



OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF PARLIAMENT  
PARLIAMENT BUILDING  
OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL  
FREETOWN  
Tel: 232-076-615187  
E-mail: [admin@parliament.gov.sl](mailto:admin@parliament.gov.sl)



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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### **PARLIAMENT RATIFIES TWO AGREEMENTS ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF ENERGY**

The Parliament of Sierra Leone on Thursday 03<sup>rd</sup> December, 2015 ratified two loan agreements geared towards the improvement of the energy sector in the country.

The following agreements were ratified by Parliament:

“Subsidiary loan agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Regional Transmission Company of Cote D’ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea (Transco CLSG) in relation to the loan agreement dated 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2013 between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African development Fund (ADF). In the other, ADF acted on behalf of Nigeria Trust Fund, NTF.

The Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Dr. Kaifala Marah said among other things prior to ratification, that the parent agreements had been earlier ratified by Parliament this year, with the aim of improving and providing sustainable, cheap, and affordable energy for the people of Sierra Leone. Dr. Marah affirmed that the ADF is committed to rural electrification particularly the dropping of the lines, and that the Government of Sierra Leone would compensate affected property owners along the power grid. The Minister also said that TRANSCO has the duty to run the power lines among the countries in the Mano River Basin as mentioned in both agreements.

The Chairman for the Committee on Energy in Parliament, Hon. Sulaiman M. Sesay told the house that both loan agreements are a little over \$20 Million. He referenced the state of energy in the country before President Koroma took power in 2007. He said in 100 days President Koroma promised and delivered electricity to the people of Freetown. He also said that EGTC and EDSA should be strengthened to provide efficient and clean energy to the people of Sierra Leone.

Hon. Hannah Songowa Bundu noted that before now, energy used to be a challenge and that the melody “light don cam” has faded away. She also said that the inhabitants of Freetown and its environs are enjoying cheap, affordable, and sustainable energy supply.

Hon. Jusufu B. Mansaray said that the Government has spent a lot of resources on the energy sector without the desired results. He described the energy component across the country as an “abysmal failure”, citing dim lights and that these loans would be repaid by generations yet unborn. He called for Koribondo and other villages to benefit where the transmission lines would be routed.

Hon. Karifala Sheku Conteh emphasized that energy is critical to the development of Sierra Leone and recalled that in 2007 the Government inherited 5 mega watts that were not even enough to power LEOCEM. This he said the Government has increased to over 100 mega watts. He also said that Sierra Leone is no longer a destination for generators he described as “kabba tigers”. The ratification of the WAPP (West Africa Power Pool) gave birth to the CLSG with numerous benefits such as employment and exchange of expertise. He also said that the ambition of President Koroma is to provide 1000 mega watts at the close of 2017, whilst referring to energy as a “solvent of development”. He ended by submitting that the CLSG has the sole capacity of cushioning the energy problem of Sierra Leone.

Hon. Hassan Sesay referred to energy as work-in-progress and regarded the CLSG agreements as a step in the right direction. He said the creation of EGTC and EDSA are conscious efforts that will attract immense benefits to the country. He also said that in order to realize economic integration and facilitate trade; efficient and sustainable energy supply speaks volumes.

For Hon. Ansumana J. KaiKai, the energy programme is continuous. He traced it as far back as the 1980s. He also said that Sierra Leoneans had endured 11 years of civil conflict; and these programmes were borne out of improving the lives of ordinary Sierra Leoneans.

Hon. Dr. Bernadette Lahai, Minority Leader of Parliament referred to energy as a cross-cutting issue. She said every government has her priority and stated that less than 20% of Sierra Leoneans have access to clean energy. She also regarded energy as the game changer that is needed in our daily lives; and called on Parliament to oversee judicious use of funds in the energy sector.

Acting Majority Leader of Parliament, Hon. Leonard Fofanah said that constructive criticisms are welcome to deepen their understanding in the energy sector; whilst alluding to the parent agreements that had been ratified by Parliament. He also said that the current ratification would facilitate the commencement of the project; and encouraged all that once the projects are realized, they would positively affect rural communities in terms of electrification.