



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION-FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 19th MARCH, 2013

SESSION – 2012/2013



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

VOLUME: I

22ND SITTING OF THE HOUSE:

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held on Tuesday, 19th March, 2013.

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II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THURSDAY 14th MARCH, 2013.

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(B) THE MINISTER OF POLITICAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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IV. GOVERNMENT MOTIONS:

(A) THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONORABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENT WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON THURSDAY, 14TH MARCH, 2013

PROJECT PAPER ON A PROPOSED AFRICA CATALYSTIC GROWTH FUND ADDITTIONAL FINANCING IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$ 5,690,614 TO THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE FOR A REPRODUCTIVE AND CHILD HEALTH PROJECT, PHASE 2 DATED 9TH AUGUST, 2012.

(B) THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONORABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENT WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THIS HOUSE TODAY THURSDAY, 14TH MARCH, 2013:

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND SOCFIN AGRICULTURAL COMPANY (S.L.) LTD. DATED 24TH SEPTEMBER, 2012.



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Tuesday, 19th March, 2013.

The House met at 10:06 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown.

I. PRAYERS

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

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

The House was called to Order

S.O. 5(2) SUSPENDED

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THURSDAY, 14TH MARCH, 2013

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEPUTY SPEAKER

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 14th March, 2013. As usual, we go through page by page. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? Page 10? Page 11? Can somebody move that the record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 14th March, 2013 be adopted as presented?

HON. ROSALINE J. SMITH: Mr Speaker, I so move.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. MABINTY KADIJA SILLAH: I so second Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any counter motion?

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

Record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 14th March, 2013 was
unanimously adopted as presented

III. PAPERS LAID

(A) THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE

THE HIGH COURT (CRIMINAL SESSION) RULES 1965 (S.C. NO. 74 OF 1965)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENT NO. 1 OF 2013

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in my capacity as the Majority Leader and Leader of the House and Leader of Government business, I wish to lay on the Table the following papers on behalf of the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice.

(A) THE HIGH COURT (CRIMINAL SESSION) RULES 1965 (S.C. NO. 74 OF 1965)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENT NO. 1 OF 2013, HIGH COURT RULES

(B) THE MINISTER OF POLITICAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Mr Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Political and Public Affairs, I would also like in my name and in my capacity as Leader of Government Business lay on the Table of the House the following papers on his behalf:

- (i) NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY, ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2010; AND
- (ii) NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY, COMPOSITE ANNUAL REPORTS FOR THE YEAR 2011 AND 2012 (*APPLAUSE*).

IV. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENT WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON THURSDAY 14TH MARCH, 2013:

PROJECT PAPER ON A PROPOSED AFRICA CATALYTIC GROWTH FUND ADDITIONAL FINANCING IN THE AMOUNT OF US \$5,690,614 TO THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

FOR A REPRODUCTIVE AND CHILD HEALTH PROJECT – PHASE 2 DATED 9TH AUGUST, 2012

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Minister please proceed sir.

MR MOMODU KARGBO (Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am here this morning to pilot a Government Motion as it is on the Order Paper, item 4 (a). I move that this Honourable House ratify the following agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 14th March, 2013:

"PROJECT PAPER ON A PROPOSED AFRICA CATALYTIC GROWTH FUND ADDITIONAL FINANCING IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$5,690,614 TO THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE FOR A REPRODUCTIVE AND CHILD HEALTH PROJECT, PHASE 2, DATED 9TH AUGUST, 2012."

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during the debates on the budget, somebody pointed out that the performance of the health sector was not good. But Mr Speaker new information has begun to filter in. I have been reading such information in the internet about the United Nations Human Development Index. The indication which I have read is that Sierra Leone has moved 10th places up out of 178 nations that are rated; we are now ten points above those countries. Mr Speaker, project like this shows the progress we are making in the health sector. The motion that I have read is for additional funds to finance the Reproductive Health in the Ministry of Health. This project started way back in 2007. When it was conceived originally, the phase 1 had this bad record about child health and infant mortality rate in the country. It was a very bad record Mr Speaker. Phase 1 of this project focused basically on reducing longer term maternal and under-five mortality. Therefore, a lot of investment has been done in terms of building hospitals, health centres and repairing them in Kambia and Kenema. We have pictures to show all of these Mr Speaker. The that success of that programme

