



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION-FIRST MEETING

FRIDAY, 12th JULY, 2013

SESSION – 2012/2013



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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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First Meeting of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament
Of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held on Friday, 12th July, 2013.

I. PRAYERS

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THURSDAY, 11TH JULY, 2013

III. LAYING OF PAPERS

COMMITTEE ON PRIVILEGES AND EHTICS

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IV. MOTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE

PROSPOSER: HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA

SECONDER: HON. ANSUMANA JAIA KAIKAI

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THE FIFTEENTH REPORTS OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE BE ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE AND THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN BE APPROVED

V. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE

BE IT RESOLVED

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENTS WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON THURSDAY, 11TH JULY, 2013:

(i) SIERRA LEONE PETROLEUM LICENCE AGREEMENT BLOCK 10A-10 (SL) LTD. AND THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE;

*(II) SIERRA LEONE PETROLEUM LICENCE AGREEMENT BLOCK 10B-10-A-Z PETROLEUM PRODUCT (SL) AND THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE;
AND*

*(III) SIERRA LEONE PETROLEUM LICENCE AGREEMENT – BLOCK 7C – 10
–A- PETROLEUM PRODUCTS (SL) LTD. AND THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA
LEONE.*



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

FIRST SESSION-FIRST MEETING OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Friday, 12th July, 2013.

The House met at 10:09 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown.

I. PRAYERS

[The Legislative Clerk, Mr Lamin Yansaneh, Read the Prayers].

[The Deputy Speaker, Hon. Chernor R. M. Bah, in the Chair].

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S.O.5 (2)

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Mr Speaker, with your leave and with the concurrence of the House, I would like to amend the Order Paper for today to include Laying of Paper. Mr Speaker, may I ask that that item comes immediately after record of Votes and Proceedings. Record of Votes and Proceedings is item II. Therefore, item III should now be "Laying of Paper, the Committee on Ethics and Privileges" by Honourable Ansumana Jaia Kaikai.

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THURSDAY, 11TH JULY, 2013

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 11th July, 2013. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? There being no amendment can someone move that the record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 11th July, 2013 be adopted as presented?

HON. ALHASSAN JERO KAMARA: Mr Speaker, I so move.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. DICKSON ROGERS: I so second Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any counter motion?

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

*Records of votes and proceedings for Thursday, 11th July, 2013
was unanimously adopted as presented.*

III. PAPERS LAID

COMMITTEE ON PRIVILEGES AND ETHICS

HONOURABLE ANSUMANA JAIA KAIKAI, CHAIRMAN

HON. ANSUMANA JAIA KAIKAI (*Deputy Minority Leader of the House*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise on S. O. 18 and beg to lay on the Table the Report of the Committee on Privileges and Ethics on the draft Code of Conduct and Privileges for Members of Parliament.

IV. MOTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE

PROPOSER: HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA

SECONDER: HON. ANSUMANA JAIA KAIKAI

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THE FIFTEENTH REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE BE ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE AND THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN BE APPROVED

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA (*Majority Leader of the House*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is my pleasure to present to the House the 15th Report of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service on Parliamentary vetting of Presidential nominations.

Introduction:

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service met on Thursday, 11th July, 2013 and interviewed three Presidential nominees for appointments as:

- i. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary/Permanent Representative to the United Nations;*
- ii. Electoral Commissioner, (Southern Region); and*
- iii. Board Member, Corporate Affairs Commission (Representing the Chamber of Commerce).*

Procedure:

The Committee maintained strict consistency to its established procedure. Inquiring questions put to the nominees pertained to their educational backgrounds, track records in pertinent work situations, declared assets, tax obligations and their visions for a successful tenure.

TWENTY-FIRST SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON THURSDAY, 11TH JULY, 2013

Mr Speaker, the following nominees were interviewed:

- i. Mr Vandy C. Minah, Proposed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary/Permanent Representative to the United Nations;*

Mr Vandy Chidi Minah is a professional legal practitioner who has acquired wealth of work experience in the United States and the United Kingdom. He has also served the United Nations' Missions as Legal Officer and Adviser in New York, East Timor, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sierra Leone. He yielded to the call of the President to serve his country as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, (2008–2010) and as Minister of Transport and Aviation (2010–2012).

