

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

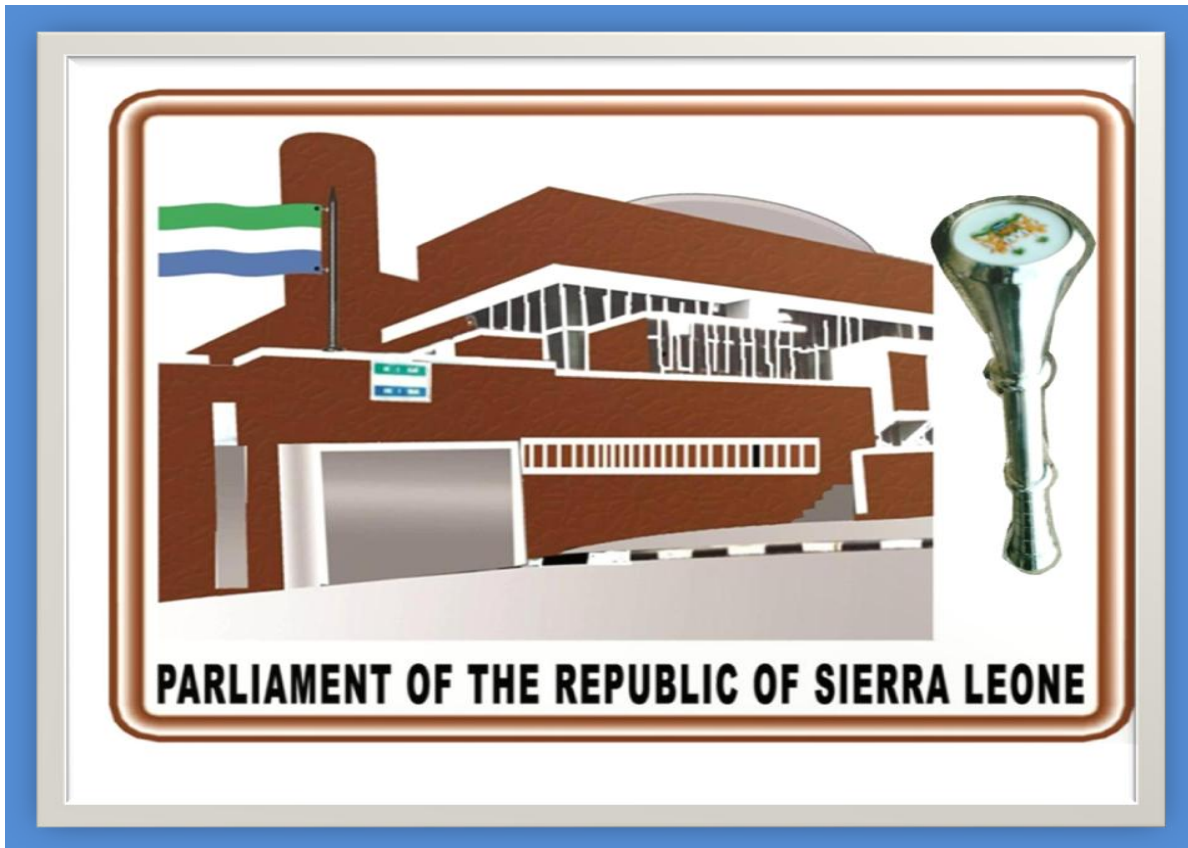
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION - SECOND MEETING

THURSDAY, 11TH OCTOBER, 2018

SESSION – 2018/2019



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held on Thursday, 11th October, 2018.

CONTENTS

I. I. PRAYERS

II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON THURSDAY, 2nd OCTOBER, 2018

III. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENT WHICH WAS LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON THURSDAY, 11TH OCTOBER, 2018

FINANCING AGREEMENT [SIERRA LEONE AGRO-PROCESSING COMPETITIVENESS PROJECT] BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION [IDA], CREDIT NUMBER 6299-SL

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

PROPOSER: HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS

SECONDER: HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THE THIRTEENTH 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 CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Thursday, 11th October, 2018.

I. PRAYERS

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

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

[The Speaker, Honourable Chernor Abass Bundu, in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY, 2ND OCTOBER, 2018.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Tuesday, 2nd October, 2018. We will skip pages 1 to 4, which contain the names of Members of Parliament. I do not know about Honourable Members, but I have an incomplete list in my own document. Anyway, since we are skipping those pages, we may as well proceed with the proceedings, starting from Page 5. Page 5? Page 6? Page 7?

HON. ALUSINE O. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, the word 'twelfth' is spelt as 'T-w-e-f-t-h.' The 'l' is omitted. It is under 'be it resolved....' on Page 7.

THE SPEAKER: Correction will be made by the Clerk. Page 8? Page 9?

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Page 9, the second penultimate paragraph. The spelling, 'this,' it is spelt as 't-h-e-i-s,' instead of 't-h-i-s.' Again, instead of 'ratify,' it should be 'r-a-t-i-f-i-e-s.'

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member.

HON. ALUSINE O. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, the second to last line, 'L' is also omitted. DEVELOPMENT the 'L' is omitted.

THE SPEAKER: I thank both the Honourable Members for their careful scrutiny of this document. Page 10? Page 11? Page 12? Page 13? Can someone move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Tuesday, 2nd October, 2018 as amended?

HON. MOSES JORKIE: I so move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

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

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Tuesday, 2nd October, 2018 has been adopted as amended]

III. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

DR PATRICIA N. LAVERLEY *[Deputy Minister of Finance]*: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratifies the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of House on the 2nd August, 2018:

'Financing Agreement for the Sierra Leone Agro-Processing Competitiveness Project [SLAPCP] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association [IDA], dated, 26th July, 2018.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the purpose of this Project is to improve the business environment in the Agro-Business Sector and the increased productivity of targeted Agro-Processing Firms in Sierra Leone. The SLAPCP consists of three fundamental components. The first component relates to the promotion of an enabling environment for Agro-processing sector competitiveness and growth of Agro-Business Firms. This component is **\$2mln.** This specific component consists of programme of activities to help reduce burdensome Agro-Business Sector regulations that constrains productivity and weakens incentives of existing Agro-Business Firms, Small and Medium Enterprises [SMEs] to reinvest earnings or make new investments for sector growth and competitiveness. This component includes a Technical Assistant Programme and this programme postulates to the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] in generating evidence on good practices in an environmental impact assessment for Agric-business to simplify and reduce the cost of obtaining environmental licences. Second, the selected Private Sector Associations and Public Sector Agencies in strengthening the mechanism for public private dialogue to provide a structured platform for systematic engagement between the Public Sector and private investors in the Agric-Business sub-sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the second beneficiary institution is the Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency [SLIEPA] in developing and implementing a programme for the retention and expansion of Agro-Business investors. This would help to strengthen Agro-processing in the country. The Sierra Leone Standards Bureau [SLSB] is also a direct beneficiary of this Project. The SLSB would help to improve compliance with standards and conformity with Agro-processing related activities. The Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Small Medium Enterprise Development Agencies [SMEDA] would also directly benefit from this Project in strengthening the capacity to provide clearly defined services to support and enhance institutional coordination for SMEs and other private sector actors. It would improve strategic planning and priority setting in Agric-Businesses.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the second component relates to farm level support in order to increase productivity and strengthen competitiveness for SMEs in the Agro-processing valued chain. This second component is **\$6mln** and it consists of a programme of activities to increase the productivity and competitiveness of Agro-processing SMEs and the associated suppliers of rice, cocoa, coffee, etc. This would help to strengthen the valued chain of these key commodities. What we intend to do, through the second component, is to establish an SME Technical Assistant Facility for the provision of hands on business advisory and technical assistant programme to selected SMEs within the Agro-Business Sector, so that upstream and downstream markets linkages for such SMEs can be established. We will also undertake investment in key innovations to companies at different stages of the entire Agro-Processing value chain so that Secondary goods and services can be provided across the range of commodities within the Agro-Processing Sector. The Project will also provide matching grants to selected SMEs based on pre-defined criteria that are participating in the Technical Assistant Facility that will be established to fund the selected SMEs and other businesses that would benefit through this Project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the third and final component relates to Project Implementation, Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation. This third component costs

