of this Honourable House, I beg to withdraw the Paper entitled: The Work Permit [Fees, Regulation 2024], The Work Permit Act 2023 Act No. 11 of 2023, Statutory Instrument No.1 of 2024 which was laid on the Table of the House on Thursday 25th January 2024.

Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To

[Motion by the Minister of Employment, Labour and Social Security, has been withdrawn]

V Papers Laid

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change

MR JIWOH ABDULAI: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your leave I beg to lay on the Table of this Honourable House, the following papers:

[i] THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY [ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FEES] REGULATION 2024;

THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY ACT 2022, [ACT NO 15. 2022]

STATUTORY INSTRUMENT NO.2 OF 2024;

[ii] THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY [AGRICULTURAL AND AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES] REGULATION, 2024;

THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY ACT 2023, ACT NO. 15 OF 2023

STATUTORY INSTRUMENT NO.3 OF 2024;

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, I want to move a Notice of Motion.

THE SPEAKER: Is it related to what the Minister has said?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Yes I want to move.

THE SPEAKER: Order please!

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: I want to move a Notice of Motion.

THE SPEAKER: A Notice of Motion on what the Minister has said?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on S.O [25]. I am giving a Notice of Motion, that those Statutory Instruments that have been laid on the Table of this House be debated and I will move the Motion. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, before I relieve the Minister and subject to the proper thing being done by the Deputy Leader of Government Business, let me just bring this to the attention of the Minister. I know a good number of you are new to governance; it does not mean that because you have been to the House and laid the Instrument that Instrument takes effect immediately. We have had instances before where the laying of Instruments on the Table of the House was completely misunderstood by both officials of the Ministry and the general public. When you lay an Instrument, it matures into Law after 21 days; and that injunction is to be found in Section 107 Sub-section 7 of the Constitution so please take note of that. You do not need to go and begin to implement the fees prescribed in the Instrument immediately; you have to wait as you have heard from the Deputy Leader. He is giving Notice of a Motion that, that particular Instrument be debated so you will have to wait. I just thought that I should caution you, so you will now take this caution back to your Ministry. Thank you Mr Minister, you may now take leave off us.

Honourable Members, whilst I await the announcement of the next item, I want to bring to the notice of the House that we have suffered another loss, in the passing of a former Member of Parliament, Honourable Emmanuel Tommy, former Deputy Minority Leader of the SLPP, and later became the Acting Minority Leader in the Third Parliament. His remains

I understand would be interred tomorrow in Kenema City. So, for both losses that we have suffered, may I ask all of us to please rise and observe a minute silence and may the souls of the reposed of the departed Honourable Members rest in perfect peace. We may now proceed with the rest of today's business.

VI MOTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE

PROPOSER: HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:

SECONDER: HON. AARON A. KOROMA

BE IT RESOLVED:

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

FIRST SESSION OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND

REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

THE TWELFTH REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE ON PARLIAMENTARY VETTING OF PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATIONS - 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service, cognizant of its constitutional responsibility of vetting and recommending of qualified candidates to this plenary for important offices of State, met on Tuesday 6th February, 2024 and interviewed **ten** Presidential Nominees for the following positions: i) Justice of the Supreme Court ; ii) Member, Board of Trustees for the Students Loan Scheme, iii) Chairman, Fertilizer Regulatory Agency iv) Chairman, Seeds Certification Agency v) **two** Members of the National Communications Authority , vi) Chairman, National

Youths Commission ;vii) Member, National Youths Service, viii) Chairman, Allied Health Professional Council and ix) Chairman of the Independent Media Commission.

2. PROCEDURE

The Committee conducted as usual the hearing within its set framework of procedures and the Presidential Nominees were interviewed on issues pertaining to their educational backgrounds to ensure that they have the relevant education and necessary backup experience to effectively perform in the various positions appointed. Further probing questions put to the Nominees covered wide ranging issues relating to their track records in the Public service and other pertinent work situations, declared assets, tax obligations and their visions for a nationally productive tenure. Issues of unsuitability or otherwise were also closely looked into.

3. FOURTEENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY, 6TH FEBRUARY, 2024

The following Presidential Nominees were interviewed on oaths:

i. Mr Abdulai Masiyambay Bangura Esq. Proposed Justice of the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone

Mr Bangura is one of the few Sierra Leonean Legal Practitioners with a very rich cross cultural background that portrays practical sense of humility and nationalism. He hails from Bombali, Northern Sierra Leone but acquired his Secondary School education at the Government Secondary School Kenema in the 1980s. His law sojourn in the provinces brought justice to the door steps of many deprived communities in the South-East of the country.

He has a rich plethora of legal services to State institutions after he was called to the Bar in 1996 to name just a few: State Counsel, Law Officers Department -1995 -1996; Legal Retainer for Kenema City and District Councils 2002-2018 respectively; Provincial Legal Retainer for National Social Security and Insurance Trust NASSIT-2007-2017 ; Forum for African Women Educationist(FAWE)-2003-2008, International Rescue Committee (IRC)-1999-2010 and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees(UNHCR)-2001-2010.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Nominee prior to this appointment served as Deputy Attorney General and Minister of Justice 2018-2019 and Chairman of the Political Parties Regulation Commission(2019–to date), where he exhibited professionalism and love for the country.

Responding to the Committee on his professionalism and what he would be taking to the Supreme Court, he said he was going to the Court with open- mindedness, fairness and give justice to whom Justice is due.

He was hailed across party lines for his unrestrained nationalism during Political Parties trying times.

ii. Dr Francess Fornah- Proposed Member, Board of Trustees Student Loan Scheme Fund

Dr Francess Fornah is a task-focused, result-oriented career professional with a strong Nursing, Midwifery, and Public Health background with proven records of providing education, training, mentoring and coaching in midwifery education and practices. She is currently serving as the Head of School of Midwifery in Masuba, Makeni under whose leadership registered an increased number of births specialists and attendants to rural health units.

She holds a Doctorate Degree in Public Health, specializing in Community Health Education from Walden University, Minneapolis, Minnesota in the United States of America and has impacted immensely in the sub region as a Fellow of the College West African College of Nursing in the field of Maternal and Child Health Nursing, a critical area of concern for any good democratic government.

Responding to the Committee on what she would be taking to the loan scheme, she said her level of administrative prowess would help her to work amicably with colleagues to deliver the scheme as expected by the Government.

iii. Dr Mustapha Syhnus Tejan-Kella-Proposed Chairman, National Fertilizer Regulatory Agency

Dr Mustapha Kella is an internationally acclaimed Agriculturist with Policy, Development and Fund raising and management background has worked extensively for the United Nations as Civil Affairs Team Leader. From June 2015 to November 2022 in Sudan, he was responsible for managing relevant information, planning, analysis and budgeting for the United Nations Peace Missions in South Sudan (UNIMISS). He also later played a pivotal role as Programme Officer for the National Disarmament Demobilization Reintegration in the South Sudan and was responsible to plan and supervise the implementation of policies and operational guidelines for the execution of such assignment. Back home, as Programme Officer and Head of the Demobilization Unit (1996-2003) he played a crucial role in the disarmament program after the ten years of civil war.

He is a Scientist and researcher with a number of global scientific publications to his credits. Dr Kella studied at the University of Adelaide, Australia where he bagged the Doctorate Degree in 1982.

Responding to the Committee, on how he would ensure the government supplied fertilizers are properly regulated, he mentioned that his long term administrative experience would enable him set the structure for a transparent and accountable operation as expected by law to contribute meaningfully to the Feed Salon initiative.

iv. **Mr Amara Idara Sheriff-Proposed Chairman Sierra Leone Seeds Certification Agency**

Mr Sheriff is an Agricultural Economist, Strategic Planner, and monitoring and evaluation expert with over thirty years spanning experience. He was a key stakeholder of the agricultural sector plan (2018-2022) where he served as the Chief Agriculture Officer initially and later as Director-General, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security. He was one of the key players in the coordination, formulation and appraisal of projects for donor funding in the Ministry of Agriculture (1996 and 2010), the move that motivated the private sector growth in the implementation of agricultural production targets.

He is an unassuming retired Civil Servant that still possesses energy and knowledge to invest in rural agriculture in a bid to achieve food self-sufficiency through his found initiative named **Nguala Agribusiness Development Company** in the South-East of the country.

He holds a Master of Arts in Development Studies specializing in Agriculture and Rural Development (1987-1988) from the Hague Netherlands in addition to other credentials to his credit.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee was mindful about the current commitments of the Government in relation to the Feed Sierra Leone Project and interviewed the Nominee on how he would develop seeds, work with SLARI to research and produce seeds that meet climate change resistance, the erudite seasoned agriculturist stated "with my wealth of experience working with the Ministry of Agriculture, the first thing is to set the system right; that is ensuring that the right seeds get to the farmers at the right time. My focus will also be on the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI) for a collaborative work in producing seeds that befit our soils and climate but more importantly resist the changing nature of climate.

v. Mr Samuel Squire: Proposed Member, National Communications Authority Board

Mr Abdul Squire is a development professional with expertise in program assessment, data analysis and strategic planning. His vast knowledge and experience in the design, execution, monitoring and evaluation of projects and programs has earned him a long term reputation for evidence based decision making. His quest for knowledge earned him lots of academic prowess and job experience especially in the Non-Governmental World where he has contributed immensely as Head of Operation in the welfare and control of Street Children since 2020.

Answering the Committee on National Communication Authority Board operations, he said he would work with colleagues on the Board to create fair competitions amongst communication companies, protect consumers' interest and help the Chairman to look at policies within our mandates to deliver as expected.

vi. Madam Sallay Ndimawa Adams- Proposed Member, National Communications Authority Board

Madam Sallay Ndimawa Adams is a Gender Activist, an educationist in the field of nutrition and Public Health. Her passion for adolescents' girls' education encouraged her to establish the Young Women Advocacy Network, a Civil Society forum that coordinates and promotes the affairs of the **girl child** including the unflinching supports to the '**Hands off our Girls**', the national flagship program of the First Lady of Sierra Leone.

Until her appointment, she serves as senior teacher and Acting Head of Department of Home Economics at the Methodist Girls High School spanning for over a decade. She holds a Bachelor Degree in Home Economics and double Master Degrees in Public Health and Administration respectively from the Njala University.

She promised to work earnestly with the Board to achieve the relevance as dictated by the Communication Act. She concluded on a resounding note that team spirit and patriotism would be an integral part of her assignment executions.

vii. Mr Saidu Alie Larkoh- Proposed Chairman, National Youths Commission

Mr Saidu Alie Larkoh is a trained and qualified teacher with acclaimed professionalism in strategic leadership. His tremendous work in the government Ministries, local and international NGOs have earned him recognition nationwide over the years. He is result oriented, God-fearing, a team player, and has the zest for knowledge growth. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Nominee is a grass root personality in the Tonkolili District and well known in the country for Academic services.

He has proven academic records and a lot of training certificates to name but a few: B.Sc. (Hons.) Statistics 2013, Njala University; Certificate in Agriculture and Livestock Management 2018 Harbin University of Commerce, China and Master in Educational Administration, Njala University 2021.

