

i. OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

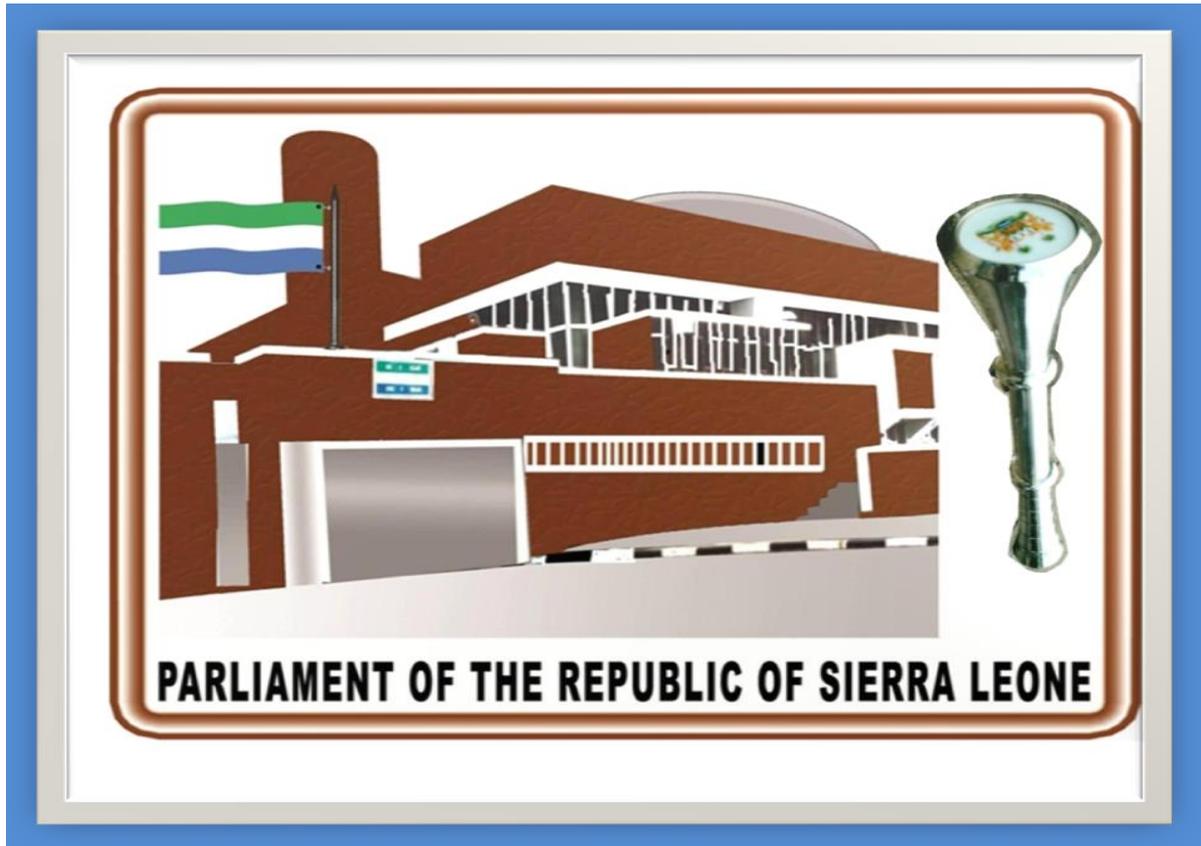
# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**  
**FIFTH SESSION - FIRST MEETING**  
**THURSDAY, 16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2017**

*SESSION – 2016/2017*



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**VOLUME: I**

**NUMBER: 13**

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House  
Held Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2017.

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*THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE*

**Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House**

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**FIFTH SESSION – FIRST MEETING  
OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT  
OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC**

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**Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2017.**

**I. PRAYERS**

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

*[The House met at 10:20 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]*

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

The House was called to Order

*Suspension of S. O. 5[2]*

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to crave the indulgence of this House to amend the Order Paper to accommodate the following instruments, so that they can be laid on the Table of the House:

The Public Elections Act, 2012;

The Public Election Enlargement of time for Registration of Voters Order 2017;

Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Authority Operations Regulations 2017;

Public Elections Act, 2012;

The Ward Boundary Delimitation Order 2017;

The Constitutional Instrument Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991 Act No. 6 of 1991;

The Parliamentary Election Delimitation of Constituencies Order 2017;

The Report on the Investigations of a Land Dispute between Ibrahim G. Bah and Mr Alhaji Ibrahim Timbo by the Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Lands Country Planning and the Environment and on the Investigation of a land Dispute between Mr Lamin Kamara and Mrs Adama Kargbo by the Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Lands, Country Planning and the Environment. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members that is the suggestion relating to the amendment. I take it that there is no objection. That been the case, the Papers, as read by the Majority Leader of this House, could be laid.

**II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY, 14<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2017**

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR**

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2017. As usual, we go page by page. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? There being no amendment or correction, could someone move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2017?

**HON. BENNEH BANGURA:** Mr Speaker, I so move, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

**HON. CHERNOH R. M. BAH:** Mr Speaker, I so second.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2017 has been adopted as presented]*

### **III. PAPERS LAID**

[A] THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**MR MOMOH VANDI** *[Deputy Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development]*: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table of the House the following document:

THREE TOWNS WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECT [ADDITIONAL LOAN] LOAN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE OPEC FUND FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT [OFID], DATED 22<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY, 2017.