Mr Minah assured the Committee that he would be going to New York to serve the best interest of his nation and its people. He said: *"If given the required blessing of approval by Parliament," he said, "I promise to work with devotion and dedication, as I have always done, to actualise the Foreign policy objectives of this nation."*

ii. Madam Fatmata Bintu Alhaji, Proposed Member Corporate Affairs Commission representing the Chamber of Commerce;

Madam Fatmata Bintu Alhadi is a Barrister-at-Law. In 2004 – 2006, she was in private legal practice. From 2007 to 2009, she served as prosecutor (on contract) at the Law Officers Department before joining the Guaranty Trust Bank (SL) Limited as Manager of the Legal Department. She rose through the ranks and is today the Assistant General Manager and Group Head of Legal, Human Resources and Corporate Affairs Department of the bank.

Madam Fatmata Bintu Alhadi promised to work to the best of her ability to ensure that the interest of the nation is placed above all other considerations. "I have ideas but I want to be humble in tapping on other ideas. I have strong commitment in promoting the common good and I will draw on the experience for the success of the Corporate Affairs Commission," she said.

iii. Madam Augusta Bockarie, Proposed Electoral Commissioner (Southern Region)

Madam Augusta Bockarie is an employee of the National Electoral Commission. (NEC) Joining the Commission in 2005, she rose through the ranks to her current position of Chief of Gender and Disability – Department of Human Resources.

Madam Augusta viewed her appointment as a call to national duty. She assured the Committee that she would work to the best of her ability, without fear or favour but with justice to all.

Recommendation

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee adjudged the following Presidential nominees to be suitably qualified for their proposed appointments and are recommended to the House for approval:

- i. Mr Vandy C. Minah, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary/
Permanent Representative to the United Nations;*
- ii. Madam Augusta Bockarie, Electoral Commission, (Southern Region);
and*
- iii. Madam Fatmata Bintu Alhadi, Member, Corporate Affairs
Commission.*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Fifteenth Report portrays the collective view of the Committee. I therefore move that the Fifteenth Report of the First Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations contained therein be approved. Signed by Honourable S. B. B. Dumbuya, Chairman.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. ANSU J. KAIKAI: I rise to second the motion Mr Speaker.

(Question proposed)

HON. J. B. MANSARAY: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker Honourable Members, it is good to be here this morning to approve the nomination of the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. Mr Speaker, we are talking about people who are going to manage the

business of various state institutions. We also have one nominee who will be representing our country in the United Nations. I therefore want to lend my voice to these nominations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the first person I would want to talk about is Madam Augusta Bockarie. I want this House and those around to understand that this lady is going to handle the issue of democracy in this nation. We shall be going back to another election after 4 years. I only want to tell her that her appointment has been made, but we on this side and those on the other side are going to approve her to man the issue of electoral process in this country. I thank God that she is a Sierra Leonean. She is a beautiful lady Mr Speaker. We are going to give her our lives today. She has to ensure that peace reigns in this nation. Madam Augusta Bockarie, you are going to work for National Electoral Commission of this country. But it is not all about the National Electoral Commission. It is about representing Southern Region as a Commissioner of the National Electoral Commission. I am not asking for special favour at all. I am saying this because I know the support I always receive from my constituency. This Honourable House knows what I am talking about.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what I want to say here is that, this lady has been chosen to move peace in this nation, because the peace of this nation lies in the hands of the National Electoral Commission. I say so because they conduct our elections which some feel bad and others feel good. They take decisions at their will because they are independent. And you are going there as a Sierra Leonean, you were be working for the disables in that Commission, but this time you are working for southern region, and you must prove that you are going to be there as a Sierra Leonean. Please my dear sister; I want you to display integrity when you shall have assumed office. Please make sure that you perform your task independently. I don't want a situation wherein people will start pointing fingers at you when you shall have retired.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want my sister to know that elections are serious issues in this country. Elections determine the fate of our children yet unborn. They

