



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**(HANSARD)**

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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**FOURTH SESSION - THIRD MEETING**

**THURSDAY, 20<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2016**

*SESSION – 2015/2016*



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMETARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House  
Held on Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2016.

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THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENTS WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE THURSDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2016:

[i] THE PARIS AGREEMENT

[ii] THE MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY

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

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

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**Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2016.**

**I. PRAYERS**

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

*[The House met at 10:08 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]*

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

*The House was called to Order*

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

**II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON THURSDAY, 13<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2016.**

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, we go through the Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2016. As usual, we go through page by page. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? And Page 7? There being no amendment or correction, could someone move for the adoption of the Record of Votes and Proceedings for parliamentary sitting held on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2016 as presented?

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

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

**HON. FRANK KPOSOWA:** Mr Speaker I so second.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[The record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2016 has been adopted as presented]*

**III. PAPERS LAID**

**HON. KOMBA E. KOEDYOYOMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in my capacity as the Deputy Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, I beg to lay on the Table of this Honourable House the following reports from the Public Accounts Committee:

[i] Report of the Public Accounts Committee on Seven Performance Audit Reports of the Auditor General for the period 2011 to 2014; and

[ii] Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of Local Councils for the financial year 2013.

**IV. GOVERNMENT MOTTION:**

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENTS WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON THURSDAY, 6<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2016:

[I] THE PARIS AGREEMENT

[II] THE MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY

[III] THE ROTTERDAM CONVENTION ON THE PRIOR INFORMED CONSENT PROCEDURE FOR CERTAIN HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL AND PESTICIDES IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE

[IV] THE BASEL CONVENTION ON THE CONTROL OF TRANSBOUNDARY MOVEMENTS OF HAZARDOUS WASTES AND THEIR DISPOSAL

[V] THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL ON ACCESS TO GENETIC RESOURCES AND THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE SHARING OF BENEFITS ARISING FROM THEIR UTILIZATION TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

[VI] THE ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION

**DR SAMURA M. W. KAMARA** [*Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2016 my Ministry laid before this Honourable House, five United Nations Conventions on the Environment and the Charter of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation [OIC] an effort to meet some of our international treaty obligations under the charters of the United Nations and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. The six agreements before the House for consideration are:

[i] the Paris Agreement on Climate Change;

[ii] the Minamata Convention;

[iii] the Rotterdam Convention;

[iv] the Basel Convention;

[v] the Nagoya Protocol; and

[vi] the OIC Charter.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will now endeavour to provide a brief description of the purpose of each of the international instruments being proposed for ratification:

### **[i] The Paris Agreement on Climate Change**

The Paris Agreement is within the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change [UNFCCC] dealing with greenhouse gases emissions, mitigation, adaptation and finance, beginning in the year 2020. The Paris Agreement is the outcome of negotiations adopted by 192 countries during the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2015, in Paris, France. It was subsequently opened for signature by the Secretary General of the United Nations on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2016 [Earth day] at the UN Headquarters, a record number of 175 countries signed during the ceremony. The Signature Ceremony was another important step to further secure the world's collective commitments in tackling climate change, facilitates the early entry into force of the Paris Agreement, and provides for the smooth finalization of the operational details needed to give effect to its provisions. As a party to the Convention, Sierra Leone fully participated during the adoption of the Agreement in Paris and at the signature ceremony in New York. I am honoured to inform this noble House that His Excellency the President Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, signed the Paris Agreement on the margins of the 71<sup>st</sup> UN General Assembly on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2016.

The Agreement aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, including:

- a) holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impact of climate change;
- b) increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production; and
- c) making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances. As Honourable Members are aware, the 5<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ranks Sierra Leone as the third most vulnerable country, after Bangladesh and Guinea Bissau, to adverse effects of climate change. Also, very recently, the Climate Vulnerability Index 2015 ranks Sierra Leone as the second most vulnerable country.

Furthermore, Sierra Leone has low capacity to adapt to climate change. The rural population will be the most affected because of the high dependence on rain-fed agriculture and natural resource-based livelihoods. According to the science of climate change, these impacts are likely to continue to affect Sierra Leone in the future, despite the country being one of the least responsible countries for generating the problem, in terms of its contribution to global emissions of greenhouse gases, which is negligible.

These challenges have been associated with serious food security issues, health and environmental implications for our citizenry and the world at large, which therefore demands an immediate intervention by Governments and the international community.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our Agenda for Prosperity [AfP] commits Sierra Leone to mainstreaming inclusive green growth in our development process. Thus, by ratifying and domesticating the Paris Agreement, Sierra Leone will:

- a) create a new era for a harmonious relationship between the economy, the environment, social and long term sustainability;
- b) provide a pathway for partnership to shift to a green economy as well as for identification and implementation of various preventive, mitigation and adaptation measures;
- c) support the transition to low-emission development involving decoupling carbon emissions from economic growth through a series of measures across all economic sectors; and
- d) provide the required platform for our country to contribute to the international strive towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Paris Agreement and our accompanied National Action Plan, which has already been approved by Cabinet, will prepare the Government and people of Sierra Leone to limit our carbon footprint; minimize risks by improving adaptive capacity, reducing vulnerability to climate change impacts and increasing the resilience and sustainable wellbeing of all citizens; and to leverage new opportunities and facilitate collaboration in the country and regional and global communities.

It is worth noting that the Paris Agreement will enter into force only after 55 countries that produce at least 55% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions ratify, accept, approve or accede to the agreement. On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, the United States and China, who jointly represent almost 40% of global emissions, issued a joint statement, confirming that both countries will sign and ratify the Paris Climate Agreement. This development is critical to an early entry into force of the Agreement, and gives hope to countries that are most vulnerable to climate change. More than 15 countries, mostly Small Island Developing Countries [SIDs] have deposited their instruments of ratification at the time of signing.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as one of the most vulnerable countries to the effect of climate change, it is well advised that Sierra Leone takes necessary steps to ratify the Paris Agreement sooner rather than later. We must not allow ourselves to be left behind. Adherence to the implementation of the Paris Agreement will assist in enhancing Sierra Leone's resilience to Climate Change impacts, a safer environment, strong institutions, increased productive capacity across all sectors, thereby, leading to green economic growth and sustainable development.

It will also reduce the burden on the socially disadvantaged and other vulnerable groups such as women and children through the implementation of programmes that will seek to address water scarcity, food insecurity, maternal and child mortality. In partnership with other stakeholders, including the Green Climate Fund [GCF], Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and other international Climate Change funding windows, co-funding support will of course be required of the Government of Sierra Leone.

COP 22, which will largely reflect on current national implementation strategies, plans and actions, is scheduled to be held in Morocco in November 15, this year.

### **[ii] The Basel Convention**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Basel Convention on the Control of Trans-boundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal usually known as the Basel Convention is an international treaty designed to reduce the movements of hazardous waste between nations, and, specifically, to prevent transfer of hazardous waste from developed to less developed countries (LDCs). The Convention was adopted on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 1989, and entered into force on 5 May, 1992. It was created to address the increasing concerns over the management, disposal and trans-boundary movements of hazardous wastes. The Convention covers hazardous wastes that are explosive, flammable, poisonous, infectious, corrosive, toxic or eco-toxic with the potential of causing damage to human health and the environment. The underlying principles of the Basel Convention are that:

- a. trans-boundary movements of hazardous wastes should be reduced to a minimum consistent with environmentally sound management;
- b. hazardous wastes should be treated and disposed of as close as possible to their source of generation; and
- c. hazardous waste generation should be reduced and minimized at source; and to assist LDC's in environmentally sound management of the hazardous and other wastes they generate.