He has also served in many capacities visa-vis Lecturer 2023, Njala University; District Census Coordinator Tonkolili 2022. Reacting to the Committee inquiries on promoting Youths programs, he said the structures for the Commission operations had been

established by his predecessors and promised to build on them vigorously; especially supporting the implementation of the Drug laws in relation to the pervasive addictions of destructive amongst youths of the country.

viii. **Mr Abdul Samad Kamara: Proposed Member National Youth Service**

Mr Abdul Samad Kamara is a Civil Rights Activist, who is well known in the Tonkolili District for protecting the Rights of the vulnerable especially women and youths. From 2012 to 2022, he served as Regional Project Manager, Education Project, Centre for Democracy and Human Rights, Tonkolili District; 2014 to 2023, District Coordinator, National Elections Watch (NEW) Tonkolili District; 2011 to 2017, District Chairman, Human Rights Defenders Network, Sierra Leone etc.

Mr Kamara's long standing relationship with the youths across the four regions of this country, spanning from his days as Desk Officer of Youth Affairs at the Tonkolili District Council to current recognition at various national youths forum, likely promoted this new assignment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during screening the Nominee was reminded of the myriad youths unemployment issues and he pointed that there are guidance on youth's creativity and entrepreneurship which both the Commission and the Youths Service have been working on. He promised to open new grounds in this direction and create the open space for increased youth voices to be heard.

ix. **Mr Abu Ansumana Conteh- Proposed Chairman, Allied Health Professional Councils**

Mr Abu Ansumana Conteh is a Rural Community Health Practitioners' Champion, a visionary leader that has left an indelible contribution in carving out a clear recognition of the immense sacrifices the Community Health Officers (CHOs) and other associated cadres are offering in the health service delivery of the country. The then Paramedical School in Bo now under the Njala University produced the first graduates of Community Health Officers (CHOs) in 1986 and since then the trajectory has increased with no service scheme for the mentioned cadres for the health system then catered only for Medical Doctors, Nurses and Pharmacists whilst Community Health Officers (CHOs) and other health professionals were

not rightly cared for. The lack of a professional regulatory body that will cater for the welfares of these CHOs and other cadres in terms of licenses, practice codes, ethics and remunerations posed a huge challenge. The relentless efforts of this Nominee and his Colleagues greatly assisted the Ministry of Health to pioneer the CHO Practitioners Act, 2017; whose implementation now begs for this position which the Nominee in questioned was identified by all cadres at the Health Ministry to fill.

The Nominee is a humble and grass root Medical practitioner that has worked and represented the CHOs and other Health practitioners as shown in the following achievements:

- 2012 – First appointed Chief CHO that established office space in the Ministry of Health to coordinate the affairs of CHOs.
- 2013 - developed a scheme of Service in collaboration with the Human Resource Directorate for the promotions of CHOs to Senior and Principal ranks.
- 2006-2012 –Acting Head of the Department of Community Health and Clinical Sciences, Njala University during which he made many reforms in upgrading the curriculum of CHO to degree level and introducing another cadre of Community Health Assistants that are principal assistants to the CHOs at the Peripheral Units in remote communities; etc.

Mr Abu Ansumana holds a Master Degree in Community Health from the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom (2005) and hosts of other international Diplomas at his credit.

He promised the Committee to fully use this position to uphold the interest of his subordinates in all spheres that would promote policies with the Ministry of Health to cater for the recognition, quality service deliveries and benefits for services of all health professionals under his watch.

x. **Joseph Simon Egbenda Kapuwa-Proposed Chairman Independent Media Commission**

Mr Joseph Egbenda Kapuwa is a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court and undertakes both criminal and civil prosecutions on civil matters especially relating to media laws and

ethics. He was called to Bar in 2012 by the Council of Legal Education in Sierra Leone. He served what was then the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) as News Editor from 2000 to 2006. During the civil war years of the country, he worked for the United Nations missions and gathered hands-on experience news in the Public Information Section of the United Nations Missions in Sierra Leone where he served as the First Sierra Leone's Professional Officer and Head of News. Prior to his recent appointment he served as the Director-General of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation, the service which the Fifth Parliament commended as '**professional**' in the coverage of critical and topical businesses of the legislature.

He was hailed across party lines for his hard work and result oriented leadership manifested at challenging times in the Media world.

Reacting to the current status of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC), the seasoned administrator catalogued that under his leadership lot of reforms took place amongst where:

- the media landscape was made viable that ensured journalists were central focused both in career trainings and were given special motivations on some assignments to enable them deliver efficiently; professionalism now a hallmark is promoted than ever before in compliance with the Independent Media Commission guidelines which he commended as worthy.
- That the SLBC is undergoing transformation from analogue to digital system as a new layer of growth which would certainly continue even in his absence.

He concluded that SLBC was far gone in rebranding itself as a national broadcaster as far as he was concerned and was going to the IMC with the legal and journalistic mindset to build on the gains made by his predecessors to make the media world proud.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- i.Mr Abdulai Masiyambay Bangura Esq. - Proposed Justice of the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone
- ii.Dr Frances Fornah- Proposed Member, Board of Trustees Student Loan Scheme Fund
- iii.Dr Mustapha Syhnus Tejan-Kella-Proposed Chairman, National Fertilizer Regulatory Agency
- iv.Mr Amara Idara Sheriff-Proposed Chairman, Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency
- v.Mr Samuel Squire- Proposed Member, National Communications Authority Board
- vi.Madam Sallay Ndimawa Adams- Proposed Member, National Communications Authority Board
- vii.Mr Saidu Alie Larkoh- Proposed Chairman, National Youths Commission
- viii.Mr Abu A. Conteh-Proposed Chairman, Allied Health Professional Councils
- ix.Mr Abdul Samad Kamara- Proposed Member, National Youth Service
- x.Mr Joseph Simon Egbenda Kapuwa- Esq.- Proposed Chairman, Independent Media Commission(IMC)

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

Signed.....

Hon. Mathew Sahr. Nyuma (JP)

Chairman & Leader of Government Business

Date:.....

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of Government Business, any Secunder to the Motion?

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: I so second Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

Question Proposed

THE SPEAKER: I will give the Floor first and foremost, to the Seconder of the Motion.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, they say “charity begins at home”. I am sure when the Leader of Government Business and Chairman of the Appointments Committee was reading the report; he was very emphatic on Nominees from Tonkolili. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before I dwell into them, I want to use this moment to recognise my Paramount Chief, P.C Sheboreh Kelleh III of Yoni, Marbella Chiefdom *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like I said, I want to start at home and that is Tonkolili District. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Nominees before us Mr Saidu Alie Larkoh and Mr Adbul Samad Kamara, whom have been nominated to serve as Board Chairman for National Youth Commission and that of the Youth Service, these appointments the people of Tonkolili are very much pleased with.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is not new because Tonkolili has always answered to the call when the country needs us. I could remember when we were faced with energy crisis, the most reliable energy power before the CLSG, is Bumbuna; and today, when we talk of energy, there is no way you cannot mention Bumbuna. Bumbuna is in Tonkolili *[Applause]* and for successive Governments Mr Speaker, Tonkolili has been the backbone of this country *[Applause]*. So we are not surprised today again we have been called to fix the youth issues of this country. We have the Minister from Tonkolili, Mr Mohamed Orman Bangura, who is working tirelessly to improve on the welfare of young people in this country; and today, the President has nominated capable men from Tonkolili who are well-informed and vast in youth issues to help improve the welfare of young people of this country. I want to assure the President that Tonkolili will deliver in that sector again, just as we delivered in the Energy Sector *[Applause]*. I want to assure this House that these men are great men like the Leader said for example when you go to Magburaka, one of the leading families is the ‘Larkoh’. I can say this is the time for the ‘Larkohs’, we have the MP of Magburaka who is also a Lakkoh; and today, we have a Nominee who is going to serve as Chairman of NYC who is also a ‘Larkoh’, so I can safely say that this year or this period is

indeed a moment for the 'Larkohs'. Congratulations to the 'Larkohs' of Magburaka *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to draw the attention of these young people; they are going into a Sector, that is faced with high prevalence of drug abuse of our young people. We are losing our future generation through the abuse of drug; youth unemployment is the order of the day. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to call on these Nominees, being that they are charged with the responsibility to oversee the National Youth Commission and the National Youth Service, I want to call on them to innovate policies or skills that will improve on the lives of our young people that we are losing rapidly to the abuse of drugs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to zoom in on Mr Abdulai Masiyambay Bangura, the proposed Justice of the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, they say the reward for hard work is more work and I do not think that we should even waste our time on this particular Nominee because he was the Chairman of the Commission that was superintending the activities of Political Parties. He was nominated and served as the Chairman of Political Parties Registration Commission now Authority, I want to say that he did that job with diligence Mr Speaker *[Applause]*. When we had our challenges, if it were for the Court probably, we would not have got a Flag-bearer but he was so involved in ensuring that the APC moves on. So we want to say thank you to him; it was as a result of his independence, integrity and hard-work that led us to where we are now. On that note, I want to thank you Mr proposed Supreme Court Judge; but Mr proposed Supreme Court Judge, one thing I like about him possibly he could be the very first that looked at a Ruling Party and said the wrongs against them. We all could remember that there was a time wherein he issued a statement levying fines against the SLPP when they were found wanting on the law and that is the kind of Nominees we need.

On that note Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say he is going to an Institution that is challenged, the reputation of that Institution is being watered-down *[Applause]*. Today Mr Speaker, Political Parties prefer to dialogue instead of going to our Courts. Today business communities instead of going to Courts for redress, they prefer using arbitration

instead of going to the Courts; that is a call for action I believe in the ability of this young able man *[Applause]*, he has proven his mettle whilst he served as Chairman of the PPRC.

HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW: Mr Chairman, point of Order!

THE SPEAKER: What is your Point of Order?

HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW: Mr Speaker, S.O [34]. We cannot sit here and allow an Honourable Member to demean a whole Arm of Government that is the Judiciary. He is free to say that but we should caution him Mr Speaker. The APC went to Court when they wanted to test the waters whether the PR System was legitimate or not. How can you go to an Institution that you do not have trust in? You would only say your opinion, but the Judiciary is credible enough as far as we are concerned *[Noise in Interruptions]*.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, I can understand Sir, the Honourable Member is in Law School and we have the Chief Justice here; Mr Chief Justice, please remember him *[Applause]*.

HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW: Mr Speaker, I am still on my legs Sir please call the Honourable Member to order. I just want you to call the Honourable Member to order please Mr Speaker; I am craving on your indulgence.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, he is in Law School Sir.

HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW: Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member is speaking to the world and not only to Parliament so demeaning the Judiciary of Sierra Leone cannot do us justice.

THE SPEAKER: I cannot recall a single word that he has used that is demeaning.

HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW: You are the 'Arbitrator' Mr Speaker, I agreed; he has 'watered down' the credibility of the Institution.

THE SPEAKER: I was listening with great attention but I cannot recall the Honourable Member using any word that could be interpreted as demeaning.

HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW: I can repeat his words.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Do not worry yourself, I can understand; it is noted Honourable Member.

THE SPEAKER: Maybe, I am not heard of hearing but I am sure I did not.

HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW: Okay Mr Speaker, you will decide; thank you.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Like I said, I will give him his day, the Chairman of the Legal Education is here, the Chief Justice; and he is a pupil pursuing LLB, so Mr Chief Justice, please be kind to him Sir he is a good Member of Parliament [MP] and he can make a good Lawyer *[Laughing]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like I said I believe in the proven track record of integrity of the proposed Justice of the Supreme Court. I have not worked with him, but those that are Lawyers are saying good things about him. Some of us have worked with the PPRC Proposed Supreme Court Judge, we have worked with him, we know he is a man of integrity, please go to that Justice Sector and make a change *[Applause]*. We cannot move as a nation without Courts that Sierra Leoneans cannot trust so please Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I call on these Nominees to make sure that they go there and make the President proud, and make Sierra Leoneans proud and restore the integrity of this Institution.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to quickly zoom in on Mr Joseph Ebgenda Kapuwa, who is going to the Independent Media Commission [IMC]. In terms of his qualification, those ones are of course, irreproachable. Nobody questions his qualifications and I am not sure that we have ever felt short of qualified people. What we have felt short of is mostly people that can realize that when once they are appointed to positions of trust, they are not only representing themselves, but also representing their generations. The young man who is the proposed Chairman of that Commission, we all know how the SLBC was and to his credit, he made the SLBC more digital, more visible and more accessible to the public *[Applause]* for a very long time, I want to commend you for that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when you look at the Long Title of the IMC Act of 2020, it calls for many things not just to regulate Media Institutions or to also register Media

Houses but when you go to the functions; there is a core function which has been abandoned for a long time and that is improving the well-being of our Journalists. That responsibility falls on the IMC to improve on their welfare to the sense, they have to improve on their efficiency and for one to be efficient, and that person has to be capacitated financially. He has to be capacitated with knowledge as the case may be. We have not treated our Journalists with the much needed respect. We have Accountants, we have Lawyers, we have Doctors, and all of their services go with service charges. When you go to their offices, they will tell you that if you want to see a Doctor, you would have to pay **LE500** or **LE1000** before they prescribe medication for you. How much are we paying Journalists for the services they are rendering for us *[Applause]*? We are treating them with reckless abandonment. And on that note Mr Speaker, this should go to his credits if he puts attention into improving their livelihoods and see how you can capacitate them. Probably, they are committing some of these offenses because they are not well capacitated. There is no way we can pay them and I depend on Journalists to advertise my business, if I am a Politician and I have been defamed, I depend on Journalists to reclaim my image; let them be treated fairly. Please work with SLAJ, and the Ministry of Information, to come up with regulations that would indicate service charges to indicate fees for the acquisition of their services *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to quickly talk on Mr Amara Idara Sheriff and Dr Mustapha Syhnus Tejan-Kella. When you look at their resumes Mr Speaker, these are great men who have served this country diligently and I do believe that the President had not made any mistake to nominate them to serve in these critical Agencies which are the Fertilizer Regulatory Agency and that of the Seed Certification Agency. I want to call on the attention that the success of the 'Feed Salon' depends on these particular Agencies. You cannot have a bumper harvest; you cannot have a better productivity if you do not have viable seeds. Today, the market of seeds is volatile; everyone brings seeds, still most of them are not viable that is why we are still struggling with yields, whilst other countries or maybe the sub-region is boasting of 4 or 5 tons per hectare, we are still talking of 1.9 tons per hectare; which is way below the average in the region and there is no way we can

achieve self-food sufficiency if we do not have quality seeds and quality fertilizers which are pre-requisite for improving agricultural productivity *[Applause]*. I call on you to regulate that Sector to ensure that we have viable seeds, quality fertilizers that will improve agricultural productivity in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk on the Nominees that are going to the National Telecommunications Authority [NaTCA]. Mr Speaker, when the dynamic lady was called, we all heard the reactions of the Galleries. They did not react because they like you; they reacted because they believe that when you go to NaTCA, you will make a change *[Applause]*. Today, our people can no longer buy **Le2** top-up and make two minutes call. Our people are no longer enjoying their usual 'kola'; our people are no longer enjoying their usual bonus that is the expectation of these people in the Galleries *[Applause]*. They expect that when you go to NaTCA, make sure you make good policies. NaTCA is not only there to make revenue, you are a Government Agency for God sake, your primary aim is how you can improve on the welfare of the people, and not how you can generate revenue from the people *[Applause]*. I find it very disturbing when I looked at the Finance Act of 2024, wherein the very NaTCA is saying that it is even discouraging the NMOs to even give bonuses. It is like you are discouraging the NMOs to give bonuses to Sierra Leoneans, please make sure you look into that particular area as well. We need our bonus back. We need our 'kola' back; we want to get the value of our monies for top-ups *[Applause]*. Whenever I buy **LE50** I should be able to make calls at least for 10, 20, 30 minutes but today just a minute will cost around **LE2** and some hundreds of Leones which is too much for the average Sierra Leonean.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk on Mr Abu A. Conteh. Mr Speaker, when I was at Njala University, Mr Conteh was the head of the Community Health Science; and for the records, Mr Conteh is the first Community Health Officer in this country *[Applause]*. When this course was introduced in 1986, he was 001 and his passion to ensuring that this Sector is regulated at the highest point; Mr Speaker, 90% of the Professionals that are delivering healthcare services to our people, fall within this particular cadre. The Medical Doctors, have their Medical and Dental Council they are being regulated but the Lab

Technicians, the Nurses, the Phoenixians, the CHOs who are mostly rendering the services to our people are not being regulated; even if they commit an offence, there is no law that actually regulates them, so having a professional Sector to regulate them I think, it is a step in the right direction.

Lastly Mr Speaker, they are all fine Nominees, you have not been appointed by the SLPP President, you are appointed by the President of Sierra Leone to serve the people of Sierra Leone *[Applause]*. When you go to your offices, you have not been appointed to serve SLPP people, you have been appointed to serve the people of Sierra Leone *[Applause]*. Please serve them irrespective of their tribe, irrespective of their religion, irrespective of their political affiliations, see them as Sierra Leoneans because you have been appointed not just because the President likes you. The President appointed you with expectations and please note that your reputations are on the line if you go to these offices and underperform, you would not only disappoint yourself or your Party, you are also going to disappoint your very families *[Applause]*. So please go to your respective MDAs and do justice to the people of this country.

On that note Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I call on Colleagues to approve these nominations with alacrity. Thank you very much Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I will now give the Floor to the Women's Leader.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Speaker, before that let us be mindful of your earlier announcement of time.

THE SPEAKER: It is almost 10 minutes to 12 Noon.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Maybe, we could add couple of minutes.

HON. NENNEH LEBBIE: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I am going to be very brief; the last speaker has just exhausted what most of us have in mind to say. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank His Excellency, for choosing our Sierra Leonean brothers and sisters to serve in different capacities. I want to congratulate you guys in advance but I have some few words which I would want you to take home.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is not the first time our brothers and sisters have been chosen by His Excellency the President. I just want to make a general statement for my brothers and sisters; that they are going to offices that have been manned by our brothers and sisters equally, they might have done much or perhaps, you need to do more. Mr Speaker, often and again, we are faced with a lot of embarrassments from these Nominees which we approve in this House; and that brings me to some few words of caution which few days ago during our annual Thanksgiving and Prize-giving Service, I want to quote you directly with your leave Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, you did say: "When you have nothing, you have to be patient; so you exercise patience when you have nothing and when you achieve, watch your attitude". Mr Speaker, I have decided to quote these words for a lot of reasons, and the reasons you know exactly Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, because we normally have our brothers and sisters when they come we see them, they are not poor people; believe you me, I am not referring to you as 'poor people' in this case but poor in the sense, because you want these positions. Sometimes, when you come and we see your attitude very patient, you bow to Mr Speaker; you bow to Honourable Members, but as soon as you are approved by this House *[Applause]*, woe upon anyone of us here, to give you calls. We are not giving you calls to beg you believe you me; we are giving you calls for our Constituents *[Applause]*. We have the voiceless out there; we should be talking for them. We should advocate for them and therefore we will continue to knock at your doors to see that we give them jobs. We listen to their cries; but each time we approve people in this House, when they go to their different offices, they are different people altogether I hope these Nominees will not behave like that to us. We say this often and again because, we know the kind of challenges we face out there. We are facing a lot of challenges. We have a wider coverage and we face the bullet all the time. We face the challenges; we are the ones that are blamed. When you do not perform properly, they will come back to us and say SLPP or this Government is not doing anything. I can give you a simple example Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, scholarship results are just out the Sierra Leone Grant-In-Aid [SLG] to be specific, most of us are frustrated here because we gave only two names Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, they did not respond to those two names. They never accomplished the assignments *[Applause]* that is so frustrating. It is

frustrating because these are people we approve them here. When we call them please help XYZ for us, they will never respond. Sometimes, they do not even pick our calls so it is so frustrating that is why I quoted you Mr Speaker, Honourable Members. Now, you want it, you are here with us and we are ready because we cannot disappoint His Excellency the President. You are going to those offices to perform and we would believe that you will do your best not to disappoint us at all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would quickly talk about Food Security and this Food Security hinges on two main people here; Dr Mustapha Syhnus Tejan-Kella who will be approved for the office of the Chairman, National Fertilizer Regulations Agency and Mr Amara Idara Sheriff, Chairman Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these are two main offices that hinge on the Food Security we are talking about. My colleague has spoken about it but that needs to be re-emphasised for a lot of reasons. Some of us take pleasure in agriculture that is a thing I like personally. I like to participate in agriculture. Last year, I did some seed rice cultivation at Tormabum; this year I would be coming to my District that is the Bo District – Tinkonko Chiefdom to be specific. I will be cultivating some good number of land myself and some few ladies from Bo District definitely. But what I am trying to say here is normally, we lack the tendency of supplying individuals or Agencies viable seeds. Most times the seeds are adulterated, when you cultivate your land you need so much money because agriculture needs money, and we spend our monies without asking government for a dine but when you give us seed rice that is adulterated, that will affect the efficiency of that particular product or viability of that seed. So let us make sure that the seed multiplication do some good verification of those seeds and tell us the viability of the seeds. Please bring the seeds on time; and equally too, there is always hue and cry for the fertilizers supply. Fertilizers are supplied lately and that is why sometimes when you give Farmers, they will sell them because they sell and get money to do something else in relation to the activity they are doing. So these two offices you are manning please, when you go to these offices, make sure you work in the interest of 'Food Security'. We want to achieve it; it is good that we grow what we eat in Sierra Leone. We want to be proud of ourselves; we do not want to be lazy Sierra Leoneans not

relying on China, Taiwan and other places to send their own food for us. Rice is our staple food so we want to enjoy cultivating the land for what we eat.

Before I take my seat Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me congratulate the two beautiful ladies that have been appointed. I want to congratulate you in advance but I want to talk to you, we need to change the narrative. Let us work like mothers of Sierra Leone ready to change the narrative. I hope you understand what I mean by changing the narrative *[Applause]*. We have been dancing for men all this while much has not been done with respect to men; now that we are opportune to man these offices, let us make sure we work like women and make sure that Sierra Leone is proud of women that come next elections, we would have more women in this Parliament, more women in the Executive, and more women in all the Ministries, Department and Agencies [MDAs]. With those few words, I want to congratulate you in advance and I ask Colleagues to speedily approve you. I thank you *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I am sorry I would have to disappoint a good number of you today; before I recognise any other speaker, let me take the opportunity to recognise the dignitaries who are in our midst today. We have: Ambassador Joe Bell, Chairman of NaTCA, Honourable Justice Alfred Ganda, Justice of the High Court *[Applause]*, Honourable Justice Komba Kamanda is here with us *[Applause]*, the Honourable Justice Tonia Barnett *[Applause]*, the Honourable Justice Augustine K. Musa *[Applause]*. We also have Madam Zainab Umu Moseray – Commissioner, Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone [ECSL] *[Applause]*, Honourable Justice Fynn, MMB Tarawally, Ambassador Umaru B. Wurie, Residence Minister – North-West, Rev. Dr Osman Jessie Forna, General-Secretary of the Inter-religious Council, Mr Mohamed K. Konneh - Chief Electoral Commissioner, we also have in our midst, Isata Sellu-Tucker – Magistrate, Mamakoh Betty Kallon – Magistrate, Councillor Anthony Koni - Board Director, the Honourable Edward Soluku – the man with the solution *[If you are looking for any solution to your problem, now you know where to go]*. We have Dr Robert Shakanda - Deputy National Secretary-General of the SLPP, we also have Madam Martha Kanagbor- National Treasurer of the SLPP and we have the Honourable Mohamed Albert Tarawally. You are all most welcome and a very special day and of course,

the one and only the Honourable Alusine Kanneh. A man who now serves the State as the Chief Immigration Officer but let me assure him that he is greatly missed in this Well.