determine the peace of this nation. So, if you've been nominated by the President for this office and you've been recommended by the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service as suitably qualified for this post, I want you to do your best. Honourable Members on the other side cannot confirm your nomination alone. It is going to be done by both sides of the House, including the Paramount Chiefs. Therefore, your loyalty must go for all Sierra Leoneans. I want her to be very fair in everything she would be doing after her approval. And I want to ask this House to approve her nomination.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about Mr Vandi C. Minah. He has proved his excellence throughout. He has worked for foreign nations. Now, he has returned home to serve this country. He has served two ministries in this country. Before he went to those ministries, you were here for parliamentary approval. But sometimes when we go to your office and other offices, Ministers feel that we are beggars. They allow us sit at the corridors waiting for them. They don't usher us in their offices to sit at all. The President only nominates you; and we are the ones that approve your nomination. Your loyalty should be for both the nation and the parliamentarians. Assuming that the President nominates you, but if Parliament says no, you will appear funny before the international communities where you've done your best. Maybe someone will just get up from this end or from the other end and say no. If somebody says Mr Vandi C. Minah you are not fit for this job. If we decide not to approve you, you are out of the job. Now, you are going to overseas and to one of the best nations in the world. Please, I want you to know that when you get there, it is not going to be about parliamentarians on that side. It should not be about the Minister of Justice sitting by you or any other person, but it should be about Sierra Leone. Our brothers and sisters are languishing in the United Kingdom. They have problems with the United Nations. Therefore, when you get there, make sure that you seek their interest. Some of them have been financiers to poor homes in this area. Please go there as a Sierra Leonean. You are coming from our end. We know you to be a good worker.

Your dad suffered for this country. Please prove your mettle again. You have lifted the face of Sierra Leone. We appreciate you and I want to commend that we approve him.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am the chairman of the Sierra Leone Indigenous Business Association (S.L.I.B.A.), representing the South. Chambers of Commerce has always been doing their businesses and our brothers and sisters are on the streets with no lucrative business to do. The determinant factors of those programmes came from your initiatives. You went begging for the improvement of businesses in this country. You are a very young lady. You've tried your bit. You have educated yourself and you've been in the justice sector for sometimes. Today, you are going to the business world.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, she is still in the legal sector.

HON. J. B. MANSARAY: No Mr Speaker, she is going to look at the business world in the legal perspective. Though she is in the legal sector, but this time she is going to protect the business world. Please make sure that you continue the good work for the betterment of Sierra Leone. It is not going to be about A.P.C. alone. I want to say thank you very much and I want to kindly ask this House to approve all the nominees before us this morning.

HON. BENNEH BANGURA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, if we reduce our speaking time it might benefit all of us.

HON. BENNEH BANGURA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, let me first of all thank His Excellency the President for presenting such a beautiful team in this Well. I have no doubt that they will live up to their expectations. Yesterday, we interviewed this team and we found out that they are very competent for the positions for which they have been nominated. My appeal to them is that, they should know that without Parliament they would never be where they are. My colleague that spoke before me has dilated on

that. He said so because the reception Members of Parliament has been receiving from Ministers has been very unfriendly. Therefore, I want to crave your indulgence that when Members of Parliament visit your various offices, you have to do your utmost best to see them as quick as possible.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have no doubt that Mr Vandi C. Minah would live up to our expectation. During the interview yesterday, nobody was able to doubt his integrity and intelligence at all. I want to crave the indulgence of this House to swiftly approve this team. I thank you.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all this while I have deliberately refused to comment on all of the appointments His Excellency has made. But today, I want to be very personal Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, there is one nominee before us to be approved, Ambassador Vandi C. Minah from Pujehun District (*Laughter*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think this is one of the best things that has happened to the Pujehun District in recent years. This is because the nominee has performed very well in all the ministries he has served. The nominee before us today has proven to be a true Sierra Leonean and born of Pujehun District. Let me remind him that his late father was a Sierra Leonean, who proved to this nation that he was a member of the Pujehun Clan. I want to draw the attention of Mr Minah to the fact that his father was a great man. I want you to know that you are a Sierra Leonean. Pujehun District is your home. Mr Speaker, I want to say here that Mr Vandi C. Minah is a fine gentleman. I want to say bravo to the President for this nomination. For the first time in my life, I am saying congratulations Mr President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me join my colleague, Honourable J. B. Mansaray from Koribondo in admonishing Mrs Bockarie. She has been entrusted the lives of the people of this country, particularly the Southern Region. Mr Speaker I am saying this because whatever we are suffering from today, is as a result of the Electoral Commission. I want to draw the attention of Mrs Bockarie that the President made no

