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**PRESS RELEASE**

**PARLIAMENT APPROVES EIGHT (8) SUPREME & APPEAL COURTS JUDGES AND FOUR OTHERS**

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has on Tuesday 19th March 2019 extensively debated and unanimously approved the Twenty-Ninth Report of its Committee on Appointments and the Public Service, chaired by the Leader of Government Business, Hon. Sidie M. Tunis.

Speaking to the nominees after approval, the Speaker of Parliament, Rt. Hon. Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu in congratulating and extending his felicitations said that “I am proud that the nominees have just been approved by Parliament”, having due regard to their eminent qualifications, experience, competence, capability and probity which they have demonstrated over the years during the course of executing their duties. He also said that “I have no doubt that the nominees will live up to the expectations of President Bio, Parliament, and the People of Sierra Leone”, adding that the Judges should dispense justice to the highest degree of impartiality and to the best of their consciences and in accordance with established law with the aim of dispelling the unfavourable perception the public holds against the Judiciary. He stressed the need for the impartial dispensation of justice without fear or favour.

The following presidential nominees were approved by Parliament:

- I. Hon. Justice Alusine Sani Sesay-Supreme Court Judge
- II. Hon. Justice Allan Baami Halloway-Supreme Court Judge
- III. Hon. Justice Sengu Mohamed Koroma-Supreme Court Judge
- IV. Hon. Manga Fana Deen Tarawally-Supreme Court Judge
- V. Hon. Justice Jamesina Essie Leonora King-Appeal Court Judge
- VI. Hon. Justice Miatta Marie Samba-Appeal Court Judge
- VII. Hon. Justice Ansumana Ivan Sesay-Appeal Court Judge
- VIII. Mr. Sulaiman Bah-Appeal Court Judge

IX. Mr. Prince Terena Quee-Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council

X. Alhaji Alie Badara Yillah-Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council

XI. Mr. Samuel Benedict Vandi-Member, Sierra Leone Police Council and

XII. Mr. Jennings Anto Brian Wright-Member, Board of Trustees, NASSIT

Seconding the motion, Hon. Emilia Lolloh Tongi, an independent MP from Kailahun District alluded that “the New Direction is the right direction” and commended President Bio for making effort to satisfy the women of Sierra Leone. She called on Judges to give justice to provincial women that are staying in distant areas and urged them to inflict severe sentences on perpetrators of rape in the country.

Hon. Hindolo M. Gevao of SLPP catalogued the experience, competence and hard-earned reputation of the Judges and referred to their service to the Bench as “a huge sacrifice”, largely due to poor conditions of service and being barred from profiting from any other enterprise. He also called for more Magistrates to be sent to Kailahun District with the aim of improving access to justice.

Hon. Daniel B. Koroma of APC commended the Judges on their promotions in the justice sector, adding that “it was based not on political considerations, but on their professionalism”, that had also been identified by the APC over the years. He decried the practice of “preliminary investigation” as “obsolete” and that it should be replaced by a new “Criminal Procedures Bill” which should be brought to Parliament for enactment without further delay.

Hon. Alhaji Dr. Kandeh Kolleh Yumkella, Leader of NGC praised President Bio in light of the statement he made in Parliament “to overhaul the judiciary”, adding that the President has put a lot of trust in the Judges to revamp the judiciary. He also called on Judges to protect businesses, human rights, free speech, freedom to demonstrate, law enforcement and protection of our nascent democracy by being independent and dispensing justice without fear or favour.

Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas, the Rt. Hon. Deputy Speaker of Parliament spoke loudly on the need for improving the conditions of service for both Judges and Members of Parliament as required by extant provisions of Act No. 6 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone.

Rounding the debate, the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Chernor R.M Bah made reference to his representation in high-profiled cases and contributions to the jurisprudence of Sierra Leone. He referred to Judges “as competent and they have the capacity to perform”. He said that their collective action will redeem the negative perception which the public is currently holding against the Judiciary, adding that “our democracy rests in the bosoms of the Judges”, saying that “there will be no peace without justice”.

Concluding, the Leader of Government Business, Hon. Sidie M. Tunis spoke on the need for consultations, negotiations, and dialogue for the smooth running of the House. Speaking on

President Bio's belief in an impartial judiciary, he assured the Judges that their conditions of service will improve under the New Direction. He also called on them to uphold the independence of the judiciary by dispensing justice for all without fear or favour. Amidst other assurances, he educated the House that the Judges were appointed by President Bio based on the recommendation of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission, subject to the approval of Parliament.

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