rolled over to Phase 2. Phase 2 was more expansive than Phase 1. It was conceptualised as 20 million United States Dollars project in 2010 and 2011.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the course of preparing these documents and the various approvals and exchanges of communication between the Government of Sierra Leone and the World Bank, the Government of Sierra Leone put a proposal that we wanted to put more emphasis on malaria. It was like saying, please, can you do something quick? It is very important to us. We have to address this malaria problem. We want to reach the poor people in the rural areas. We want to provide bed-nets in every corner of this country. Initially, there was no immediate source of funds available. Therefore, this reproductive child health care that was going on was readjusted. That is the history Mr Speaker. Approximately, 5 to 6 million United State Dollars was removed from that project and diverted to buying bed-nets and to improve the malaria control programme. In other words, more investment was done in all aspect of malaria control programmes.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, additional money is now available for this project. This means that we can go back to what was originally conceived as the total maternal health programme for the country. In effect, what has happened is that we now have more money for this programme. Therefore, instead of a project of 20 million dollars, we now have 26 million dollars. Mr Speaker, this 5.6 million dollars has two components. Let us look at Page 5 of the document I have just laid on the Table of the House, you would see the layout. You will see the original grants of 6.3 million United States dollars; which was topped-up to the 5.2 million United States dollars, plus small additions that is now being replaced so that we can implement the full component of this project. This amount of money is a grant that will fit into the existing project. Additional money is just been made to the existing project. This is not money that we have to pay back at all. Only that we have to be judicious in the utilisation of those funds. We cannot say because it is a grant and we don't have to pay back we become reckless in the way we spend this money.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement comprises of two components: the first component comprises \$3, 614,000. This money would go to capacity building, monitoring and evaluation at all level of the health system. I cannot emphasize that point much to this House. This House is concerned with oversight activities. At our level, we are talking about monitoring and evaluation; and at your own level, you talk about oversight. But all these nomenclatures meant the same thing. Looking at what is going on Mr Speaker, we should make sure that we get gains as a nation. We have to make sure that things are done in the way they are supposed to be done.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the second item is that we want to introduce the hospital information system. A clear way to explain this maybe for some of us who have overseas connection, when you are sick and you have gone abroad, somebody might want to get more information about your health. There must be proper information about you. Questions like what hospital have you been attending? Who is your doctor? They should be able to plug into the system and generate information about you. This is the kind of thing that is been thought of developing this nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we want to get involved in the project demographic and health survey. How is the population changing? We are investing into health. A lot of money is going into health. So, what is our health condition? I mentioned this during the Budget Speech. We wanted to know the state of our health. These are now rated issues. This is why we have been ranked among other countries. I believe 170 out of 180 nations is a good progress. We also want to invest a little on the facilities of the Ministry. This very is difficult. But one thing that keeps ministries moving is the operation and maintenance cost. Key components are vehicle maintenance. They have to move from one point to the other. Some of them are specialised vehicles like ambulances. These ambulances are responsible to take patients from point A to point B. Mr Speaker, \$ 3 million out of \$5.9 will go to that area.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the \$2.690 million (as we invest in the health sector) will go to the training of our health workers. It is expensive these days to train doctors

abroad. But this \$2.6 million will go towards supporting Njala University College as well. It will go towards the University of Sierra Leone like Fourah Bay College and others. Monies are going to be spent on pre and post graduate trainings. We have nurses and doctors; but that is not where it ends at all. We have to continue to train our medics. New equipment processes and systems have to continue. We have to train these nurses and doctors as a way of improving the health sector. We would be paying for professors from abroad to come and stay in our country for 6-12 months. We might be conducting specialised courses of which the technical skills are not readily available here. That is one area where the money will be going.

Mr Speaker Honourable Members, the second part where the money will be spent is in buying teaching materials and laboratory equipment. These are things we cannot continue to emphasize. If we want to move this nation, these are issues that are necessary. Part of the money will be used in upgrading some of the facilities at Njala and Fourah Bay College or the University of Sierra Leone. In other words, the medical school will have some elements of improvements. That is where part of this money will go.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we decide to bring in Professors from abroad, we also need to take care of them whilst they are here. We will be providing vehicles and accommodation, for them. We have to make them comfortable to stay here and teach their respective courses.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is the core activity of the proposed amount. It is a grant of \$5.6 million. In terms of institutional arrangement to implement the project, the Ministry of Finance has an Institutional Project and Administration Unit. It has long been involved in Phase 2 of the implementation as well as the Ministry of Health will oversee all of the implementations. There will be a Technical Coordinating Committee of the reproductive child health, chaired by the Chief Medical Officer. They would continue to oversee this project on a daily basis.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I submit that this is a very important investment in this country. If I say it is coming to us free, I don't say it with any glee at all. I say it with a lot of sense of responsibility that even though it is a grant, we have to use it properly to make sure we benefit from it. With that Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 14th March, 2013: "*Project paper on a proposed Africa Catalytic Growth Fund additional financing in the amount of us\$5,690,614 to the Republic of Sierra Leone for a Reproductive and Child Health Project – phase 2, dated 9th August, 2012.*"

