



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FOURTH SESSION - THIRD MEETING

THURSDAY, 13TH OCTOBER, 2016

SESSION – 2015/2016



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PARLIAMETARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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Third Meeting of the Fourth Session of the Fourth Parliament
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held on Thursday, 13th October, 2016.

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BE IT RESOLVED;

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENT WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON THURSDAY 6TH OCTOBER, 2016:

[i] FINANCE AGREEMENT [REGIONAL DISEASE SURVELLANCE SYSTEMS ENHANCEMENT PROJECT IN WEST AFRICA [REDISSE]-SIERRA LEONE PROJECT UNDR THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, DATED 4TH AUGUST, 2016.

[ii] FINANCE AGREEMENT [HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY AND SYSTEM SUPPORT PROJECT] BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE INTERNATIONALDEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, DATED 4TH AUGUST, 2016.

[iii] EBOLA RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION TRUST FUND GRANT AGREEMENT (HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY AND SYSTEM SUPPORT PROJECT] BETWEEN THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION [ACTING ASADMINISTRATOR OF THE EBOLA RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION TRUST FUND], DATED 4TH AUGUST, 2016.

[iv] DOLLAR CREDIT LINE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF INDIA DATED AUGUST, 11TH 2016.



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Thursday, 13th October, 2016.

I. PRAYERS

[The Clerk of Parliament, Hon. Ibrahim Sulaiman Sesay, Read the Prayers].

[The Speaker, Hon. Sheku Badara Basiru Dumbuya, in the Chair].

The House met at 10:28 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown.

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S.O.5 [2]

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON THURSDAY, 6TH OCTOBER, 2016

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Thursday, 6th October, 2016. As usual, Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Honourable Members, there being no amendment, can someone move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Thursday, 6th October, 2016?

HON. KUSAN SESAY: I so move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. ALIMAMY G. KARGBO: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Thursday, 6th October, 2016 was adopted without amendment]

III. THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MR MOMOH VANDI *[Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development]:* 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, 6th October, 2016:

[i] Financing Agreement (Regional Disease Surveillance Systems Enhancement Project in West Africa [REDISSE]-Sierra Leone Project under the First Phase of the REDISE between the Republic of Sierra Leone and International Development Association dated 4th August, 2016;

[ii] Financing Agreement [Health Service Delivery and System Support Project] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and International Development Association, dated 4th August, 2016;

[iii] Ebola Recovery and Reconstruction Trust Fund Grant Agreement [Health Service Delivery and System Support Project] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and International Development Association [Acting as Administrator of the Ebola Recovery and Reconstruction Trust Fund], dated 4th August, 2016; and

[iv] Dollar Credit Line Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Export-Import Bank of India dated 11th August, 2016.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, because of the limited time available, kindly permit me to move the motion for the ratification of the Agreements, so that this House would adequately debate on them. If permission is granted, I will like to move the motion as follows:

[i] Financing Agreement [Regional Disease Surveillance Systems Enhancement Project in West Africa [REDISSE]-Sierra Leone Project under the First Phase of the REDISE between the Republic of Sierra Leone and International Development Association dated 4th August 2016.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you will recall that when the Ebola virus invaded West Africa in the latter part of 2013 and early 2014, there was no mechanism in place to surveillance diseases. It was therefore easy for the Ebola Virus Disease [EVD] to spread within the Mano River Union countries of Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and beyond. Against this background, the Regional Disease Surveillance Systems Enhancement [REDISSE] Project is a regional project developed separately for Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Senegal, Liberia, Guinea, Liberia, and beyond. Against this background, the Regional Disease Surveillance Systems Enhancement [REDISSE] Project is a regional project developed separately for Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Senegal, Liberia and Guinea to:

[i] Strengthen national and regional cross-section capacity for collaborative disease surveillance and epidemic preparedness in West Africa, thereby addressing systemic weaknesses within the animal and human health systems that hinder effective disease surveillance and response; and

[ii] Help in the event of an Eligible Emergency, to provide immediate and effective response to the said Eligible Emergency.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the REDISSE-Sierra Leone Project constitutes the first phase of the programme, and consists of five parts:

PART I: Surveillance and Information Systems-This part aimed at strengthening and developing regional interconnected human and animal platforms to promote collective action across border and cross-sectorial collaboration in surveillance, and encompassing the provision of goods, consultants' services and training and the financing of operational costs as required for in the said agreement.

PART II: strengthening of Laboratory Capacity-This part is to carry out a programme aimed at strengthening the existing networks in the participating countries of efficient, high quality, accessible public health and veterinary laboratories for the diagnosis of infectious human and animal diseases;

PART III: Preparedness and Emergency Response-This part is to carry out a programme in support of national and regional efforts to enhance infectious disease outbreak preparedness and response capacity by improving local, national, and regional capacities.

