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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOURTH ALLOTTED DAY: PARLIAMENT CONTINUES DEBATE ON PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH**

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has on Friday 27/05/2022 continued debates on the Motion of Thanks to His Excellency the President, Brigadier Rt. Julius Maada Bio's address, he so graciously delivered on the Occasion of the State Opening of the Fifth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone in the Chamber of Parliament on Tuesday 10th May 2022.

Making her submission to the debate, President of the Female Caucus, Hon. Veronica Kadie Sesay appreciated God Almighty for giving President Bio the wisdom to rule the people of Sierra Leone. She said the global pandemic (COVID-19) strongly affected the growth of the economy of the country and underscored the respect the president has for his citizens, in light of prioritizing their much needed agenda.

On education, she said initially it was a privilege, but now it is right for every Sierra Leonean and went on to heap praises on President Bio's administration for the Improvement in the education sector in the country. She also commended the president for the infrastructural development and women's empowerment in governance.

Hon. Abdul Kargbo said there were lot of promises made by the president and none has been accomplished, referencing the overhead bridges, the Lungi Bridge, the construction of fire stations for the National Fire Force, a cultural village that was promised by the president year's back and not fulfilled. He said what the president said was a policy statement and that has to be honored and respected. He said the president had spent more than four years in office and most of the agenda promises in his manifesto have not been actualized. He said there is a selective justice by the government, and bias in the fight against corruption, "they are just targeting the main opposition party", he concluded. He said there is a double-dipping of corruption in the office of the president, citing the Auditor General's Report and blaming the ACC for not acting swiftly.

Hon. Sarty Banya applauded the Office of the National Disaster Management Agency for helping his constituents during a disaster in his constituency and commended the president for establishing the National Disaster Management Agency to support disaster-related issue. He blamed the previous government for not supporting issues relating to disasters. He lauded the

ongoing road infrastructure development around the country. He praised the government for providing school buses for the children of Sierra Leone and requested more buses for rural communities.

Hon. Komba M.Kamanda said there were lot of promises made by the president that are accomplished, indicating the school buses for children and the school feeding programs for certain districts. He decried the president in specific areas that are not fulfilled, citing the areas of food security, water supply, teachers' training institutes, scholarships for children of serving teachers, housing, roads, electricity, and bridges.

Hon. Foday Mario Kamara said the president meant well for the country, but underscored the point that people blamed him for things he did not know about. He said the president should not lay credence on the concluded national census for the development of the country and informed that it would send the latter into doom. He said the economy of the country is not growing as expected and underscored the bad state of the foreign exchange rate. He spoke about agricultural policies, which he said are not benefitting the country and urged for proper implementation of agricultural productivity.

Hon. Sahr Charles said the quick-fixed project cannot help the development growth of the economy, citing; that the five hundred billion leones credit facility given to the private sector during the peak of COVID-19 to provide essential commodities for the people of Sierra Leone was not tenable. On overspending, he said for the past four years the Auditor General Report has not been debated and accused Parliament of Sierra Leone for failing to adhere to the 1991 Constitutional provision of Sierra Leone. He commended the ongoing construction of the new airport terminal at Lungi. In the mining sector, he urged the government to advocate for an added value on minerals extracted, in order to generate more revenue. On national cohesion, he said the president needs to do more for peace and security to prevail, and commended the National Disaster Management Agency for their service.

Hon. Issac Tarawalie said deforestation is affecting the country's environment and called for tougher measures to address the unwarranted activities. On the free quality education, he highlighted its challenges whilst outlining the economic hardship of the people.

Hon. Mustapha Sallu denounced some previous speakers who spoke negatively about the economic situation of the country and decided to put the records straight, backing it with statistical data. He spoke on the effective management of the economic growth by the government during and after the COVID-19 and classified the GDP and that of the wage bill in tandem with the economic growth.

Hon. Alieu Emanuel Koroma said the people of Sierra Leone are suffering from hunger and underlined the absence of Food security for the people. He said the citizens of Sierra Leone are going to bed without food., "Everything about food security is a sham", he asserted. He urged for the proper use of chemical fertilizer to safeguard the environment.

Hon. Francis Kai-Samba said the misrule of the APC for eleven years is what is affecting the development of the nation and blamed the previous government for the lack of development for the Kenema people. He said the previous government was run like a business and blamed the APC for looting the economic development of the state. In clarifying the point on the debate of the Auditor General, he said in the history of the Parliament of Sierra Leone the Auditor General Report has never been debated. He said the government is committed to addressing the foreign exchange rate. He used the opportunity to accentuate the efforts of President Bio's government on education.

Hon. Barber Kamara thanked President Bio's administration for reactivating sport for the people of Sierra Leone and commended the flagship program of the president on education and questioned the president for failing to mention about the welfare of the teachers in his speech. He captioned the economic situation of the country as "the roof leaks more than ever before", he opined that the ACC is not credible in the fight against corruption, referencing previous speakers on the subject. He concluded by saying that, there is selective justice in the country.

Hon. Shar E. Juna referred to the president's speech as a "fine and beautiful document". He commended the president for capacitating the security forces and underscored the tremendous strides performed by the government in terms of development in that sector.

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