mistake to nominate her as Commissioner for the South. Therefore, she must be mindful of the fact that she is going to a region wherein 70% of the most educated people are coming from.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to join the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service that interviewed Mrs Bockarie that she is a fine woman. I hope she would serve this nation to the best of her ability, not at the detriment of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party. A lot has been said about ministers closing their doors on Members of Parliament. I have one exception who is the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice. I think he has been accommodating as far as I am concerned to some Members of Parliament. I thank you Mr Speaker.

HON. ANSU J. KAIKAI: I thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to support the motion that I have seconded. I have learnt a lot about the nominees that are before us today. And of course, talking about Mr Vandi C. Minah, the Hansard of this Honourable House have it that in less than 6 months ago, he appeared before us. What I said then about Mr Vandi C. Minah still stands. I wish not to waste any more time in showering praises on the son of the late Honourable Francis Minah of blessed memory.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it pleases me that the President consulted with the leaders of my party about Mrs Bockarie. Therefore, I stand here with their clearance to endorse her nomination on behalf of my party. In doing so, let me say that the Attorney-General is here to listen. I want to assure the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice that no problem would arise after Madam Bockarie has taken her appointment. The provisions of Sections 32:8(9) and Section 33 of the Constitution of this country are all met. I have no problem with the nominee because I was given clearance by the headquarters of my party that they've been properly consulted by His Excellency the President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on the issue of the third candidate, I didn't say much during the interviews. This was due to the fact that after reading her resume, I

discovered that she has wealth of experience on cooperate affairs. I discovered also that she has an LLM in Corporate Law (Finance and Banking). On that note Mr Speaker, I urge this Honourable House to approve the nominees before us.

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to join my colleagues in asking that we approve the nomination of all of the three nominees. Mr Speaker the Honourable Dickson Rogers did say something that is very close to my heart. He said that Mr Vandi C. Minah comes from a region that has 70% of the most educated people of this country. Mr Speaker, the people I admire in life are the educated ones, not wealthy people at all. I respect people like Dr Bu-Buakie Jabbi. I admire them a lot. But my disappointment with the educated people is that, most of the time they refuse to be true to themselves. And the true mark of a real educated somebody is that he/she should be objective. He/she has to be dispassionate and be realistic in life. Let our educated people try to be so because that is the hallmark of intellectualism. The father of Vandi Chidi Minah was an uncle of mine. Politically, he was a staunch member of the A.P.C. I was very close to him. Well, if he was an S.L.P.P. member and later defected to the A.P.C. you have to read between the lines. Mr Speaker, S.O. (2) "enibodi de go wusai betε de" (*Laughter*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as the Honourable J. B. Mansaray said, Mr Vandi C Minah has been in this House for the third time. And in each case, he has been successful. And Mr Speaker if you go through the records of Mr Vandi C. Minah, you will rate him as a Grade A student in his days. Honourable Ansu J. Kaikai spoke about LLM. I am not impressed by that. Even if you have ten PHDs, the application is the most paramount Mr Speaker. I admire Foday Rado Yokie not because of what he is in Economics but he applies himself wonderfully Mr Speaker. I am not saying that Mr Vandi C. Minah does not apply himself. He was a Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperations. He excelled himself in that position. Later, because of his very good performance, he was elevated to the post of a full-fledge Cabinet Minister in the Ministry of Transport and Aviation, where he acquitted himself remarkably. But

today, Mr Vandi C. Minah (as I told him at the interview) is going to his natural habitat as an Ambassador. That is his field Mr Speaker. I am sure he will be very happy to go there, not necessarily to serve tea and coffee. Mr Speaker, I have no doubt that Vandi C. Minah will represent this country well.