PART IV: Human Resource Management for Effective Disease Surveillance and Epidemic Preparedness-This part is to carry out the development of the recipient institutional capacity for planning and managing continuing workforce training, leveraging on existing training structures and programmes across countries in the West Africa region, through the provision of goods, consultants' services and training and financing of operational costs as required for in the said Agreement.

PART V: Institutional Capacity Building, Project Management, Coordination and Advocacy-This part provides holistic support for project management, including its fiduciary aspects, monitoring and evaluation, knowledge generation and management, communication as well as for critical cross-cutting institutional support in the participating countries and at World Health Organisation (WHO). It also encompasses the operational costs as required for in the said agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this project is strategically relevant as the recent EVD epidemic in West Africa confirmed the critical importance of strengthening national disease surveillance systems and inter-country collaboration in order to detect disease outbreaks earlier and respond more swiftly and effectively, such that the loss of human lives and economic costs are minimised. The EVD outbreak in the West Africa sub-region also demonstrated that there can be rapid and large spill-over effects of disease that can transcend local and national boundaries. Thus, this project is linked to the commitment that the global community has made to the countries of West Africa in light of the huge human and economic costs of the EVD in order to strengthen weak human health, animal health, and disease response systems. In addition, the project will improve the preparedness of the region to handle epidemics, and thereby minimise the national, regional, and potential global effects of such disease outbreaks. This project is also relevant as there is a global forecast of another epidemic for the West Africa sub-region.

The expected benefit and target beneficiaries of this project are all round inclusive, both regional and national in scope. The project will support countries' efforts to harmonise policies and procedures. Also, countries will be empowered to engage in joint planning, implementation and evaluation of programme activities across borders at regional national and district levels. Moreover, this project will promote resource sharing of high-cost specialised assets such as reference laboratories and training centres. The surveillance and response capacity of the regional system depends on the strength of the individual national systems and the front-line or community-level capacities that need to be in place throughout the countries.

The total cost for the REDISSE- Sierra Leone Project is (Special Drawing Right) (SDR) 21,300.000 (Equivalent to USD30,000,000) of which SDR14,200,000,000 (Equivalent to USD20,000,000,00) is a credit; and SDR7,100,000,00 (equivalent toUSD10,000,000,00) is a grant. The Principal of the Credit will be repaid over a period of thirty-two years after a grace period of six years, commencing from the date of this Agreement. The maximum commitment charge rate payable by the Government of Sierra Leone on the un-withdrawn financing balance shall be one-half of one per cent per annum; and the service charge payable by the recipient on the withdrawn credit balance shall be equal to three-fourths of one per cent per annum.

2. The Health Service Delivery and System Support Project

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Health Service Delivery and system Support Project has two Agreements that were laid on the Table of this Honourable House on Thursday, 6th October, 2016 and they are as follows:-

- a. Financing Agreement (Health Service Delivery and system support Project) between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the international Development Association dated 4th August, 2016, and
- b. Ebola Recovery and Reconstruction Trust Fund Grant Agreement (Health Service Delivery and system Support Project) between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association (acting as Administrator of the Ebola Recovery and Reconstruction Trust Fund), dated 4th August 2016.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Health Service Delivery and System Support project is designed to improve and support health care delivery system especially maternal and child health. The objectives of this project are: (I) to increase the utilization and improve the quality of essential maternal and child services: and (II) in the event of an eligible crisis or emergency to provide immediate and effective response to the said eligible crisis or emergency.

This project has three components as follow:

Component A: Health Service Delivery

Under this component, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are two key activities as follows:

1. Community-Level Engagement

[i] To carry out a programme of activities that will strengthen and improve community engagement and access to basic health care and information, such as training and routine supervision of community health workers; training of community facilitators: supporting the District Health Management Teams [DHMTs] and the Ministry of Health and Sanitation [MOHS] in order to follow up community health and service delivery concerns.

[ii] To carry out a programme of activities that will improve public health and education, such as finalising the national environmental health policy and strategy; reviewing and updating the public health legislation; training of selected public health aids; providing identity cards, uniforms and personal protective equipment to public health aids: and carrying out of supervision and financing of operational experiences.

2. Facility-Level Service Strengthening

[i] To carry out programme of activities that will strengthen facility level service delivery, such as providing essential drugs, medical supplies and equipment to selected health facilities, recruiting and deploying multi-disciplinary clinical teams to selected health facilities and supporting their outreach work in Peripheral Health Units.

[ii] To carry out a programme of activities that will support the establishment of emergency medical services and improve emergency medical services delivery such as carrying out of initial and refresher training of selected drivers and paramedics; carrying out of publicity on emergency medical services; and providing support for national coordination of emergency medical services.

