



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**FIFTH SESSION - FIRST MEETING**

**THURSDAY, 20<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2017**

*SESSION – 2016/2017*



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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, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2017.

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THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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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, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2017.**

**I. PRAYERS**

*[The Table Clerk, Mrs Fatmata Bintu Weston, Read the Prayers].*

*[The House met at 10:40 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown].*

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

The House was called to Order

**II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON THURSDAY, 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2017**

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2017. As usual, we go page by page. Page 1? Page 2?

**HON. DR BUBUAKEI JABBI:** Mr Speaker, on Page 2, under absent without excuse. My name is mentioned under that heading when in actual fact I did send messages that of my traveling upcountry and I will not be present. So, I would have expected my name to be placed under 'Absent with Excuse.'

**THE SPEAKER:** So, Honourable Member, if you did send any message, what you should have done in the first place was to verify whether the message was received. Did you ascertain whether the message was received?

**HON. DR BUBUAKEI JABBI:** Well, if you say I would have to ascertain at this stage, I thought there would be dispute about it.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, this is the dispute now. Was the message delivered by your very self or sent through somebody?

**HON. DR BUBUAKEI JABBI:** Well, it was a text message to those concerned.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, I would not advise that when you want to send such messages, you do it by text messages. That is none official Honourable Dr Bubuakei Jabbi.

**HON DR BUBUAKEI JABBI:** Sometimes at the time of finding it necessary to do so, you may not have the opportunity to do the other processes.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, Honourable Member; if you consider it very important and serious, you should have sent a message in a very official way. Messages by telephone are rather informal and informality in this case is indicative of un-seriousness.

**HON. DR BUBUAKI JABBI:** I was very serious about doing it.

**THE SPEAKER:** Did you follow it up?

**HON. DR BUBUAKEI JABBI:** No, Mr Speaker, because I had to travel upcountry.

**THE SPEAKER:** So, the seriousness was not sustained.

**HON. DR BUBUAKEI JABBI:** Sorry about that, Mr Speaker *[Laughter]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Fatmata Bintu Weston, please mark him as 'absent with excuse.'

**HON. DR BUBUAKEI JABBI:** Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? And Page 6? There being no other correction or amendment, would somebody move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2017 as amended?

**HON. NICHOLAS KAMARA:** I so move, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

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

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agree to]*

*[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2017 has been adopted as amended]*

### **III. PAPER LAID**

#### **THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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

Table of this Honourable House the following document:

Loan Agreement Tokeh-Lumley Road Improvement Project between the Republic of Sierra Leone and Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development Dated 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2017.

#### **IV. BILL**

#### **FINANCE ACT, 2017**

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister, have you come prepared for this Bill?

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** Yes, Mr Speaker.

**HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, sometime ago, this Finance Bill was on the Order Paper in this Parliament and when it was announced, the Deputy Minister asked that we suspend the debate on this Bill because the substantive Minister himself wanted to be here. We deferred the debate on this Bill because of that reason.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Finance Bill is very important because it helps the Government to identify various sources of revenue in the way of taxes for this Financial Year, 2017. Mr Speaker, because it is so important, we had expected a pre-legislative briefing on this Bill. We want the Ministry of Finance to come and explain to us the import for levying new taxes or for removing or adding other taxes, so that all of us will be convinced and agreed on the reasons. This has not been done and based on the Deputy Minister's last plea that the substantive Minister himself would like to be here, but he is not here today, we would insist that the substantive Minister come before we start the debate on this Bill. I want to move that we defer the debate on this Bill until the Minister is here.

Also, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Bill has to be first of all discussed at a pre-legislative hearing *[Applause]*. These are my two motions I want to put on the Floor.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

**HON. ALPHA B. LEWALLY:** Mr Speaker, I second that motion.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*The debate on the Finance Bill has been deferred until the substantive Minister is present]*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, for the purposes of Parliamentary correctness, the Honourable Dr Bernadette Lahai has moved the motion, but perhaps the motion was not even necessary because those of us who were here between 2002–2007, we had it as a Convention that before any Bill is debated, we must have a pre-legislative briefing on it. But because of the importance of that motion, it was even included in our Standing Orders when the Standing Orders were reviewed. If you check the Standing Orders, it is included that we must have a pre-legislative briefing on any Bill. Parliament is supreme and this can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. For instance, the Minister seated here is a Minister in the Ministry of Finance as a Deputy Minister. Therefore, he is competent and eligible to pilot any Bill here in the name of the Ministry. However, Parliament is saying that they want the substantive Minister and that is the supremacy of Parliament. And once it has been accepted by a motion, that is how it is going to be. So, Mr Minister, not that Parliament thinks that you are not fit, but there is a reason for that, perhaps there are reasons.

**HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE:** Besides, Mr Speaker, he suggested it.

**THE SPEAKER:** He suggested it?

**HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE:** During the last sittings, he made that suggestion.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister, did you make that suggestion?

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** Can I explain?

**THE SPEAKER:** did you? Yes or No?

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** No, let me respond.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister, here is a simple question for you.

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** Not exactly sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** The Speaker is talking and you are talking. What is the matter with you, Mr Minister? *[Laughter]*.

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** Sorry, Mr Speaker.



**THE SPEAKER:** Stand up. Answer the question now. Did you at any time suggest that the substantive Minister should pilot this particular Bill?