Mr Speaker Honourable Members, there are times when the head of an institution becomes an inspiration to those that are subordinate to him or her. But I can tell you from my own findings that this woman, Augusta Bockarie is a woman of character. She has integrity, and we can all rely on her. We have been relying on all of them and we know what has been the result. For Fatmata Bintu Alhadi, interestingly Honourable Members, she was in the Chambers as a very good Lawyer in this country, by the name of Roland Wright. Incidentally, I taught Roland Wright in school.

THE SPEAKER: What does that imply Mr Leader?

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: And it was Roland Wright that taught even the Speaker here.

THE SPEAKER: I was just waiting for that Mr Leader.

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as the Honourable Veronica Sesay drew my attention to something yesterday. I was asking Alhadi this cooperate business, you think you are well grounded in it, then, Honourable Veronica Sesay said, well yes, she did her Law Degree in this Finance and Banking, these are issues for corporate people and I agree with Honourable Veronica Sesay. I therefore have no iota of doubt that she is fit for the position because she had been selected by the Chamber of Commerce to represent them on the Commission. I have no doubt that she would do well. I therefore commend all of them to this House for approval.

(Question Proposed Put and Agreed to)
(Motion of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service was
unanimously ratified).

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, with the words that have been expressed this morning, there is no reason for me to congratulate them. All I'll do is to wish them well. As the Majority Leader of this House has said, I think I know Bintu Alhaji fairly well. We worked together and I know that she is a person who can deliver and deliver well. And Mr Vandí C. Minah was referred to as a Grade A student. I want to assure this House that it is not just on paper but also on application. I know Mr Vandí C. Minah very well. For Madam Bockarie, it has also been said that with a very good leader, the followers are bound to follow. We have seen that the other nominee has been dominating the National Electoral Commission. We wish her well and we hope that she would join the team on continuing doing well. Good luck.

IV GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE

MR FRANK KARGBO (*Attorney-General and Minister of Justice*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 11TH July, 2013:

- (i) Sierra Leone Petroleum Licence Agreement Block 10A-10 (SL) Ltd. and the Government of Sierra Leone;*
- (ii) Sierra Leone Petroleum Licence Agreement Block 10B-10-A-Z Petroleum Product (SL) and the Government of Sierra Leone; and*
- (iii) Sierra Leone petroleum Licence agreement – Block 7c – 10 –A- Petroleum products (SL) Ltd. and the Government of Sierra Leone.*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these are not new Agreements to this Honourable House. You would recalled that there was a bid round for the award of offshore oil blocks sometimes in 2011, and it was very successful. Regrettably for some of the companies that were awarded these Blocks, they couldn't meet the terms of the Agreements.

THE SPEAKER: Did you say 2011 or 2012?

MR FRANK KARGBO: Yes Mr Speaker, 2011 and 2012. It was successful, but as I said, some of the companies that were awarded the Blocks could not meet the requirements of the Agreements. These were Agreements that were already ratified by Parliament when they were awarded. I could recalled that I presented them in this House. But some of the conditions are so stringent that the companies failed to meet them and were unwilling to proceed with the Arrangements. It is for this reason that I am before this Honourable House again today Mr Speaker. These are standard Petroleum Licensing Agreements with specified time frame of 30 years, divided into various periods of development and eventually production. You will also notice that the Agreements provide for performance guarantees, the provision of work plans to be agreed between Governments, more specifically the Petroleum Directorate and the Company. And that has to be strictly adhered to Mr Speaker. And there is the provision for relinquishment. After 3 years, if no work is done, you will have to relinquish at least 50% of the Block. Mr Speaker Government has to participate in each and every Block that is awarded. There are licensing fees to be paid, corporate social responsibility and local participation and transfer of skills. Most immediately, there is the question of the signature bonus of 10 million Dollars per Agreement. And considering the tight finances that Government is operating on at this point in time, I think that will be very helpful.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I wish to commend these Agreements to this House for ratification, as they are to the benefit of this country and with the expeditious manner with which as a nation we would want to develop the petroleum sector. It is

only but proper that this House continues in its usual manner of cooperation in this direction.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I therefore move that the following Agreements as were laid on the 11th July, 2013 on the Table of this House be ratified.