Component B: Health System Support

There are three key activities under this component as follows:

1. Health Human Resource Development

To carry out a programme of activities that will strengthen health human resource development such as supporting the development of post graduate medical training programmes including hiring of teaching and administrative staff, acquisition of medical related books, laboratory materials and equipment; providing stipends to eligible post-graduate students and eligible trainee nurses; supporting the training of auxiliary health workers, including developing continuing professional development programmes for medical doctors nurses and mid-wives.

2. Sector Coordination and Management

To carry out a programme of activities to enhance sector coordination and management such as, providing technical assistance and support for the operations of the directorates in MOHS, including planning and supervision; monitoring and evaluation, installing health management information Distict Health Management Team building the capacity of and supporting DHMTs including training, providing support for the regular deaths; and supporting the implementation of the service level agreement (SLAs) initiative including financing of staff in the Service Level Agreement (SLA) Management Unit.

3. Project Management Monitoring and Evaluation

To finance the operating costs associated with project coordination and implementation carry out monitoring and evaluation of the project including specialised surveys, collection and analysis of data; and build the capacity of staff involved in the implementation of the project.

Component C: Contingency Emergency Response

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this component is to provide immediate response to an eligible crisis or emergency as needed. The relevance of this project cannot be over emphasised as the EVD exposed the weaknesses in our health care delivery system. It is therefore designed to improve and support our health care delivery system, especially maternal and child health, and provide immediate response to crisis or emergency in our health care delivery system. This project is expected to address the weaknesses that were exposed in our health care delivery system by the EVD outbreak and help to

strengthen the system by training community health workers; developing health policies and strategies; providing essential drugs; medical supplies and equipment; providing effective and efficient monitoring and evaluation system: and preparedness for crisis and emergencies epidemics.

The total cost for this project is USD15,500,000,00 of which USD10,000,000,00 is a credit of thirty-two years after a grace period of six years, commencing from the date of this Agreement. The maximum commitment charge rate payable by the recipient on the un-withdrawn financing balance shall be one-half of one per cent per annum; and the service charge payable by the recipient on the withdrawn credit balance shall be equal to three fourths of one per cent per annum.

3. The Dollar Credit Line Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Export-Import Bank of India, date 11th August 2016 was signed by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development in Freetown on the 11th August 2016

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Dollar Credit Line Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Export-Import Bank of India dated 5th August, 2016 was signed by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development in Freetown on the 11th August, 2016. The overall purpose of this Dollar Credit Line Agreement is to finance the construction of a transmission line from a proposed Bumbuna Hydro Electric two to Waterloo and build sub stations to deliver electricity to towns and communities along the line.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable Members are aware that the present national transmission system consists of Bumbuna electric project which has 162 kilo volts line, 200 kilometres from the substation at Bumbuna to the Freetown substation where it is connected to the distribution network. In addition, there are separate distributions network in Makeni, Magburaka, Bo and Kenema. The distribution capacity is severely constrained and has suffered from high technical and non-technical losses caused by lack of maintenance overloading and inadequate metering bailing and revenue collection. Overall it is estimated that the network can evaluate no more than

35 megawatts of power. Presently modalities are being put in place to construct Bumbuna 2 hydro-electric project which will increase the capacity of the existing Bumbuna hydro-electric project by 140 megawatts. The West Africa power poll project is under implementation. The objective of the West Africa power poll project is to create a regional electricity market in West Africa through the transmission of the interconnection line from Cote De'Ivoire to Guinea through Liberia and Sierra Leone. The proceeds from the India line of credit will be utilised to augment the national transmission line for this project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, several studies have shown that despite Government effort, the greatest binding constraint investment and growth in Sierra Leone is poor electricity supply. The transmission line that would be constructed from the proceeds of the India Import-Export Bank of credit would not only transmit the power generated from both Bumbuna 1 and 2, but it would also transmit power from the on-going regional transmission line from Ivory Coast to Guinea through Liberia and Sierra Leone. The regional transmission line which Sierra Leone stands to receive around 40 megawatts is expected to be completed by the end of 2018 which would coincide with the expected completion date of the India Bank funded project. The project is therefore strategic and important to connecting the people of Sierra Leone to the national grid. The project is value for money because even when the Bumbuna 2 is completed and the regional line is built the citizen would not only fully realise the benefits without evacuation of the power and transmission to various parts of the country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in July 2016, a consortium of five development financing institutions including the World Bank and the Africa Development Bank approved the 130 million dollar financing of a 57 megawatts power generation for Freetown. During the negotiation with the partners one of the key risks identified by the partners was the weak transmission and network infrastructure in Freetown. Therefore this project is strategically relevant in supporting the financial investment which requires the distribution network not only in Freetown but the country as a whole. The total cost of the India line of credit is 78 million dollars. The principal of the

loan would be repaid over the period of 20 years after a grace period of five years commencing from the date of first disbursement of the proceeds of the loan. The interest rate is 1.5 per cent per annum and a commitment charge of 0.5 per cent per annum on the loan withdrawn and outstanding. The interest and commitment charges shall be paid semi-annually. Giving the importance of this project and meeting our health care delivery systems at the regional and national levels and transmitting of the people of this country. Mr Speaker, I now move that the following agreements that were laid on the Table of this Honourable House on Thursday, 6th October, 2016 be ratified.