There are already 183 state parties to the convention and Sierra Leone happens to be among the very few UN member states (about 13) that are yet to ratify or acceded to the Convention.

### **[iii] Rotterdam Convention**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade is a multilateral agreement that is meant to promote shared responsibilities and cooperative efforts in relation to importation of hazardous chemicals. It was adopted in

Rotterdam on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1998 and entered into force on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2004. The dramatic growth in chemicals production and trade during the past three decades has raised both public and official concern about the potential risks posed by hazardous chemicals and pesticides. Countries lacking adequate infrastructure to monitor the import and use of these chemicals are considered to be particularly vulnerable.

The convention promotes open exchange of information and calls on exporters of hazardous chemicals to use proper labelling, include directions on safe handling, and inform purchasers of any known restrictions or bans. Parties can, however, decide whether to allow or ban the importation of chemicals listed in the treaty, and exporting countries, they are also obliged to make sure that producers within their jurisdiction comply with the regulations.

#### **[iv] Minamata Convention on Mercury:**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minamata Convention on Mercury is an international treaty designed to regulate the use of mercury through controlling anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds. The Convention was adopted on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2013 in the Japanese city of Minamata. It was named after this city because of the devastating incident of Mercury that the city and its people suffered which resulted in many deaths. It is anticipated that over the next few decades, the Convention will enhance the reduction of mercury pollution from the targeted activities responsible for the major release of mercury to the immediate environment. By ratifying the Convention, governments are able to protect the health of their citizens and the environment.

Sierra Leone participated in the negotiations that led to the adoption of the Convention in Minamata, Japan, and it was signed by our Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, on 12th August, 2014.

#### **[v] The Nagoya Protocol**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing is an international agreement which aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, as well as having appropriate

access to genetic resources and by transfer of the relevant technologies, taking into account all rights over those resources and their technologies, and by appropriate funding, thereby contributing to the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components. It was adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its tenth meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2010 in Nagoya, Japan and it entered into force on 12 October, 2014, ninety days after the date of deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification. The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources is one of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

#### **[vi] The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation [OIC]**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation [OIC] founded in 1969, was primarily established to strengthen solidarity among member countries as well as the development of cooperation in political, economic, social, cultural and scientific spheres among its members. The Organisation is the collective voice of the Muslim world and seeks to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world. The OIC is the second largest inter-governmental organisation after the United Nations and it has a membership of 57 states in various region of the world. The Organisation was established upon a decision of the historical summit which took place in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1969 in response to the arson attack on the Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem. In order to protect the vital interests of its membership, as well as the promotion of peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes involving Member States, the Organisation established a consultative and cooperative relationship with the UN and other inter-governmental organisations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sierra Leone's membership of the OIC dates back to 1972. Over the years Sierra Leone has received several Technical and Financial support from OIC countries within the framework of organizational cooperation among Member States. During the fight against the Ebola scourge, Sierra Leone received a substantial logistic and financial assistance from OIC Member Countries, including Saudi Arabia,

Turkey and Kuwait. This support was undoubtedly extended to Sierra Leone in the spirit of pursuing the objectives of the organization, whose core principles include the following:

- Enhance and consolidate the bonds of fraternity and solidarity among the Member States;
- Safeguard and protect the common interests and support the legitimate courses of the Member States and coordinate and unify the efforts of the Member States in view of the challenges faced by the Islamic world in particular, and the international community in general;
- Respect the right to self-determination and non-interference in the domestic affairs and respect for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of each Member State;
- Ensure active participation of the Member States in the global political, economic and social decision-making processes to secure their common interests;
- Strengthen economic and trade cooperation; in order to achieve economic integration leading to the establishment of a Common Market;
- Exert efforts to achieve sustainable and comprehensive human development and economic well-being in Member States;
- Encourage dialogue among different civilisations and religions; and
- Enhance and develop science, technology, research and cooperation among Member States in these fields;

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, ratification of the Charter of the Organisation of Islamic Conference will further enhance Sierra Leone's voice, representation and influence in the organisation as well increase its ability to access and benefit from the diverse technical, scientific, educational and cultural cooperation programmes of the organisation, as well enjoys its numerical support on key issues at the United Nations and other multilateral platforms.

## **STRATEGIC RELEVANCE**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me conclude this presentation by briefly reiterating the strategic relevance of these instruments laid before this Honourable House for ratification. The impact of environmental damage on the lives of people around the world especially in developing countries, is today a major security threat and global concern, and these have made it necessary for the UN General Assembly to negotiate and adopt a number of resolutions and international treaties on the environment, in a bid to prevent and control the numerous activities of man to save Planet Earth from total destruction. Protection of the environment to enhance economic growth and sustainable development has therefore become a major focus and topic of discussion in environmental diplomacy today.

Sierra Leone has only adhered to a few of the 120 and more UN Conventions and Protocols relating to the environment - the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; Kyoto Protocol; the Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer; Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the Ozone layer; Convention on Biological Diversity; Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Drought, particularly in Africa; Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species [CITES]; Ramsar Convention on Wetlands; and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as a State Party, Sierra Leone is required to meet its obligations under the provisions of all five instruments, while at the same time, accessing the support needed, including technical and financial, for the various national implementation agencies involved in the management, control and protection of our environment. These implementing, monitoring and enforcement agencies will effectively carry out their mandates guided by the international legal instruments of the different treaties under consideration while promoting our Government and national interests.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the major stakeholders on implementation currently include but not limited to the following agencies: the Environment Protection Agency; Sierra Leone Standards Bureau; the NRA, Law enforcement agencies, health sector

workers dealing with disposal of health wastes, chemical inspectors in the business of trade and industry, Universities, security apparatus, and other science and research institutions. Overall implementation certainly requires strong inter - and intra - MDA coordination and collaboration at all times as well as that between the country and the wider international community.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in summary, given these circumstances highlighted with regards to the potential benefits to Sierra Leone in the objectives of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, and coupled with the existential nature of environmental threats hovering around Sierra Leone, I wish to entreat Honourable Members to unanimously ratify the following conventions/Protocol/ Charter laid before this Honourable House. They are:

- [i] the Paris Agreement on Climate Change;
- [ii] the Minamata Convention;
- [iii] the Rotterdam Convention;
- [iv] the Basel Convention;
- [v] the Nagoya Protocol; and
- [vi] the OIC Charter.

*[Question Proposed]*

**HON. MABINTY FUNNA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the ratification of these conventions is very important and we hope that the implementation will be successful. I want to start by saying that Sierra Leone is a signatory to these conventions. We need to work within the parameters of these conventions and also disseminate the information to our people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in respect to the Paris Agreement, according to climate analytic.org as of 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2016, 191 countries signed the Agreements and 81 countries have ratified them. In West Africa, only 5 countries have ratified those Conventions. Ratification of the Paris Agreements in this country is timely and I strongly believe that it will send a strong signal and highlight the commitment of this government. Sierra Leone will play a crucial role at the forthcoming International

Conference on Climate Change, which is due to take place next month in Morocco. I am of the opinion that it will be an opportunity for us to demonstrate continued leadership within the African Climate Group and to encourage others to do the same.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have to ensure that arrangements are put in place before entering into the Paris Agreement, with reference to what has already been adopted in Paris last year. In this regard, I want to inform the Minister that there are significant aspects we need to take into consideration, such as developing and implementing climate change and health programmes for our public health personnel. These personnel should be able to identify and effectively manage climate change and other related issues. As a government, we must continue to solicit supports for the development of this country. As a government, we must be able to provide formidable supports to our farmers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, most of these conventions are environmentally related, and I believe that the ratification of these conventions is an important milestone in ensuring that Sierra Leoneans are protected. These conventions require ratification; so that government could adopt a mandatory national action plans. That is the more reason why it is very important for us as a government to implement policies and measures to eliminate harmful practices within our various communities.