[B] THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE

**MR ARROW BOCKRIE** *[Deputy Attorney General and Minister of Justice]*: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table of the House the following documents:

- THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS DELIMITATION OF CONSTITUENCIES ORDER, 2017;
- THE WARD BOUNDARY DELIMITATION ORDER, 2017;
- THE PUBLIC ELECTIONS ENLARGEMENT OF TIME FOR COMPILATION AND THE DIVISION OF THE PROVISIONAL LIST OF VOTERS ORDER, 2017;
- THE PUBLIC ELECTION ENLARGEMENT OF TIME FOR REGISTRATION OF LOCAL ORDER, 2017;
- CONSTITUENCY AND BOUNDARY DELIMITATION REPORT VOLUME ONE

I want to thank you for your kind attention.

**HON. SUALIHO M. KOROMA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise on S.O 25[2] to give a notice of motion for this Honourable House to

debate the following Statutory Instruments that have just been laid before on the Table of this Honourable House. I will submit the written notice of motion as soon as possible to the office of the Clerk. Thank you.

[C] THE CHAIRMAN OF PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON LANDS COUNTRY PLANNING AND THE ENVIRONMENT, HON. ROSALYN J. SMITH

**HON. ROSALINE J. SMITH:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, pursuant to Standing Order 18[6], I beg to lay on the Table of the House the Oversight Committee Report on the investigation of Land dispute between Mr Ibrahim G. Bah and Alhaji Alpha Ibrahim Timbo on one hand and the investigation of land dispute between Mr Lamin Kamara and Mrs Adama Kargbo on the other hand.

#### **IV. GOVERNMENT MOTION**

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 Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2017:

[i] Loan Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Africa Development Fund [Rehabilitation and Extension of Bo-Kenema Distribution System], dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2016; and

[ii] Protocol of the Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Africa Development Fund [Rehabilitation and Extension of Bo-Kenema Distribution System], dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2016

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the two Agreements, as stated on the Order Paper, relate to the same project, viz-a-viz the rehabilitation and extension of the Bo/Kenema Distribution System. If permission is granted, I would like to move the two motions together.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as you may be aware, the Bo/Kenema power emerged after the Chinese Government built the Dodo Dam in the later part of 1970s and the early 1980s to supply electricity to Kenema. Since Bo is about 42miles

from Kenema, it was agreed to extend the transmission line of this project to Bo, so that the two cities can benefit from the hydro that was generated from the Dam. The Dam was originally 4megawatts, but was increased to 6megawatts in the early 2000. During the dry season, when the hydropower drops extremely to low levels, the use of captive power generation is widespread and imposes high cost of production. The industrial and commercial business sector has to rely on expensive captive diesel generators. Furthermore, the two cities have grown tremendously and most of the inhabitants are outside the power grid.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the project target area around Bo and Kenema cities, an insulated power system covers an area populated by slightly more than 500 inhabitants. The distribution networks supply power to 10,509 customers in Bo, 6,762 customers in Kenema, and 250 customers in Blama; thus leaving more than **75%** of the population area without access to electricity. The current demand is estimated to be around 7.5megawatts being supplied by a 4megawatts diesel generator, located in Bo and 6 megawatts Hydro Power Plant in Dodo, which was connected to Kenema. This is, however, available only during the rainy season. The distribution system is severely constrained due to obsolete equipment, lack of maintenance and coupled with high losses of over **40%**.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a single circuit 33 KVA interconnector allows the load to flow from Bo to Kenema during the dry season from Dodo, but any fault on this line leaves Kenema in the dark. The components for the distribution networks were installed around the mid1980s and many parts of the system are now in a very poor state from health and safety perspective.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the proposed project is meant to upgrade the Bo/Kenema interconnector into 33 KV double circuits, 48 kilometre overhead line within the existing right of way that will increase the transfer capacity between the two cities. The project also intends to construct new sub-stations located in the outskirts of Bo and Kenema to help manage voltage issues and help improve load growth. System availability would be further increased through the construction of 11KV ring distribution lines that will feed the low voltage transformers to supply both domestic and commercial customers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the proposed project would enable construction of distribution lines sub-stations and any user connection campaign in Bo and Kenema. It will include the following:

- upgrade and construction of a 70 km overhead 33 KV lines between Bo and Kenema, along with the construction of primary sub-stations and rehabilitations in each city;
- rehabilitation and expansion of medium voltage and low voltage distribution networks within the two cities;
- implementation of an end user connection campaign with the objective to connect 37 thousand additional households to the grid;
- provision of service for preparation of designs and bid documents;
- provision of capacity building to EDSA relevant stakeholders; and
- provision of temporary generation during the construction works.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the estimated cost for this project is **\$53,089,911.6**. The ADF Loan is estimated at **\$6,433,245.14**. The ADF grant is estimated at **\$6,536,665.92**. The DfID grant is estimated **\$3,882,000**. The Government of Sierra Leone will contribute a total of one million two hundred and ninety thousand **[\$1290000]** plus cost of compensation of project affected properties.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the strategic relevance of this project cannot be over emphasised. It would provide reliable electricity supply and access to electricity to the majority of the people in Bo and Kenema. The project would also rehabilitate or upgrade and expand on the distribution network. It is expected to cater for the newly developed communities without access to electricity. The provision of reliable and affordable electricity would promote private sector development and increase economic activities in the beneficiary towns and communities. The project would benefit the people of Bo, Kenema and the communities within the distribution lines, including Blama, Geherun, Dodo and Yamandu with a population about six hundred thousand people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement is very important because it gears towards meeting the energy needs of the people Bo and Kenema, including some

towns along the transmission lines. In that regard, I move that the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of this Honourable House on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2017 be ratified:

[i] Loan Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Africa Development Fund [Rehabilitation and Extension of Bo-Kenema Distribution System], dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2016; and

[ii] Protocol of the Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Africa Development Fund [Rehabilitation and Extension of Bo-Kenema Distribution System], dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2016.