[i] Financing Agreement (Regional Disease Surveillance Systems Enhancement Project IJN West Africa [REDISSE] – Sierra Leone Project under the First Phase of the REDISSE between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association, dated 4th August, 2016.

[ii] Financing Agreement (Health Service Delivery and System Support Project] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association, dated 4th August, 2016 .

[iii] Ebola Recovery and Reconstruction Trust Fund Grant Agreement [Health Service Delivery and System Project] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association [Acting as Administrator for the Ebola Recovery and Reconstruction Trust Fund], dated 4th August, 2016.

[iv] Dollar Credit Line Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Export – Import Bank of India, dated August, 11th 2016.

Question Proposed

HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I held back my contribution because of the confusion that was ongoing as to who was to speak. I just wanted to make brief contribution to this wonderful document.

In the first place, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development for promptly bringing these two agreements. One

of these agreements has to do with health and the other focuses on electricity. The Minister's presentation was very comprehensive and detailed. I think it left no iota of doubt in the mind of any good thinking Sierra Leonean to understand the reasons behind these agreements. I found the two agreements non-controversial because they are timely. Both agreements have come at a point in time when we have been thinking as to how to address our health care system and issue of electricity in this country. However, the presentation made by one of the Deputy Ministers seemed to dispel our worries.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by saying that for some time back, before the outbreak of the Ebola epidemic, our health care system was nothing to write home about. In other words, the health care system was in shambles. The outbreak of the Ebola Virus brought to our fold the awful nature of our health care system. However, I want to thank God for the efforts that are now being put in place to ensure that crisis like Ebola would not take us unaware anymore. The first document aims at bringing together West African states to be able to surveillance and take an effective step in regional disease system enhancement. This is because this has also been absent in West Africa and that is the more reason why West Africa became a playground for so many diseases. Ebola actually brought this to our knowledge to understand that we needed an arrangement in terms of bringing together the states from West Africa to be able to surveillance diseases which have devastating effects on our lives. Therefore, I am of the opinion that this financing agreement on disease surveillance is timely for the people of this country. I want to state here that the Ministry of Finance has positively responded to the cry of the people of West Africa to ensure that this system is workable and visible.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for the internal arrangement in our health system, I think the two documents are self-explanatory. If you go through these documents, I am sure they have put mechanisms in place to ensure that we have proper medical attention. My worry about the agreement on health is proper supervision. According to this agreement, the personnel would be properly trained and provided with the

necessary tools to carry out their work, but what is lacking, even though it is on paper, is the supervisory role of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation over the staff in the rural settings. I come from an area very close to border between Sierra Leone and Guinea and I know exactly what obtains in those areas. In fact, the roads in that part of the country are very bad and this makes it impossible for vehicular transportation. The only way you can reach to those medical outposts is either by foot or motorbike. Therefore, removing a supervisor from Freetown to go and oversee the activities of those outposts would be a herculean task. I hope that the beautiful ideas put on this paper would be fully implemented; otherwise I have no problem with these agreements.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the only problem I have is that the amount of money to be ratified as grant is very small. We are a poor country and I think our donor should have increased the grants aspect from USD 5mln to USD 10mln. However, I want to thank the Ministry of Finance for coordinating with our donor partners for making these moneys available.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also hope that the agreement on electricity would be implemented as stated in this document. On that note, Mr Speaker, I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity.

HON. ALHAJI SERAY DUMBUYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker for this opportunity to add my voice on these agreements. Though little, but these agreements are steps in the right direction. They could help to cushion the economy of this country. In other words, I believe that the agreements would increase supervision and support to our growing economy. I also want to believe that development does not take place in a vacuum. In other words, we need to exploit all possible means to ensure that this country moves forward. These Agreements are meant to provide the necessary environments for the development of this nation. Therefore, if we work together we shall succeed. Success is the reward for those who work hard. I am aware of the obstacles ahead, but with our efforts, as resilient nation, we shall get there. I know that it will be difficult, but we have to sacrifice. No nation develops easily. America believes in credit and I believe with these agreements, the economy of this country will be buoyant again.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, great nations always ask for support. The Dollar Agreement meant to electrify this country is also on the right track. Couple of years ago, this country was branded as the darkest nation in the world, but with the coming of this government, electricity has improved greatly. In Russia, there was a move during the reign of Vladimir Lenin for the electrification of the Soviet Union. Nations in the world develop only through electricity. This Agreement would help to electrify this country. Today, we can boast of street and traffic lights. Mr Speaker, except people who are blind, but we are seeing that it is only the APC led-government that has done that. I want to inform this Honourable House that we are planning for the development of this country because what is well planned, well organised and well-structured will lead to success. I believe that the structure this government is putting in place is for the benefit of this country. On that note, Mr Speaker, I want to ask this Honourable House to support these structures, so that we can achieve our development targets. I thank you, Mr Speaker