(Question Proposed)

HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe Committee on Health in the last parliament would surely blow a sigh of relief because we closely monitored the implementation of this grant during the last Parliament. We sat together and wrote a report and made recommendations to the Ministry and those responsible to implement the project. I believe most of the recommendations have been reiterated this morning. We want to say plenty thanks to the Ministry of Health. We want to assure this Honourable House that we would closely continue to monitor this project for the intended purpose. The advice we want to send out very clearly as the Minister did say is that, we want to see this money, the \$ 5.6 million dollars being used judiciously for the intended purpose. We have heard a lot. We have also seen a lot on television about previous projects at the Ministry of Health. But we believe this will continue to be closely monitored Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on the area of capacity building, we want to strongly recommend or make an appeal that the nurses and CHOs in the rural areas be considered strongly when Professors flown into the country so that at the end of the day they would be trained and deployed in the interiors. In the past, nurses and doctors in the city are trained. When these trainers or facilitators get back they all stay in the

capital and forget about the rural areas. We want the rural areas to be capacitated so that the work of the health sector is improved.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to talk about the information sector. If you go to Appendix 2, Page 12, you will notice that the target was not met as far as the information system was concerned and we wrote a recommendation on that. We want that area to be strongly considered. Thank God that we are hearing good news about it. Therefore, we would continue to monitor it and see how best we are involved in the process. This is to ensure that the Committee on Health and Sanitation works with the Ministry so that the targeted goals are achieved.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with these few words, I want to call on each and every Member of Parliament to see how best this grant is ratified for the best interest of our children and lactating mothers. God bless us all.

HON. ISATA KABIA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there was a time when Sierra Leone was at the top of the entire wrong list where we made and scored the highest maternal mortality and infant mortality rate. Sierra Leone has been rated as the least developed country in the world. If today we have been praised for being the fastest mover on the Human Development Index (HDI), I believe it is due to the Free Health Care Programme. The Free Health Care has touched us all as a country. It is not for any particular region, tribe, or for any particular member of a political party. It is for every Sierra Leonean. So, we must all be vigilant and assume the post of monitors to ensure that the Free Health Care initiative succeeds. Within the last two debates on the Presidential and the Budget Speeches, we have had comments and complaints from Honourable Members that the Free Health Care hasn't reached certain areas. This is not due to lack of political will at all. It was due to our own human weaknesses. We must make sure that we are part of ensuring Government successes so that Sierra Leone will win.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Honourable Minister for laying this particular paper for further funding for the Free Health Care initiative, especially in the area of the Reproductive Health Care and Human Capacity Building. These two areas, if addressed will move us faster as a country than before. We now have approximately 250% of under-fives accessing the Free Health Care. Our maternal mortality rate has been reduced and will continue to fall. We want to ensure that the birth control for our nation is addressed in the next step of the health care initiative. I want us to use these funds judiciously and...-(*Interruption*).

THE SPEAKER: Sorry Honourable Member. Honourable Deputy Minority Leader please let us listen.

HON. ISATA KABIA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all of us should be part and parcel of making sure that we use these funds judiciously so that there won't be any more complaints that Moyamba, Bo, Kono and Kenema did not benefit from the Free Health Care funds. Sierra Leone's Human Development Index (HDI) value for 2012 was 359. We are now in the 177 position out of 187. We will no longer be at the bottom and the last of humanity. I think that is an achievement that we all should be proud of. If this is to continue, the positive trend of our nation depends on this Honourable House as part of the oversight of Government to make sure that we do our job to the best of our ability so that every constituency and all the people that we represent benefit from these funds. Mr Speaker, I want to plead to all Honourable Members to ratify this Agreement today. Thank you (Applause).

HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, since the resumption of this Parliament, this is one of the sweetest Government's Motions to be laid on the Table of this Honourable House for our consideration. Others were also good. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to inform this Honourable House that we are in a hurry to develop this country. We are a nation that is in a hurry Mr Speaker. If it were not for political reasons, I don't see why we should be wasting time in debating this document. I would have thought in my own view that the efforts which

have been put into this document by the Oversight Committee on Health during the last Parliament in ensuring that their oversight activities were carried out to the fullest as well as the efforts of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development in putting together ideas contained in this document should not have gone through the rigors as we are now going through. One would have thought that the process would have been as we normally do in slicing butter. It could have been as easy as approving our national budget. This is because we are in a hurry and we need this money to develop this nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in my opinion, my colleagues who had contributed to this debate earlier had said it all. I would crave the indulgence of this Honourable House to put our minds together in ratifying this document. Mr Speaker, I thank you very much.