\$2Mln and consists of a support for a Project Coordination Units [PCU], as well as a Project Fiduciary Management Unit [PFMU]. This Unit would oversee the preparation, coordination and overall supervision of this Project, including the preparation of safeguards, implementation, procurement, financial management, monitoring and evaluation as well as contract management that would be delivered through this Project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the implementation of this Project will critically support job creation and income generation. The Project will target **40%** in targeted valued chain enhancement within the Agro-Business Sector. The Project would provide financing and technical assistance to the SMEs to support the acquisition of technology, transfer of knowledge and skills to strengthen innovation and consequently increase productivity within Agro-Business. The Project would obviously contribute to the strategic objectives articulated in the 'New Direction' and specifically in the sectors of Agriculture and Forestry, Fisheries, Marine Resources and Tourism.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the key benefits of this Project are new investments within the Agro-Business Sector. We will increase market shares in goods and services through an improved quality of the business environment. We will strengthen the skills and capacity of SMEs and this will help to attract foreign investors within the Agro-Business Sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the targeted beneficiaries, as previously mentioned, are SLIEPA, SLSB, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, etc. These are the key beneficiary institutions that will benefit from this Project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during the Appraisal Mission and the preparation of this Project, the team consulted with these beneficiary institutions. The Maximum commitment charge of this Project is only one and half percent per annum on the 'Earn Withdrawn Financial Balance.' The Service charge is three fourth of **1%** per annum on the 'Earn Withdrawn Credit' and the principal amount of the credit shall be repaid in thirty two years semi-annually, after a grace period of six years from the date of signing the said Agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is an IDA Loan Agreement and it is a **100%**. Giving the importance of this Financing Agreement in terms of improving Sierra Leone's business environment and increase agricultural productivity, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratifies the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of House on the 2nd August, 2018:

'Financing Agreement for the Sierra Leone Agro-Processing Competitiveness Project [SLAPCP] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association [IDA], dated, 26th July, 2018.

[Question Proposed]

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it has all been said by the Minister during her presentation. This is a very simple Agreement and it is in the best interest of the people of this country and the Government. As rightly mentioned by the Minister, it is an Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the IDA. Basically, it is meant to improve the Agro-Business environment and to increase productivity. The Minister has gone ahead to tell us the institutions that will benefit directly, hence impacting the life of the various SMEs in their various localities. For example, she mentioned the EPA due to the work they will be doing. They will conduct various assessments of the environment to reduce bureaucracies in acquiring licenses. The cost will be reduced, so that they will benefit and the costs of the different components have just been mentioned. SLIEPA is to expand the business environment and encourage investors to invest in all these areas. The SLSB is going to improve their capabilities in order to maintain standards and conformity. The Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and the institution responsible for all SMEs will equally benefit. For Part 1 of this Project, those are the beneficiaries.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other part, as mentioned by the Minister, involves direct investment, so that productivity will be increased and that will equally comprise technical support and the formation of technical committees and physical financing. There is what is commonly called 'match granting' that will be given to SMEs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Implementation, Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Project are mentioned by Madam. She has also gone ahead to tell us the time limits in terms of paying the loan, i.e. thirty two years. Again, the interest rate is very minimal. So, I think this is a very good Agreement signed by the Ministry of Finance and it will impact greatly on the lives of our people in various localities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister stated in her presentation that the Agreement will create jobs for Sierra Leoneans. Job creation in Sierra Leone is a problem these days because there are lots of people in the informal sector, even in the formal sector. There are lots of graduates or educated people who do not have jobs. So, this Project, for example, will help to create jobs for many people. It will equally help to create income, wealth creation and revenue. That is equally importance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, she also spoke about skills as another benefits inherent in this Agreement. For instance, they will engage in the training of new investments and capacities and those investments will be brought to various SMEs in their localities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the informal sector is scattered, but if we have an Agreement of this nature, it will bring all SMEs together. It will also bring institutions to coordinate and invest in these areas. I think it is a laudable venture and I want to remind this Honourable House that this Agreement is non-controversial. This Agreement is in the interest of the people of this country and the interest of all of us. This should not be any form of political bickering in the processing of ratifying this Agreement. We are all Sierra Leoneans and we are elected Members of Parliament to represent millions of Sierra Leoneans. What we want is the improvement of this country, the economy and the lives of our people. The business of every Government is to improve the lives of its people. If you cannot do that, then governance will not be meaningful and this Agreement is basically gearing towards ensuring the livelihood of the people.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I urge this Honourable House to ratify this Agreement speedily. I thank you very much.

HON. SHIAKA M. SAMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to agree with my brother on the other side that this Agreement before us is non-controversial. I would love to urge my colleagues to ratify this Agreement. Like the Minister said, there are lots of beautiful things in this Agreement for our country and for the people of this country. For instance, jobs will be created, Sierra Leoneans will be empowered, there will be financial and technical assistance for Sierra Leoneans, productivity will increase. There are lots of other good things we hope to gain from this Agreement.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have few concerns I want to bring to your notice. Our Agreements cannot push this Nation forward because these Agreements are usually very beautiful on paper. The Minister spoke very well and I was encouraged by her presentation. Her presentation sounds as if this Agreement will bring goodies for this country. When I was a small boy at the Bo school, we heard about very beautiful ideas like the 'Green Revolution.' So many Agreements were signed. I spent about three days in my constituency on a 'meet the people tour.' I visited communities and those communities have schools that were housed by makeshift structures. I visited one of the schools and I nearly shed tears because of the dilapidated condition of that school. Many of our schools are a disgrace to this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we had the 'Sababu' Education Project few years back and other beautiful projects. Mr Minister, I want to thank you very much for your effort, but my concern is, what change will this Agreement bring to improve the lives of our people? This is very important. Majority of our people lived in villages. They have voted for the Government and they expect Government to reciprocate. They are the tax payers and they are Sierra Leoneans. We own this country together. When our Government enters into loan Agreements like this one, there are serious consequences. Our grandchildren are going to pay these loans at high interest rates. The loan should be used to improve the living conditions of our people. Freetown is not Sierra Leone. Are we going to secure this loan to empower the same foreign investors who have wreaked havoc in our communities? Are we going to secure this loan to empower Sierra Leonean farmers who do not have access to legal representation? Are we going