HON. IBRAHIM BEN KARGBO: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have just listened to the presentation made by one of the Ministers of State in the Ministry of Finance and economic Development. He clearly and eloquently addressed those issues that are very necessary for the development of this country. We are talking about two components of developments in these presentations. In the first place, the Minister explained to us about the need for this country to undertake those programmes necessary to improve the health care of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have made the point time and again that this is a government that has its own initiatives. Apart from the loan that is going to improve on our health care, this government had already, through the leadership of this President, introduced the Free Health Care programme for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. In other words, what we are doing today is merely to add the funding aspect of the Free Health Care programme to what this government had already started.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one of the Members of Parliament from the other side made a very important point about accessibility. Notwithstanding the fact that we

are putting in place modalities to access a loan facility to improve on the health care of this country, we want to be very certain that we take this facility down to the grassroots this time. I say so principally because if you go to certain settlements in the rural areas, you will come across two very important difficulties. The first difficulty is that some of these hospitals lack drugs. This time round we want to be very certain that we do not simply have Health care in name, but those concerned are given the necessary drugs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the second point is an issue that has to do with the other arm of government. That is we have trained quite a number of nurses and we have sent some of them to the rural areas, but up to this time, some of them will tell you that they have not been properly recruited and they are not on payroll. For us to be able to fully utilise their expertise, we should address this very important aspect. As I move on to look at the... - *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: It is a sore point, Honourable Member.

HON. IBRAHIM BEN KARGBO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As a man of classics you will know that when Marcus Tullius Cicero was writing to his daughter Julia, he said my dear daughter 'one of the very important things in life is to be precise and clear; make your point going.' That was for those of you who have not read Latin. That was what Marcus Tullius Cicero, a great educationist, wrote to his daughter. And if you read those words of Cicero, you will discover that he wrote several letters to his daughter. If you read those letters, you will learn a lot from life itself. The important thing Mr Speaker is that we have emphasised the point that it is not enough for us to train nurses and midwives without fully utilising them after graduation.

Having stated that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to move to electricity. This was a point we addressed and we identified when we assumed office in 2007. We simply discovered that Sierra Leone was lacking electricity and nobody had to run away from that fact. Honourable Members on the other side can attest to that fact when their Ministers were magnanimously invited to a cabinet meeting for the very first time by a new President, they conceded that one of the challenges they faced was the absence of electricity. We are now putting in place the necessary mechanisms to address that

issue. Today, we are looking at Bumbuna Phase II. If you are enjoying electricity today, it is as a result of the presence of Bumbuna Phase I. I am saying this because I was in Parliament in my earlier years, when we started the Bumbuna Project. I was a Minister when we completed that project. Therefore, I know that we have a project that is ongoing, which is operational and from which we are benefitting. All of us are benefitting from the Bumbuna project today. Mr Speaker, the Minister is not just here to look at us, but he should take note of what we are saying. In fact, he should have given us the history of Bumbuna Phase II. He should tell us about Phase I. Is it a success story for the people of this country? Are we moving to the Phase Two because we have completed the Phase I?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what we call the Bumbuna Phase II is what we call the 'Berinbeh' Project. For those of you who do not understand the Geography of Sierra Leone, the fall that we are going to harness now to create the Bumbuna II is found in a place called 'Berinbeh.' It is a Korankoh word. When Bumbuna Phase II came, it was discussed in certain quarters, and what was very clear was to identify a group of people who can easily handle Bumbuna Phase II because we discovered that Phase I could not meet the needs of the whole country. However, since this government is committed to ensuring the wellbeing of the people of this country, the government decided that there is need for Phase II; and even a Phase III or Phase IV. The introduction of this concept of the Bumbuna II is not only the concept of the President, who said that we should provide electricity for Sierra Leone, but also the government that says we cannot continuously leave our people in darkness. On the eve of the 50th Anniversary, Mr Speaker, diplomats from Britain, France and America asked for permission to meet the President of this nation; and when they finally met, the President raised the issue of Bumbuna Phase II and his commitment to providing electricity for the people of this country. The President also spoke about his plans to industrialise this country. The diplomats told the President that they would recommend a company to him. In the process, a company known as Jul Afrique was identified and recommended to the

President. Jul Afrique scouted around; and today, we have this funding from Exim Bank of India to fund this Project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before I conclude, I want to make it very clear that whatever policy that is brought to this House by a Minister, it is a policy that is part of the programmes of the All Peoples' Congress Party. This also explains the issue... -
[Interruption].

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, the Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo is making a point. Do you agree that the APC-led government is the government of Sierra Leone?

