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PRESS RELEASE

PARLIAMENT APPROVES TEN (10) PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES

The Second Report of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service, chaired by the Leader of Government Business, Hon. Mathew Sahr Nyuma has on Thursday 21st October 2021 debated and approved with unanimity ten presidential nominees to serve in high offices of State.

The following presidential nominees were approved by Parliament:

1. Mr. Sheka Mansaray- Chairman Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion
2. Ms. Valnora Anita Christiana Edwin- Member Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion
3. Alhaji Sulaiman Bah- Member Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion
4. Hon. PC Sheku Amadu Tejan Fasuluku Sonsiama III-Member Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion
5. Rev. Mrs Olivia Helen Iyesatta Fonnieson- Member Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion
6. Ambassador Haja Alari Cole- Member Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion
7. Mr. John Vandy Rogers- Deputy Director General, National Disaster Management Agency
8. Col. (Rtd) Binneh Kondeh Conteh- Deputy Commissioner, National Commission on Small Arms
9. Mr. Joseph Ahmed Turay- Member Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion and
10. Rev. Dr. Shodanke Johnson- Board of Directors, Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion

Seconding the motion, the Opposition Whip, Hon. Hassan Sesay said the approval of presidential nominees was a national duty and went on to inform the House that it was of utmost importance to have the Independent Commission for National Peace Cohesion functional. He recalled and reminded the nominees of the past incidences including the removal of MPs from Parliament, the Tombo fracas and others that were needed to be

addressed for peace and national cohesion in the country. The MP also said that civil servants were promoted on the grounds of tribal and regional basis. Calling on the nominees to make Sierra Leone proud, he urged them to embark on conflict resolution and prevention with a view to enhancing peace and national cohesion.

Leader of NGC, Hon. Dr. Kandeh Yumkella said the nominees have huge tasks and went on to remind them of some of the SDGs relative to peace and national cohesion. He recalled how late President Kabbah initiated peace with his UN experience. He advised the nominees to maintain integrity and promote impartiality in discharge of their duties. The MP asked the nominees to pay keen attention to certain documents would face Parliament for approval.

Leader of C4C, Hon. Saa Emerson Lamina thanked President Bio and the nominees, and recalled the horrendous civil conflict Sierra Leone had suffered before it came to an end in the year 2002. The MP highlighted the importance of peace and its requirement for sustainable development. He called on the nominees to focus on various factors that would enhance peace. He commended some of the nominees for their wealth of experience and qualities demonstrated over the years. He asked them to consider certain theories that would engender peace and national cohesion. The MP asked all and sundry to believe in the Leadership of the Presidency of Dr. Julius Maada Bio, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

Hon. PC Bai Kurr Kanagbaro Sanka III thanked President Bio for setting up the independent commission for peace and national cohesion and that it was paramount for peaceful co-existence in the country. He noted that all the nominees are household names with patriotic abilities to deliver on their appointments and called on Members to approve them. He advised the nominees to be ready to do what is right. "Do not be afraid, fear God to ensure that the country is peaceful", he stated and went on to say that Parliament had approved several nominees of high standings, but he said the country remains static. Appealing to the Hon. Speaker to support them to bring on a positive change, he called on the nominees for disaster management to brace up and properly prevent, manage and address disaster related issues in the country.

Hon. Neneh Lebbie applauded the President Bio for his commitment to peace by establishing the commission on peace and national cohesion, and recalled his military days how he fought for peace and democracy in the country. She informed the House that Sierra Leone has continued to divided on partisan basis, adding with the establishment of the peace commission, conflicting issues would be addressed. The MP used the opportunity to ask the nominees to unite the people. "The youths of this country are being used by us, politicians", she remarked and urged them to sensitize the youths in a positive direction for national peace and development. She recalled the factors that triggered the war in Sierra Leone and advised the Commission to address them adequately, and she also threw light on disaster mitigation.

Hon. Daniel Koroma said the day was historic for establishment of the Peace Commission and went on to say he had opposed to the idea of the Chief Minister chairing the peace

commission, but according to him, it was unfortunately not heeded to. He asked the nominees to remove political lens to address political issues that would engender conflict in the country. He admonished all the nominees to work in the interest of peace and national cohesion of Sierra Leone.

Rounding up the debate, Acting Leader of Opposition, Hon. Ibrahim Ben Kargbo recalled that during the course of initiating the parent document, they walked out, but today they are satisfied with the nominees. He said the commission is supposed to be independent, and anything short of that, they raise question and sound the alarm bell. He expressed satisfaction over the composition of the nominees. The Acting Opposition Leader called on the peace commission to lend credence from the Nigerian model, where people were given the opportunity to express their grievances for everlasting peace. "People must know and express freely why they are bitter", he stated. He used the opportunity to raise question on the representation of parliamentary seats relative to the political and regional division in the country, condemning it as wrong for a commission established to promote a peaceful co-existence in the country.

Speaking on poverty alleviation and the role of Paramount Chiefs, he said such a move would promote and enhance peace in the country. He said the commission is good, but must be of good use to serve the national interest.

Concluding the debate, the Leader of Government Business, Hon. Mathew Sahr Nyuma thanked all for acknowledging peace as a requirement for sustainable development. He commended President Bio for this peaceful initiative. He decried the opposition APC for boycotting the peace conference that laid the foundation for the birth of the national commission for peace and cohesion in the country. He also denounced some politicians who campaigned on tribal and regional lines and asked all and sundry to change their mindsets.

The Leader described President Bio as a sincere and patriotic Leader relative to the delivering on his manifesto promises. He also informed the House that the creation of a strong institution like the peace commission would enhance peace and national cohesion in the country. The Leader said it was timely to support this Commission to consolidate peace and cohesiveness in Sierra Leone.

Extending his felicitations, the Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu said the commission is good and necessary for sustainable development in the country. He said the tasks before them were herculean ones that demand tacts to be overcome. He called on them to deliver on their respective appointments, and assured them of parliamentary support for the success of the commission on peace and national cohesion in the country which was long overdue. He concluded by wishing them good luck in their new appointments.

In another development, five bills were introduced for the first time in Parliament for consideration by Ministers of Government.

They include the National Payment Systems Act 2021, Deposit Protection Fund Act, 2021, Customary Land Rights Act, 2021, National Land Commission Act, 2021, and the Gender Empowerment Act, 2021.

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