empower farmers who cannot write projects? Are these loans going to be used to improve the lives of Sierra Leoneans who voted for the 'New Direction?' These are some of the questions I want the Minister to consider. There is no use signing any Agreement if majority of Sierra Leoneans will be cut off from accessing these loans. I want to encourage the Minister that some of these Agreements are laudable on paper. Madam Minister, if you go to the provinces, you will shed tears.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have visited a number of countries like Liberia and Abidjan. When you compare Sierra Leone to Liberia, Liberia cannot be richer than Sierra Leone in any way. We have natural and human resources, but when I visited the Parliament of Liberia, I went to the office of the Speaker, you cannot compare it to the office of the Speaker here. It is a shame. My constituents did not vote for party colours. I am an independent Member of Parliament from Pujehun. I have no regret because we voted for people who can push this country forward. We did not vote for party colours at all. So, when we voted for President Bio in my constituency, it was because he promised a 'New Direction' and this 'New Direction' should not stop on paper. It should be seeing in the communities. President Bio has a unique advantage. He has been a Head of State and he has had the experience before. He knew the mistakes that were made and he has now got the opportunity to correct those mistakes.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as Sierra Leoneans, we have to support him to ensure that he succeeds. A failure for him will be a failure for all Sierra Leoneans. Also, a failure for five years will put our country behind for five years. I want to remind the Minister that when we shall finally get access to the resources of this loan, those resources should be used to improve the lives of people in the provinces. These are people being left out. We cannot use that money to empower only foreign companies. Some of these companies have very bad human rights records. Talking from the point of authority, some of these foreign investors are finding it very difficult to access funds from foreign banks. There is a particular case I would not mention here, but a company went for a loan, but did not succeed because they have terrible human rights records. They cannot come and hide here to seek for funds from our Government to punish

these same people who voted for this Government. So, I want to urge the Minister to ensure that these funds are used to improve the lives of our people. They cannot read and write, but that does not mean they cannot use the funds in the best way possible.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this country has been exporting rice in the past without foreign assistance. Our people have the energy and the technical know-how to do it. What they need is empowerment. If you empower only the foreign companies, they are not here because they love us; they are here because they see opportunities to make huge profits. They are going to take those profits back to their countries. If we empower Sierra Leonean enterprises and local farmers, they will help to develop this country. I pray that this Agreement will not remain on paper, but it will be translated to improve the living conditions of our people in the provinces. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, before you take your seat, you made reference to the office of Mr Speaker and hinted at some comparison between the office of Mr Speaker in Sierra Leone and the Office of Mr Speaker in Liberia. I am sure the House and Mr Speaker sitting here in particular would be very interested in any elaboration that you may have on the observation you have made *[Applause]*. I know you made that comparison in passing, but my reason for drawing your attention to that is because the Deputy Minister of Finance is here *[Applause]*.

HON. SHIAKA M. SAMA: Mr Speaker, thank you very much. I made those comments with very good intentions. When I go to places outside this country, I try to observe very keenly and see how some of those good things can be replicated in our country. Sometimes it is even shameful, I am sure you are aware of that, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: So what recommendation would you like to make to the Minister?
[Applause]

HON. SHIAKA M. SAMA: Madam Minister, I am sure you have visited other Parliaments. Sierra Leone has been known to be a great country. A lot of other Africans gained education here and they have used that knowledge to improve their countries. If you look at the conditions of Members of Parliament here and the Speaker, the working

condition is a national disgrace. The office of the Liberian`s Speaker, even the space and the facilities by my estimation is twenty times that of our Speaker here *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, now you are speaking *[Applause]*.

HON. SHIAKA M. SAMA: Mr Speaker, I want to advise the Minister that when people come to do business in our country, they usually visit our offices, including the office of the Speaker by just taking casual look. They may not feel that we are very serious about certain things. So, I think the first impression counts a lot. Members of Parliament in Liberia have offices that they can employ fifteen staff who are paid by Government *[Applause]*. For some of us, our offices are at the Canteen. I think we have to change that. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I want to thank the Honourable Member for his constructive contribution to the debate and to implore the Deputy Minister of Finance to take note of every comment that the Honourable Member has made. Thank you.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, I rise on S.O. 26[2] *[Applause]*. I want to move that we discuss the conditions and privileges of Members of Parliament *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: This is one occasion that I would commend the Honourable Member for citing the correct Standing Order *[Applause]*. I will order that we defer consideration of that matter to another date. We shall proceed with the debate before the House.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Thank you, Mr Speaker, Members of Parliament would not want to undermine your authority and we do respect that. We would like to have a brief meeting immediately after this sitting is adjourned in Committee Room 1 for us to discuss this particular issue in details *[Applause]*. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I am very grateful for your indulgence and I will certainly accept the invitation *[Applause]*. We shall now proceed with the debate before the House.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when fine Agreements are brought to this Parliament, it is obviously a consensus that all of us will have to ratify it. However, I want to advise that when an

Agreement of this nature is brought to this House, the MDAs that are responsible to implement it should be here to listen to us as Members of Parliament. Agreements have been ratified in this Parliament and when they go for implementation and coordination are not there.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have expressed a view and I want to know if the relevant MDAs are represented here. You made a very pertinent point. Can the Leader of Government Business assure this House that the relevant MDAs are all represented?

HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS: Mr Speaker, I can assure this House that the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Trade, and SLIEPA are here. Actually, it is only the Ministry of Agriculture and EPA that are not represented here. They were all invited. They will be around, but at least we have majority of them here.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the reason these institutions are supposed to be here is because when we ratify these Agreements for onward implementation, they would have listened to the representatives of the people and in the process, they would have known what we have said here. A lot of Agreements have been ratified in this House, but coordination had been a serious problem. This time round, under the 'New Direction,' it is not going to be business as usual. When Agreements are ratified, the oversight Committee here will definitely do proper Oversight.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, **\$2mln** is there for the coordination of these activities and this **\$2mln** is going to those institutions for supervisory role. If we are going to develop this Nation, definitely we should empower the SMEs because this is the group that forms the bulk of the working population. If this Department is empowered, the joblessness of our youth will be reduced. There is lot of burden on Government. This is the only country where Government spends **60%** of its revenue on salaries and wages. However, if the SMEs are been empowered, it is very much clear that the Private Sector would be able to handle the employment facility in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in choosing SMEs, I want to crave the indulgence of the people that we would have to be selecting these SMEs to do due diligence. Please, you have to do due diligence and make sure that you provide those moneys to the SMEs that can perform. Do not give money to your friends or create your own SMEs and provide funds to them *[Applause]*. Please provide those moneys to people who will perform, so that at the end of the day, the joblessness of the youth will be reduced. This is the promise and it is one of the promises we promised the people of this country during our campaign. I am very confident that we are going to achieve this in the shortest possible time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister should look into the area of coordination. They should coordinate properly because when we go for oversight, we usually realise that coordination among MDAs had always been a major problem. If coordination is properly managed, I am very sure the Project will achieve its goals.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, definitely this Agreement is not controversial. I therefore crave the indulgence of Members of Parliament to speedily ratify this Agreement because it will help to reduce joblessness in this country. This Agreement is not meant for the Sierra Leone People's Party or the ALL People's Congress, but for the entirety of Sierra Leoneans. Therefore, I encourage all of us to support this Motion. We promised to deliver and we will continue to deliver, so that in 2023 it is going to be an unopposed election. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I think we have listened to about three or four male Members of Parliament. Let me now recognise the mother of the House to make her contribution.