HON. IBRAHIM BEN KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to conclude by saying that both the electricity and healthcare programmes presented to this House by the Minister are consistent with the programmes of this government; and we will continue to support the Executive arm for the implementation of those programmes. I also want to make it very clear that this presentation is necessary and in the interest of the people of this country. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I want the Chairman of the Health Committee to please stand up. Please summon the Minister of Health and Sanitation to report to you and explain why there is no representation from his Ministry. Please report whatever response from him to the House by the next sitting.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my contribution is going to be a very brief this morning. I will try very hard to observe the provision in S. O. 36 [2], which states that you limit yourself to the topic on the floor. The four papers presented to this House this morning are non-controversial; and I want to ask my colleagues on this side of the House to speedily ratify these agreements. I am also appealing to my colleagues on the other side that when you are contributing to a non-controversial debate, please do not introduce controversial issues that have the tendency to kindle another debate *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please say that again.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: I once again appeal to my colleagues on the other side that when you are contributing to a non-controversial debate, do not introduce controversial issues because we would be left with no option, but respond to those controversial issues being introduced. If I should respond to the contribution made by the Honourable from Bombali, Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo, he said that we have done XYZ. I am an Economist; and in economics, we believe in the cost benefit analysis. I believe the present government comprises the ruling and opposition parties. As opposition, we are part of the governance of this country. From the opposition point of view, I believe we have expended more than the benefit we have received from electricity. We have spent so much on electricity and that was why I asked if Bumbuna Phase I had been completed. If we have completed that phase, we should not be running out of electricity. For instance, Parliament is presently using its standby generator because Parliament could not get electricity supply from the Electricity Distribution Authority. Phase I should have been completed before another phase is begun. Mr Speaker, whenever Parliament is in session, electricity shouldn't be a problem at all. As a government, we spent so much on electricity but little has been achieved in that regard.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very rational in my analysis and I want to state here that some of us have not read these agreements, but if you go to the implementation, the donors or the partners have said the Project would be implemented December 17, 2017. We have to stop introducing controversies into debates that are non-controversial.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have one major concern about the presentation made by the Minister, which is the special drawing right. The amounts involved are in place, but I have said this before and I will say it again that when we are negotiating these loans, in as much as we are contracting these loans and they are yet to be paid, we should stop contracting these loans from positions of weakness. I said so because if you look at the first agreement, it will tell you that the rate of interest we are going to pay on the amount yet to be withdrawn is very high. According to the agreement, we

are going to pay 1/4th of the amount. I want to appeal to the Minister that in future, he should ensure the harmonisation of the rate of interest. If the rate of interest is harmonised, it will be good for all of us. As a Parliament, we have no right to reverse those interest rates. However, we have to bear in mind that we have to harmonise them when it is 1.5%, let it be 1.5%. These are loans we have to pay back. From all indication, Mr Speaker, I am convinced that the SLPP is going to pay back those loans *[Applause]*. Therefore, we should stop contracting these loans randomly because the quantum we are paying as interest rate is very high.

Having said that Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the loan is timely because we need it as a people; we need it as a country; and we need it as a government. However, we have to take note of the interest rate. Let us try as much as possible to harmonise the interest rate. On that note, I want to ask colleague Honourable Members to ratify these agreements.

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my elder brother on the other side said that we should stop introducing issues that are controversial when debating non-controversial issues.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, the Honourable Foday Rado Yokie did not say we should not be controversial in our submissions. If you are not controversial when you are debating, then you are being contradictory because debate itself is controversy *[Applause]*. In other words, debate by definition is controversy. What he said was that where it has been established that something is devoid of controversy, then do not introduce an element of controversy into it *[Applause]*.

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker for that clarification. Well, the Honourable Member in question started on a preaching note, but he ended up being controversial *[Laughter]*.

THE SPEAKER: The Honourable Member was quite right.

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member should have practiced what he preached earlier on. Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member from

