



OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF PARLIAMENT
PARLIAMENT BUILDING
OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL
FREETOWN



E-mail: sierraleoneparliament@hotmail.com/admin@parliament.gov.sl

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PRESS RELEASE



PARLIAMENT APPROVES SEVEN HIGH COURT AND THREE APPEAL COURT JUDGES

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has with unanimity on Thursday 08/12/2022 approved Seven High Court and Three Appeal Court Judges to serve in the Superior Courts of Judicature contained in Sixth Report of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service, chaired by the Leader of Government Business, Hon. Mathew Sahr Nyuma.

The following presidential nominees on the recommendations of the Judicial Service Commission were approved by Parliament:

1. Justice Francis Banks Kamara - Justice of the High Court
2. Justice Boi Hannah Bonnie - Justice of the High Court
3. Justice Aggrey Aruna - Justice of the High Court
4. Justice Adrian Fisher - Justice of the High Court
5. Justice Mohamed Bawoh - Justice of the High Court
6. Justice Abdul Sheriff - Justice of the High Court
7. Justice Abu Bakkar Sannoh - Justice of the High Court
8. Justice Tonia Barnett - Justice of the Appeal Court
9. Justice Samuel Omodele Moses Taylor - Justice of the Appeal Court and
10. Justice Michael Patrick Hindolo Mami Jr. - Justice of the Appeal Court

Seconding the motion, the Opposition Whip, Hon. Hassan Sesay said Parliament was about to approve very important persons to serve as Judges in the High and Appeal Courts of Sierra Leone. He referred to the nominees as qualified and competent for their positions given their respective and exemplary performances over the years. He also referred to them as consummate professionals and urged them to dispense justice fairly for the benefit of the country. In light of recommendations contained in the TRC Report, he called on Judges to be independent and fair in the dispensation of justice as they are people who have earned their reputation over the years and would want to maintain it unscathed.

Hon. Hindolo Gevao said it was a special day for special Sierra Leoneans who were called to the Bench. He said Judges and Magistrates were not so much liked especially

by those who lose cases in Court. Hon. Gevao said given the nature of Judges, he was gratified to seeing them bow in Parliament. He recalled the role played by Justice Barnett and Paolo Conteh by taming the excesses of the clique boys to the extent of cleaning the gallows. Speaking on the competence of the Judges, he said he had benefited immensely from the knowledge of Justice Adrian Fisher in the legal arena. He appealed to the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, through the Judges to employ lawyers recently called to the Bar to start prosecuting cases at Magistrates Court than the police.

Leader of C4C, Hon. Saa Emerson Lamina as a male champion in light of the He4She campaign said he was pleased with the promotion of women to serve in the Superior Courts of Judicature. He said he was pleased that Government was implementing the recommendation of the TRC Report on increasing Judges to speedily handle cases before them without fear or favour. Recalling some of the progressive laws that have been passed by the current Parliament assembled, he referred to them as competently qualified to serve and save Sierra Leone. He praised Justice Taylor for effectively handling the C4C matter in Court.

Referencing some biblical allusions on the lifting of immunity and the delivery of judgement by God through man, Hon. Abdul Kargbo said the destiny of Sierra Leoneans are in the hands of our Judges. He also said that he had followed most of the Judges closely and that they are men and women of integrity and character. He also said that the Auradicals club at FBC has a role to play for unity in the country and said the performances of the Judges over the years were exemplary.

Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas said the welfare of the Judges should be improved, adding that some civil servants were better catered for than our Judges. He said Parliament should do something to improve the condition of the Judges in light of next year's budget and also said that Judges were constraints in doing their job ranging from manuscripts painstakingly before judgements were delivered on cases before the courts. He called for the employments of Stenographers and Lawyers to serve as Clerks to Judges to expedite the speedy conclusion of cases.

Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Chernor R.M Bah shared the sentiments expressed by the Deputy Speaker on improving the welfare and conditions of our Judges. He also said that without an impartial and independent judiciary, the survival of the state would be farfetched. Given the nature and enormity of their job, he said our Judges should be taken care of properly. He also heaped praises on Justice Mami whom he said was an excellent orator and endorsed all the nominees for approval by Parliament.

Concluding the debate, Leader of Government Business, Hon. Mathew Sahr Nyuma thanked his colleagues for scrutinizing the Judges in light of legality and constitutionality. He described the nominees as qualified and familiar with the court room, and added that they are charged with the responsibility of interpreting the law and to punish law breakers. He agreed that the budgetary allocation to the Judiciary should be increased to take care of Judges and to provide for an improved technology to attain an e-court in the country. He spoke on the need for security of Judges and Magistrates given the nature of their job. He lauded the efforts of the Judicial Service Commission and called for judgements to be accepted in good faith.

Congratulating the nominees, Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu said that the unanimous verdict of Parliament was a testament that they were eminently qualified for the positions and wished them good luck in their new assignments.

Following the approval by Parliament and in line with provisions of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, the nominees will swear an oath to President Bio before they could officially enter their new duties as Judges to the High and Appeal Courts of the Judicature of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

Parliamentary and Public Relations Department
Parliament of Sierra Leone

+23278495023/+23276625960/+23278426851/+23278697776