HON. VERONICA K. SESAY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is the voice of wisdom from a woman. This loan is very good for the people and Honourable Members, especially those of us who are here. If you looked at what is in this Agreement, one of the things the Agreement is going to address is job creation. I believe we are bothered about employment issues. The youth are waiting for us; and in this Agreement, the main issue that is going to be addressed

is job creation. So, I do not think we should be laboured on this. It is very good for us because we are the people's representatives.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our roles, as Honourable Members, are oversight function, law making and representation. Now, we are going to stake our necks in terms of ratifying this loan. My worry, as you have heard from my colleague is that we do not want the implementation of the Project to be on paper alone. We want to see the reality. That is why when he mentioned the line ministries that are supposed to be here, I was very happy. They are supposed to be here to listen to the concerns Members of Parliament would want to flag up. Each time I stand here to make my presentation, I always express this concern. Mr Speaker, S.O. [2] 'People nɔ fɔ de cry fɔ una den una cam ask watin mak dem yei red.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are here with big jargons, but you have to pick the sense and leave the nonsense. You should be here to listen to us because each time we go on Oversight, you will see most of what we are saying here. As the Chairperson for the Committee on Trade said, the Ministry of Trade is the umbrella. So, during the implementation of this Project, we will follow these issues up. We will be the first to question certain things after the ratification of this Agreement. That is the first thing we are going to take because the Agreement has an area that concerns us. Encouraging foreign investors is good, but we should be talking about good roads, agriculture, fisheries and marine culture.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the cultural aspect is dear to my heart. We do not have to kill our culture. I thank God because it is in this Agreement. If you go to Guinea, you see Guineans in their cultural regalia. I am just from Ghana and you will see Ghanaians in their culture. Which culture do we have in this country? Initially, we had the 'Tamalay,' the country clothes. We are supposed to be wearing our local dress on Fridays, but that is not happening at all. We are seeing people in coat and ties dress on Fridays. The Speaker is not imposing; he is just telling you to be well dressed [*Undertone*]. We want to see Honourable Members setting the space. You have to lead and others will follow.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are here talking about the package and improvement. We do not know when the raining season starts or when the dry season ends. Initially, the raining season starts in April except in abnormal cases, but now we cannot even tell. Climate change is in the package and the EPA is in charge of the environment. Majority of my people are farmer in my constituency, but you will be amazed to see what is happening to our environment. You have to do something very fast. We do not want to see disasters anymore. We want to see how you operate. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade is here. Please take the message to your Minister and he is very much committed. The last time I invited him, he was supposed to travel, but he was here with the full package. That is what we want to see. If we call you, we are not calling you here to squeeze you. We are not here to witch-hunt anybody, but to hear the success stories you have achieved. We know that there are challenges, but sometimes when we invite the Ministers, they will rather send their representatives.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my concern here is that whenever we call you, come and listen to us. Come and tell us your success stories and the challenges you have encountered. We need to come together and collaborate or work together because it is our duty to oversee your operations. It is also our duty to make laws or to translate those policies into laws. I am saying this because people will say it is the Honourable Members who passed those laws. I do not want to be part of bad laws in this country. We want to make sure that we work together and that is why when we have little fracas with our brothers. I will be here to talk to them, so that we can come together for the benefit of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister's presentation was very good and I admired her. She was steadfast, calm and well composed. That is what we want to see in this country. We want to see more women in governance. We are asking for **30%** women's representation. Where are the women? Here are the women. Keep it up. That was a very good start and I want you to continue. Please, make sure the implementation of this Project is done effectively and efficiently. We do not want to call

you here tomorrow to come and explain. We do not want to see a situation wherein you will not be able to answer certain questions. If we notice any wrong doing, you should inform us. I would not want to see you standing there or sitting here to answer questions from Honourable Members. The Honourable Members you are seeing today are very committed. We usually laugh together, but when there are questions or issues to discuss, we speak with one voice. As you have heard from my colleague, we will certainly hold a closed door meeting and we will speak with one voice. So, this is how we operate here. Keep the good work and make sure that you take into cognisance the roads where these Projects will be implemented. I am coming from a very deplorable area and we want to enjoy from this national cake. Please consider our roads. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, mother of the House, for your very constructive contribution.

HON. FODAY M. KAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am glad for this opportunity to make an input to this debate. Other speakers thought the Agreement is good and it will not be good for somebody to stand here and talk against it. To buttress what my colleague, the independent Member of Parliament has said, the problem we have in this country is the implementation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is a pity the Ministry of Agriculture is not represented here today. I want to announce to this House that we are in discussion with the Ministry of Agriculture, especially Members of Parliament from Kambia District, including our Leader. You will be surprised to know that there is no single fertilizer this year for Kambia and Port Loko Districts. Our farmers have been asking for fertilizers, but nothing has been given to them. Presently, we are battling with the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure that our people get fertilizers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what I want to bring out is that some of these Agreements are on paper and the actual implementation does not reach the poor people. As some body was saying, Sierra Leone voted for the 'New Direction.' Honourable Member, whether you voted for the 'New Direction' or not, you are now

under the 'New Direction' and His Excellency the President is for all Sierra Leoneans. Our fear is the amount i.e., **\$2mIn** for this side another **\$2mIn** for the other side and **\$6mIn**. We want to see this reflected on the faces of Sierra Leoneans. However, to allay the fears of my colleague on my side, I want to remind him that the Commission of Inquiry is still on the Table of this House. To me, it is not a bad idea [*Applause*], but as we usually say in the Temne Language, S.O [2] 'ma yor guror ya yor rukor' what I want to say here is 'what goes around comes around.' I want to say to my Honourable colleague that the payment of this loan will start in six years. That means perhaps the SLPP would have gone and you will see National Grand Coalition [NGC] ruling this country. The NGC will be responsible to pay this loan, S.O [2] sobeh 'Alhamdulillah.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a fine Agreement and indeed I would rather ask this noble House to ratify this Agreement with the understanding that if what this Agreement is meant for is not seen on the ground, then somebody will have to answer for that afterwards. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I will now limit the debate to one speaker on either side of the aisle before I ask the leaders to wind up the debate. I think it is obvious on this side. I know its quiet obvious and I will not disappoint you.

HON. ZAINAB C. TARAWALLY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. We are moving towards the end of the first session. I feel honoured when we have in front of us a woman of substance, a woman that is representing women [*Applause*]. We are not talking about what has happened, but we on this side would want to praise things that are very good and we want to talk about things that are real. When we have women who are strong and supportive, we are always supporting a very good action. We on this side are always on the positive side of supporting good things. We are always in favour of very good things. The Agreement is a fine and thirty two years have been slated to pay this loan, when I would have been in my late age. However, I will continue to enjoy the Agreement and I know that the wonderful and unique Speaker

would be at his retirement bench, enjoying this unique and wonderful opportunity. In thirty two years, he would still be alive.

THE SPEAKER: Give them notice of that, Honourable Member.

HON. ZAINAB C. TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, I have gone through the nitty-gritty of this Agreement and it is a fine Agreement. According to the Agreement, we will pay **1%** of the principal amount per annum. It is very good. For a nation to pay huge amount of money, it tells you that government is continuity. We are here to continue where ever the past Government stopped. The 'New Direction' is following where former direction stopped. We are here to support the government and we are here to support Agreements that will help our children's children. Sierra Leone is a unique country; Sierra Leone is a wonderful country. Sierra Leone is always green. If you go out, you will see the green. What I mean is that we have lots of natural resources and these resources are there to help us push this Nation forward. So, Sierra Leone is always unique.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to caution the ministries and agencies that are going to implement this Project, especially the Ministry of Trade and Industry, SLIEPA and the Ministry of Finance. The issue of bureaucracy has to stop now. We are equals when it comes to development. We are here praise singing this Agreement. I want to state here that after the ratification of this Agreement, we would come after you. This means that your doors should always be opened for us. It is not the business of ministry; it is the business of Sierra Leoneans. We are representing the bulk of Sierra Leoneans. So, you have to work in the interest of the people. Make sure your eyes, ears and nostrils are always attentive. So, put whatever at your back for the benefit of all Sierra Leoneans.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague on the other side said whether you are red or green, we are one and the loan is for every Sierra Leonean. We will monitor the recruitment process in order to ensure that the least man benefits from it; not because he/she is on the other side, but whatever side the person is. So, I want to thank

Madam Minister and to call on this Honourable House to speedily ratify this Agreement that is in front of us. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for her contribution. One thing I like about the left side is that they take cognisance of my pronouncements. I thank them for that. The Deputy Leader of Coalition for Change [C4C] will speak for the rest of you.