HON. NENNEH LEBBIE: I want to call your attention to the time Mr Speaker.

Suspension of S.O 5[2]

THE SPEAKER: You are all most welcomed and more especially of course, the Honourable Acting Chief Justice whom we had recognised much earlier *[Applause]*. In case there is any dignitary whose name I have not mentioned, please bring that to the attention of the Clerk; the omission of your name is not deliberate but merely inadvertently. I just want to take two more speakers one from either side of the aisle, and then we conclude. Does that meet your agreement? Thank you.

HON. ARUNA P. LARKOH: Thank you Mr Speaker. I greet you in the name of Allah and I want to thank you all for giving me this opportunity as you have been carefully selected by His Excellency the President, Dr Julius Maada Bio.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to zoom in my discussion around three Nominees who have been carefully selected by His Excellency the President. But first of all, I want to talk about my own brother, Mr Saidu Alie Larkoh who is a very hardworking, committed and intelligent Sierra Leonean who had served in the capacity that he has been appointed to serve as Board Chairman for two consecutive terms. He is now a Nominee as Chairman for the Board, National Youth Commission.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Saidu Alie Larkoh is a fine Sierra Leonean who has the spirit of improving the lives of youths and he is somebody that has been contributing to the development of youths in his District. Mr Saidu Larkoh because of his experience and his track record, he has the skills to actually transform or support activities within the Commission as proposed Chairman of the Youth Commission. Mr Saidu Larkoh is well educated as read from his Curriculum Vitae [CV]; he is a Masters holder who had actually impacted the lives of youths in his District Tonkolili, Magburaka to be precise.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Saidu Larkoh has been doing youth empowerment activities in his area and has contributed immensely collaborating with stakeholders to ensure that youth activities are actually transformed *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to look at the contribution of our dear brother, an activist who has also helped to push youth and women's empowerment activities in the Northern Region, who is the Nominee for the Youth Service Commission Mr Abdul Samad Kamara. He has served as Civil Society Activist in the Northern Region for some time; and before his appointment, he had held so many positions and these positions have actually supported youth activities in Tonkolili District and the Northern Region at large. If all these experiences of the Nominees are being put together, I know these fine gentlemen will actually perform in their respective offices that they are being nominated to serve. But I also want to urge them while assuming these offices, I know they are my brothers we are all from Tonkolili District and they are people that are very passionate about development. They are people that have been contributing, they have been supporting activities, promoting development in the District and they believe in the developmental trajectory of His Excellency, President Julius Maada Bio *[Applause]*. I know with that background, they will contribute. As I said, let them realise that Tonkolili District is a District that has been producing Leaders as our Honourable Leader said, the Honourable Aaron Koroma that Tonkolili has been contributing to the socio-economic development of this nation. Appointing these fine gentlemen from Tonkolili District, I know it is an addition and they will make use of that opportunity *[Applause]*. I want to urge them that the District that they are coming from is a District that is intoxicated with drug abuse. We have so many youths in the District taken dangerous substances especially 'kush'. As they are assuming these positions, we want to urge them to focus on how they can actually support these youths to mitigate some of these activities that are undermining their own progress, activities that are not making them to think positive for their own future. We know 'kush' intake is a national issue, but with them in the Ministry of Youths as Commissioners for Youth Commission, and Chairman for National Youth Service, I know they will actually support this activity.

On that note Mr Speaker, I am calling on this Honourable House to expedite the approval of these fine gentlemen who are fit for purpose and will deliver as expected *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I will now give the Floor to the Honourable from Kailahun, and then we will wind up; 3 minutes, not more than that.

HON. QUINTIN SALIA-KONNEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker, I will make it very short. To start with, I want to thank our President for giving us these fine Nominees but again, in as much as I do not have enough time, I will pick a very reasonable number of them and discuss them. I will start with Mr Abdulai Masiyambay Bangura, I believe his appointment or his nomination to this position has not brought doubt to anyone of us across the aisle because I believe as a man, he has worked tirelessly for very long years to reach this position today and in fact, I believe personally that this is not enough for a man like Mr Bangura. I believe he is somebody who has served this country irrespective of political lines, irrespective of tribe, colour or with no discriminatory factor, he has served the people of this country; and I believe taking the position he has been given, I believe it is just the right thing to serve in the Supreme Court. Let it be noted by everybody in this Chamber that particular position given to Mr Bangura is free from any biasness. He is going to the position to serve the people of this country and he is going there to do justice to himself and the Institution that he would be representing. Mr Bangura, if you go outside Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you would see a whole lot of Lawyers came to support him, I thought I was at the High Court; it was only when I looked around I saw the structures, then I realised it Parliament. But again, because of his good relationship with his colleagues, you can see that even the Acting Chief Justice is here to support him. We have so many other Justices here, we have other personalities, Magistrates, Lawyers, all across supporting him so I believe I want to thank the President again for giving him this opportunity to serve.

THE SPEAKER: And on that note.

HON. QUINTIN SALIA-KONNEH: Just a short one to conclude; you would realise two prominent people have been appointed to serve in the Fertilizer Agency and that of the Seed, and we all know those positions link up with the Flagship project of the President. All

I want to tell them is that, they should not use those positions as ornament of decoration, they have been appointed to serve the true purpose of those positions.

THE SPEAKER: On that note.

HON. QUINTIN SALIA-KONNEH: And so on that note, I believe when once you go into those offices, my brothers do justice to those offices given to you and serve the people of this country.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member. I now give the Floor to the Leader of the Opposition.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just learnt that the corpse is here so therefore, this is going to be one of the shortest debate on appointment. My Colleagues here have said a lot about the Appointees and I agreed with most of what they said relating to the Appointees. For the Appointee to the Supreme Court, I want to join my Colleague Honourable Aaron Aruna Koroma [*Undertone*]; that basically, I served as the Interim Secretary of the Party at the time he was superintending over PPRC, and if it were not for his intervention, we would not have had Flag-bearer; we would not have had our National Delegate Conference. Regardless of the fact that we were Opposition, several other State Institutions were dismissing us with the back of their hands. He embraced us and ensured that justice is done to us so if the APC Party was able to produce Dr Samura Kamara as our Flag-bearer, it was because of his hard-work, and because of his good works [*Applause*]. So I want to commend you, and I want you to transmit that same spirit into the Judiciary. Much has been said about the Judiciary including some of the State Institutions, including the ACC and all; but like I said, it was Rev. Chinodu that once said; "if you are in a generation, you do not add anything to that generation; you are a minus to that generation, it would have been better you never existed in that generation". I am quite sure you are not a minus, go and make us proud in the Judiciary.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, also the appointee for the IMC Mr Joseph Egbenda Kapuwa. When he was at the SLBC, we were also struggling to hold our national delegate conference, he used to constantly call Members of the Opposition, and he would say I want

to give a level plain field to every Political Party *[Applause]*; so he would call us to participate in radio and television debating competition with SLPP. I could remember there was one point in time he called me and I was busy and everybody else was engaged either in the provinces on campaigns; he had to tell me that I will cancel this programme because I do not have representation from the Opposition. So we want you to transmit that same spirit into the IMC and like I told you, the challenges at SLBC could be quite different from the challenges at IMC. IMC is playing a regulatory role on all media institutions, so you would have to know that you are the father now of all Media Houses including the Media House you were serving. So you have to ensure that you seek the interest of Journalists and Honourable Aaron Koroma opined a lot about the conditions of Journalists including their salaries and all. You have to improve it and make Journalism profession an enviable one. Also I told you that IMC is not only limited to providing solutions to the problem, IMC can also prevent problem but we cannot prevent problem when we do not have the prerequisite modernized digital equipment to make sure that we monitor radio programmes. We monitor the media or electronic print because all radio stations will be on at the same time. I was part of the Committee on Information and Communications that paid an extemporaneous visit to the IMC and we came to the conclusion that IMC at that time, did not have the equipment to monitor radio stations and they only depend on complaints made by victims of media bullying. They would again go to these radio stations to demand records of those programs and to me basically, the radio stations have every tendency to edit their broadcast before sending it to IMC for them to be vindicated; so try to do the best of your ability to ensure that you have modernized equipment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mrs Frances Fornah your knowledge in the medical field which you have shown over the years is incredible. One thing I can say is that, they say 'if you want to know how beautiful your wife would be when she is old, you must look at the face of your mother-in-law'. The mere fact that you have demonstrated that kind of erudite character in your profession means you are going to transmit it to the State. Do something in the Loan Scheme that somebody else would sit and always remember your service.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Larkoh, you are a very young man. One credit I would give to President Bio is his ability to repose confidence in young people *[Applause]*. We have seen in his administration so many young people have been appointed and to us, it is a very good thing. So Mr Larkoh, the credibility of young people are on your shoulder, make sure that you satisfy them. Because of time Mr Speaker, I have a lot of them to talk about but I am restrained because of time and because of S.O [38], so I now ask the House to expeditiously approve these Appointees from His Excellency the President *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his contribution; I will now give the Floor to the Leader of Government Business.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank my Colleagues for their contributions especially the words that came out from my Colleagues on the other side talking about giving approval of these Nominees. So when I see the very first statement, I believe you have done a very good job. I also want to thank the Committee for helping all of us to make sure that we screen them properly; look at their backgrounds as read from the report and their qualifications if they are fit for purposes in those offices that they are now going to take over.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, even though we have challenges all over the place and we know qualifications sometimes has to do with some level of administrative skills; so they are not perfect at all by any means. But as it pleases His Excellency the President to hire, so by Constitutional provision it pleases His Excellency the President to fire; that you have to accept. It is either you resign, or your term comes to an end or you are fired; these are the things that we are saying, but we are not anticipating anybody to be fired but if that is the case at the end of the day, let us accept it in good faith. What comes to our mind, let us serve our people, serve in the interest of this country, serve in the interest of service delivery and that one was clearly stated in the report I read. I would not want to single out any one of them, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made it very clear, in trying to pick one Nominee after the other; I will just say to all of you, do your best so that Sierra Leone will be at a level we are all anticipating it to be. For those youths, which we are

trying to move from the stage where we can get them to work and to be of positions of trust in society we are going to focus on how to do it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want the Chairman for the Drugs Agency to know that the victims could not be continued to be victimized. What we can do is to how do we take care of them, and how do we rehabilitate them. So there are policies that are really geared towards fighting drug issues in this country you would also need to take into consideration that those experiences must come with some result especially in terms of fighting corruption and other areas.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on the "Feed Salon project" which we want to achieve as a nation, but we need to fight together for the good of all, and we should not fight in isolation as if we are still fighting. As the Opposition Leader said, President Bio has given the platform to young people so we should come together and rally around policies that can bring us together and let us pay less attention to policies that can put us apart. As you are going to your different offices please make sure you deliver in the interest of this nation. I believe without any singular doubt, all of you with the experiences and qualifications I believe you can perform.

