



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

Tel: 232-076-615187

E-mail: admin@parliament.gov.sl



PRESS RELEASE

11TH FEBRUARY, 2016

PARLIAMENT DEFERS RATIFICATION FOR EXPANSION OF WELLINGTON-MASIKA HIGHWAY

The Right Hon. Speaker of Parliament, Sheku B.B Dumbuya has ruled that the ratification of the loan agreement for the expansion of the Wellington-Masiaka Highway be deferred until further consultations.

This ruling in favour of the dissenting voices on both sides of the House followed a protracted debate on the issue.

In presenting the loan to the House prior to the deferral, the Deputy Minister of Works, Housing and Infrastructure, Babagaleh Barrie said that the concession agreement was about financing, designing, constructing, operating and maintaining the Wellington-Masiaka Highway by China Railway Seventh Group (CRSG), using the toll system for 25-years. He also furthered that the rehabilitation and widening of the Wellington-Masiaka Highway into four-lanes has the potential of extending it into six-lanes in future. He averred also that the loan bears no interest; six years concession period, and four years for the construction of the road, with one year extension in case of defects. He also said that the total cost of the loan was over \$150 Million and the GoSL would contribute twenty billion Leones for the relocation of the affected property owners.

Members of Parliament on both sides of the aisle praised the idea of the toll system, and recalled the unflinching relationship and bi-lateral ties existing between China and Sierra Leone in terms of our infrastructural development. MPs also opined that a toll system had been in existence in the mid 90s until it was disrupted by the war.

MPs earlier argued that the ratification of the agreement be deferred because of certain clauses in the agreement. They also called for a reduction in the proposed toll prices to cushion economic and social

effects. They said that vehicle owners, road users, and the general public should be consulted and sensitized about the loan agreement, such as categories of toll, method of payment, etc. to obtain EIA license before the commencement of work, and the relocation of the affected property owners.