I thank you for your attention [*Applause*].

*[Question Proposed]*

**HON. IBRAHIM BEN KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that this is another step taken by Government to bring about development to this country. As I was listening to the radio this morning, one of the officials of the Ministry of Energy was explaining the challenges he is confronted with in that Ministry. Somebody very close to me said that the Ministry of Energy has become the Ministry of explanations. However, what is also important is the fact that he also observed that Government wants to ensure that electricity is improved in this country. We need not remind Members of this House that when the President was campaigning to become President of Sierra Leone for the very first time among other things, he promised to improve on the supply of electricity in this country. And when he assumed office, he instructed that Freetown should be improved from 4 megawatts to 25 megawatts, which happened. But because the President of this country sees Sierra Leone in an awesome manner and Sierra Leone is Sierra Leone and not just Freetown or Makeni, he believes that electricity should also be expanded to other parts of the country, especially in major cities like Kenema and Bo, which have developed into big communities. The history of the Dodo Electricity in Bo District is very clear.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we all know that it was Dr Siaka Stevens who, in agreement with the Chinese, decided that Kenema should have a hydroelectric project system for the expansion of electricity to that part of the country.

Nevertheless, he was not satisfied with that development and he decided to sign an agreement with the Danish Government for the Thelma System in Bo. When the Thelma System and the Dodo Hydroelectric Systems were installed, it became very easy to merge the two projects to ensure that Bo and Kenema had reliable electricity. For a very long time, the two cities did have reliable electricity until they started getting some difficulties.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when Dr Ernest Bai Koroma came to power, the first thing he did was to identify these difficulties. After identifying the problems, his Government decided to sign this loan Agreement in order to upgrade, develop and enhance reliable electricity to that part of the country. Within this very short time, what we have done, as a Government, is to make sure that the Southern and Eastern parts of this country are not left out in terms of development. We already know that we have been rated as a country with one of the best roads and majority of these roads are in the Southern and Eastern parts of Sierra Leone. Again, when the bridges in West Africa were accessed, it was agreed by the Engineers of roads that one of the best bridges in West Africa can only be found in Sierra Leone and that bridge leads to Segbwema.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that we are not only restricting infrastructural development to roads alone. In fact, the word infrastructure also includes electricity and telecommunications. We are doing very well in those two areas. I am very satisfied that the Minister of Finance and Economic Development has made sure that his Deputy Minister becomes an expert in parliamentary procedures and he has been doing very well since he started coming to Parliament. Of course, the presentation he made this morning was very succinct. Members of Parliament would agree with the Government policy to expand the supply of electricity to that part of the country. We are also determined to expand electricity to other parts of the country. This is what happens when you have a very progressive Government in office and this is what we are going to continue doing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to inform this Honourable House that there is no difficulty in the presentation made by the Deputy Minister of Finance and

because we are also determine to see other parts of this country develop, I want to restate here that this is a fine Agreement. This Agreement is consistent with Government policy and I therefore urge this House to ratify this Agreement. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**HON. FODAY RADO YORKIE:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am a happy man and the people of Bo and Kenema Districts will be happier than before. Indeed, it is a welcome idea for the people of Bo and Kenema that since the Dodo Dam came into existence in the 1980s, the production at that time seemingly was just too big for the people of Kenema alone. Therefore, they thought they could extend similar facility to the people of Bo, which was a welcome idea for both districts.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during the dry seasons, it is the power station from Bo that usually supply electricity in Bo and Kenema. In the rainy seasons, we heavily rely on the Dodo Dam. Unfortunately, though the supply of electricity for the past few years has not been able to meet the current demands of the people. The then SLPP Government thought it fit to expand the Dodo Dam from 4 megawatts to 6 megawatts, so that the demands for electricity them are met. Now there is an increase in demand, which the 6megawatts can no longer meet. Therefore, this is the rationale why we are here this morning. The APC Government has decided to increase it from 6megawatts to 7.5megawatts. This is because there is an increase in demand for electricity.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to differ from what Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo has just presented to this House. In the presentation of the Honourable Minister, he craftily dogged the payment of the interest in this Agreement. The question, how do we pay, and what is the rationale for this loan Agreement? I am particularly concerned about the payment of this loan. How much are we going to pay and at what interest rate? For instance, if you go to the Agreement, I have said... - *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister, in the words of Honourable Foday Rado Yokie, did you craftily doge this information or it was left out inadvertently?

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** None of the above, Mr Speaker.

**HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE:** In that case, it is always good to have an intelligent leader to lead you. There are lots of things the Minister did tell this Honourable House. I can still stand by it because the Minister did not tell us at what interest rate we are going to pay the loan, and this is very important. As I said earlier, I am very concerned about the payment of this loan because we are going to take over the governance of this country and we will be responsible to pay this loan. Therefore, the payment of this loan has to be made clearer to us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go to the Hansard, you will find out that my principal concerns, when issues of loans are discussed in this House, have been the payment of interest rates. Fortunately, when the present Mayor of Freetown brought a loan for the construction of the Freetown City Council, he said that the interest rate for that loan was **0.5%**. According to the then Minister of Finance, he said that 'there is no loan you can contract and repay less than **1%**. Today, we are seeing the strategy in this Agreement. Please look at sub-section 3.01, under the 'Re-payment of Principal.' As I have said, the rationale is very good. You have ten years grace period. We will start paying this loan from the eleven years to thirty years at **2%** interest rate. Besides, we will also have to pay **0.7%**. This means that we will pay something like **4%**; and by the time we finish paying this loan, we will end up paying approximately **10%** on the principal amount alone. That is bad economics, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want the Minister to pay rapt attention to what I am saying. The reason why I am saying this is because of the rate of interest we are going to pay. The rationale behind you contracting the loan is wonderful. We have ten years grace period, which is acceptable. We also have two years, which is wonderful as well. The total amount of this contract is not clear because the Minister told us in his presentation that the total amount of contract is **53.08mln** Dollars. What is not included in the overall cost is the cost of compensation. If you look at this document, the bulk of the money will go towards compensation. I want to state here that this is corruption because you will find Government officials colluding with house owners to steal from Government. I am very concerned about