HON. SAA F. BHENDU: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. On behalf of the C4C, we are coming from a deprived community and whatever Agreement we are going to ratify here, we want to see the reflection on the lives of the local people. Like we used to say, this is a very good one and we have no reason to fight against it. We will always support anything that is in the best interest of the community. Like in our slogan, 'we have the nation first;' but over the years, we have seen institutions or agricultural organisations with beautiful programmes, but they do not benefit the local communities. If you go back to the local banks we have in our communities, they always institute conditions the common man cannot be able to obtain loan from those banks. With the ratification of this loan, looking at the 'New Direction' and what it stands for, we want to see the local people benefiting from this Agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as our colleague was saying, we are very much optimistic that in the near future, the C4C will be paying these loans. Against that backdrop, we are going to monitor the implementation of these loans. This is because we believe that the C4C will be in power and will be in charge of paying these loans. Mr Speaker, S.O [2], I see for u, you see for me.'

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I urge this Honourable House to speedily ratify this Agreement. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I will now recognise the Leader of the Opposition, followed by the Leader of Government Business to wind up the debate.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I am sure we still have an item on the Order Paper for this afternoon. Therefore, I will

endeavour to be very brief, more so when all Honourable Members who spoke to the subject under discussion did so very well. Mr Speaker, it is a fact that this loan is not just good, but also relevant for the people of this country. We might have a good loan, but if it not relevant, we would not need it. So, this is one of the loans we need because it is good and relevant. I want to commend the Minister for her detailed presentation. When you have a Minister that is detailed in providing information, there is very little to say except when there are controversies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Member from Moyamba, who happens to be the mother of this House, emphasised job creation this Agreement would bring. However, we would only achieve job creation if the loan itself is implemented properly. So, I would not put job creation as being paramount, it would be the end subject. Primarily, we would have to focus on making sure that the loan is properly implemented.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a lot has also been said about the Line Ministries; i.e., those that are represented and those that are not represented. I am happy that colleagues have made it very clear that we would be robust in our oversight functions. It is our duty and we have to make sure that we do our own part of the job. Usually, what the ministers want is laxity. You do not blame them for that because Members of Parliament have a mandate to execute. We must ensure that we exercise and execute that mandate to the latter.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have also heard about the EPA, SLIEPA and Standards Bureau. We know the relevant Committees that should be overseeing those MDAs. I want to plead with colleagues to robustly monitor the implementation process. SMEs are also part of this Agreement. The Honourable Member from Bombali said that the Bill was brought to this House and was passed into law during the last Parliament; and that Government is continuity. We are happy that the Project has continued because SMEs are relevant to the survival of our Nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go through the Agreement, a huge chunk of money is going towards monitoring, implementation and training. That has been the

pattern for donors and our development partners. We hope that the beneficiaries of these funds through trainings will develop their capacity as Sierra Leoneans. This is because we must have the capacity *[Applause]*. We do not want to see experts from Ghana, Nigeria or Senegal when we have them here. That is something we should monitor very closely. Mr Speaker, this is something I would not have said today, but for the attention of the Minister, I should say it. When we spend moneys on training Sierra Leoneans, we should make sure that their jobs are secured as well *[Applause]*. We should not train people and then the next minute they are elsewhere. It would seem as if the moneys are being thrown away. We have a case in point now, but fortunately, the Leader of Government Business is taking action against the Ministry of Local Government. The Ministry of Finance was against the idea, but the World Bank granted another loan and several Sierra Leoneans who were employed were laid off. We do not know why they were laid off, but I am sure the Minister will tell this House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I give my concurrence on the ratification of this loan and we have been encouraged to speedily do so. Madam Minister, we have assured you of our supports, but make sure you do not disappoint us. We are here and do have the expertise. However, we are policemen, overseeing MDAs and I want to assure you of our support. We will continue to do our job.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I endorse the ratification of this Agreement and to also encourage colleagues to support its ratification *[Applause]*

HON. SIDIE M.TUNIS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by thanking my colleague Members of Parliament, especially the Leader of the main opposition for supporting this Agreement. I also want to make it clear that while we would be there to support our compatriots in other institutions, I have said over and over that people who are not politicians should stay away from politics and support politicians. We are the politicians. You have to support us, but if you participate in politics whilst occupying sensitive positions and politically active at the same time, it would be very difficult to maintain that job when you lose the elections. I would try as much as possible to look into that particular issue the Leader of Opposition spoke about. I would ensure that I

look into it. In fact, I have already given instructions to the Minister to come to Parliament for us to discuss the issues. But I am still calling on civil servants, professionals and technocrats to stay in their offices and do their jobs. They have every right to be partisan; they have every right to support any political party; but let them leave politics alone. When you decide to leave your office and go into politics, the politics will come back to your office and when the politics decide to come to your office. Normally the politics will not leave you there *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a concessionary loan that is geared towards promoting Agro-businesses and it is going to create jobs and wealth for our people. I want to call on our colleagues to help in the implementation of this Project. You have a very important role to play in the implementation process. In other words, you have a very important oversight role in terms of monitoring and the implementation of this Agreement. We have been here on several occasions complaining about the activities of MDAs, but the 1991 Constitution gives us the right to call every one of them to come to Parliament if their stewardship is not satisfactory. Let us use those oversight functions to ensure that agreements are implemented in the interest of the people of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I said earlier, we have another item on the Order Paper. Therefore, I do not want to waste much time on this. A lot has been said about this Agreement and I believe it is a unanimous decision by this House to approve this Agreement. I will therefore ask my colleagues when the question is proposed, let us ratify this Agreement. Thank you.

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

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, before I invite the Honourable Minister to respond to the comments made by Honourable Members, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome back to the House our very abled Chief Whip on Government's

side, and to express, on your behalf our very sincere condolences, for the loss of his brother in Norway. I will ask that we rise for a minute of silence in memory of the deceased. *[A minute of silence was observed]*. May his soul rest in perfect peace. It is a pleasure to have you back. I refer to you as the automatic machine, but your absence was very much felt by all of us. I now invite the Honourable Minister to respond to the many contributions made.