Hopefully, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we successfully endorse the ratification of these conventions, it will now make it legally binding on us as parliamentarians to pursue the objectives of those conventions. With these few words, Mr Speaker, I want to ask this Honourable House to ratify these conventions without delay. I thank you, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

**HON. MOIWAI MOMOH:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the agreements before this Honourable House for ratification are very important as already stated by the Minister. We need to take this issue very seriously, Mr Speaker. The Paris Agreement is telling us how we can protect our environment or to a greater extent, how we reduce the damage in our environment. As a result of the

industrialisation process, we are experiencing a very high temperature and the heat is not escaping to anywhere. Mr Speaker, whenever the temperature rises, global warming is the end result and I want to state here that the Paris Agreement is all about global warming. When there is a lot of heat in the atmosphere and the heat is not escaping to anywhere, it would result in the rise in temperature. We are talking about greenhouse gas emission which also means 'warming.' This document we are about to ratify is talking about how we can protect our environment. It will also implies that all nations that are signatory to these Agreements have been given the responsibilities to domesticate these Agreements. That is the reason why they are talking about nationally determined measures we are going to use to protect our environment. How do we go about it is the major question. We are aware of the fact that we only have emerging factories in Sierra Leone. We do not have industries like European societies. They have bigger industries and so many people are not even aware of the effects of the technological advancement in the world. In this country, the only industries we have are the Cement Factory, Brewery, etc. For the brewery industry, for instance, most of the materials/ingredients are brought into the country. We only provide water and sugar to get the final product. However, what is happening at the global level is also affecting Sierra Leone. Let really come to our own level now and see how far we have gone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a very old document and it states that Sierra Leone has been benefiting from a huge sum of money in order to protect our environment. The document states 200 million dollars, which Sierra Leone has benefitted for a period of years, but how far have we tried to protect our environment.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister, I hope you are listening to the Honourable Member.

**HON. MOIWAI MOMOH:** We need to have a perimeter fence because the issue of deforestation is very serious in this country. I think this Agreement is in place because we have to ensure that our environment is properly protected. The early warning signs have been dumped quite some time now. We cannot construct a perimeter fence to protect the peninsular mountain. People are still encroaching and these are the good for

nothing people who are destroying our environment. The Sierra Leone society is really at a treat of death. These are organisms that really wanted to maintain patterned stability, continuity and even peaceful coexistence, but the environment itself is being threatened and whenever the environment is threatened, it affects the lives of the people. So we are afraid because there is a threat from global warming, environmental hazard, natural disaster, the Ebola disease and even economic disaster. We need to handle the issue of environmental protection at our own level in other to avoid lawlessness. There is an institution that is responsible on stop the people from encroaching to those areas, but that institution is not functional at all. As a result, Sierra Leone is suffering. We need to do something in other to stop the issue of global warming.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go through Article 2 of this document, you would see that the 2° Centigrade that has been and from which we have to reduce that number by 1.5 is not good for us. It is a problem for developing countries like Sierra Leone. I was even thinking about 1%. Mr Speaker, one of the greenhouse gases we are talking about here is carbon dioxide. We need it, but I want to state here that the European society is not going to drop technological advancement only to save the developing countries. They are going ahead to do whatever they want to do because of the post modernity period we are now talking about. In fact, we have even gone above modernity and that is why we are talking about post modernity period. In other words, we have gone above the mass consumption stage, so it is going to affect Sierra Leone. Therefore, it is really necessary for us to ratify the Agreement. However, ratifying this Agreement to enable us solicit supports from donors, the UN and other agencies is not only the point, but how we could properly utilise those funds as stated in this document. We have to ensure that the lives of Sierra Leoneans are properly protected.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to appeal to the government not to expend or disburse all the resources on roads construction. We are talking about saving the lives of Sierra Leoneans. We need to diversify our economy in other to target those areas. This is a very important document and we are not going to rely on donor

agencies. As a government, we need to play our own part for the development of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the Islamic document before us. It is an important document for the Muslims. When I realised that the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation is a fervent Muslim, I came to the conclusion that the document before us is important. We know how the Muslim countries have involved into a lot of hostilities, even within their own countries. They have targeted Western World as 'KUFARS' as they are commonly called. The question is what is responsible for the massive increase in Terrorism in the Islamic World?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the Minister was making his presentation, he made mention of the attack of against the 'Alpha Mosque' in Jerusalem that led to the forming of this Organisation. We realised that immediately after that attack, there was outbreak of Arab/Israeli War. And even those who are Members of this Organisation, who have signed the treaty, including Saudi Arabia, agreed that a member state should not interfere into the domestic affairs or internal affairs of another member country. However, we are still seeing what the 'Saudis' are doing in Yemen. So, there are lots of violations by the Arabs themselves in particular as far as this document is concerned. How are we going to benefit after signing this particular treaty as a member of this Organisation? Whether we will not be affected by actions of Saudis?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these are some of the issues we have to look into critically before we agree with this document. With these few words, I want to thank the Minister for bringing these documents to us.

**HON. KELFALA S. CONTEH:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will be looking at the 'Paris Agreement,' which I think is more important because it is an international threat. I will focus my intervention in elucidating some of important components in the Agreement, so that we would increase our level of understanding about global warming. I want to support its ratification. In doing so, Mr Speaker, I want to inform this House that the Paris Agreement is very good because it geared towards the realisation of the Agenda for Prosperity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during the last presidential addresses and budget hearings, we realised that the President committed himself to the Green Energy and even the Green Economy. Today, he is in here in relation to the Green Economy and Green Energy. What he has said is coming to reality *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Paris Agreement is not an isolated Agreement. The ratification of this Agreement is what I can describe as the due process because it emanates from the United Nations Convention on Climate Change; which is a framework convention on climate change. It is a component of the Paris Agreement. The Minister rightly said in April, 1995 that Sierra Leone signed the United Nations Framework on Climate Change. I am happy to state here that Sierra Leone has been realising numerous benefits from that commitment. For instance, Sierra Leone has gained more than two hundred million dollars since that document was signed *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am making mention of the framework convention simply because there are similarities. Mr Speaker, this is new to this House that there is a Convention on which this Paris Agreement was emanated. It is new and this is an opportunity for us to know about it. The difference is that the Paris Agreement is made up of the following:

- i. Green House adaption;
- ii. Green House Financing;
- iii. Technology Transfer; and
- iv. Capacity Building.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is an important Agreement we need to look at carefully. For example, before the floods devastated this country sometime ago, we had the information from the African Regional Pool five days prior to those floods. However, because we were incapacitated and lacked the necessary technology, the flood devastated Freetown severely. Therefore, ratifying the Paris Agreement at this point in time is a way of saying that we are ready to take care of flooding in this country. With the support we are going to get from this Agreement, we are going to increase our

technological transfer into this country. That is the significance of this Agreement and it does not stand alone *[Applause]*.