mismanagement of Government funds. We should try very hard to close those loopholes and focus on revenue generation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would also like the Minister of Finance to bring the Finance Act to this House. The Act is long overdue and we must try very hard to ensure that it is being brought to this House. Revenue generation is key for development of this country. However, the people of Bo and Kenema Districts would welcome this idea. Like I said before, I am very particular about the rate of repayment and the rate of interest in this loan Agreement.

Having said that Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to urge this Honourable House to ratify this Agreement. The people of Bo and Kenema will heartily congratulate Government for this laudable venture. We are looking forward to its immediate implementation. I am spending a lot of money on fuel every day. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Majority Leader, the Honourable Foday Rado Yokie said something that is very important about the Finance Bill. The Finance Bill is long overdue and I want the Minister to take note of that very seriously.

**HON. SUALIHO M. KOROMA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just wanted to take off from where the Honourable Foday Rado Yokie from Bo ended. I am going to look at best parliamentary practice... - *[Interruption]*.

**HON. HASSAN B. SHERIFF:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to make a point of order on the Finance Bill. The Committee on Finance met with the officials of the NRA and the Minister of Finance on that issue. In assumption, the Finance Bill has been taken to the Government Printer, with the hope that it will be brought to this Parliament very soon.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honestly, Honourable Foday Rado Yokie has portrayed himself as a true nationalist. If the Finance Bill had been brought and enacted into law, we should have got something that has now been lost. That, in essence, is what he has been saying.

**HON. SUAHILO M. KOROMA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was talking about the parliamentary best practice and this was

eloquently explained by the Honourable Foday Rado Yokie. In other jurisdictions within the sub-region, for instance, copies of the draft agreements are usually brought first to Parliament, so that Parliament will sit together with International Partners. This will give Parliament the opportunity to make suggestions and amend where necessary before the document is finally signed on behalf of the country.

Unfortunately, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the case in Sierra Leone is different because Government usually signs Agreements before they are brought to Parliament. This is why this Parliament is always under fire because parliamentarians do not usually have the time to scrutinise these Agreements before they are finally signed. As far as this Agreement is concerned, there are so many good things in this Agreement, but any little mistake we make will attract public condemnation. If these Agreements are thoroughly looked at before they are signed, we will not consider a second option in terms of throwing it out. However, we cannot afford to throw this particular Agreement out because it is going to benefit our people. Again, we should expect public condemnation because there are few things which are not included in this Agreement. So, I want to state here that in future, let us be having these Agreements looked at from the parliamentary point of view because we represent the people of this country before they are finally signed by Government.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to look at the Dodo Dam. I must state here that these issues we are discussing here today have been raised before for the rehabilitation of the Dodo Dam since 2014. I was a member of the Committee on Energy and Water Resources then, and we visited the Dodo Dam, where most of the issues were flagged up. The speculation was that, the Dam was expected to generate 4.9 megawatts, but only 2.2 megawatt was realised because of the leakages in the system. Those issues were raised in our Committee reports, which were debated in this House and the recommendations were forwarded to the Ministry of Energy. I want to believe that this Parliament has done a good job and I want to say Kudus to them because these issues were raised long ago. There are so many leakages in the system and that is why those who are expected to benefit are not benefitting at all.

Again, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the transmission system in Bo/Kenema Power Station is very obsolete and this is the reason why we have to overhaul the entire transmission system.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am not seeing a lot of officials from the Ministry of Energy. If they are here, I want to plead with them that whenever they go to Bo, they should look at the current distribution network in that district. I am saying this because I want them to also promote tourism in Bo by supporting the Hotels. What is happening in Bo is that most of the transformers are being overloaded and are not working properly. For instance, if you go to MJ Motel in Bo, you will find out that they have electricity in that Hotel, but cannot use it because the electricity they have there cannot even put an AC and other appliances on. They are using generator twenty-four hours every day. Therefore, I want you to support the Motels and other Guest Houses in Bo, so that we can be able to boost our Tourism Sector.

Mr Speaker Honourable Members, I heard the Minister laying a lot of emphasis on extension. I think this loan is all about extension and rehabilitation. I want to categorically state here that the existing system is really optional in terms of distribution. I want you to also pay attention on the existing system and not just the extension of that system. If you look at the wordings in this loan Agreement, I want to believe there is no controversy; and above all, the Agreement is timely. I am aware that this Government has laid a lot of emphasis on electricity supply in this country and even water supply. I want to thank the Government and the Department for International Development [DfID] because of the supports it has given to the Ministries of Energy and Water Resources.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to remind the President that in 2008, he promised the people of this country that within thirty-six months, every district headquarter town would have sustainable electricity supply. Now, we only have eleven months left for his second term of office. I want to remind Government that they have to do a lot of work.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to urge this Honourable House to quickly ratify this Agreement, so that they start the implementation of this Project. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

**HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by making few clarifications. The Honourable Member from Bo stated that the standard of parliamentary practice is that the Agreement has to be brought first to Parliament, so that parliamentarians would have first-hand information before it is finally signed. Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member failed to realise that each country has its own laws. In our own situation, when the Executive signs an Agreement, they have to bring it to this House to either agree or disagree with its contents. Therefore, for the Honourable Member to tell this House that standard procedures have not been followed is misleading.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, I would want you to use the word 'wrong,' rather than 'misleading.' It is certainly not misleading at all, Honourable Member. Perhaps, for the purposes of what we do here, that is the norm. I want to tell you from my international experience that in some other Parliaments, before these Agreements are signed, the relevant parliamentary Committee[s] will engage the individual. That is happening in other jurisdictions. In fact, I am going to encourage that practice here. I must say it is a very good practice.

**HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take your point, Mr Speaker, but what I am trying to state here is the fact that the Constitution allows for the separation of powers. The Legislature has its own functions that are considered separate from the Executive. We cannot, as a Parliament, interfere with the work of the Executive if it is not in our domain. That is the point I want to underscore.

Again, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is another reason why I said the Honourable Member from Bo has been wilfully misleading this House. The reason is that he said that the Agreement emphasised more on expansion component than rehabilitation. This is also not true because the Agreement has a rehabilitation component in it. In fact, it has three components; i.e., expansion, upgrade and rehabilitation.

Also, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, another Honourable Member was questioning the loan repayment and the interest rate. Mr Speaker, no one will predict the value of **\$53mln** ten years from now. In other words, nobody will

predict the exchange rate of our currency and that of the value of the Dollar. The Honourable Member from Bo is questioning the **2%** repayment and **0.7%** repayment, which in his own opinion, it is a bad Agreement. I would like to inform him that this is one of the best Agreements you can get anywhere in the world.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have approved loan agreements that have been converted to a grants. This means that we benefited from the loan and we paid **0%** interest rate. In that regard, I see no reason why the Honourable Member was questioning this Agreement. This is an opportunity for the people in the Southern and Eastern parts of this country to benefit. It is an opportunity for the business women, school going children, etc. Mr Speaker, we cannot, in anyway, question the content of this Agreement. Repeatedly, Mr Speaker, the Honourable Members on that side, especially those from Blama and Yamandu, have been shouting in this Well that they have not benefited from the infrastructural development of the governing party.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Alhassan Kamara, that is totally irrelevant.

**HON. ALHASAN KAMARA:** On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to urge this Honourable House to ratify this Agreement. Thank you very much.

**HON. SIDI M. TUNIS [*Acting Minority Leader*]:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Agreement we have before us is timely, considering the current status of electricity supply in Bo and Kenema Districts. The Agreement, as most Honourable Members have said, is not a controversial Agreement. The only problem I have with it is the fact that this Parliament has ratified several loan Agreements for the Energy Sector, especially for the Western Area. Unfortunately, we have not realised the optimal benefit we were expecting. In fact, there is an increase in output, but we are still experiencing 'blackouts' in the country. I think we have invested a lot of money on the Energy Sector, but we are still having some challenges. I am, therefore, encouraging the Minister of Energy and the management of the Electricity Distribution and Supply Agency [EDSA] to put more efforts to provide electricity for the Western Area.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, looking at this loan Agreement, it is indeed a very good Agreement. Therefore, I would want the Ministry of Finance and Economic

Development, together with those who are going to implement this project, to sensitise the people where this project is going to be implemented. I am saying this because we have had an experience wherein when the Bumbuna/Freetown transmission lines were under construction, there were lots of interferences from the community people. Some of them were using those expensive cables to make pots. All these were happening because the people were not thoroughly sensitised. Therefore, I want to urge the EDSA, the Ministry of Finance and economic Development, and the Ministry of Energy to invest some money on sensitising the people residing along the project paths.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Member from Bo was suggesting that we pay compensation fee to those who would be affected by this project. Also, I want to state here that there is condition precedence to this, and with the leave of Mr Speaker it reads: **“provide evidence that there is a subsidiary financing agreement with terms and conditions acceptable to the fund has been executed between the borrower and EDSA for the purpose of on-lending the proceeds of the loan.”** This is the condition precedence for the disbursement of this loan. Therefore, I would want to encourage you to make follow-up on this and ensure that everything is done for the people of Kenema and Bo. We want sustainable electricity supply in those parts of the country. I thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Sidi M. Tunis, this is not only for the people of Kenema or Bo, but for the people of Sierra Leone because Sierra Leoneans go there.

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU [Majority Leader of the House and Leader of Government Business]:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me at the outset congratulate the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development for taking this venture to obtain a loan for the rehabilitation and extension of the Bo/Kenema distribution system.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, somebody was saying that with all the amount of moneys we have ratified in this House, loan or grant, we still have blackouts. I want to inform this Honourable House that electricity is like money, ‘the more you get the more you want.’ And if that is so, I believe we are all witnessing the population boom in this country... - *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Foday Rado Yokie, I hope you heard what the Majority Leader has said.

**HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE:** I did not, Mr Speaker. I want him to go over what he has just said.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Majority Leader, please go over that.

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU:** Mr Speaker, to put it in a very simple and understandable term, I said that electricity, just like money, 'the more you get, the more you need it.' That is why we are going to rehabilitate not only what is already there, but to extend the present facilities, so that the population we presently have will be accommodated.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Foday Rado Yokie, I guess you know the law in Economics.

**HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE:** Mr Speaker, I think that is why I said then and now that you have seen the rationale to increase its capacity from 6 megawatt to 20.5 megawatt. I think that is what the Honourable Member is saying. I agree with him because he is our Leader.