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** Not exactly, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Then, what happened?

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** The primary reason why I asked this Honourable House to postpone the debate on this Bill was because we had to make some significant changes. That was the primary reason why I asked this House to postpone the debate. And before I came in, I had discussed with some Members of Parliament and I also discussed with my Minister and he told me that he would love to be here. It was not like a condition. I am here to represent him and I am as competent as my boss. I believe we can proceed and debate this Bill. I want you to know that this is a very critical Bill.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister, someone wants to come up with something and that is the procedure here. The moment somebody gets up to speak, you resume your seat.

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister is wasting the time of this House. You nearly pose a very simple question to him, but he is giving us an explanation that has no relevance to the question. The issue of even making appeal for this debate to continue is out of order because we have already taken a vote on that issue. Majority of us have agreed with the proposals of the motion. So, there is no reason for him to give us lengthy explanation which has no relevance.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much Honourable Member. Mr Minister, You have heard it all. I have just been considerate or magnanimous in allowing you to say what you wanted to say. However, anything you are going to say at this point would not only be irrelevant, but totally immaterial.

Honourable Members, the Minister said something which I want to respond to. He was trying to tell this House that this Bill is so important that he should go ahead with it. I wonder you people in the Ministry do realise the importance of this Bill. There is certainly no evidence of that. However, I would pity the Minister because relatively he is

new in the Ministry. Perhaps that is the reason they want the substantive Minister to be here; and above all, we cannot do anything on this Bill without a pre-legislative briefing. Therefore, if you had realised the importance of this Bill and the urgency of it as well, perhaps you should arrange for us to have a pre-legislative briefing long before now. If you have told this House that this Bill 'is important,' but you have not showed anything that it is important, I am beginning to imagine otherwise. There has been a motion and it has been carried. You go back and report to your boss that nothing can be done with this Bill unless the debate is preceded by a pre-legislative briefing. Did you get that, Mr Minister?

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** Yes, Mr Speaker!

**THE SPEAKER:** Go now and report accordingly.

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE:** He has said that this Bill is important and I want him to note that government will continue to lose a lot of revenue the longer this Bill is delayed. So, it is good for you to come as soon as possible. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister, I hope you heard the Honourable Member.

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** Yes, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Did you appreciate the point?

**MR MOMOH VANDI:** I have noted the point, Mr Speaker.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on S.O 23 to draw the attention of this House to a development that is becoming worrisome in the west end of Freetown. Yesterday, there was a gruesome road accident by the Lumley Police Station Roundabout and this is not the first time it is happening. There was another time in not too distant past when two major accidents occurred in that same area. I think there is a law prohibiting big trucks from plying from Spur Road to Lumley. This accident happened right in front of the Police Station. Sierra Leoneans are who losing their lives out of recklessness. I would want to request this

House to call either the Police Complaint Board or the Police themselves to explain why we are having these disastrous accidents. I have been a victim of police recklessness in that area. My vehicle was plying the main Goderich Road at one time when a vehicle came from the Honourable Kallon's area and just flipped my vehicle. The police officer who went there kept telling me that the man who owned that vehicle went to Guinea and has never returned. So, I want them to explain why we keep having these ugly occurrences in front of their Police Station and they are doing nothing about it. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Patrick L. M. Kargbo, are you in charge of the Police?

**HON. PATRICK L. M. KARGBO:** No, Mr Speaker. The Honourable PC Bai Kurr Kanagbaro Sanka III is in charge.

**THE SPEAKER:** Who is the Deputy Chairman to that Committee? Honourable Hassan A. Sesay, please report that to the Committee in charge. I agree with you that it is serious and the Committee should summon the relevant officials.

**HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just want to make an addendum to what the Honourable Hassam A. Sesay has just mentioned. Mr Speaker, I would also want the Sierra Leone Road Safety Authority to come along with the Sierra Leone Police when they are summoned before this House because there should be signposts that prohibit trucks from plying along that road. In the absence of signposts and other road safety measures, I ask that they also appear before this House with the Sierra Leone Police. I thank you.

**HON. DAUDA KALLON:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to bring to the attention of this Honourable House that the national voter registration exercise that is ongoing is currently facing some difficulties. For the past three days, we have been receiving calls from NEC officials within our constituencies that some of the staff who are supposed to carry out the registration exercise have downed their tools and as a result people who have been queuing to register are now complacent to register. I want

to bring it to the attention of this Honourable House and the authorities concerned, so that attention would be given to this situation. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** That is a very important concern and it has to be looked into

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, I am adjourning the sitting to Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2017 at 10:00a.m., but I would like Members of Parliament to hold themselves in readiness for a possible pre-legislative briefing on the Finance Bill to take place on Monday. That means I am kindly asking all Members of Parliament to be around. The Minister has said that the Bill is important and if the Ministry do realise the importance of this Bill, then they should make everything possible for us to have a pre-legislative briefing on this Bill on Monday. Who is the Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Finance?

**HON. ALHAJI SERAY DUMBUYA:** I am the Deputy Chairman Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Alhaji Serray Dumbuya, make sure they have the parent Act because it is a law that when you are amending a Bill, you must have the parent Act.

### ***ADJOURNMENT***

*[The House rose at 11:16 a.m. and was adjourned to Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2017 at 10:00a.m.]*