Nonetheless, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Honourable House has a responsibility towards this Paris Agreement. The responsibility was mentioned by the Minister at cabinet level. As Members of Parliament, our responsibility is to set out resolutions as indicated in Section 173[1c]. It says that Members of Parliament must set up resolutions to cushion or support the laws that we make in this country. For example, we can begin to talk about the atmosphere, protecting our water catchment areas and protecting the level of carbon emission right across the country. These are the resolutions drafted by EPA and they are resolutions to be endorsed. If we do this, Mr Speaker, this country will definitely move ahead towards realising the Agenda for Prosperity. With those few words, I want thank you very much *[Applause]*.

**HON. FRANK KPOSOWA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will start by counting myself blessed to be part of the process of making this History. Today, the world has taken the centre stage in environmental issues. I am saying this because of the damage mankind is doing to this planet. The Minister and the government have done well by bringing these protocols to this Parliament for ratification. This is test of patriotism for Members of Parliament. We are looking at a report that has given an alarming ranking of our country. The ranking started with number three and now two. Maybe by the time this debate ends, we will be thinking about number one. That is very alarming, Mr Speaker. A process like this should not even entertain an element of controversy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that I am not a Lawyer, but I am pretty sure that legislations arise out of social conditions. I say so with reference to the legal profession. What is expected of us is to facilitate the ratification of these protocols as soon as possible, so that we can engage ourselves in other activities geared towards educating our constituents on climate change.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I stated earlier, most of these protocols would not have been before us today if we had not undertaken activities that culminated in

creating these environmental concerns. The fraudsters are using Mercury and this is where some of us are getting worried. Therefore, I do not think we should waste time in ratifying these protocols. Climate change is an emergency situation that is facing this planet Earth.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one thing I like about these protocols is the section that talks about 'Prior Information Content [PIC]. This is crucial and at the same time critical. It is the salvation we are all looking forward to, as patriotic citizens of this country. The Nagoya Protocol has already started benefitting the people of this country. What we are doing here today is mere formality. People in the Eastern Region are now benefitting from preserving, undertaking and upholding the pledge they made to protect the Gola Forest. I am sure that this benefit will become a nationwide benefit if we stand by the Executive and ratify these protocols that have been brought to us by the Minister. With these few words, I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the issue about climate change has been very topical in the international stage for quite some time now. Bringing this convention to this House is a step in the right direction.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have seen how environmental hazards have caused devastative effects on our communities. Therefore, bringing these Agreements to this House suggests that this government is trying to be proactive in inhibiting further devastations to our environment. Today, Sierra Leone is going to be one of the five West African countries ratifying these protocols. This means that this government has the willingness and Members of Parliament are now showing the ability to ensure that these protocols are ratified.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague Honourable Member was saying that institutions that are meant to fight climate change in this country are not functional. I want to question that statement because we know that over the years, the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] has been very proactive in that regard. Officials of that Agency have been on the radios and televisions, trying to educate the people on the devastating impacts of climate change *[Applause]*. However, ratifying these

Agreements is one, but taking the information to the common man is very important, so that they understand what climate change is all about. I think that is one area where collaboration and coordination should come into play. There must be collaboration and coordination between Parliament and EPA, so that both could find possible ways of disseminating the necessary information to the grassroots. If we ratify these Agreements without positive response from the people, we will just be talking to ourselves. Instead of these Agreements are shelved in our offices, we have to ensure that they are fully implemented. We have to collaborate with the relevant agencies, so that the people will be properly informed about what is meant to take care of our environment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am of the opinion that tree planting is one of the best ways of fighting climate change in this country. We have to embark on tree planting along the streets of this country. Planting trees would help to reduce some of the environmental problems in this country. Those who are specialist in that area will educate us better on afforestation. However, we the lawmakers must ensure that when these Agreements are ratified, there must be a mechanism wherein we educate our people on the issue of climate change. This is because they are the ones we represent and must protect their interests. If this House ratifies these Agreements, we will be doing it on their behalf. So, we have to create a more cordial working relationship between parliamentarians and the relevant stakeholders or those institutions that are responsible. Presently, we now have the EPA, the National Protected Area Authority [NPAA] and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. The above mentioned institutions have been working on these documents for some time now and I want to ask my colleagues to speedily ratify these Agreements.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it will be unjust if we fail to ratify these Agreements. When these Agreements shall have been ratified, a more working relationship with EPA and other organisations will be achieved. We have to ensure that the information contained in the Paris Agreement is disseminated to the people. The people have to understand the extent to which this will affect their communities. We have seen what

happened at Kroo Bay. It might be difficult to associate what happened at Kroo Bay to the Paris Agreement; but if we are able to coordinate and disseminate credible information, then the people will understand what it means to be more proactive than to be reactive. This is because we have seen the devastating effects of climate change in this country. We have to prepare well in order to address the rampant flooding in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to briefly talk about the Islamic Organisation Committee [IOC]. That is not a new organisation to us because we have been dealing with them for quite a while now. Therefore, the fears expressed by my colleague from Kailahun District should not be addressed here. I am saying this because we are here to strengthen our relationship with the Islamic Development Bank. We have been doing business with them. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

**HON. ALFRED B. KATTA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity. The Agreements before us this morning are very important for the continued existence of this country. I am looking at the Paris Agreement that deals with climate change. Sierra Leone, as the Minister rightly said, is gradually going down the ladder. Somebody said that Sierra Leone was ranked number two or three. I think those rankings are good for a nation at all. If we want to talk about climate change in this country, we have to focus on the rural communities because those are the areas that are suffering massive deforestation in this country. The question is, are we ready to do it as a country? I believe we should encourage the government to organise an inter-ministerial cooperation; i.e., the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Energy, Water, Mining, etc. The mining activities in this country are also contributing to the issue of climate change. If you look at the Agreements before us, they are intertwined. They are related to global warming, deforestation, etc.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, land acquisition for agro-practices and mining are all risk factors to our situation. I want to advise that if there is going to be an inter-ministerial cooperation; these are issues we need to address. We have to ensure that the information is trickled down to the rural communities, or else we will not succeed.

How prepared are we as a country to face this challenge? How prepared are we in terms of ratifying these Agreements? The ratification of these Agreements has a long way to ensuring our welfare and development as a country. Looking at the environmental damage in this country, our rivers have declined rapidly. In fact, our valleys and lakes are disappearing. What are we going to do as people? I believe we should treat these Agreements with all seriousness.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I come from a constituency that has the 'Baoma Gold' mining company. Mr Speaker can attest that because he is aware of the 'Kangari Hills' that is under the purview of the Ministry of Forestry. If you go to that area, you would see the amount of homeless people, some are from Liberia, Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone. We have started experiencing the effects of mercury, especially at the 'Tala River.' It is draining into our rivers, causing a lot of hazards. The EPA has produced report on those issues. What have we done as a nation to address those issues? The systems are in place and we have also got some moneys to make sure that we implement certain programmes. We have to ensure that we rescue our lands in order to properly secure the future of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these Agreements are very good, but how much are we ready to implement and domesticate the provisions contained in these Agreements for the good of Sierra Leone. I believe if we come together and educate our people in the rural areas, I think the problems connected with climate change would be adequately addressed. Our people in the rural areas are cutting down trees to make charcoal. Well, we now have a new technology, the use of gas to cook our food. The question is how much are we ready to subsidise, so that these gas could be used by our people. If we want them to stop cutting down trees, we have to do something for those people. If alternative measures are not put in place, it will be like beating a dead horse. With these few words, I want to respectfully ask that we ratify these Agreements. I thank you very much.