Bombali said that the APC-led government is a government that plans ahead of events; a government that plans from past mistakes; a government that always have in mind the people it serves; and a government that wants prosperity for its nation *[Applause]*. We all saw how ravaged this country was during the Ebola scourge. What people are now saying that our health system was nothing to write home about before the outbreak of the Ebola disease is not true *[Applause]*. What we witnessed and experienced could have been very devastated if it had been experienced in any of those Western countries *[Applause]*. We have seen time and again regions struggling with epidemics like Bird Flu, SAS, N1 Virus, etc., are diseases they did not, in anyway, plan for at any given time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the fascinating aspect of the agreement is community engagement. Mr Minister, it is a pity that the Minister of Health and Sanitation or a representative from that Ministry to witness this debate is not here. I think this is not the first time this House has been disrespected by the Minister of Health and Sanitation *[Applause]* or officials from the said Ministry. The Directorate of that Ministry is not also represented here, but at the end of the day, that Directorate will be responsible to execute this Project. None of them is here to listen to the concerns and opinions of Members of Parliament, who are the representatives of the people. How will they know how to execute this Project when they are not here, Mr Speaker? They should not be invited for them to come and witness what we have to say. As I was saying, Mr Speaker, the community engagement aspect is very important and it is going to be a good starting for Members of Parliament, Councillors, community stakeholders and ward committees. These are different groups of people, who at the end, will have to face the electorate.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, training is also a very good component of this agreement. I want to urge Ministry of Health and Sanitation to look at the training aspect in this agreement. Training is very important for our nurses, CHOs, paramedics and even drivers. However, these have to be done the right way for the benefit of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about incentives - financial and non-financial to staff. As a Parliament, we want to see the right thing is done properly. This is because we have seen situations wherein nurses are refusing to go to their stations because of lack of incentives, even within the Western Area. We have had a situation wherein someone, who never went to work at the Mental Health Hospital, was receiving pay. The person in question was working somewhere else, but he was receiving salary from government. However, Mr Speaker, I want to say here that this is a step in the right direction. As the Honourable Member from Bombali said, 'this is a government that is planning; a government that learns from past experiences; and a government that is ready to tackle challenges head-on. On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to urge colleague Honourable Members to speedily ratify these Agreements. Thank you so much *[Applause]*.

HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I went across the border during the Ebola scourge. This particular agreement is very important because the fact that we will be sharing information and surveillance systems, which will eventually prepare us to fight any disease in the future. Again, it is the same Ministry of Health that will be taking the lead and I want to call on my colleagues, especially the Committee on Health to bring the Minister of Health and Sanitation and his team here. We need to express our opinion on some of these issues in this document. Generally, the three agreements are non-controversial and I want to call on my colleagues to support the ratification of these agreements.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Dollar Credit Line Agreement Exim Bank of India is also timely; and as the Honourable Members from Bomboli and Bo stated earlier, it would have been better for this Honourable House to know the background of these agreements. In other words, it would have been better for this House to know what has happened with Bumbuna Phase I. Probably we would have been in a better position to debate this particular issue. The issue I have with this particular agreement and so with many other agreements that government is entering into is the duty waivers or tax waivers. For example, in this particular agreement, if you go to Page 5, under 'eligibility

of contracts,' it says, "*The borrower hereby confirms to Exim Bank that the eligible goods and services shall be exempted from all kinds of taxes and duties of any nature whatsoever, levied in the borrowers country, including all cooperate personnel value added taxes, import custom duties, special levies and social security contributions for temporary employees deputed by the seller in relation to execution of the contract in the borrowers country.*" I don't think this particular clause is good for our country because by agreeing to some of these articles, we are more or less contravening our own laws. We have been advocating for people to pay National Social Security and Insurance Trust [NASSIT], GST and other forms of taxes. We should not contradict the laws we make in this House. What is about to happen used to happen in the past, when all the multilateral mining companies operated in this country for many years without this country benefitting from what we supposed to have benefitted. Therefore, I want to call on the Honourable Minister and the Ministry of Finance to take cognisance of that fact we have our laws in this country, especially those laws on taxes. They must consider the existence of these laws before entering into an agreement.

Having said that Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I call on my colleagues to speedily ratify these agreements. Thank you very much.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before coming to the debates proper, I want to thank you very much for the interim decision you took immediately in inviting the Ministry of Health and Sanitation to this House. Whilst we appreciate and respect your judgement, Mr Speaker, I want to give notice and I do hereby give notice that in future any agreement that comes to this House [if the Ministry in charge is not here], the House will refuse to debate that agreement *[Applause]*. For far too long, Mr Speaker, this House has been treated with contempt. When the President calls a Minister, for instance, he/she goes to answer the President's call immediately, but this is farfetched in this House. I want to inform the general public that this House is greater than the President *[Applause]*. We've come to discuss three important loan agreements without the presence of any of the three Ministers in the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. There are three Ministers in that Ministry, but none of

them is here to witness this debate. We do not take very kindly to such behaviour. In this regard, a notice is hereby issued that before we debate any future loan agreements, we do a roll call before the proceedings start. If the Minister in charge of the agreement is absent, we will not proceed. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, three of the four loan agreements we are discussing this morning are in the domain of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. The agreement that has to do with the Dollar Line Agreement is for the generation and distribution of electricity in this county. These agreements are very important for the livelihood of our people. Government is already putting in a lot of money into other segments like education, which is also a felt need of the people of this country.

Mr Speaker, the Honourable Komba E. Koedoyoma from Kono did say possibly erroneously that, we are only expecting a grant of 5 million dollars. The three agreements the Minister outlined have an element of 15 million dollars grant agreement in them, plus 35 million Leones loan for a grace period of over ten years. In as much as those moneys are not sufficient.... - *[Interruption]*.

HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA: Mr Speaker, I wanted to set the records straight. I made specific reference to the grant under the 'Ebola Recovery and Reconstruction Trust Fund and I did say that we were expecting more in terms of grant under this specific agreement. Here we were given a grant of USD 5 mln and a loan of USD 10 mln. That was my comment, Mr Speaker. What I understand from the Deputy Majority Leader's comment is that I made mention of the three agreements under the domain of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. I did not say that, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Deputy Majority Leader, I want to advise that you proceed with your presentation.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Today, Mr Speaker, Parliament is almost an undergraduate medical school and the Minister of Finance acted as the Professor in Neurosurgeon when he was delivering his lecture in clinical matters. I want to thank him very much for that comprehensive lecture we have

received this morning. As a Parliament, we appreciate the importance of these grants and the agreements we are about to ratify.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this House has just returned from recess and I believe we had peaceful rest. Mr Speaker, if these agreements were very controversial, Members of Parliament would have raised that up; but for the fact that everybody was commending the agreements indicated that they are non-controversial. The Minister's presentation was very good and I think that presentation provided enough information for Members of Parliament to understand the agreements. is in satisfaction of the lecture that the Minister has delivered and the fact that we appreciate the government's effort in delivering the service they had promised to this nation. Therefore, I want to thank very much for his wonderful presentation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our people say, "*a beggar has no size.*" This means that whenever you go out begging, you don't indicate your size. You are going to accept whatever that is given to you. Likewise, the donors giving their loans have to determine the interest rates and they have to determine the amount they are going to give and the grant that would be added to the loan. In the circumstance, we will have to accept what they have given to us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with regard the Dollar Credit Agreement, we will again want to thank the government for the swift action they have taken. By 2018, electricity would be generated by Bumbuna Phase II for this country. If we do not have the distribution lines working properly, there is no way those services could reach our people. So, the Dollar Agreement is to enhance and facilitate the running of the lines across this country, particularly in the Freetown where the transmission poles are very dilapidated and some of them are falling down. This House would agree with me that we have had a few cases in the Western area where the lines are being cut off at night and they have been killing people in this country. Therefore, this is a welcome agreement and there is nothing else we can add to it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Acting Minority Leader said on Page 5 that this is a bilateral agreement between the government of Sierra Leone and the government of

India through the Exim Bank. Since it is the first of such agreement between Sierra Leone and India, they want to make sure that the money received is effectively and prudently utilised. We have to accept the little we will have to pay. I believe the Minister would elaborate on these issues, but in the process, they have done well. I therefore want to call on this Honourable House to speedily ratify these Agreements that is before us. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

MR MOMOH VANDI: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you for your respective contributions and concerns. I want to assure you that your concerns are noted and they would be channelled accordingly. I specifically want to respond to the Honourable from Bombali about the history of Phase one. Phase one is already completed and operating at 50 megawatts. Once again, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 6th October, 2016

[i] Financing Agreement (Regional Disease Surveillance Systems Enhancement Project IJN West Africa [REDISSE] – Sierra Leone Project under the First Phase of the REDISSE between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association, dated 4th August, 2016.

[ii] Financing Agreement (Health Service Delivery and System Support Project] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association, dated 4th August, 2016 .

[iii] Ebola Recovery and Reconstruction Trust Fund Grant Agreement [Health Service Delivery and System Project] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association [Acting as Administrator for the Ebola Recovery and Reconstruction Trust Fund], dated 4th August, 2016.

[iv] Dollar Credit Line Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Export – Import Bank of India, dated August, 11th 2016.

[Question proposed, put and agreed to]

[Government Motion by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development has been ratified]

THE SPEAKER: I want to say you are the Deputy Financial Secretary, and the next time you do what you have just done, you will be in contempt of Parliament and this House will send you to jail. Thank you very much, Mr Minister.

HON. MOHAMED LAMIN MANSARAY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise on S.O. 48[1], in respect of Private Member Bill. I ask for leave to be granted to introduce a Bill titled: 'The Community Health Practitioner Act, 2016; being an Act to establish the Community Health Practitioners Board for the purpose of regulating all professional Community Health Service Providers in performance of their duties and for other related matters. This Bill is divided into 10 parts and was Signed Honourable Mohamed L. Mansaray of Constituency 047, Koinadugu District.

HON. NICHOLAS KAMARA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on S.O 23. For the interest of this House and for the General public, I want to draw the attention of the Chairperson for the Committee on Energy and Power to come and educate Members of Parliament for the increment in electricity tariff. Also, I want the Chairman of the Committee on Internal Affairs to explain to this House why the price of a passport has been increased from Le 500, 000 to Le 700, 000.

THE SPEAKER: Those two issues have been raised by Honourable Suahilo and Honourable Silikie respectively. I want to assure them that they will be addressed accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at 12:10 p.m., and was adjourned to Thursday, 20th October, 2016, at 10:00 a.m.].