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU:** Mr Speaker, because of the priority we have placed on the development of energy in this country, we are all seeing the influx of investors into this country. This is one of the moments in the history of this country wherein we have witnessed the emergence of a lot of factories that are currently in operation because the investors are no longer coming with generators for their factories. Today, even the development of the chicken industry is taking place rapidly because there is electricity. We can even boast of having the Dangote Cement factory in this country. If you put the quantum of electricity being consumed by these industries together, you will notice that it is no longer a child's play. Therefore, the question of blackout still persisting in this country has to be contextualised. We have moved from 7 megawatts to over 200 megawatt. If people are saying that we still have blackout in this country, I want those people to take note of the amount of electricity these factories are consuming and the rapid growth of the population of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank those who have made their contributions and have called on us to ratify this Agreement. I want to assure them that their observations have been taken in good faith. I want to join them in asking this Honourable House to ratify this Agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want this Honourable House to know that I schooled in Bo and there was a popular saying in that area that 'sweet Bo, expensive Kenema.' Those were the days of the Banka Soka Power Supply [BKPS]. During that period, if you go to Bo and Kenema, there was electricity; after 1992, we started encountering a lot of problems. However, we are not going to shift that blame to anybody because we are doing what we are doing as a government and I think that is the reason why the people of this country have elected us to do.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Foday Rado Yokie was saying that when they shall have assumed power in 2018, they will not want to see a lot of problems. I know he was referring to my Government and I will take his observations and the observations of the other people very seriously. I want to wish him well. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** So you see Foday Rado, I wanted you to add something Order! I wanted you to add something by way of a correction when you said well yes, he is my leader and you should have added also my presidential candidate.

**HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE:** I have made declaration in this Well that I will be hopefully and honestly ready to work with him.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want the Chairman of the Committee on Finance and the Minister of Finance to take note of the point made by the Honourable Foday Rado Yokie; i.e., the Finance Bill. The Finance Bill is very important and it has to be brought and laid on the Table of this House. What we have heard is the voice of a responsible opposition.

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank all those who have contributed. They have raised very important concerns and those concerns have been noted.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to make some clarifications with regards the concerns raised by Honourable Foday Rado Yokie. In the first place, if you look at the loan Agreement, it is about **10%** of the total cost of the project. Honestly, Mr Speaker, that is not as significant as you may think. To clarify what he has said, I want to state here that the interest rate will be **0.56%** and the payment period is about 30 years with a grace period of 10 years. On the issue that has to do with compensation, that cost cannot be determined except the consultant determines the cost.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on the area that has to do with the Finance Bill, I am very passionate about revenue mobilisation. I am the Minister in charge and I have personally made efforts to ensure that revenue is mobilised to its fullest. As the Chairman of the Finance Committee said earlier, I think we have met on three occasions and I want to assure this Honourable House that the Finance Bill will be brought to this Well very soon. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister, how soon is pretty soon?

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** Mr Speaker, as soon as possible.

**THE SPEAKER:** Well, I would have liked you to say it the way Kwame Nkrumah used to say; i.e., sooner or later, but sooner rather than later, that was how Kwame Nkrumah used to say.

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** On that note, 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 Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2017:

[i] Loan Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Fund [Rehabilitation and Extension of the Bo/Kenema Distribution System], dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2016; and

[ii] Protocol of Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Fund [Rehabilitation and Extension of the Bo/Kenema Distribution System], dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2016. I thank you very much.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

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

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister, thank you very much. I would want to agree with the Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo, who said in his contribution that your presentation was rather comprehensive. I must state here that it was a good presentation and I want to thank you very much.

**HON. PC BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are now dealing with constitutional and legal issues in this Parliament. Members of Parliament have given a notice of motion to debate the instrument that you have laid on this Table. We have been notified that the registration process will start on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2017. If the legality of that prevails, I want to take this opportunity to ask the leadership of this House whether the 21 days from the time they laid those papers have lapsed. Again, I want to know if we are going to debate that proposed motion. If these two issues are to stand, is it legal for the registration to start on Monday? I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, the registration can still continue, but I take your point very seriously. I hope the Majority Leader heard what you have said. We have 21 days and 21 days is 21 days. Please take note of what the Paramount Chief has said. The registration can still continue, only that if you look at the Constitution, the question of fixing date for the election is good, but Parliament also has a say in it. Most people do not know this, but Parliament also has a say in this matter.

**HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, sometimes last week, I spoke about the Njala University saga. It is still not settled and Njala University has still not reopened. I was expecting members of the Committee on Education to have met with the Ministry or the Njala University Administration to see how best they could settle the issue between the Administration and staff on one hand and the officials of that Ministry on the other hand. Some of us have children, brothers and sisters and some even have wives attending there. We should take that issue very seriously. We have been hearing from the social media that students have been demonstrating. We have also heard that those students have been

approaching the Administration of this Parliament, but nothing has happened in terms of settling that issue. This is almost the end of the first semester and as we speak, Njala University has not reopened. Mr Speaker, if you have not started classes for a period of ninety days, it means half of the academic year has gone already. Therefore, I want to urge the parliamentary Committee on Education to speedily look into that issue and report to this House, so that our brothers, sisters and the children resume classes. Most of them are idling and we need to do something.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to talk about the voter registration exercise that is going to start on the Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2017. I want to state here that on behalf of the young people of the Sierra Leone People's Party [SLPP], I want to urge every Sierra Leonean who has reached the age of eighteen years and above to go and register, be you APC or SLPP. If you want a better change, please go and register. Go and register, so that we can kick the APC out of power in 2018. I thank you very much.