**HON. MUSTAPHA M. BRIMA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Minister for providing an exhaustive explanation on these

Agreements we have with us this morning. What I have seen, without looking at isolated cases or conventions on the Order Paper, I want to look at four of these conventions as they are inextricably intertwined and they are very comprehensible by courtesy of what the Minister has told us and the outside research that has been done. The Paris Agreements, the Minamata Convention, the Rotterdam and Basel Conventions are intertwined. They border on the aspirations of this country to also join the committee of nations in trying to achieve or attain the sustainable development. Therefore, I am not here to go into the details of the Paris Agreement because I have not seen any controversy in these Agreements.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these Agreements have to be ratified as fast as possible. There are institutions established in this country for these four Conventions. One of the institutions we have with regards to these Agreements is the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA]. As Members of Parliament, we have to ensure that the institutions we create in this country are effective and efficient. We also have to make sure that those institutions carry out their statutory responsibilities to the latter. Therefore, what I want to proffer here, especially on these four conventions, is for the EPA to quickly prepare an action plan and present it to this House. The action plan should spell out ways and means of resolving the problems posed by climate change.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the whole aspect of environmental management is talking about finances. However, I also want to state here that it hinges on the efficient and effective use of information, education and communication. At a higher level, it also hinges on what is known as Behavioural Change Communication [BBC]. In this respect, EPA should bring an action plan to this House, so that we will be in a better position to follow the domestication and implementation of these Agreements. These are no longer child's play because global warming is on the increase. The transportation of hazardous waste and pesticides are things we should take very seriously in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a couple of years ago, I was discussing with a friend on why Ivory Coast was hit by the deposition of hazardous wastes. According to my friend, the deposition of hazardous wastes in Ivory Coast disturbed the entire country

because due to the lack of information and rampant corruption amongst government officials. I want the Minister to note that we need to work very hard in terms of educating the people. If the information is effectively disseminated, our people will be well-informed about climate change. The most important thing I want to mention here is the issue of corruption. People wanted to make money out of the deposition of hazardous wastes in Ivory Coast. A lot of people wanted to make money were there to ensure the deposition of hazardous wastes in that country. This happened in Ivory Coast a couple of years ago. Sierra Leone, may the Lord forbid, cannot be an exception. Therefore, we have to be very cautious about those people who would want to deposit some of these things in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have been fortunate because of the resilient nature of the people of Sierra Leone and the listening ability of some of our leaders; otherwise we would have been exposed to the Lebanon wastes situation. I thank God we have people who can listen. I want to encourage the Minister to critically look at those issues, especially the one that has to do with corruption. With those few words, I want colleague Honourable Members to know that these Agreements are non-controversial. I thank you very much.

**HON. ALBERT DEEN KAMARA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the ratification of these Agreements is very important for the progress of this country. I would want to limit myself to the Paris Agreement, which is very important for the progress of this country. Climate change is not a new phenomenon because it has been in existence for over millions of years *[Applause]*. In 1987, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC] came together and informed member states that what was happening now, if care was not taken, the Earth' would extinguish. I want to inform this House that the Earth we are living presently has what is known as planetary boundary materials such as oxygen, water, biodiversity, the ecosystem, to name but few. As I speak, we've exhausted over 80% of those materials. This means that we need to take precautionary measures.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister spoke about the greenhouse gases. There are eight of them and the carbon dioxide takes the lead with approximately 56%. We also have other gases like the Mitigas, Carbon, Floro-carbon, etc. What is the essence of getting rid of these greenhouse gases? The greenhouse gases have negative effects on the air, i.e., 'global warming.' Global warming is indeed a global problem due to these greenhouse gases.

Another area I want to talk about is the Ozone Layer. We usually get rays from the sun which we call the ultraviolet rays. It is very hazardous and its remits over thousands of Kilo-juice. If the gas from the sun gets directly to us, we will melt, but the Ozone Layer tries to prevent us from the direct rays of the sun. In fact, other area that is usually affected is water. I want to inform this Honourable House that when GUMA was constructed in the 60s, the capacity was for 23m cube. Today, the population of this city is over one million people. Had it not been the changes in the climate, the people of Freetown could have been using the water for 7 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  months without experiencing shortage. Climate Change has caused a lot of problems for us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the same climate change is presently affecting the agricultural sector. I want this House to know that the nitrogen gas is very important because whenever you plant groundnuts, for instance, what gives them the fruits is nitrogen. Climate Change is causing a lot of havoc on the nitrogen and it is very important to us *[Applause]*.

However, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is something ironical because its affects the water and the polar pole. This is why we usually experience a lot of flooding because of the increase in the sea level. Honourable Members, climate change is something we need to really treat with the utmost seriousness. As already been mentioned by the previous speakers, domesticating this Agreement is one of the steps we need to take very seriously. The EPA must involve stakeholders like Members of Parliament to disseminate this information to the people of this country. EPA could not do that alone. In 1987, for example, scientists involved member states and EPA should

also do the same in terms of involving Members of Parliament to disseminate this information. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**HON. HELEN KUYEMBEH:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Minister for these Agreements. I have no doubt in my mind that these conventions are very important for this country. Honestly, all those who have spoken were in support of these Agreements. The Paris Agreement aims at strengthening global efforts to fight climate change, holding global temperature above pre-industrial levels, adverse impact on climate change itself, vis-à-vis, what happens with our trees.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister spoke about the implementation process. He said that there would be an implementation process or probably supports to help countries in their efforts to deal with climate change. I want to remind the Minister that implementation is one of our biggest problems in this country. We have ratified many conventions and agreements over the years, but the impacts of those conventions or the contents of them have not been felt in this country. However, what we need to do is the fact that the Executive needs to work harder in as much as Parliament is responsible to ratify these Agreements. Parliament may ratify, but the greater part of the implementation of these Agreements lies on the Executive. Almost all MDAs under your purview are included in this exercise, including your Ministry. As political heads of MDAs, you control these MDAs and you should know how these Agreements are implemented. As political heads, you have to make sure that what Parliament is approving here today is implemented to the latter. Ratifying these Agreements is one thing, but implementing the provisions in these documents is another issue. This is good for us, but we have to ensure that the impacts of climate change are communicated to our people, especially those in the rural areas. In fact, a colleague on the other side was saying that we need to get the information down to the grassroots because they are currently involved in cutting down trees. They are doing it because of economic disadvantage. The lives of majority of the rural people depend on the proceeds they get from selling fire wood and charcoal. However, these activities are

largely responsible for climate change we are talking about. We are experiencing the adverse effects of climate change as we speak.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a couple of months ago, the flooding that took place at Kroo Bay is a typical example. We were warned, but because we refused to listen to those warnings, we later felt the repercussion. When we were kids, this is not what Freetown or Sierra Leone used to be. It is a clear indication to show that Sierra Leone has evolved to a point where we don't need the international community to tell us what is good or bad. We have to use our own senses to see that we have evolved to a point where we need to make corrections to the wrong things going on in this country. If we fail to right the wrongs we have committed, it would be a disaster for all of us, including our future generations. In that regard, I want to implore all ministers and other government officials to ensure that when these conventions are ratified, they should be implemented as intended. You have to follow where the money is going, so that the right thing is done. You have to make sure that the right information reaches the people in the rural areas. They should understand the adverse effects of cutting down trees. Cutting down trees does help them to get money to feed their families, but the side effects of it are very disastrous.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other thing I would want to talk about is whether Sierra Leone would have the capacity to deal with climate change, health issues, food security, and green growth. I was talking to somebody the other day about agriculture and I was very hopeful when we got a new Minister for Agriculture. I know that the new Minister is effective and he can make the change we have been yearning for in this country. However, you and I know that this country needs an agro-economic growth. I am saying this because we cannot sustain ourselves on minerals. Minerals come and go and you are never sure whether you will see a diamond in where you are digging. If we cultivate the land and plant crops, we would be sure of getting something at the end of the day. Maybe, with your reference for us getting a green-growth, we should be talking about how to revamp the agricultural sector, so that at least the green growth you were talking about would impact this nation.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say something about our development partners - the NGOs, International Organisations, Civil Societies, etc. I want to state here that we have not done much in addressing some of these problems. All of us, including the NGOs and other organisations, are always assuming to know, but yet we have not created any impact. Fingers are always pointed at Parliament that this House has not done certain things. The question is what has the Executive done? What have those NGOs done? What have the Civil Societies done? Well, I want to state here that we should stop talking and 'work the work.' This is what most people fail to understand. They discovered problems, but failed to proffer solutions. The message I want to send to all and sundry is that people should be suggesting solutions towards identified problems and be part of the process to make positive changes. We should stop blaming each other and be proactive in solving our problems. There are so many things wrong, but if we put our hands on deck, those issues militating against the progress of this nation would be mitigated. I thank you, Mr Speaker [*Applause*].

**HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the International system is where issues of international concern are discussed, alliances forged, treaties negotiated and national interest advanced. These treaties and protocols or conventions we are in the process of ratifying are not different from what has been happening before.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before making my contribution, I always work towards setting the records straight. I would start with the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. This document does not, in any way, support or promote terrorism. It has nothing to do with terrorism. It is meant to strengthen the relationship among Islamic countries, share economic, social and other technological interests and help support each other. The late President Ahmed Tejan Kabba of blessed memory has once chaired this in Iran. In other words, he was once a Chairperson in a conference held in Iran.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to briefly talk about the treaties on Climate Change. For the past decade, we have had six of the warmest years over the last decade. What does that tell us? It tells us that we need to re-examine our activities and

re-examine our relationship with the environment. We cannot continue business as usual. We have seen the Glazier melting, which resulted in flooding. I want this nation to understand that deforestation can lead to global warming, pollution of the atmosphere, depletion of biodiversity, etc. So, as a global organisation and global family, we must take actions if we want a brighter future for our children. That is what the Paris Agreement and other conventions are all about. The Honourable Member highlighted the deposition of toxic and hazardous wastes in third world countries by these industrialised nations. Mr Speaker, during the war years, there was a wide rumour going around that a chemical or hazardous component was deposited in the Eastern region of this country. This was widely rumoured during the warring years. Nobody knew the effects of those waste materials. If my elder brother was talking about criminal activities, I think that was also criminal. Depositing hazardous chemical wastes without the knowledge of ordinary citizens or the state is criminal.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me now come to our internal arrangement. The question is have we formulated policies that we need to implement? How are policies formulated? Parliament has ratified a number of Agreements or Conventions, and it is up to the Executive to act or not to act. In Sierra Leone, for instance, the use of pesticides and herbicides for agricultural productivity is very hazardous. Also, I am not an advocate of fertilizer use. Fertilisers contaminate our waters and add phosphorus to our rivers, thereby contaminating the waters.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the dry season is fast approaching, and this is the period if we want to maintain our international attractiveness to tourism, we must put a stop to fire incidences in most parts of this country because it releases toxic materials into the atmosphere. Diseases like heart diseases, asthma, etc. are associated with those toxic materials.

As lawmakers, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we must engage in educating, sensitising and passing on the correct information to our people. In dealing with environmental problems, every little step is very important. We have to be switching off our electricity bulbs before we go to bed or before leaving our offices. If we make a

legislation banning the importation of the use of refrigerators, it helps a great deal. With these few words, Mr Speaker, I want to urge colleagues to speedily ratify these Agreements. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

**HON. SUAHILO M. KOROMA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank this government, particularly the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for bringing these Agreements to this House. The Minister and his team have given this country an opportunity to be part of many international treaties, conventions and agreements. Sometimes when you go out to attend some of these international conferences, you are not allowed to take active part in terms of contributing to debates simply because Sierra Leone has not yet domesticated some of these conventions. So, I want to thank you for a work well done.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have talked a lot about implementation. I think every Member of Parliament spoke extensively about implementation, but I want to differ a bit from the last speaker. The last speaker said that it is left with government to implement these Conventions or Agreements. I just want to remind him that when once we ratify documents in this Honourable House, we have a role and responsibility to take government to task for the implementation of these laws and Agreements. It is not left with the Executive alone to implement those Agreements. I want this House to know that nature does not need us at all, but we the people need nature. The question is why are we destroying nature? Nature does not need us at all, Mr Speaker. If you pay a visit to some of our forests, you will notice that nature does not need us. It can exist and function perfectly without human beings. On the contrary, we need nature for our survival. Therefore, there is no need for us to be destroying nature.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to draw the attention of this House on the efforts I have personally made, including members of my committee on the issue of water catchment areas. I have raised the issue of Climate Change for the past two years now. I have stated in this House that the water catchment areas in Freetown have been depleted and degraded. As the people's representatives, I want to ask this Honourable House to do something about it. If we are talking about Climate Change,

one of the issues we need to address is the water crisis in Freetown. If we fail to address this issue, the people of Freetown would experience more problems that would also result in environmental hazard.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know that the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] would live up to expectations. I am saying this because I believe in the leadership of the head of that Agency. I also want to say that as a nation, we have not been very sensitive in trying to correct some of the wrongs in the country, particularly in the city. I am very concerned about the city because if you take a look at Nairobi, Accra and Monrovia, you would notice that they have tried to resolve most of the environmental problems in those cities, with special reference to the water catchment issues. Conversely, we have not been sensitive in that regard. The Agency has been very proactive because we have been working with them. The Committee on Water Resources has also been working with the Ministry of Water Resources. However, we have not been able to achieve the much needed results we have been yearning to achieve. This is because sometimes it requires the 'political will' to achieve the desired results. Sometimes when issues of national interest go to Cabinet, it takes some time before Cabinet approval.

**THE SPEAKER:** How do you know, Honourable Members? Are you a member of the Cabinet, Honourable Member?

**HON. SUAHILO M. KOROMA:** I am not a member of the Cabinet, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** So, please withdraw that statement.

**HON. SUAHILO M. KOROMA:** I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. You can proceed, Honourable Member.

**HON. SUAHILO M. KOROMA:** I want to emphatically state here that most of the work of Parliament is done in Committees. In that regard, we have to develop a policy that would gear towards dealing with the water catchment areas in Freetown. According to the Minister of Water Resource, that document was taken to Cabinet and as we speak, nothing has been done in that direction. We have not received any

feedback from Cabinet. I want to ask the Minister of Foreign Affairs to ensure that whenever a Cabinet meeting is summoned, the document in question is discussed, so that we deal with the issue of water catchment areas.

*[Suspension of 5[2], being 12:00 noon*

**HON. SUAHILO KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want look at the issue of popularising the laws, Treaties, Conventions and Agreements we usually pass in this House. I have said this severally on radio that we sometimes spend a lot of resources to formulate policies, make laws, ratify treaties and conventions, etc. but we do not have time to popularise those laws and policies. That is one of the major setbacks in this country.