Mr Speaker, before I take my seat I once again want to thank your very self, and I also want to say thanks to Mr Bangura who is now going to the Supreme Court. In this world, you have to serve your conscience and God and not to the detriment of the State, or at the detriment of people. Lawyer Bangura popularly known as 'Legal B' has supported some of us when we started our politics at the early age of 30s. He has been very instrumental not because he belongs to Party A or B because he believes in promoting young people and when I was at Fourah Bay College he was in LLB. 3 when I was in year 1. When he was a Private Practitioner in Kenema through the Chambers of the late Lawyer Navo, he was helping the poor people. Today, he has held a huge office and now moving from PPRC to the Supreme Court. When I asked him one specific question which one do you believe has more weight than the other? He said I do not believe in the weight, but in the area of professionalism. I asked the question again for the second time and he said, 'it is not about the weight, but I am going where I am comfortable'.

Mr Speaker, in those days' people were finding it very difficult to practice law in the provinces. When he went to the provinces he was a very humble man under the Pupillage of late Lawyer Navo and he was serving with humanity. He does not go to his house early; he would be in the street with the young boys.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I cannot end by not talking about my Knight brother who is brother Kapuwa. You are a Major, I salute you Sir. You have served as a Lawyer and Private Practitioner under the Pupillage of Lawyer Bangura. You are a young man coming from Gbokakajama Bolamayama in fact, coming from a ruling home; he is called Chief Joseph Egbenda Kapuwa Esq. What a wonderful man you are; history will judge you, men will talk about you, but society will speak to the truth one day and those who take the pulpit to preach, they will preach what is good for you for the sake of humanity. You are going to a very critical office, not a lucrative office but a very powerful regulatory body that we need to create the landscape to change the trajectory. As I said in the Committee, there are two Professionals that we have and they would just come with all their certificates. I am a professional Photographer but with what certificate? So let us be a professional Journalist and let us serve our consciences and believe that the pen is mightier than what you think, but also believe that when you put your pen, put it in the interest for the good of all. I thank you all *[Applause]*.

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

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of Government Business and all Honourable Members who have taken the Floor on this important item.

Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to

[Motion of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service moved by Honourable Mathew S. Nyuma has been approved]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, it is now my pleasant duty to add my own voice of congratulations to the Nominees that have just been approved. They are all very eminently qualified for the positions to which they have been appointed, and I want on behalf of the entire House, to extend our warmest congratulations and felicitations to all of you as you embark on your new assignments. I want to specially congratulate somebody else because today in this Parliament, history is being made. I am a lover of history and when I see one, I would make sure I register it. The history that is being made today is being made by His Excellency the President, Julius Maada Bio; in the language of the University I attended which is The Cambridge University I would say to him he is entitled to be awarded a double star *[Applause]*. When you hit a First Class Honours and a double star it means, you are top of the top-most. The first star is Justice Bangura I want you here to forgive me if I sound a little parochial to be the first Temne man to be appointed as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone *[Applause]*. I say this with absolute authority; I have done my research very carefully, and he is being approved by the Sixth Parliament presided by the first Temne Speaker of this House of Parliament *[Applause]*. So that was what I mean when I say His Excellency is called a double star and has made history. With that, I will now stand the House down for about an hour for us to attend to our next engagement and then we shall all return to the Chamber here, after our engagement in the State Hall. We wish you well and you go with the blessings of this House, and I am sure with the blessings of God Almighty. I thank you. I am standing the House down for about an hour.

The House stood down at 12:37p.m.

The House resumed at 3:00p.m.

VII GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE HEREBY RATIFIES THE FOLLOWING CONVENTIONS WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON THURSDAY 25TH AND TUESDAY 30TH JANUARY 2024, RESPECTIVELY:

[i] CONVENTION ON JUDICIARY COOPERATION IN CIVIL, COMMERCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS BETWEEN THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO AND THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

[ii] CONVENTION ON CYBERCRIME

[iii] AFRICAN UNION CONVENTION ON CROSS-BOARDER COOPERATION [NIAMEY CONVENTION]

Suspension of S.O5[2]

MR TIMOTHY KABBA [MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION]: Mr Speaker, I stand before you today to address matters of utmost novel and national significance and moral urgency in the place where the voices of our people resonate through their elected representatives. The ratification and laying of the under-mentioned Agreements, Conventions, and Reports respectively, hold the potential to shape our nation's future in a profound ways. The above Instruments are progressive and cooperative; they represent an opportunity to provide stronger ties in the global communities and participate actively that would benefit our nation economically, socially, cybernetically and environmentally. They signify our determination to be responsible global citizens and to ensure a brighter future for generations to come.

Mr Speaker, Members of Parliament, the Agreements and the Conventions on Judiciary Cooperation in Civil, Commercial and Administrative matters. This particular Agreement encompasses diverse areas of cooperation that is vital for the development and prosperity of our nation:

1. The Conventions on Judiciary Cooperation- The Convention will provide a legal framework on the resolution of civil, commercial and administrative disputes, between our country and

other countries of the world. It will provide the framework for the resolution of conflict and also provide a very conducive environment for trade and investment thereby fostering a fair dispute resolution mechanism; the movement of goods and services, capital and people have become increasingly dynamic.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement will build that bridge between our legal system and existing legal systems of other countries. The main objective of this Convention, is to guarantee legal certainty and enable ease and effectiveness to just an effective access to justice which means, an Agreement entered into with Sierra Leone and other countries can be protected legally. The implication is when there is call for justice the identification of competent jurisdiction, clear designation of the applicable law, speedy and effective recognition and enforcement procedures can be enhanced.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement is a commitment to cooperation and collaboration that would bring tangible benefit to our country. By ratifying this Agreement, it tends to work together with the Kingdom of Morocco, to establish a system of recognition and enforcement of judicial decision which would enhance mutual trust in the Judicial Institution of both countries. By ratifying this Agreement, it takes a significant milestone towards strengthening the bonds of friendship and cooperation with Morocco while creating opportunities and protection for our citizens. I thank you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members,

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE HEREBY RATIFIES THE FOLLOWING CONVENTIONS WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON THURSDAY 25TH AND TUESDAY 30TH JANUARY 2024, RESPECTIVELY:

[i] CONVENTION ON JUDICIARY COOPERATION IN CIVIL, COMMERCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS BETWEEN THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO AND THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

[ii] CONVENTION ON CYBERCRIME

**[iii] AFRICAN UNION CONVENTION ON CROSS-BOARDER COOPERATION
[NIAMEY CONVENTION]**

THE SPEAKER: Since we have three Agreements listed why don't we take them holistically to save time?

MR TIMOTHY KABBA:

**[ii] THE BUDAPEST CONVENTION ON CYBERCRIME AND PROTOCOL ON
XENOPHOBIA AND RACISM**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I present another matter of paramount importance for our nation's security and global cooperation in the digital age. Cybercrime is a growing menace that knows no person. It is a threat that has a potential to undermine our national security, sabotage economic development and interfere with the potential of our citizens. The Budapest Convention is a Treaty that is created under the auspices of the Council of Europe and adopted in 2001. It offers a comprehensive framework of international cooperation in addressing cybercrime. Giving this backdrop, I implore Honourable Members to consider the following key reasons for ratifying the Budapest Convention and Cybercrime and its Protocol on Xenophobia and Racism:

i. Global Collaboration

By ratifying the Budapest Convention, Sierra Leone would signal its commitments to global cooperation in combating cybercrime; in an era when cybercrime attacks often originate from beyond our national borders, international collaboration and cooperation is not merely desirable but essential.

ii. Legal Framework

The convention provides the solid legal framework for defining and prosecuting cybercrimes. It offers procedures for investigation, prosecution and the domestication of Laws that meet international standards as in the case of the Cyber Security and Crime Act of 2021. This would help us align our national Laws with the evolving challenges of cybercrime.

iii. Protection of Human Right

Importantly Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Convention emphasises the protection of Human Rights, ensuring that investigations and prosecutions are carried out with due respect for civil liberties, privacy and the rule of law. This is a critical aspect to be considered as we work to address the complex nature of cybercrime.

iv. Protocol on Xenophobia

This is an integral part of the Convention to address its crime committed which is increasingly prevalent in our today's landscape. Ratifying this protocol demonstrates our commitment to combating hate, racism and discrimination in all its forms.

v. International Reputation

Ratifying this Convention enhances Sierra Leone's international reputation as a responsible and progressive country committed to addressing transnational challenges.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Budapest Convention and Cybercrime and its Protocol on Xenophobia and Racism, offers us a crucial opportunity to protect our nation's security and the wellbeing of our citizens in the digital age. By ratifying this Convention, we would be sending powerful message that Sierra Leone is committed to safeguarding the digital future for all.

[iii] AFRICAN UNION CONVENTION ON CROSS-BOARDER COOPERATION [NIAMEY CONVENTION]

Mr Speaker, Members of Parliament, the Niamey Convention has the potential to transform our nation and our continent for the better. Sierra Leone has always been a proud and active member of the African Union [AU]; committed to the principles of unity, solidarity and cooperation. We have contributed to peace-keeping missions, humanitarian effort and regional development culture. It is our duty as a nation to continue this tradition of active participation in the continental affairs. Ratifying the Niamey Convention would be a step that would bring us closer to that goal. This Convention is a framework that invites cross-border cooperation and integration across African Continents. It is designed to address the common

challenges faced by African Nations such as cross-border cooperation and management, economic development, security and environmental sustainability. With the ratification of this Convention, we would join hands with our fellow African Nations that is: Guinea, Ghana, Cote d' Voire, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Togo in addressing these challenges collectively. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like corporate neighbouring countries on the cross-border issues, we are better placed to collectively combat transnational crime, terrorism and other security threats such as disputes over boundary areas and increase trade and investment opportunities; this would contribute to a safer and a more stable Sierra Leone.

[iv] Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament, the Government of Sierra Leone's national report of a combined 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st periodic report of the Africa's Charter on human and peoples' right as well as the initial and combined 2nd, 3rd and 4th periodic report on the protocol to the Africa Charter, on human and peoples' right on the right of Women in Africa, known as the Maputo Protocol.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the issue of Treaty Reporting is of great importance to our nation's commitment to upholding human rights, justice and the principles, enshrined in Section [10] of Sierra Leone's Constitution and International Law. It is with the utmost reverence for our nation and its values that I call upon this Honourable House to consider laying before the Parliament, Government's National Report for the combined 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st periodic report on the Africa Charter on human and peoples' right as well as the initial and combined 2nd, 3rd and 4th periodic report on the protocol to the African Charter on human and peoples' right; as well as the initial and combined 2nd, 3rd and 4th periodic report on the Protocol.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, are we on the same line?

MR TIMOTHY KABBA: I suppose so Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I have in front of me three Agreements not four and the Order Paper shows three Agreements, the fourth one you alluded to seems not to be part of the agenda for today.

MR TIMOTHY KABBA: I pleaded with you Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members and that you have confirmed for me to present four Agreements. My apologies for that Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR TIMOTHY KABBA: On that note Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Honourable House is hereby invited to ratify the following Conventions which were laid on the Table of the House on Thursday 25th and Tuesday 30th January 2024, respectively:

[I] Convention on Judiciary Cooperation in Civil, Commercial and Administrative Matters between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Sierra Leone

[ii] Convention on Cybercrime

[iii] African Union Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation [Niamey Convention]

Question Proposed

THE SPEAKER: The Chairman for the Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; is the Deputy here? Any Member of that Committee? Yes Madam, you have the Floor.