(Question Proposed)

HON. MICHEL SHO-SAWYER: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my contribution would be very brief. I believe this is historical to be a Member of Parliament, representing my people of constituency 108. I want to ask this House to swiftly ratify these Agreements. I say this because when I was very young, I used to hear the stories of us having oil in this country. I am gradually seeing what I have been hearing coming to fruition. The Minister has stated that these licenses that will soon be ratified by this House are licenses that are going to be provided for the next 30 years. I only hope I would be in my prime enjoying some of the benefits of these licenses. I am not sure how many of us would be alive, but I would definitely be in my prime.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am standing here to ask this House to swiftly ratify all these Agreements because, I believe as a country we need to move forward and we need to move forward diligently. And I believe these companies that have gone through all the qualification criteria and have met these qualifications would be companies that would help and assist in the development of Sierra Leone. I thank you.

HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA: Mr Speaker, I am not a scientist. I have been trying to read and put together a few things I want to understand in these Agreements. Like the young man did say, it is our wish and the wish of entire nation that these programmes go through. We have abundant flow of oil in this country. We want to be relieved of our dependent status. This country is going to be an oil producing state. I have been trying to read these huge documents, but like I had always said in this Well, if we are given sufficient time to read, we might be able to add a few things to these Agreements. I want to draw the Minister's attention to some areas. As I was reading

this Agreement, the Sierra Leone Petroleum License Agreement Block 10B A-Z between Sierra Leone Government and A-Z Petroleum Product, we have 30.3% extension bonus. But I discovered that the figure given in words is dissimilar to the one in figures. This was why I said we should be given enough time to be looking at these mistakes. Mr Speaker with your leave I would want to read. "30.3 – Extension Bonus: the Licensee shall pay to the State in part the sum of 5 million United States Dollars." But what is written in figure is \$2 million. I don't know which one is the correct figure. Is it the one in words or the one in figures? I am a bit confused here Mr Speaker. And I am sure if I had time, we would have identified all the typographical errors. But I would want in as much as there are typographical errors, I leave it to the legal minded people in the Law offices to please go over these Agreements so that errors of this nature would not adversely affect the State. Mr Speaker, I want to give my support to the approval of these three Agreements. Thank you Mr Speaker.

HON. DR ROLAND F. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I join the Honourable Member who said that the time given to look at these Agreements is short. This is an important Agreement Mr Speaker. I think it would have been good if we have been given enough time to go through these Agreements. But as the Minister presented I think he is a competent legal person and if he says the legal aspect of these Agreements have been sufficiently provided for, we take him at his word. There are certain issues that need to be considered as far as these Agreements are concerned. For Sierra Leone, it is a new experience ratifying Petroleum Agreements. We are now ratifying exploration and production of petroleum. And we depend on lessons from neighboring countries to be able to forge ahead as a nation. We know what we have heard from neighboring countries about issues connected to the production of petroleum. This includes environmental risks. I have had privilege to talk with knowledgeable people on this matter and I have been told that off-shore exploration is less hazardous in terms of environmental pollution as compare to on-shore exploration. Therefore, the initial production exploration which is being carried out may not be as hazardous as when the petroleum is produced on-shore. At the same time, we need to

pay attention to this issue. But I believe that this document provides guarantees to make sure that our environment is sufficiently protected.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is also the issue of the use of proceeds from petroleum activities. Again, we take lessons from neighboring countries. After years of production, the proceeds have not really gone down to benefit the grassroots population. And these are issues we need to consider as we ratify these Agreements that the proceeds of the Petroleum Industry flow down to the grassroots and we all enjoy the benefits. We must remember that this is the era of Agenda for Prosperity and prosperity can only be meaningful in this context when it flows down to the grassroots people. Mr Speaker, this is an issue that should be considered.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the issue of local content is very important. I want to say that this is an issue that should be considered as we ratify these Agreements. That is, the people where this Petroleum is produced have to reap the benefits. With these short comments, I want to urge this House to ratify these Agreements.