DR PATRICIA N. LAVERLY *[Deputy Minister of Finance]*: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I took note of your questions. The first question I would like to respond to is the one relating to the beneficiary institutions. What I would like to clarify to Honourable Members is that this Project would be led by the Ministry of Trade and Industry and not by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The lead beneficiary institution is the Ministry of Trade and Industry. What we are trying to do, through this Project, is to strength the overall capacity of the Ministry of Trade and Industry. This will help to strengthen the Sierra Leone Investment and export Promotion Agency SLIEPA. Again, we are also supporting the SMEs Development Agency, the Standards Bureau and so on. It is in the Agreement. Of course, we cannot do this without the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Environmental Protection Agency. So, the Ministry of Trade is the lead beneficiary institution of this Project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the second concern I wish to address is the one relating to job creation. We are aware of the impact of Agro-processing and what we intend to do, through job creation in this Project, is to focus on youth owned businesses or youth managed businesses and women owned Agro-businesses. That is the crux of this Project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with regard to strengthening the capacity of Sierra Leoneans, providing more opportunities to the beneficiaries through the SMEs technical assistant facility and preference will be given to Sierra Leoneans through this Project. We also took note of the implementation challenges that most donor funded projects usually faced. We are aware of the challenges inherent in project implementation and I want to state here that most of them are not entirely challenges of the Government.

The borrowers and the donors also have their own challenges. What we are going to address through this Project is to ensure intensive supervision. That is why we have taken a careful look at clauses 4 and 5 on Page 7 of the Agreement. We have outlined the approach we intend to take to strengthen the implementation and oversight on a day to day base.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to inform Members of this Honourable House that I spent a lot of time in Liberia, working with Members of Parliament in Liberia. So, I wish to assure you that due to my background and the exposure I have, I am aware of the conditions of service for the Liberian Legislators and the big disparity between our own parliamentarians in Sierra Leone.

THE SPEAKER: She deserves the loudest applause, Honourable Members *[Applause]*.

DR PATRICIA N. LAVERLEY *[Deputy Minister of Finance]*: Please be assured that you can count on me, the Deputy Minister of Finance, to work with you *[Applause]*. I will stand by you in improving your conditions of service. I have been asked to repeat this and to take this home with you. I stand by each and every one of you regardless of your political background, your political affiliation to ensure that your conditions of service are improved. Thank you very much *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, you cannot have it better than that. Madam Minister, you may now resume your seat.

DR PATRICIA N. LAVERLEY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Friday, 3rd August, 2018:

Financing Agreement of the Sierra Leone Agro-Processing Competitiveness Project between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association Credit Number 6299-SL.' Thank you very much.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Government Motion by the Deputy Minister of Finance has been ratified]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, with the expectation derived from the comfortable assurances by the Honourable Deputy Minister Finance, I think she deserves a louder applause than *[Applause Across the Floor]*.

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

PROPOSER: HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS

SECONDER: HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THE THIRTEENTH 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.

HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS *[Leader of Government Business]*: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I present to you the Thirteenth Report of the First Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service.

1. Introduction

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service, alive to its constitutional obligations met on Tuesday, 9th October, interviewed three Presidential nominees for the following appointments:

[I] Chairman, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Commercial Bank Limited

[I] Chairman, Legal Aid Board

[ii] Chairman, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Road Transport Corporation

2. Procedure

The Committee maintained strict consistency to its established procedure. The nominees were interviewed on issues pertaining to their educational backgrounds and to ensure that they have the relevant education and necessary backup experience to hold such important offices of state. Further probing questions put to the nominees

covered wide ranging issues relating to their track records in pertinent work situations, declared assets, tax obligations and their visions for a nationally productive tenure. Issues of unsuitability or otherwise were closely looked into.

3. Sixteenth Sitting of the Committee on Tuesday, 9th October, 2018.

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

[i] Dr James David Rogers, Proposed Chairman, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Commercial Limited.

Dr James David Rogers is an accredited Economist with a wealth of knowledge, experience and competence in International Banking and Finance, Agricultural Economics and Extension. From 2003-2007, Dr James David Rogers served as Governor of the Bank of Sierra Leone. The Committee acknowledged the nomination of Dr James David Rogers as appropriate and observed that the nominee had actually supervised the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank during his tenure as Governor, Bank of Sierra Leone. Dr James David Rogers was commended across party lines as a true patriot. **"We are of the view that you are highly qualified to serve in that capacity,"** a Committee Member eulogised.

[ii] Honourable Justice Miatta Maria Samba, Proposed Chairman, Legal Aid Board.

Honourable Justice Miata Samba is a judge of the High Court of Sierra Leone with over seventeen years international and domestic experience in Criminal law, Commercial law and Human Rights Law.

Highlighting her areas of concern in response to the Committee's inquiries, Honourable Justice Miatta Maria Samba deposed that the Legal Aid Board was established to serve those who could not afford the financial resources required to hire lawyers to represent them in court. From her experience as a judge, she said: **"Most accused persons who had appeared before her did not have proper legal representation because they are poor and could not afford to hire their own lawyers"** "Lawyers," she said, **"are very expensive, soliciting their services could cost one an arm and a leg. So when they appear before me as a judge, I called on**

the Legal Aid Board to avail themselves in court to help represent such people. Some of the accused could be innocent, but if they are not represented, they could be locked behind bars. I put great emphasis on that because I know how important it is to help people who find themselves in that kind of situation."

Reacting to questions relating to the conditions of the prisons, the learned Judge opined that there were many inmates languishing in prison for unnecessary long terms because they have not been indicted for their cases to be heard in court. **"I would like to see members of the Legal Aid Board going into the prisons to see what is happening there. So, if I am approved by this Honourable House, this is one of the areas I would want members of the Board, including the Executive Director, to see what we can do about such people who find themselves incarcerated for long periods without indictment for their cases to be heard in court.**

[iii] Madam Khaday Zorokong, proposed Chairman, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Road Transport Corporation.

Madam Khaday Zorokong is a popular opinion Leader and Gender Activist. She is currently the proprietress, 'Sisters for Reintegration and Development,' a Non-Governmental Organisation.

Responding to probing questions on what new ideas she would bring to the Corporation, Madam Khaday Zorokong said that she would endeavor to improve the welfare of the staff in general, build up their confidence and make them feel part of the Corporation to motivate them to give their best for this Nation. **"I want to build up the capacity of women. I would want to see women bus drivers competing with men in other countries, women are generally more careful than men. Hence, they will take better care of the buses.**

4. Recommendation[s]

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

[i] Dr James David Rogers, Chairman, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Commercial Limited;

[ii] Honourable Justice Miata Maria Samba, Chairman, Legal Aid Board;

[iii] Madam Khaday Zorokong, Chairman, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Road Transport Corporation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Thirteenth Report reflects the unanimous view of the Committee. I therefore move that the Thirteenth 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. Presented by Honourable Sidie M. Tunis, Chairman.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, any seconder?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, I so second.

[Question Proposed]

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members. Again, we are presented with a set of nominees for approval to manage the affairs of various Parastatals.