**HON. LEONALD S. FOFANAH:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have heard the Honourable Member from Bo loud and clear. We are not oblivious of the fact that the strike has taken a long time, but the fact of the matter is that the Committee on Education is working towards addressing the issues. Last week, the Minister of Education was in the provinces and he visited Njala University. We hope the strike would be brought to an end very soon. We are working assiduously to make sure that the strike action is put to an end. All of us are very concerned like what the Honourable Member rightly said. We have sisters, brothers, children, grandchildren in that institution; and above all, we have voters. As a government, we are concerned that the college resumes its normal operation very soon. I thank you very much.

**HON. MUSTAPHA M. BRAIMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is an adage which says, 'those things you look at that will be debilitating and you say it is not my business, sometimes will come and ride you over.' I am just coming from the border area of Liberia and Liberia is rendering certain areas vulnerable in case of any strange happenings. We have learnt over the years that even the war we had, it

came from Liberia and Bormaru is a strategic town. There are lots of issues that should be addressed in Bormaru. I want to inform this House that wild bats have invaded that part of the country and they are destroying crops very seriously. The people are very worried and that town is in my Constituency. They do not know where these bats are coming. They have almost damaged crops and that is one of the major agricultural areas. There are no mining activities going on in that part of the country. They solely depend on agriculture.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the people are very worried; and when I was there a couple of days ago, they were agitating that this matter be brought to the attention of Government. As a Member of Parliament representing that part of the country, I think this is the most ideal forum to convey this message. Their crops are being destroyed by those wild bats. This happened a week after they have started invading Pendembu Town. I do not want this issue to be treated with levity because this is how some of these things spill over to other areas. I want to make an appeal to Members of Parliament to do everything humanly possible to assist those people. They are not begging for relief this time, but they are just asking us to do something that will scare away those invading bats. I thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Mustapha Braima, I want to agree with you. I have always said that in life, do not underestimate anything and do not take anything for granted. The English people have a proverb which says, **“That which is left undone will undo you.”**

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on S.O. 23. The Honourable Member from Bo made a personal plea on behalf of the young people on the registration exercise. I participated at the mock registration in my constituency and the registration we are talking about is civil and voter registrations, which means that we want every Sierra Leonean to register. That is the big register that will qualify you to vote and also be a Sierra Leonean. Let us understand it better.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Majority Leader, please go over the second part of that statement. This registration is not only going to qualify you to vote, but your status as a Sierra Leonean.

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU:** Mr Speaker, on behalf of this Parliament, and by virtue of my position as Leader of this House, we want to crave the indulgence of all Sierra Leoneans to go and register. You are going to register to vote if you are an adult and the other registration is meant to activate your status as a Sierra Leonean. Make sure that all your data are captured correctly. That is your passport to any ECOWAS country and any other country in the absence of not being able to have a passport. I wish you a fruitful registration exercise. I thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Majority Leader, to add to what you have said, when I was the Majority Leader of this House, about three people who were nominated by the President came for interview, but the Committee realised that they had not registered and they were dropped. This exercise is not only going to qualify you to vote, but it will give you an identity as a Sierra Leonean. Therefore, it is very important and you have to go and register.

**HON. IBRAHIM BEN KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on behalf of the Bombali District Caucus of this Parliament, I would want to extend felicitation to our brothers in Port Loko District on the occasion of the elevation of Honourable Benneh Bangura to the position of Chairman of the APC for Port Loko District *[Applause]*. We all know that Honourable Benneh Bangura is a popular name in this Parliament and I have worked with him in the Committee on Information and Communications and I came to the conclusion that he is a man who is forthright and possesses the capacity as well to perform and achieve results.

Having stated that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we also want to recognise the fact that as Members of the All Peoples Congress Party, we are aware of the fact that the erstwhile Chairman of that district did his best to give the APC a good name in that part of the country. Therefore, we are happy that the one-time Chairman of that district did perform exceptionally well. More importantly, Mr Speaker, I want to state here that we in the Bombali District will continue to work assiduously with our brothers in Port Loko District. We are also aware of the fact that Port Loko is very anxious to provide a President; and if they provide a President, we will work with that President. However, we believe that we have laws, rules, regulations and structures in the party; and consistent with those rules, regulations and structures,

Honourable Benneh Bangura has become the Chairman for the APC in Port Loko District. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**HON. P.C JOSEPH ALIE-KAVURA KONGOMOH II:** Sometimes people do not recognise what goes around them. I want to thank the Government for the way and manner they distributed the recovery priorities. I want to confess here that indeed my chieftom has benefited a lot. The reason I stood up to speak is because there are only twelve Paramount Chiefs in Parliament and there are only twelve of us that belong to two worlds; i.e., as parliamentarians and as Paramount Chiefs. We are living with the grassroots people and if those people are not properly sensitised, they will not register. We have two registrations that will start on Monday. I have gone round my Chieftom and I have been telling the people about the Civil Registration not the Voters' Registration... - *[Interruptions]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Paramount Chief, I was expecting you to tell them about the Civil Registration not only the Voter Registration. Please put emphasis on Civil Registration.

