



PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE  
PARLIAMENT BUILDING  
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## PARLIAMENT RATIFIES STATE OF PUBLIC EMERGENCY

**Freetown, 7<sup>th</sup> August, 2014**

The House of Parliament has today ratified the State of Public Emergency throughout Sierra Leone as declared by H E the President and published in the Sierra Leone Gazette on 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2014.

This State of Emergency as per Section 29 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone (1991) was necessitated by the recent outbreak of the deadly Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). EVD previously broke out in the Ivory Coast, and earlier this year, in Guinea and later, Liberia before its equally deadly attack on Sierra Leone in March, via Kailahun District, Eastern Province.

The Leader of the House, Hon. Ibrahim R. Bundu made the following proclamation:

*Pursuant to section 29 (3) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991, I move that this Honourable House ratify the declaration of a State of Public Emergency made by His Excellency the President and published in the Supplement to the Sierra Leone Gazette, vol. CXLV No.41 dated 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2014.*

MPs had turned in large numbers to this special sitting, breaking their holiday (parliamentary recess) to ratify the Presidential declaration and give legality to it. The EVD is one of those issues which have galvanized parliamentary unity as citizens' lives are at stake, including those of the lawmakers themselves. EVD update from the Ministry of Health says that so far, ... people have died from the virus.

At the end of the sitting, MP for Lunsar/Marampa, Hon. Isata Kabia who passionately contributed to today's debate, was in somber mood from news of two constituents who had just died from the EVD. Contributors to the debate also included the following Honourable Members: Chief Whip Claude Kamanda, Patrick Foya of 001, Kailahun; J B Mansaray; Mabinty Funna (Chair, Health Committee); PC VBS Kebbie; Augustine Torto (Chair, Foreign Affairs); Emma Kowa; Mustapha Brima; Helen Kuyembah; A. Manly-Spaine (Chair, Legislative Committee); Deputy Speaker Chernor R.M. Bah and Alhaji Ansumana Kai-Kai.

Rounding the debate before re-stating the motion, the House Leader said that Ebola is not a disease to be contained but to be eradicated. Members voted overwhelmingly in favour of the presidential proclamation.

This special sitting of the House saw MPs in a very eager mood to join the debate and make their voices heard. There was also a large turnout of Ministers and other senior public functionaries and members of the public and civil society in a sitting described by the Deputy Speaker as "very, very important."



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Government Ministers (Joined by John Benjamin) in rapt attention