HON. DR ABDULAI SESAY: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very delighted that this is a new dawn in the history of Sierra Leone. As we all know Mr Speaker, oil has been a source of revenue for many African countries and we also know that there is a lot of scramble from many companies for the wealth of Africa. And I believe that after going through these Agreements, you will realise that the people who have been preparing this document have done a great job and they need to be commended. There are few things I will like to highlight in Article 2(6) of Block 7 C-10. It talks about the License shall maintain all apparatus and appliances and all wells which have not been abandoned and plugged. It went on to explain about how to prevent wastage petroleum and how to maintain the ecosystem. The regulations are mentioned but there is no stipulated consequence if they fail to follow those regulations. I will like the Minister to look into that. I will also like to draw the attention of the House to Article 23 of the same page. On that page, the Agreements talks about employment and training. I think one of the crucial things we need to look into very

critically is how Sierra Leoneans will benefit from the proceeds of our oil industry. Today, we have very few Sierra Leoneans who are trained and there is a provision in this document that people will be trained and I think it is our responsibility to encourage our sons and daughters to take this opportunity to be trained so that they will take over the management of the oil industry; otherwise, we will continue to have foreigners benefitting from the wealth of our country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us look at Article 27, Page 43. That Article talks about the social cooperate responsibility. And I think the social-cooperate responsibilities mentioned here are so important for the good of this country. It is my prayer and hope that all who are responsible will make sure that these conditions are met. We want the people of Sierra Leone to benefit. Thank you.

HON. AMADAU FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to contribute to this very important Agreement this Morning. I want to delve on the employment and training opportunities mentioned in Article 23, Block 10A- 10. My concern is that, I am sure that many Sierra Leoneans are qualified in this particular industry, even though it is a new industry. According to this document they are saying they will employ Sierra Leoneans who are qualified and experienced. But the fact of the matter is that, we will have who may be qualified but without experience. Can the Attorney-General please consider that? Mr Speaker, even though people are qualified, they may not have the necessary experience to create a situation but they can learn on the job so that we will cushion our unemployment rate. We have people who are unemployed and if we want to reduce the unemployment rate in this country, we must create a situation where people can learn on the job. With that I want to thank you Mr Speaker.

HON. ANSU J. KAIKAI (*Deputy Minority Leader of the House*): I thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to give my humble contribution to the Agreements that are before us this morning. The Attorney-General has informed this House that these Agreements are not new, and that, this House has ratified them

some time ago. I remembered when they were brought here. It is indeed true that we ratified them here. The changes that have taken place since then according to the Attorney-General prompted him to bring these Agreements for re-approval. My colleagues have spoken quite a lot about these Agreements. Where there are problems or some mistakes have been noted by at least one or two Honourable Members. This means that Members of Parliament, even though the notice is short have done some amount of justice to the Agreements. The amendments that the Attorney-General has mentioned and the typographical errors that my Honourable colleague has mentioned should be noted by the office of the Attorney-General. Another member mentioned cooperate responsibilities and training of Sierra Leoneans. I did a little bit of soul-searching on that because the Blocks are lying adjacent of Pujehun, Bonthe etc. And let me inform this House that some of these countries are already in contact with the local people on-shore. The people have already benefited from some amount of cooperate social responsibilities, even though they are extremely small; but by the tradition of our Northern brothers, you have to give Bora what due Bora. That is the tradition Mr Speaker. You have to give Famalowei what due Famalowei. The Paramount Chiefs will bear me witness. Therefore, on the basis of that, we are treading cautiously and observing keenly the activities of our friends who are interested in off-shore resources. We are reminding them that we do not want any 'abony' or whatever activities to be carried out in our country. So I urge the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice who is a legal citizen of Pujehun and Bonthe Districts. I urge him to please bear in mind that the interest of the people should be his utmost concern. He has to give the people what due them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, sometimes ago, when the communications company came here for ratification, we made sure that they have in their caveat some amount of cooperate responsibilities to the chiefdoms and the constituency by way of them paying to us or contributing to our constituency development fund. That was ratified by this House. I am urging the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice to please look into that. The hobbled ways they've been handling affairs is not pleasing to us Members of

Parliament at all. Such privileges be extended to the current Members of Parliament. if we were allowed, we would have said that unlike African Minerals that are so generous to Members of Parliament that are existing in their areas. I would have asked that the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice include in these Agreements some of contributions that must go to every constituency in this country (*Applause across the Floor*). I am sure that would not be a bad notion. This is because as Sierra Leoneans, the resources of this country should be equitably distributed among all of us. I hope the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice would take note of this and the next time this issue comes up, we would propose an amendment to that effect. I pray that he has taken notes on what I have just said. I want you also to include the concerns of the Members of Parliament on behalf of the people they represent. On that note, I urge the House to ratify these Agreements.