**HON. PC JOSEPH ALIE-KAVURA KONGOMOH II:** Mr Speaker, my concern here is that we told them that they are going to register from zero year and above. As long as you have life, you are going to be registered. Those who are Sierra Leonean citizens. In other words, we want to distinguish between Sierra Leoneans and those who are just coming to settle with us. I have been telling my people this message. The Voter Registration is going to start on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2017, whereas the Civil Registration is going to start on the 20<sup>th</sup> March to 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2017. I do not know when the Voter Registration is going to end, but I want to state here that recently, the Speaker of this House emphasised on obtaining permission if you are constrained to attend sittings. I want to state that these people need our presence, so that they can actively participate. We can go to the last village, but perhaps the officials who are going to register them may not reach where we may likely reach. What do we do in such situation, Mr Speaker? You have to sympathise with the Paramount Chiefs.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Paramount Chief, you know that S.O. 23 should be very short and you should not have gone as far as you went. The Speaker is always in his

office and is always available. There are times when you do not have to say everything in public. That is quite understandable; and any rules, however rigid, there must be a room for exceptions. I am not unaware of that fact.

**HON MOIWAI MOMOH:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also stand on S.O. 23. I want to report to this House that that there is an outbreak of German measles for the very first time in the Eastern Region of Sierra Leone, precisely in my Constituency. According to the medical expert, Sierra Leone used to register the German measles in the Northern Region. Therefore, they never mobilised medical gears for all the districts in Sierra Leone. Therefore, by the time they could respond to the outbreak, it has spread rapidly and most of the children who are suffering from that ailment are children under the age of five years and they are school going children. So, I am appealing to the Government and medical practitioners to mobilise the necessary resources for Constituency 006. What we normally do sometimes in Sierra Leone is to always wait for an outbreak before responding and when we talk about disaster, preparedness and response, we should mobilise all our medical gears in readiness for every outbreak.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think we should have learnt from the Ebola outbreak. If you want to contain any contagious disease, you need to contain it from the nearby villages or surrounding villages and not necessarily where the outbreak started because it will be too late. I think the few medical practitioners who went there paid attention to the village where the ailment started, thereby failing to realise that contacts had already taken place in those communities. The disease is spreading far and wide. I want the Government to take note of this very seriously. I thank you very much.

**HON. BENNEH BANGURA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, just because I am Chairman for Port Loko District for the APC that does not mean I do not also oversee my neighbouring districts. In that regard, I regret to announce the sudden illness of our Paramount Chief from Bombali, Chief Kabombor, who was here with us. Couple of days ago, he had Stroke and is presently hospitalised. Thank you very much.

**HON. FREDERICK SANDY SOURIE:** Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just want to raise an issue that is affecting our people in Kono District; i.e., the issue of transportation cost from Makeni to Kono. Mr Speaker, before the roads were rehabilitated, the transport fare from Makeni to Kono was **Le35, 000**. Unfortunately, even when the roads have been rehabilitated, they are still charging people **Le35, 000**. I am appealing to this House to call on the Drivers' Union and the Ministry of Transport and Aviation to look into this issue. The distance from Makeni to Kono is 98 miles. That is the issue I wanted to raise.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, before the road was rehabilitated, what was the price of fuel?

**HON. FREDERICK SANDY SOURIE:** Mr Speaker, if you look at the transport fare from Freetown to Makeni, which is about 118 miles, the cost is around **Le 20,000** to **Le25, 000**. Comparatively, those travelling from Makeni to Kono should pay lesser. The **Le35, 000** is too much, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, you would recall that in one of the sittings in I presided, I did announce to this House about the formation of a Steering Committee on the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs]. The Committee has now been constituted and the membership of the Committee is as follow:

1. Hon. Dauda J. B. Kallon - Chairman;
2. Hon. Sheku Sannoh;
3. Hon. Rose Mary Bangura;
4. Hon. Suahilo M. Koroma;
5. Hon. Alhassan Kamara;
6. Hon. Komba E. S. Boyah;
7. Hon. Edward Style Jengo;
8. Hon. Babah Saidu Kamara;
9. Hon. Francis E. Kowa;
10. Hon. Lahai Marah;
11. Hon. Frederick Sandy Sourie;
12. Hon. Gladys Gbamoh Gbappy Brima;
13. Hon. Henneh Raddar;

14.Hon. Aaron A. Koroma; and

15.Hon. Osman K. Conteh.

Mr Clerk, I do not see too many SLPP Members of Parliament on this list. Who prepared this list? The way parliamentary Committees are constituted is provided for in the Standing Orders. I am afraid I will not put this list to the Floor for approval until it is properly done. Go and consult the relevant Standing Orders. Mr Majority Leader, were you consulted on the formation? The representation of the SLPP is poor.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, my attention has been drawn to something which I will describe as an eyesore. If you go to the Dispatch Section, you will find out that documents are just piling up in Members' Pigeonholes. That means some of the documents supplied are never collected by Members of Parliament.

Honourable Members, the Honourable Sidi M. Tunis, Honourable Brimah Conteh, Honourable Ibrahim R. Bundu and my very self would tell you that in our days, we were so anxious for documents. In fact, the first thing we usually do in the morning was to go to the Dispatch Section to see whether there were documents for us. In actual fact, it is these documents that make you proper parliamentarians. I will ask the Clerk of Parliament to go and check. The National Electoral Commission has brought other documents that have to be put in the pigeonholes. If the pigeonholes are not cleared, then there would be no place for these documents. Many of them are in store. Please go and clear the pigeonholes.

Honourable Members, all of us know and everyone knows that the registration exercise will begin on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2017. Had it not been for the fact that this is an election year, we would have adjourned sine die to allow Members of Parliament to participate effectively in the registration process. But let us also remember that these are critical times and Parliament must be meeting. Therefore, in order to enable Members of Parliament to be present for the commencement of this exercise, I will adjourn Parliament to the 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2017 at 10 a.m. Thereafter, we would be meeting, but I would be making allowances where I think it is necessary.

***ADJOURNMENT***

*[The House rose at 12:10 and was adjourned to Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2017 at 10:00 a.m.]*