HON. EMELIA L. TONGI: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. As we all know Morocco has been a friendly country to Sierra Leone and it is really unfortunate that terrible things happened before this Agreement is being brought to Parliament. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Morocco has been really helpful especially during the 5th Parliament and having talked about bringing this Agreement between Sierra Leone and Morocco. It is a very interesting Agreement and we are happy as Sierra Leoneans to hear from them and bringing up an Agreement that can actually encourage us to forget about the horrible things that have been happening, I think we should go forward and encourage and felicitate this wonderful ideas. As far as the cybercrimes are concerned also Mr Speaker, it is high time we brought it. Today in Africa, we are trying to build a very strong Africa and very soon, citizens of Africa are also working towards rebuilding Africa. Cybercrimes are crimes that will lead towards the elimination of these evil things. We are happy to have people that are ahead of us to make a better Africa tomorrow especially West Africa. We should actually applaud

these big guys with beautiful dreams for Africa. Since it is not something that we need to argue about, we need to put serious argument. Mr Speaker, I just want us to accept it and I ask the rest of my Colleagues to ratify these Agreements. I thank you *[Applause]*.

HON. CHRISTOPHER K. VANDY: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, these are ways that countries get themselves out of international problems, international quagmires by creating relationship with another country. There is no country that is self-sufficient Mr Speaker and that is more the reason one of the functions of government is diplomatic representation. How do you create this diplomatic representation? Creating diplomatic representation is to establish representation with another country. For instance, this Judiciary Cooperation with Morocco has been very helpful to Sierra Leone since the Fifth Parliament Mr Speaker, but there is one thing here maybe I would have to mention for the concern of the Ministry of Education. The Foreign Affairs Minister is here he will take that home and maybe share with his colleagues. Morocco is one of the countries that is giving scholarships to Sierra Leoneans who are studying in Morocco. Mr Speaker, last year I was in Morocco we have good number of Sierra Leonean students studying in Morocco, they are not doing anything there because of the language barrier so that problem needs to be solved. In as much as Morocco is much investing in Sierra Leone, we really want it to yield dividend to the students that would be going to Morocco to study. The Government should try to teach them French before going to Morocco so let the Government take note of that because those that are going with certificates, they would go to Guinea and get fake certificates and they would take it to Morocco that they have learnt French.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Budapest Convention is talking about the cybercrime, this also is very good. Mr Speaker, under your leadership we enacted the Cyber Law; and I want to tell you that last year again, I was in Poland on Internet Governance programme, we spoke about the Cyber Bill here. Mr Speaker, we were Consultants there myself and the Chairman for Information, Honourable Boston Munda from Kenema. We have people from bigger countries; they were consulting us as to how we went about it and that is why I want to send felicitation to the Speaker because it was under his supervision; so these are very good things Mr Speaker. When these countries coming together and form that unity and

these are the ways they form unity, it helps a lot. Like that Judiciary Cooperation, if you commit a crime here and go to Morocco, you will be prosecuted; if you commit a crime in Morocco and you come here, you will definitely be prosecuted here. This is a very fine one, and it is not contentious Mr Speaker.

On that note Mr Speaker, I want to crave on the indulgence of Honourable Members, let us speedily ratify these Agreements and please Mr Minister share with your colleague the Minister of Higher Education, let them look at the Morocco Scholarship that comes to Sierra Leone. Even last year, there were hundred scholarships from Morocco to Sierra Leone we have a lot of Sierra Leonean students there, but it is not yielding dividend Mr Speaker. I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to have a bite on these Agreements Sir.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Morocco is doing a very good thing to Sierra Leone. We appreciate that but the issue before us is how are we going to align systems and justice that are fundamentally different? The substantive Laws of Morocco and Sierra Leone are fundamentally different. Is it sharia law or common law? When you want to incorporate, bring together two judicial systems it requires a lot more forces, a lot more analysis than you are left to deal with. Let me give you an example; if there is a criminal issue involving Sierra Leoneans, what Laws that can be applied? Is it Sharia Law in Morocco or our Common Law? In other words our criminal procedure rule in this country do they apply it? How do we reconcile the two? Whiles I commend the Ministry for coming up and actually intensify cooperation between Sierra Leone and other countries. We are here talking about technical issue and we need to have some naivety, some background as to what led to this Agreement so that we understand fully what it sought to be achieved. It is not enough to just throw at our faces Cooperation Agreement and so on. We are not a rubber-stamped Parliament anyway, we are here to make Laws and to scrutinize legislature. I want to commend you for expanding Sierra Leone's relations with other countries but when it comes to these technical matters, it is absolutely imperative that we have some background information and then make sound judgement as to the utility or otherwise of what is being proposed. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: May I ask a question? Do you think this Agreement will in anyway amend the substantive Law?

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Mr Speaker, we are not talking about amendment the substantive Law. I am happy you are a Lawyer yourself. What we are talking about is the practicality; situations arise as to how we reconcile the two systems of Law that is what I am talking about. It happens between English Law and Continental Law.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, it is not talking about harmonizing some of the Laws, it is about granting access to its citizens who come to the judicial system of the Law.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Mr Speaker, access is a very productive word but access of justice of right it is simple. Is it the right to accessing Sharia Law or the Civil Law? These are some of the issues we need to know. They accessed it some years and it is a very good idea; nobody can deprecate that and I do not need to deprecate that but we need some background information in order for us to make informed decisions. We are practicing economy Law. The Law that Jenkin Johnston makes in Court; they sit down and make decisions and they become part of our Law in addition to the Statutes we promulgate in this House.

HON. EMELIA L. TONGI: Mr Speaker, can I ask a question please?

THE SPEAKER: By all means.

HON. EMELIA L. TONGI: Mr Speaker, I would like you to explain to us, what is the meaning of 'Interpol'? Because if you address what the work of an Interpol is probably, you will be able to answer my Honourable Colleague's question.

THE SPEAKER: I am sure that word is not strange to you [*Undertone*]. You are driving away from what is before us Honourable Member; I was looking at the content of the Agreement that is before us.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: I think it is misrepresentation on the part of the Honourable Member. I think the question should be whether the Laws of Sierra Leone are part of Common Law? It is analogous to the Kingdom of Morocco; I think that should be her

question because Law is different from ordinary agreement and we know in Sierra Leone if you practice common law, you will be able to deal with Sierra Leoneans in other jurisdictions like people in Kenya, Nigeria, and Ghana. They are operating under the same legal system our law comes from the Common Law so the question that my learned senior wants to know if the law of the Kingdom of Morocco is analogous to the Republic of Sierra Leone? I think that is what my learned senior is talking about; we need to have a clear picture because in signing this Agreement now, it will limit our citizens if this House fails to do certain clarifications; so that is my humble contribution Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, let me just refer you to Article [6] it says: Moroccan Nationals with a Law degree would be admitted as Trainees in the Bar without having to justify themselves with the eligibility. How can you admit someone with a Civil Law background into a Common Law system? Mr Speaker, I keep referring to you because you are a master of these things. We need to understand how these things are going to work in practice. Mr Speaker, even a Sierra Leonean, if you study in the United States of America, when you come to Sierra Leone you cannot be admitted into the Law School. You cannot because you are not coming from a Commonwealth country. They are not in any way compatible with what we do here so that is the difficulty. It is a good idea, and it is a commendable one but let us see how it works in practice.

HON. MOHAMED PAPAH BANGURA: Mr Speaker, they are coming with these Laws to find ways of how to handle them legally; so we have to take that into consideration Mr Speaker that is why this House has to be careful in ratifying this particular Agreement *[Undertone]*. I am not saying let it not be ratified; I am saying the House needs to be careful; we have to take our time in looking at legal issues surrounding the Agreement.

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I want to employ my Colleagues that the Minister is competently qualified to answer to all of their doubts and questions. They should only hold their peace by the time we will be rounding up; I thank you very much and let us allow the debate to go on. Whatever question they have, the Minister is taking note with keen attention. It will not be a debate; and I am not too sure whether this particular Agreement is controversial. It is not in anyway because the Minister has all the answers to

your questions let us allow the debate that was why I was asking whether Mr Speaker has all ears on me.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please be patient as to whether this Agreement might provide an avenue for Moroccan nationals to circumvent the law relating to legal practitioners. I don't think it is saying that at all, because it does recognise inclusiveness that the two countries have two different legal systems and all that the Moroccan Lawyer can use is to seek an apprenticeship in Sierra Leone but not to seek to be admitted to practice in Sierra Leone based wholly and solely on the Moroccan Constitution. It does recognize very clearly that the two systems are different. There is no automaticity embedded here for Moroccan nationals to come and be admitted as Lawyers under our own legal system. I will leave it to the Minister to elaborate further but the angle from which the previous speaker was talking is one that compelled me to look at that but let me hear what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition also has to say as you were trying to catch my eye.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I thank you Mr Speaker. I know I will have my bite; it was just a response to the Acting Leader based on his concerns. One thing I like you most is that you do due diligence to anything we pass in this House by allowing the Honourable Members to make their point and then you are also trying to understand that it does not undermine the process. You are merely trying to do due diligence; and with due respect to you Sir, it is not Mr Speaker to determine how this House operates. I have my own response to all these issues but the Honourable Member has his rights to bring issues and you also deserve the right to understand his point before a decision is taken so that was my opinion. You have the sole right to do due diligence and to have a full understanding of this Agreement but to some extent it is critical. It may not be controversial but critical whosoever raises his or her own few points; I believe you are doing the right thing to try to understand before we move forward.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, would you like to respond to the question that has been raised?

MR TIMOTHY KABBAH: Yes Mr Speaker.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: For now what the Speaker is supposed to do is to take note; and then after the rounding of the debates, you will have to respond that is how it is supposed to be.

THE SPEAKER: I agree with you but nobody else was trying to catch my eye.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, by procedure you know after him nobody else, then there should be room for rounding up that is the procedure. The time I stood earlier was just to respond to my colleague.

THE SPEAKER: I take your point.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: It was not to do a rounding up; it was just to respond to him because I was expecting maybe other speakers.

THE SPEAKER: No, but I did not see nobody else [*Undertones*].

HON. MOHAMED P. BANGURA: I was here Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: He is only standing up now.

HON. MOHAMED P. BANGURA: I have been standing up Sir. Mr Speaker, I am Honourable Mohamed Papah Bangura from Bombali District. It is very much important when we ratify Agreements, and Bills in the Well of Parliament. What gives me a little bit of confidence in the three Agreements that have been read by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mr Timothy Kabbah. He is a young man and he has a very long way to go. He has many more years to live and of course, whatever Agreement I believe he signs on behalf of the people of Sierra Leone must have been done with a genuine mind devoid of politics.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am confident that the Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Timothy Kabbah and his team must have done a lot of critical consideration and of course, they must have also looked at cultural diversity. We are talking about Morocco and Sierra Leone; they have several differences in culture. For us to have an Agreement, they have to take into consideration several things. It is clear that no nation can flourish without partnership, without strengthening our bilateral connections so signing an Agreement

between Sierra Leone and Morocco, it is not new Mr Speaker, Honourable Members. I just want to urge the Minister and his team who signed this Agreement on behalf of Sierra Leone that they must have looked at cultural diversity and this is not in any way to hire a team or different nation to execute their political aims. This is why Mr Speaker, I will repeat again I am confidence considering the track record of the young Minister Mr Timothy Kabbah that indeed, they must have done some considerations. If they have not done so, please Mr Minister, as we go along in implementing this Agreement when ratified by this Honourable House, that it is implemented to the fullest of your ability and in the interest of Sierra Leoneans. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I think we should not belabour on this point too much let me step in to seek one clarification. Mr Minister, before coming to Parliament to seek the ratification of the Agreement, did you seek the legal opinion of the Law?