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU (*Deputy Majority Leader of the House*): Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me join my colleagues to welcome these Agreements before us. But let me hastily thank the Attorney-General and Minister Justice and the Ministry of Mines for not neglecting their responsibilities as my colleague has said. These Agreements were here with us before. We looked at them and we ratified them in this Parliament. If the Ministry or the Minister concerned had not monitored and evaluated what was contained in that Agreement, I don't think this occasion we are now in would have arisen. Therefore, he deserved to be thanked. We want to be very grateful and I also want to encourage Members of Parliament for their contributions this morning. One can deduce from these documents that the only benefit we are getting now as far as the Agreements are concerned is from License fees. This is because this stage concerns more on explorations, local participation, cooperate social-responsibility and trainings. The Government is also having what we call signature bonus. Please monitor and ensure compliance. It is only when you monitor we would benefit from the exploration in terms of the Agreements we have ratified.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to ask the Minerals and Mines Committee to go through these Agreements from time to time. Read the Agreements carefully and come up with observations. I must commend the Ministry of mines and Minerals that they have done a very good job to ensure that... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: What about the Directorate of the Petroleum Resources?

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU: I think that is one of the lead implementors Mr Speaker. Let me also thank the Acting Speaker for reminding me. We must encourage them to continue monitoring to ensure that all that is contained in this Agreement is complied with to the fullest. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, would you like to comment on some of the issues raised?

MR FRANK KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am gratified for the intense commitment with which issues have been raised. Errors have identified. This shows that this House is indeed fit for this purpose. Several issues were raised. I am thankful to you sir for the issue on typographical error. That will be corrected and issues of the environment were also raised. I want to assure this House that as Government and as a people concerned with the industry, we have taken lessons from neighbouring countries and countries far way. We will factor all those concerns into our legal and regulatory frame work for the emerging of petroleum sector. As a matter of fact, in terms of the environment, perhaps, we have the most stringent conditions in place. Somebody mentioned Ogoni land. Apart from the fact that these are deep water Blocks that require a lot of capital and resources to develop our regulations that will prevent the flaring of gas and the throwing of unwanted byproducts of the oil industry, I want to assure this House that these would be most effectively monitored and implemented as Members of Parliament would be incorporated.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, On the question of employments and trainings through the Petroleum Directorate, we are positioning ourselves as Sierra Leoneans to take the lead in this industry. As a matter of fact, there is a drilling to be commenced

some two weeks from now, for which we have recruited young engineers and young technicians that will go onboard the ships and see that they gain some experience. You will also notice in the Agreement that there is something called the “technical bonus” which is \$500,000 dollars. As soon as these Agreements are signed, that amount would be paid and it is a yearly payment to the Petroleum Directorate. The money is to be used for the award of scholarships to young Sierra Leoneans so that when we come onboard, we will be in place to be in the fore front of all of these Agreements.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I said earlier that we have copied from international best practices and they are all factored in these Agreements. I want to assure the Members of this Honourable House that the issues raised in terms of chieftom contribution, constituency funds will be looked at in a very serious manner. I believe that is a valid point that deserves the consideration of Government.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 11th July, 2013:

- (i) Sierra Leone Petroleum Licence Agreement Block 10A-10 (SL) Ltd. and the Government of Sierra Leone;*
- (ii) Sierra Leone Petroleum Licence Agreement Block 10B-10-A-Z Petroleum Product (SL) and the Government of Sierra Leone; and*
- (iii) Sierra Leone petroleum Licence agreement – Block 7c – 10 –A- Petroleum products (SL) Ltd. and the Government of Sierra Leone.*

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

(Motion of the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice has been ratified).

ADJOURNMENTS

(The House rose at 11.24 a.m. and was adjourned until sine die at 10.00 a.m.).