As I have been stating here, excuses in the 'New Direction' are not tolerated. Definitely, there is a contract between ourselves as a Government and the people of this Republic. In that regard, we are expected to deliver and to bring development to their doorsteps. We still believe in that promise and we are going to deliver. The people who will help us to deliver are the nominees presented to us today.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to advise the nominees that this Parliament is going to repose its trust in you and we do not want excuses. We expect you to perform and I am sure you will perform to the point that we continue to keep our brothers on that side of the aisle.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to briefly talk about Dr James David Rogers. Dr James David Rogers is a household name in the area of Economics. Of course, if the SLPP is in governance today, Dr James David Rogers is one of the people who was

educating the people of this country about the economic challenges we were facing. The people saw the need to vote for the SLPP. Dr James David Rogers, I have no doubt in his ability to perform. The Committee has no doubt in your ability to perform at the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank. We know that the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank is challenged. Of course, it is no secret that there are lots of challenges at the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank. We are hoping and praying that you will transform the bank for the good of all Sierra Leoneans. I am sure you will not disappoint this Parliament and His Excellency the President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Khaday Zorokong "de mama sef-sef" SO [2]. If you are from Bo or the South, Khaday Zorokong is no stranger. If you have not met her in person before, you would have heard her name. Khaday Zorokong is commonly called 'De sowe Acid.' If you play with her, she will definitely put you where you belong. When we lost the elections in 2007, it was very challenging to organise the SLPP. She was very instrumental. She offered herself in terms of uniting the SLPP to the admiration of all of us who left in 2005. She organised the party to the point that we had no option but to join the SLPP again. Today, the President made no mistake in nominating her to the SLRTC. Of course, we know the current status of that department. Some of us who have been in the Transport Committee in the last Parliament know that the SLRTC is challenged. That department is nothing to write home about. That is why the President, in his wisdom, has decided to bring the "De 'Sowe Acid' to reform that institution [*Applause*]. If she could organise the SLPP in the South, where the PMDC used to have almost all the parliamentary seats, I am sure she is going to reform that institution. Aunty Khaday, we have no doubt in your ability to perform. This Parliament has no doubt in you and we are praying that you will succeed, so that you will come here again to praise this Parliament. Thank you very much and we wish you well. If approved, we want to see transformation in the SLRTC.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have not known Justice Miatta Mario Samba personally, but I have heard her name. For some of us who have been listening to

radio, Miata Mario Samba is a household name in the justice sector. Of course, you are going to a very challenging institution, but you know all the problems because you have been part of the problem. You have dealt with cases that have no legal representation. You told us during your interview that some people have been jailed because they had no legal representation. This is one of the challenges you will continue to experience. Please, we want you to transform that institution for better. We hope and pray that you will not disappoint His Excellency the President because if the 'New Direction' succeeds, all of you will be part of that success.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to second this nomination and in collaboration with all Committee Members to say it is a unanimous view of the Committee. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

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

HON. SHAIKA M. SAMA: Mr Speaker, I have two of my constituents from the great constituency of Pujehun District who are before us this morning. These are, Chief David James Rogers and Madam Zorokong. Madam Zorokong was the national president of the Pujehun District Descendants` Association [PDDA]. She also served as the regional president of PDDA and I replaced her as president of that fraternity and I am still the chairman for the South. I have known her to be a very active woman. I know she can perform very well. She is also a very strong supporter of His Excellency the President. I know this because am very close to her. I just want to remind her that she has always demonstrated her love for the SLPP and this is a golden opportunity for her to prove that love. There is no way you can say you love the President if you cannot work hard to help him achieve his aspirations for this country. We do not only want chairmen, but we want chairmen who can deliver. It is not just about gender, but is also about Sierra Leoneans. I know you have what it takes to perform very well and I wish you well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I met Mr James David Rogers in the canteen and I told him that all the chiefs have come to Freetown and they have neglected their villages. We have land disputes, woman disputes and the chiefs have to settle these disputes in their capacity as Paramount Chiefs. However, Chief James Rogers has been

doing very well by representing us in the city. He served as Bank Governor and he has a lot of experience. I know he will do very well to make people of Pujehun District proud. He is also going to help push this country forward. Chief James David Rogers, I wish you all the best.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Justice Samba. I am very impressed by what she said. I am a graduate of Bo Prison. I have been there three times *[Laughter]*. I know the challenges prisoners are facing. The Prison Services have been renamed as Correctional Services. For me, there is no correction going on there because our prisons are like small boxes. A prison should be like a whole village with various departments where people go to transform their lives. Prisoners eat bad food and there are twenty or thirty prisoners in one small room. When I was in prison, I shared a room with twenty other prisoners. Life in prison is terrible. So, I am encouraged by the fact that you are aware that the less privileged who appear before the court do not have legal representation. Some of them go to prison because they do not have Lawyers to represent them. I know prisoners in Bo where I stayed for over three weeks who have been waiting for their court papers for over seven years. Some of them spent seven years waiting to appear before the High Court and when they went there, they were sentenced for three years. Those people have already spent seven years. This is very unfair.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am encouraged by the fact that the nominee has passion to advocate for the less privileged. I want to encourage you to put preventive measures in place. Do not wait for them to go to jail before you begin to assist them. I want you to have monitors in courts to make sure that the court system is properly structured and see how you can help those people. This is because if you say people should come out of jail or out of the bushes during the war, we should always ensure that those things that cause people to go to the bush do not exist with us. For me, those things that brought the war are still with us and we need people like you to ensure that we forget about them. We should not do things on paper, but we have to make sure that we take the necessary steps. I thank you very much madam.

THE SPEAKER: I recognise the Paramount Chief Member of Parliament.

HON. P.C. MATILDA Y.M. LANSANA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am glad today because women have been nominated to serve this country. There are two women who are going to take up state responsibilities. Madam Khaday Zorokong has been very active in Pujehun District, in terms of bringing the women together and organising programmes for women. In fact, she is a member of the Women of Wanjama [WOW]. Therefore, seeing her here makes me feel proud of her and I know she is going to do her work perfectly. May God grant her peace, good health and prosperity to execute her duties diligently.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am also glad for the other nominee, Madam Miatta Mario Samba. It is now quiet clear that women are taking leadership positions in this country. We have been crying for **30%** women's representation in governance. This must happen and the women are going to obtain the **30%** quota, by the grace of God. I am sure we are going to get it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Dr James David Rogers. It is a common name in Pujehun District and he has been doing very well in that district. His Chiefdom is called Kpaka Chiefdom, but he has been traversing the whole district and he is well known. He has tried very well during his work as the Bank Governor. I am very glad that he is going to work again as chairman of the Bank. The people of Pujehun District are very proud of the nominees coming from that part of the country. I hope they will continue to come as nominees in Jesus' name. Thank you [*Applause*].

THE SPEAKER: There seems to be unanimity. Well, before I call on the Leaders to wind up the debate, I would like to recognise the following eminent personalities who are with us in this Chamber, Justice Eku Roberts, Justice of the Supreme Court, Madam Tuma Jabbie, Chairman, Board of Directors, National Revenue Authority [NRA], Honourable Manso Dumbuya, Chairman, Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Ports Authority, Honourable M.L Kallon, former Member of Parliament, Honourable Amadu Fofanah, former Member of Parliament, Madam Fatmata Claire Hansiles, Executive Director, Legal Aid Board [LAB], Mrs Fatmata Ibrahim Sorie [Nee Bundu], a

distinguished legal practitioner and she is my niece *[Applause]*. I see both the Leaders of the main opposition and his Deputy are absent. The lot falls on you, Mr Chief Whip.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I must say here that I am not surprised that people have said all good things about the nominees we have in front of us today. I have been an advocate of women's inclusion in governance. So, I am definitely appreciative of the fact that we have women amongst the nominees who are to be approved today. I want to use this opportunity to draw the attention of the public to respect individuals holding state offices. I am saying this because if we want to empower women, let us respect them and we should treat them with dignity.

In line with what I have said, I want to use this opportunity to draw the attention of this House to an unsavory incident that took place between the a Deputy Minister of Local Government and the Mayor of Freetown. Let us use this opportunity to respect people *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Speaker, let us use this opportunity to respect people.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Speaker, may I use this opportunity *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Yes, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Now, you are doing the right thing. Let us confine ourselves to the subject before the House, please.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In the process of approving these nominees, let us remind people of what we should not do. Mr Speaker, I respect you and I appreciate you, but I want to remind you that I have come up with that issue before.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have known people like Justice Miatta Mario Samba for quite a while and I know that she is qualified. She is aware of the problems we have in the justice system. I have no doubt in her capacity to perform *[Applause]*.