HON. ANSU KAIKAI (Deputy Minority Leader of the House): I thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, no Sierra Leonean would oppose that which is correct and right for our country. In 2005, the last Government that was in power decided that we should implement the contents of the MDG goals. Those MDGs are in the best interest of our country. I believe one of such items in the MDGs was the health sector. We agreed to that Mr Speaker. Those of us that were here ratified the Agreement. Therefore, we should not have any objection to this Agreement at all. This process is a continuous process. Like my colleague Honourable Member from Kono said this Country is in a hurry to move ahead. Even our colleagues from the Gambia who are visiting us today are also doing their own. I do listen and watch their television station. I would only appeal to the Finance Ministry to make sure that no spillage takes place. I hope that no amount of borrowing and carrying forward take place. These are funds that are necessarily not ours. The organisation sympathised with us because we are poor. We are in a hurry to develop this country. We are therefore pleading to other organisations to give us these grants and loans in order to march with some of the First World Countries. We must make sure that the Finance Minister spends on the projects

that these moneys are meant for. It doesn't necessarily mean because these funds are in the Consolidated Fund the people of this country should not benefit from such funds. The Consolidated Fund is a big pot that contains everything that we should be juggling. I am pleading with you and your colleagues in the Finance Ministry, including the technocrats in that Ministry who never take blame for anything. We the politicians do take the blame and therefore we must make sure that those mosquito nets, especially on the mosquito programmes are paid for. They should make sure that those lactating mothers are looked after; and make sure that the children that are qualified for this programme benefit adequately. They should make sure there is enough malaria fighting drugs available in the hospitals all over the country, including clinics and PHUs rather than having to ask those poor people in the villages who go around with nothing to live and get their own share of the allocation that this House is about to ratify.

With that Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, (my colleagues, especially the Majority Leader who would be speaking after I have spoken), I am appealing to you all to quickly and expeditiously ratify this Agreement for the best interest of the people of this country. I say thank you Mr Speaker and thank you my Honourable colleague Members of Parliament.

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA (Majority Leader of the House): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would want to associate myself with everything that has been said by the Acting Minority Leader. And in doing so, I want to agree with what the Honourable Komba Koedoyoma has said also that any country that is bent on development, or any country that has a passion for development is always in a hurry. Indeed we are in a hurry and as a veritable indication of the fact that we are in a hurry, I ask that we ratify this Agreement for the development of this country. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister?

MR MOMODU KARGBO: Yes Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may like to comment on the various concerns raised by Honourable Members.

MR MOMODU KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just want to draw your attention to something. The funds are not really going to the Consolidated Revenue Fund. These funds are going into a special account known as National Health Account. And it is from that fund that the project is implemented and supervised by consultants and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and officials from the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. That is the clarification I wanted to make. Thank you very much Sir. On that note Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I once again move that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 14th March, 2013:

"PROJECT PAPER ON A PROPOSED AFRICA CATALYTIC GROWTH FUND ADDITIONAL FINANCING IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$5,690,614 TO THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE FOR A REPRODUCTIVE AND CHILD HEALTH PROJECT, PHASE 2, DATED 9TH AUGUST, 2012."

Thank you Sir.

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

MOTION WAS RATIFIED

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very sorry that we cannot proceed with the other Agreement today because of certain technical difficulties.

THE SPEAKER: Permission granted Honourable Member.

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister you may leave Sir.

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have in our midst colleagues from the Gambia. They are Members of the Gambian National Assembly; or the Parliament of the Republic of Gambia. Mr Speaker, with you leave, I with the concurrence of Members of this Parliament I would like to announce their names. Their names are:

1. The Honourable Abdulai Jaula;
2. The Honourable Habibulie jawo;
3. The Honourable Muhamed Magasy;
4. The Honourable Saidu Sabally;
5. The Honourable Kassum Jallow;
6. Mr Daniel Cardos, the Deputy Clerk; and
7. Mr Modu Sillah, Reporter.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, other officials that are part of the Foreign Agency are:

Mr Chernu Maju Jallow, Chairman; and

Mr Alieu Bah.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to make special mention of the Hon. Abdulai K. Jaula. The Honourable Abdulai K. Jaula is a colleague of mine at the Pan African Parliament. And as a matter of fact Mr Speaker, Mr Jaula is one of the founding fathers of the Pan African Parliament. When Sierra Leone decided to take her seat on that body, Mr Jaula was one of those that showed us the way. We are very grateful to him and this Parliament is very much happy that he is here. I am particularly excited to make this introduction of you, Mr Abdulai Jaula. You are a personal friend of mine, not

because you are a Member of the Pan African Parliament (PAP). Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

ADJOURNMENTS

(The House rose at 11.05 a.m. and was adjourned until Thursday, 21st May, 2013, at 10.00 a.m.).