MR TIMOTHY KABBAH: Mr Speaker, we are very well aware. This Agreement would not have come here without going to Cabinet where it was approved with the concurrence of the Board of the Law Officer's Department and other relevant MDAs. Yes, there was a legal concurrence from the Law Officer's Department. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I asked that question deliberately because I want to draw the attention of the House but more particularly for the Members who have taken the Floor. Let us turn to Article [6], and let us read it carefully; the very first paragraph [E], Moroccan Lawyers registered in the Moroccan Bar Association.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Relating to Morocco, there are two Agreements; I think it is the one dealing with judicial assistance, not protection of investment.

THE SPEAKER: This one is Convention and Judicial Cooperation in Civil, Commercial, and Administrative matters; that is what I am looking at and that is the one for which a Motion has been tabled [*Undertone*]. Before you do, let me answer the question put by the Deputy Leader of Government Business; I am addressing what is before the House, and what is before the House is a Convention on Judicial Cooperation in Civil, Commercial, and

Administrative matters between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Sierra Leone. I want to know whether we are on the same wave-length.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: We have our Tablets before us *[Interruptions]*.

THE SPEAKER: What did you say?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: It is better to be judicial *[Interruptions]*.

THE SPEAKER: What did you say?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: No, let him make his point *[Undertone]* because what I have before me here is; the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Sierra Leone on mutual Judicial Assistance in Criminal Matters.

THE SPEAKER: That is not before the House certainly. It did not form part of the Motion moved by the Minister.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: The one before us now likely is not in the Tablet and I also have two Agreements on the Tablet.

THE SPEAKER: Are we in the position to focus on the Agreement which forms the subject matter of the Motion by the Minister or not? And what is that Agreement, is it the one which I have read out?

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Yes, it is Convention on Judiciary Cooperation in Civil, Commercial and Administrative Matters between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Sierra Leone.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you; so if there is another Agreement in your Tablet it is certainly not before us at this point in time *[Undertone]*.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Yes Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Are we on the same wave-length before I proceed?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: No Sir.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Mr Speaker, all the documents were put in our pigeon holes several weeks ago.

THE SPEAKER: You may have a thousand Agreements in your Tablets, what I am concerned about is the Agreement that is now the subject of a Motion before the House; not any other. Again I ask, are we on the same wave-length? Let us not get confused on it. Did you hear the Motion moved by the Minister? I am sure you did, and what does that Motion address? It addresses in the respect of Morocco: A Convention on Judiciary Cooperation in Civil, Commercial and Administrative Matters between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Sierra Leone. That is what is before the House presently; so again I ask, do you all have that Agreement in front of you?

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Speaker, I don't think the one you have just read is uploaded; I think it is in the Pigeon Hole.

THE SPEAKER: Well I am afraid; I will not go along with that because this Agreement was laid on the Table and what we are now seeking to do is to ratify the Agreement which previously has been laid on the Table of the House.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: It is fine; it has been distributed so it is not his fault. It is unfortunate that it is not in the system that is why some Members do not have access to it but it was distributed, it is not your fault and it is not even the problem; just clarify it.

THE SPEAKER: Okay, I do not want to disadvantage the House because some of you have looked through this Agreement but I got the sense that a good number of you have not seen this Agreement, and it would not be fair for the House to ratify something that you know nothing about.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, I know this is some form of struggle because the last time there was an issue here, I insisted on the Parent copy of that particular document but there was different opinion. We are trying to be paperless and I was referred to my Tablet which is correct and which is very easy; so on that particular day, we allowed procedures to continue because he was right by referring me to my Tablet that this Parliament is now moving paperless. If this has been distributed long since then it should have been uploaded long since and then it would be very easy for us. It is not your fault, but it is like we are trying to graduate from paper-based to paperless. Those are some of the

challenges but if the hard copy has been distributed long since it should have been uploaded by now and there would be no excuse. I have learnt now that it is not the same Agreement but my opinion was different, it is not out of bad faith.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I think we had that discussion the last time I was the one who raised the issue about electronic copy. Mr Speaker, you already stated that you are trying to be fair that we have most Members here that have not set eyes on that particular copy; so I think it is left with you Sir in another sitting for us to look at this particular one but for now, I do not think it will be okay for us to look at it [*Undertone*]. How can we make valuable contribution to a document that is not in front of us [*Undertone*]?

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Mr Speaker, the question here should be did Members of Parliament see the Order Paper yesterday before coming to the Well? Were they served the hard copy by the Despatch Department? We have the responsibility to read documents before coming to the Well. I know very well that most of us are not comfortable but at least, Order Paper was out yesterday to give you information that this is the document we are going to look at. I know the Despatch Department did their assignment very diligently, and we are supposed to look at this particular document today, and it is the responsibility of all Members of Parliament to at least, peruse through their documents before coming here. So we should not blame Mr Speaker, neither the Despatch Department, but our very selves.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Nobody is blaming Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, having distributed the hard copies should be concurrent with also uploading the same copies electronically. It should be concurrent as they distribute the hard copies but it is a very good initiative maybe in the next one year, it will be 100% paperless and then, it will be as easy as that.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, let me ask you is time of the essence for this particular Agreement?

MR TIMOTHY KABBAH: Yes Mr Speaker, time is of the essence; but we cannot put the credibility of what we are doing. The expression of the rights of the Members of Parliament whose responsibility is to ensure that the right thing is done; and if the right thing cannot be

done in their estimation with the absence of the document, I leave that particular thing to Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to make a decision on that; whatever outcome would be appreciated and accepted.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you Mr Minister for your generosity. Let me be quite clear about one thing under my watch, nothing will come to this Parliament for consideration and passing, without Honourable Members having an opportunity to read, digest and understand what it is that they are passing. You are Members of Parliament, you bear responsibility for things that you enact here both individually and collectively and I want all of you when you are enacting any Law, or passing any Agreement to do so against the backdrop that you have done due diligence to that document that you have taken your time to understand its full important before proceeding. The reason being that I do not want any of you to come and say 'Aye', and then when you go out you say, I never knew what I was doing but I am now being asked. So let an opportunity be given to all of us to read this document carefully, digest it and then pass it. On that understanding, I would ask that this particular Agreement be held over for another date; but I want to give the Minister an assignment to seek further advice from the Legal Department. Mr Minister, I draw your attention particularly to Article VI; and now I am going to wear two caps as your Speaker, and as an International Lawyer. I want to read to you what the two provisions say under Article VI and I will tell you what my understanding is. The first paragraph reads: Moroccan Law is registered in the Moroccan Bar Associations, may be authorised by the competent Sierra Leone Authorities, to support or represent opponents in all Sierra Leone Courts. It has very far-reaching implications and then, the converse is also provided which is in the second paragraph also it says: Sierra Leone Lawyers registered in the Sierra Leone Bar Association may be authorised by the competent Moroccan authorities to support or represent opponents before all Moroccan Courts. It is because we have a Law in our country that you cannot represent anyone as a Lawyer in the Courts of Sierra Leone unless you certify certain conditions as a Lawyer. This Agreement by itself cannot qualify a Moroccan Lawyer to come and practice in Sierra Leone. This was why I asked whether the Lawyers in the Law Officer's Department give you proper advice? The word '**may**' not '**shall**'; it is just decoration because this wording by itself

cannot qualify a Moroccan Lawyer to appear before our Courts as a Lawyer. If that is what his intention is, then no harm is done, that is why I say it is mere wording but if really you want to make a substantive Agreement with an objective in mind, then I do not think that objective can be achieved by this provision alone. Mr Minister, I don't know whether you want to respond or you just want to take note of what I have said and ponder over it; over to you.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: The body to actually seek advice from is the general Legal Counsel not the Law Officer's Department; the Law Officer's Department will not give you any sound advice on this, and you can quote me.

THE SPEAKER: The Law Officer's Department is to provide legal advice to the Government, and the Minister is part of the Government; so if there is any legal question his first recall should be the Law Officers Department. Let me hear what the Minister has to say.

MR TIMOTHY KABBAH: Mr Speaker, I want to thank you in referring this particular Agreement for further scrutiny. You are a very admirable stature, a man that has conventional mastery over the natural law. I want to thank you for your wisdom. I have had the privilege to listen to some of the Members of Parliament on this particular Agreement; and it seems to me, some come with some experience from the Judiciary of Sierra Leone. I would definitely consult with the Law Officer's Department not the Judicial Service, because the Law Officer's Department is responsible to providing legal advice to Government, and the Judicial Council is responsible for the conduct and admittance of Lawyers to the Bar.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I like your selective reference to the verb 'may'. Mr Speaker, to support or represent opponents in Moroccan Court or visa-vis, there are laws in this country and if the law prevents a Moroccan Lawyer that is a member of the Bar of Morocco to practice in Sierra Leone that 'may' would mean they would not practise; but if they can support in the Courts of Sierra Leone, then that 'may' can also give them the right to support. But what we are talking about here is not criminal matters; it is civil, commercial and administrative matters, but with your kind answer, I would then also agree with you that this Agreement would be re-capsulated and further consultations with the Attorney-General's Office would be held. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I do not know whether all of us have the other two Agreements, whether we can proceed with those ones and ratify them today and put this first one on hold until further notice. Are we happy to proceed with the other two?

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Mr Speaker, the one is even more contentious than this; it is talking about Mutual Judicial Assistance in Criminal Matters.

THE SPEAKER: No, it is talking about Convention on Cybercrime.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, whether they are contentious or not, that should not stop us from going ahead with the two; we can debate it and then take a decision.

THE SPEAKER: The other one is the Niamey Convention.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Exactly.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, as a matter of procedure, I want to ask that we make reference to S.O [37], so we can properly ask for a postponement of the debate on this particular matter. On that note, I move that the Convention on Judiciary Cooperation on Civil, Commercial and Administrative matters between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Sierra Leone be adjourned.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: I so second.

Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To

[Motion moved by Honourable Aaron Koroma, has been carried]

THE SPEAKER: So let us get a fresh Motion from the Minister with regards to the other two.

MR TIMOTHY KABBAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Honourable House is hereby invited to ratify the following Agreement which were laid on the Table of the House of Parliament on Thursday 25th and Tuesday 30th January, 2024 respectively:

- i. Convention on Cybercrime and;
- ii. Africa Union Convention on Cross-border Cooperation [The Niamey Convention]

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, the Minister would have to move and not hereby ask the House to make an amendment [*Undertone*]; he would have to move accordingly, he did not move, so you will have to move before him.

THE SPEAKER: I asked him to make a fresh Motion.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Yes Sir, but the language of the Motion is not parliamentary.

THE SPEAKER: Then please advise him.

MR TIMOTHY KABBAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratify the following Agreement which were laid on the Table of the House on Thursday 25th and Tuesday 30th January, 2024 respectively:

- i. Convention on Cybercrime and;
- ii. Africa Union Convention on Cross-border Cooperation [The Niamey Convention]

Question Proposed

THE SPEAKER: Is any Member wishing to take the Floor on these two Conventions? If I see none, I am convinced to assume that you are all happy with these two Conventions and you would like to see them ratified. Acting Leader of the Opposition, we do not need to go to a debate now, let us wind up; you go ahead.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker, Honourable Members. As previously said by the other speakers, these two Conventions are not controversial and the spirit behind it we believe it is good. For instance, the Africa Union Convention on Cross-border Cooperation [The Niamey Convention] I can even say it is long overdue especially for Sierra Leone. As I speak right now, we are being affected by this Cross-border dispute disagreement for a very long time I can say since Adam was a boy. We have been hearing about the Yenga issues if we had ratified this Agreement or this Agreement would have gone to Parliament some 20 or 25 years back and diligently work on it, I think the Yenga issue would have been a thing of the past. Fortunately, the two countries also are friends for a very long time even trade partners but unfortunately, as far as the border business is

concerned, it has always been a problem. I believe with the ratification of this Agreement, real due diligence would be given to it, I think it will be a thing of the past. Sierra Leone has a very long border with Guinea, almost 2/3rd of Sierra Leone borders with Guinea. I am from Koinadugu of which, Falaba was part of it even our border villages or communities, we use two currencies the Leones and the Franc and sometimes Guineans come and farm in Sierra Leone, Sierra Leoneans go and farm in Guinea. They would go in the morning and come to their houses in the evening those cross-border areas so with this mutual cooperation, I think that will further strengthen the amicable relationship between the two countries. It is not just meant for only Guinea and Sierra Leone; I am just using that as an example; so I believe this is indeed very good.