Of course, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we also have Madam Khaday Zorokong. A lot of nice things have been said about her and I do not need to say much again. Therefore, I want us to speedily approve these nominees, so that we go on with the Business of the House. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these nominees are all qualified. Today, we have three nominees and two of them are women *[Applause]*. This is a clear indication to show His Excellency's commitment to empower the women of this county. As a Government under the 'New Direction,' we will continue to support women and we will also call on the women who are given positions to ensure that they abide by the rules *[Applause]*. If you are an elected officer, you should know that people elected you. If you are an elected officer occupying positions, you should understand that you are being supervised by other people and you must work under those regulations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to assure this Honourable House that the nominees we have today are very good people. Dr James David Rogers served as Governor, Bank of Sierra Leone despite the fact that he was sacked prematurely. I remember very well under the tenure of Dr James David Rogers, we have a very... - *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: This is a very interesting observation you are also making. You have just reminded me of the debate we had the last time. You wanted me to say more? Please go ahead.

HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS: Mr Speaker, up to this moment, Dr James David Rogers is one of our best Bank Governors in this country. Unfortunately, he was not given the opportunity to complete his term and he was prematurely sacked by the then

government. Today, we have Dr James David Rogers again. He has been nominated by His Excellency the President to serve as Chairman of the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank [SLCB], to use his knowledge and bring sanity to that institution. As the Honourable Member who seconded my Motion said, all of us know very well that there are problems at the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank. Therefore, with Honourable Dr James David Rogers, there will be sanity in that institution.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable Justice Miatta Mario Samba is a household name in the justice sector. She is a very brilliant Judge and she has once appeared before this House and she received a lot of acclamations from this House. We will only encourage her this time to help the poor who need her assistance and to encourage the Executive Director and the staff of Legal Aid Board [LAB] to do as much as possible to help our people out there. I have no doubt that Honourable Justice Miatta Mario Samba will perform the functions she has been nominated to perform.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Madam Khaday Zorokong is an activist. We all know that there are problems at the Sierra Leone Road Transport Cooperation [SLRTC], but I can assure this Honourable House that this is somebody that has the energy and the vigour to bring changes to the SLRTC. We have heard her already talking about introducing female bus drivers. Madam Khaday Zorokong, this Honourable House, especially the Committee on Transport will give you all the supports you need to ensure that you bring those female bus drivers onboard. Women are always very careful and that is why I want to believe that women will eventually be the best bus drivers in this country.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want again to call on this Honourable House to speedily approve the nominations of the three individuals mentioned above. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank all the speakers who have taken the Floor on this subject.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

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

THE SPEAKER: I will now like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the House, to express our very sincere felicitations to the nominees who have just been approved and to wish them well in their new assignments. We have no doubt that with their wealth of experience and background, you will truly live up to the expectations of this House and also the high expectations of His Excellency the President, which of course, motivated him to nominate you in the first place. We wish you well.

Honourable Members, let me now take this opportunity to draw your attention to Page 12 of the Votes and Proceedings we have approved and to remind the Leaders of the Main Opposition and the Deputy Leader of C4C, whether they have anything further to say in connection with the pledge I made on behalf of Members of Parliament on the 'Free Quality Education.' I have had consultations with the Leader of Government Business and the Leader of the Main Opposition and I understand consultations are ongoing on that very issue. I think before long, an appropriate response will be made.

Honourable Members, let me now draw the attention of the House to a little matter that is still outstanding. I indicated at the last meeting of the House that I was favorably disposed to entertaining the debate on the Constitutional Instruments which are on the Table and going through the maturity process at the present time. I even went on to indicate that today would have been an appropriate day for such a debate. I am a little disappointed looking at the Order Paper that there is no indication of whatsoever that any communication has been received from any Member of Parliament in that regard. So, I would want to say I am disappointed and I am sure all of you, including the general public must be disappointed as well. We are rising today without the debate that had been so widely anticipated. I hope, when we come back sometime next week, if any Member is so minded that a debate will indeed take place, otherwise, I want to remind the House that all the instruments are now on the Table and in accordance with Section 170, Sub-section 7 of the 1991 Constitution, that time has started running. It started running from the 2nd October, 2018. In other words, the twenty one [21] day statutory prescription started running from the 2nd October, 2018 and will end with the maturity of those instruments on the 23rd October, 2018. So, if any Member is so

minded, I hope the appropriate communication will be made under the Standing Orders.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Speaker, you cautioned me when I stood up to round up on behalf of the Leader, but I want to draw the attention of this House to the incident that took place between the Mayor of Freetown and Deputy Minister of Local Government. Let us be very clear that the Mayor, Yvonne Aki Sawyer was not dealt with as an individual. She was dealt with as the Mayor of Freetown and we must start respecting institutions, so that in future, those we are approving in this House will be given the due respect they deserved. I remember when the Deputy Minister was here, both sides of the aisle spoke very good things about him because we believed he was a colleague of ours and would respect institutions. We knew he was committed to operating across party lines, but the treatment meted on the Mayor is a cause for concern. Let us remember that she is the Mayor and she is a woman, which means she is vulnerable. Whether we like it or not, women are vulnerable people. The things men can accommodate might not be the ones they will accommodate. I expected the women to stand up on this and say the truth. Let us forget about partisan divide and look at humanity. Let us look at the human rights aspect of it. Mr Speaker, it is a call for concern and I am asking my colleague Honourable Members, especially the Female Caucus to take up this issue as one that is close to their hearts. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, is it on this same issue or another issue? S.O [23]? Go ahead.

HON. HAFIJU MAADA KANJA: Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, on behalf of the Committee on Defense, I want to bring to this House the fatal accident that occurred on the 1st October, 2018, which left eight soldiers and four of their children dead. They have already been buried and we have more than thirty admitted at Connaught Hospital, 34 Military Hospital and Emergency Hospital. I want to bring this to the knowledge of this House to pray for them. Thank you *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for reminding us about that awesome incident. I took the opportunity to visit the wounded at the Emergency hospital and Connaught hospital and I think it is but fitting that we rise and observe a minute of silence for the eleven not even eight compatriots who lost their lives in that awesome accident. [A minute of silence was observed] May their souls rest in perfect peace. S.O [23].

HON. DOMINIC J. LAVALIE-SHOMBE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I represent Constituency 094, Moyamba District. It is in relation with the fatal accident that happened on Friday, 5th October at the Taima Bridge, where a vehicle, with registration number AOB 690 and a driver by the name of Desmond Pessima ran over the bridge into the Taya River. As at now, only two of the victims survived. On Friday, six other bodies were discovered, two females and four males. Since yesterday, the vehicle has not been discovered. We have miners from Maritimes who have been there since Sunday night and as we speak, the vehicle had not been located. On the manifest, only seven names were listed which are; Mariam Duckley is alive and Lucy Tommy. Victoria Moray, she was going for an interview to be admitted at the Njala University, Jeneba Kanebah, Hindowa Silvallie, Samuel Pessima and Lamin Suluku relative of the Internal Affairs Minister. The situation on the ground is gruesome. Thank you very much and may their souls rest in perfect peace.

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at 1:03 p.m. and was adjourned to Thursday, 18th October, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.]