Mr Speaker, the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime having gone through the Agreement, I believe the main issue that they stand to address is the issue of how we treat those we perceived as non-citizens residing in our country and I believe we are all under the universal declaration on Human Rights. You would all agree with me, that in certain countries like South Africa for instance, they are not comfortable with Foreigners. There have been so many issues about foreigners residing in South Africa their Human Rights are being abused. I am not indicting them by the way, but I believe it is not limited to even South Africa; it is being practiced in other areas as well. Sierra Leone must be commended in this any way, because as far as my observations are concerned, we even give preference to foreigners in this country more than our own. Sierra Leone, we are one of the most tolerant countries but for other countries is the citizen first and once you see a foreigner competing in the field of commerce, in the field of education, they will not tolerate you. They would only see you as threat, they would always fear, they would not give you the space, but with this Agreement I believe, it would be enforced. Any Member, or any State that agrees to ratify this Agreement the provisions would be enforceable; and then that would make them better. So in my opinion as you rightly said, we do not need much debate on this one because it is non-controversial, it will be good for Africa, and it will be good for Sierra Leone. On that note, I urge my Colleagues that we ratify these two documents; and then the other one that has

been deferred would be brought to us later for further consideration. Thank you very much
[Applause].

THE SPEAKER: I will now give the Floor to the Deputy Leader II.

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, thank you for your sense of judgement to judiciously exercise S.O [42] over the ruling of the document that was laid before us. I know very well that I might be comfortable with the Agreement with the strong belief that it is non-controversial but because a few of us would not want to be selfish, then we have to give the opportunity to our Colleagues to properly dissect that Agreement very well for a fine time for it to be looked at.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the two Agreements at hand, including Convention on Cybercrime that has to do with racism or Xenophobia, Sierra Leone in any case should be commended because I would not want to name countries that have raw characteristics of Xenophobia. We are religiously tolerant. We are also tolerant in several ways and actually commend our country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Cybercrime on this Convention realises the beauty of technology, technology works is so great. I can sit on my computer overnight, I can get a degree as long as I am computer literate, I can go through a course but irrespective of the several gains of technology, we still see drawbacks in technology. When you watch carefully Article [2] and Article [3] on this particular Convention, they talk of illegal access and illegal interception which actually give a way for it to be handled; it is very important.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the drawbacks on technology has caused a lot of pains; a lot of pain on respectable citizens, citizens with dignity. Signing this Agreement today I believe it will be reduced. Mr Speaker, I am looking forward to such an Agreement to be extended to the Kingdom of Belgium. Mr Speaker, I am looking forward to such a fine Agreement to be extended to the Kingdom of Belgium or Brussels where many Institutions of Technology you can call on, which can give room to the loss of life or property. If such an Agreement is extended to the Kingdom of Belgium where Holland is, it will be a long way to help citizens.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on the Agreement of the African Convention on Cross-border, it is important. I must recall that sometime in 2002, the late President Kabbah actually left us with a fine foundation of the establishment of Chiefdom Security Global Guard [CHESEM] which makes us security conscious. We belong to ECOWAS as a nation and if it is now extending to the Africa Union [AU] Mr Speaker, it is important because it will aid trade, it will aid bilateral ties, it will even encourage direct investments between and among countries, not only ECOWAS countries but even AU countries in other parts of Africa; this is important Mr Speaker. The object of this particular Agreement Article [2], clearly makes an object of promoting, facilitating and transforming the border relationship between and among countries is durable. I want to believe other parts of the country will be looking forward to this.

Mr Speaker, I admire the Agreement more so in Article [15] which gives room for amendment. Mr Speaker, Parliament is doing its work, the Executive has done theirs. In Sierra Leone's 1991 Constitution Section [40] Sub-section [4]: Referring to the President as the Commander in Chief, brings all Agreement represented by the Minister Sub-section [4], gives Parliament the mandate to ratify and this is just what we are doing; ratifying an Agreement between and among AU countries as well as Cybercrime. I thank the contributors before me this time, and I urge and lure Members of Parliament across the aisle for the speedy ratification of this particular Agreement which states: Africa Union Convention on Cross-border Cooperation [The Niamey] Report and Convention on Cybercrime. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the two speakers who have taken the Floor. Mr Minister, if you do not have any question or concern, I would just proceed and put the question.

MR TIMOTHY KABBAH: Mr Speaker, I want to thank the two Honourable Members for their kind contributions in supporting these two Conventions. Mr Speaker, the Budapest Convention is an International Convention and it is not only limited to Budapest. I want to commend this Parliament especially the Fifth Parliament for making into law, the Cyber Security Act of 2021, which this Convention is actually naming the baby before the birth. This Convention should have been domesticated before even enacted into law and so, we

want to thank Parliament for doing that and also I believe this would help us to deal with crimes that are committed virtually especially when it provides the medium for actions to be taken regardless, where those who committed these crimes would be located geographically.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, even though we are not discussing the paper on Morocco, but I think it is a very kind concern; but let me inform you that it is a rule, when you go to a country where English is not the medium of education everywhere, you are put through a pedagogic centre where you learn the language for a minimum of six months and a maximum of nine months before you enter a University. I did that myself when I went to study overseas, it is still administered. What is happening like you stated Sir, people apply for these scholarships with false certificates that they are speakers of the French Language and when they go to Morocco, they do not even know how to talk French and the six months in their estimation may not be adequate for them to have properly fit in to their tertiary education system. We have a Foreign Service Academy where French in United Nations [UN] Language is taught, so we are encouraging people before you apply to these countries for scholarship, you are not very talented in languages, and you can come to the Foreign Service Academy and do the basic, elementary aspect of languages. These scholarships are given and we expect people who apply for these scholarships to be ready for education in those countries wherein they speak the first language of that country. The Government of Morocco like all the other countries that are providing scholarships are not Anglophone countries, they provide pedagogic opportunities for the learners to have pre-university education in the languages confirmed before they enter university. On that note, I want to thank all those who contributed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House of Parliament on Thursday 25th and Tuesday 30th January, 2024 respectively:

- i. Convention on Cybercrime and;
- ii. Africa Union Convention on Cross-border Cooperation [Niamey Convention]

Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To

[Government Motion by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation has been ratified]

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, thank you very much; you may now take leave off us. Any announcement?

ANNOUNCEMENT

TABLE CLERK: Honourable Members of the Sierra Leone Parliamentary Female Caucus are cordially invited to the opening ceremony of ECOWAS Female Parliamentary Architecture [ECOPEPA], date: Friday 9th February, 2024, at 9:00a.m., Bintumani Conference Hall. Please support your sister as she is going to be inaugurated as President of ECOPEPA.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I rise to inform this House that there is an issue going on specifically in Freetown of which I intend to invoke S.O [19] and S.O [21] to invite the Minister of Transport and Aviation regarding the issues surrounding the buses *[Applause]*. I believe that, if the Minister is given the opportunity to come before the Well and explain and he is on line to explain live to the people, they take that more serious than ordinary radio discussions. In my opinion, we really want to give that opportunity to the Minister, to explain the issues surrounding the service of the buses and the operational areas and so forth. I implore on you Mr Speaker, please allow Members of Parliament to do their work. In the Fifth Parliament, you asked for so many opportunities under Question Time but we did not make use of it, but this time we want to make use of it so that the Minister can come and explain to us. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I take your point, I think the route of the buses has become a matter of public interest and public concern; and it would be necessary to have the relevant Ministers to take the opportunity here to explain to both Parliament and the general public.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: I don't know whether I should stand under S.O [23] or not, but I want to draw the attention of the House and seek the approval of the House to invite the First Sierra Leonean that has been appointed Managing Director for a foreign bank to this House, so that this House can commend him. Mohamed Alhaji Samura has been the first

Sierra Leonean to be appointed Managing Director for a foreign bank in Sierra Leone and I think in my opinion that, if he gets the support and encouragement of this House, it would encourage other Sierra Leoneans to continue to believe that there is no barrier to success.

THE SPEAKER: I am mute, why are we on this?

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, you know I have worked in a bank before and a foreign bank, and you would realise that what Sierra Leoneans are used to be in a foreign bank is to be Head of Compliance or maybe, Deputy Head of Operation, Operation Manager; and the influx of Nigerian banks in this country started fully in 2006/2007 and for all their time in Sierra Leone.

THE SPEAKER: I would rather encourage you to find a way of bringing him here and see if we can obtain his presence into something else, that is before Parliament; let us not establish a precedent here.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: I take the queue Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

HON. UMPHA G.S. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, I know the Deputy Leader has already given a Notice of a Motion on inviting the Minister of Transport and Aviation; but before he did, I had an intention to rise on S.O [23] on the issue of the buses. We need more voices stating why we think the current policy when it comes to the 'Waka Fine' buses, is contrary to competitive business communities of climate or participation.

THE SPEAKER: Hold your breath, Notice has been given by your Leader.

HON. UMPHA G.S. KOROMA: I want the Minister to understand Mr Speaker, the experience I had this morning and I have had for the past one week coming to work. I am representing people and I see the struggle that they are going through every morning, and that struggle I think if I come to this Well and not express it, I would not be doing justice *[Applause]* to my role as a representative of the people especially from the Western Area, of which I am a Member of Parliament. All of us here are residents of the Western Area but particularly, when a policy states that buses should be plying through a route that is the only

route that everybody uses to come to work, it is really discomforting, and it is of urgency that the Minister be invited here. The experience I had today of course, I have a private vehicle but I am thinking about the ordinary person that struggles every day to get to work because of this new policy. I am raising my voice on this issue because, I think it is a matter of urgency that he is brought here or invited to Parliament, as soon as possible. I thank you Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Your point is well taken, and between you and your Leader, try and expedite for him to do the needful; the moment it is done, I will accede to the request that the Minister be summoned to Parliament for questioning.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, by the time we bring the Motion to the House, I am sure the issue they are referring to is a good issue, is a sensitive issue; but they have resolved it already because the 'poda poda' vehicles have been given access to their routes since this morning. They were in a meeting yesterday and they have agreed this morning *[Undertones]*.

THE SPEAKER: We appreciate your gratuitous offer of explanation but you are not the Minister we want to hear from the Minister himself. We want to hear the person who has executive authority for that particular action so I have listened to both the Acting Leader and the Honourable Member from the Western Area. Much as we welcome your gratuitous offer of explanation, I do not think that will necessarily suffice the present purpose. I look forward to hearing what the Minister has to say and the sooner the better; and therefore do the needful as expeditiously as possible; I will adjourn the House to Tuesday 13th February, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT

MR SPEAKER ADJOURNED THE HOUSE TO TUESDAY 13TH FEBRUARY, 2024

AT 10:AM

THE HOUSE ROSE AT 4:45 PM