Furthermore, I want to congratulate this Parliament for ensuring that this country be a party to these international treaties and conventions. This House has also ratified the Maputo Protocol, which is very important for this nation. As a people, we need to coordinate and collaborate with the right agencies and organisations for the implementation of these Agreements. We have to make sure that we popularise the laws we pass in this House, including all Treaties and Conventions for the edification of the ordinary man.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to restate that we should not only be signing these Agreements, Treaties and Conventions, but ensure that they are implemented to the latter. I am saying this because we have ratified the Abuja Declaration on Health, but nothing much has been achieved. Therefore, we should always prepare to ensure that whenever an Agreement is brought here for ratification, the provisions in that Agreement are implemented as soon as they are ratified.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. However, I want to remind this House that the water sector in this country is in a moribund state and we need to take swift action in order salvage that sector from extinction. We should not allow the water catchment areas to dry up in Freetown. I want the EPA, the government, the President, the relevant ministries and

all of us to intervene, so that the people of Freetown can have abundant water supply. With those few words, I want to thank you very much for this opportunity [*Applause*].

**HON. ALHAJI SERAY DUMBUYA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to add my voice on these Agreements. I want to thank the Minister and his team for putting for bringing these Agreements to us for ratification. I want to emphasise here that caution should be taken very seriously in the implementation of these Agreements. We should increase supervision and support, but at the same time we should be very watchful of those implementing the provisions in these Agreements. As active member of these Protocols, we want to participate and see that compliance is made in the areas of chemical or hazardous disposal. This is because safe disposal of hazardous wastes is an obligation of the state and even the citizenry of the state, for which we are a part. If you take into consideration the way waste materials are disposed in developed countries, you will notice that they are very cautious or rather careful. In Sierra Leone, we are just disposing rubbishes, including biomaterials everywhere. "*Charity, they say, begins at home.*"

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, the Honourable Seray Dumbuya is making a very important point on wastes management. I want you to please listen to him. Waste Management is a serious challenge in this country.

**HON. ALHAJI SERAY DUMBUYA:** Indeed, Mr Speaker. It is a serious challenge for the government. Masada is doing well and we as citizens must also work with them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to briefly talk about the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. This is an Organisation I have been following since childhood. As a Muslim, I have been to Mecca twice and I am very proud to say that this is peaceful Organisation. It seeks cooperation among member states for development and I want to humbly ask this Honourable House that this particular Protocol has no issues. Like the Organisation of African Unity [OAU] which was later transformed into African Union [AU], the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation is a peaceful Organisation geared towards ensuring the prosperity of member states. It promotes development and peaceful coexistent of member nations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during the Algerian and Moroccan War, this particular Organisation organised the Arab states and intervened. The intervention of this Organisation helped to restore peace between the two countries. In fact, during the days of late Siaka Stevens, we were fortunate to host the ad hoc committee in 1976. Their objective is to promote developments among member states. We have benefitted a lot from this organisation because we have ratified loans that are almost interest free. So, I do believe that the ratification of this particular convention and other Protocols are of high priority. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**HON. VERONICA K. SESAY:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am going to be very brief. If these documents are ratified without my inputs, I would be doing a disservice to the people I am representing in this House. My constituency is one of the areas being identified as one of the disaster prone areas. I am very impressed to see the head of EPA and team. This is what we are always expecting in this Parliament. I am saying this because whenever Ministers bring documents to this House for ratification, you hardly feel the presence of representations from the implementing MDAs. Today, we have the head of EPA and team in our midst to get first-hand information from the people's representatives. They are here to take note of our comments and suggestions. I am very impressed and I want to thank them for their presence. Women are more vulnerable than men. This is why women are sometimes called 'performers' because any department that is headed by a woman would experience positive change. The team is here to take note of our comments.

However, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have few pieces of advice to offer; i.e., monitoring and sensitisation. I want the EPA Management team and others to thoroughly monitor and sensitise our people. If you visit Plantain Island where I come from, you will notice that the water is almost in the middle of that Island. Initially, the Island used to be a fortress where slaves were awaiting exportation. Today, you can hardly find the Island because of its deteriorating conditions. You need to go there and sensitise the people. Please go there and advise the people, so that they could evacuate

them from that place. Some of our people are very stubborn to the extent that even if they see death they would not heed to advice

Furthermore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to talk about the implementation process. We have been here for the past two hours talking about ratification. We are about to ratify these Agreements, please do not shelve those documents and forget about them. We want to see the provisions in these documents thoroughly implemented. I want you to work with the parliamentarians because we are the peoples' representatives. We are the ones who are going to be questioned by our constituents. Therefore, you have to work with us, Members of Parliament.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have to be watchful of our borders. We have to fortify our borders because most of the issues we are discussing here today are imported into this country through our borders. This is one of the areas we have to pay apt attention to if this nation is to progress. We have to fortify the borders; sensitise the people; and find lasting solutions to these environmental problems. Let us work together for the benefit of the people of this country. In 2008, for instance, the sea disaster we had in Shenge was as a result of global warming. Therefore, you have to make sure that the people are sensitised, especially those in the Plantain Island, Shenge, Fogbo, etc. With these words, I want to thank you for allowing me to lend my voice to this ratification.

**HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, since 2007, I have been telling people that the issue of Climate Change must be treated with the utmost seriousness. Today, we are here to discuss possible ways of resolving that problem in this country. It behoves every Member of Parliament to support the ratification of these Agreements. We must also ensure that every Agreement is put into proper perspective. I am saying this because what we are doing today is for the future of this country and the world at large.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to make some statements about the Paris Agreement. With your permission, Mr Speaker, I read: **"The Paris Agreement is an agreement within the framework of the United Nations Framework**

**Convention on Climate Change, dealing with greenhouse gas emission, mitigation, adaption and finances, starting in the year 2020.”** I brought this because somebody just said that this country has started enjoying the two hundred million dollars. This is going to start in 2020, pending its ratification by this House. If you look at these documents, you would realise that they are meant to help Sierra Leone and her people. Therefore, it behoves all of us to do justice to them as fast as possible.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Clause [b] of the Paris Agreement says: **“If this particular document is ratified, it is going to increase the ability to adapt to adverse impact of Climate Change and foster Climate Change resilience and low greenhouse gas in the manner that does not threaten food production.”**

This means that if the Paris Agreement is ratified, we have potentials as a nation to grow and it would also ensure food production in the country. The question is why are we wasting more time? We have already wasted much of our time. It would make financial fraud consistent with a pathway towards greenhouse gas emission and climate resilience development. These are very important issues in the Agreement. My colleague was talking about destroying our forests; and as such, we are not getting water. How are we going to do it? Honourable Members how are we going to do it? Why do we have to waste time on this? You have read these documents, you have been educated about it and we know it is an issue that has to do with you and I.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe that the Paris Agreement and the Minamata Convention are very important. Day in day out our brothers are dealing with mercury. We have just realised that if you deal with mercury, you are destroying the population. We have to take this information to our people and tell them the importance of these conventions. I want to thank God for the lady who is heading the EPA. She must take some of these suggestions very seriously. Few years back, we saw her crying before parliamentarians because she wanted us to take Climate Change issues as important as our lives. We have children and some of us are more than fifty years now. There are some of you who are more than seventy years old. We should

work towards leaving a legacy for our children yet unborn. Therefore, I want the Minister to note that each time Sierra Leone fails to ratify a particular Convention it is an embarrassment to him and this nation. In as much as we are here to ratify these treaties, we have to make sure that we pay our contributions, so that at the end of the day, the people of this country can benefit from these agreements.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to plead with this House to be treating issue of national importance with all seriousness. Today, we are in the third position, which is prone to disaster and we are trying to achieve the second position. We are not here to pay lip service to issues of national importance. We have to make sure that we take the good news to our people.

With these few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to crave the indulgence of this Honourable House not to waste any further time in ratifying these Agreements. Let us ratify these Agreements for the good of Sierra Leone. Thank you very much.

**HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI** [*Minority Leader of the House*]: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to first of all thank my colleagues who have contributed to this debate this morning. It has been a very important and healthy debate. I also want to thank the Minister and his team for bringing these important Agreements to this House for ratification. This is just part of our international obligation. Sierra Leone is not an Island, but part of the global village. We can no longer say we can do it alone because we have neither the necessary expertise, nor the capability or the finances. We do not want to be left behind. Therefore, when we sign treaties [either at the continental or international levels], we must take another step forward to ratify and domesticate it. In domesticating Agreements, we are also implementing them. Therefore, I am very happy that these treaties are before us for ratification. Agreement like the OIC has been with us for quite some time now. We signed this in 1972 when I just entered secondary school. That was 44 years ago. I was in form one in 1972. The other documents have also been around for quite some time. Of course, the Kiyoto Protocol when we were on that side of the

ayes in 2005, we did ratify the Kiyoto Protocol. What we should now do is to ratify and move on with the implementation the Agreements deserve. Apart from the OIC, the other five documents are interrelated.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Paris Agreement has to do with Climate Change. And because it has to do with Climate Change, it also has to do with biodiversity and chemicals. The Minamata Convention also has to do with biodiversity and hazardous wastes. The Basel Convention has to do with hazardous wastes and the Nagoya has to do with biodiversity, especially benefiting those areas and places where they have been endowed with. Therefore, they are all interconnected in the sense that their causes and effects are complementary. For instance, when we talk about Climate Change, its effect is on agriculture. Climate Change is also impacting negatively on soil fertility and productivity.

However, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that Agriculture also is causing Climate Change in the sense that whenever you remove the natural vegetation, you are also removing the carbon dioxide. And as my colleague was saying, the Ozone Layer is also affected in the process. It is becoming thinner and no longer having the thick blanket it used to have to stop all those poisonous rays from coming to the Earth. This is because if we allow the atmosphere to get warmer [above two degree centigrade], it would be very dangerous for all of us. It would be dangerous for both human and even the environment. I totally agree with the Honourable Member from Bo, when he said that the environment does not need us, but we need it. If that is the case, we have to stop abusing it. We are not only jeopardising our own very existence, but the existences of the children yet unborn. These conventions are very important to all of us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that mercury is air and water born. It is also land born. They affect the way we live and even our fishes. Presently, we are struggling to have the EU assessment of the Sierra Leone Fish Market. Our fish will have to undergo serious chemical research to ensure that we meet the minimum level of chemicals that will be acceptable in the EU Market. Otherwise if our mercury

content is high in our fishes, we are not going to access the European Market. As I said before, the issues we are discussing here today are so interrelated and they affect our very existence. Let us take mercury as example, how many of us know exactly which substances are coming into this country. Majority of those substances are laden with mercury. In fact, cosmetics like the lipsticks we are using are mercury laden. The batteries we are using are also mercury laden. We have moved from the use of kerosene lamps to batteries. These batteries are also mercury laden. Of course, the electricity we are using is mercury laden.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we cannot discuss these Agreements without mentioning education. I agree with the fact that we have to heighten the level of our education. We have to disseminate all necessary information to our people. Education is going to be the key because knowledge is power. Our people are behaving the way they behaving because they do not have the correct information they need. Ignorance is expensive and a lot of people are doing things not because they want to do it, but because they are ignorant of the repercussion. As we are about to ratify these Agreements, I am not discussing their details because those who have spoken before me have succinctly done that. The question is what should we be looking at in the implementation of these treaties? There are key areas we should be looking at. I have just mentioned information, communication and education. Over 70% of the population in Sierra Leone is not literate. Therefore, the literate population has a lot to do n that regard. Members of Parliament have an obligation to go out to our people and sensitise them on these treaties. What are these treaties? What is the Ozone Layer? Our people may not know the scientific basis of the Ozone Layer, but Members of Parliament know. We have to go and educate our people on these issues.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should come up with ways of disseminating some of these information through the use of different media. We may even try to translate some of these into our local languages. We have to do that in different ways that would be user-friendly to our people. We can even do that in jingles, leaflets, etc. Information is going to be key in the implementation of all of these Agreements. If we

do this, ignorance would be eliminated. Ignorance is killing our people because they do not know some of these things.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other thing I want to talk about is how to mitigate the importation of these toxic wastes. We have to find possible ways of stopping the transfer of these things into our country. Again, we need enough money from both the government and our development partners to mitigate and adapt to the effects of Climate Change. In Africa, for instance, we are not benefitting much from most of these finances because of the stringent requirements put for the acquisition of those funds. For example, if you take red plus, how does a country become red plus? It takes a lot of data collection and consistent data analysis for you to be able to satisfy the financing requirements. How do we know that a country is ready? Our statistical system or data system is still evolving. Therefore, it has been very difficult for us to harness these funds because we have not met the data requirements.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as we are going to implement these Agreements, we have to strengthen other sectors and departments. Statistics Sierra Leone has to be strengthened, so that we will be able to collect the required data needed for us to have access to these funds. We used to have the 'Clean Development Mechanism, but we did not benefit simply because of the encumbrances in terms of providing accurate, timely and sufficient data for us to be able to access some of these funds. So, data financing is going to be very key in the implementation of these Conventions.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, institutional and ministerial coordination is also going to be very important. For instance, when we talk of Climate Change, it is an issue of energy. In Sierra Leone, biomass is scarce because we are cutting our trees and destroying forests for charcoal. So, if you cannot address Climate Change, do not also address the governance issue in Sierra Leone. It is about also the removal of trees from water shed. Water is key to energy and even Climate Change. We are not surprised to see the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here because when we had natural disasters as a result of Climate Change, a lot of migrants were coming into this country; migrants from one country to another. This has been the reason we were involved in

international corporation issues. Sierra Leone became part of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees [UNHCR]; and a lot of human rights issues were flagged up. This is because whenever migrants move to the receiving country, they encroach into the already depleting services, which usually resulted in conflict. Therefore, the issue of human rights keeps coming up.

As I was saying, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these issues are so interrelated that we need to encourage inter-ministerial and inter-agency collaboration and corporation, so that these issues are addressed from a holistic point of view. We should not ghettoize some of these issues. Climate Change should be the business of everybody whose activities have resulted into this menace. Climate Change is also affecting our biodiversity. It is affecting our flora and fauna. It is also affecting our own lives. We now need new species that are going to be adoptable to the new realities of Climate Change; new plant and animal species. Look at what is happening in the Sahara Region. Drought is killing the livestock in that part of the world. In that case, we are now going to spend a lot of money in research to breed drought resistance livestock; just as we are now breeding flood resistance crops.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the EPA should take the centre stage in this fight. The EPA should encourage inter-agency and inter-ministerial collaboration, so that every sector is involved. Every MDA should work towards ensuring addressing issues of Climate Change or hazardous wastes transfer. I am happy that we are taking these issues very seriously. Initially, the argument was that Africa was contributing very little to issues of Climate Change. Well, we should also look at the principle of equality, but differentiated responsibilities and respective capability. That is now the new principle. You may not be contributing, but you also have the responsibility to ensure that even the little you are contributing should positively affect your country, your people and your very survival. You take equal responsibility but within your respective capability because the responsibilities of countries are different and therefore they should be within your capabilities. And this is exactly what we are doing. We have very

little capability, but with the ratification of these treaties, we will benefit from financial gains and boost our image.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the last speaker mentioned that whenever we go to international conferences and names of countries that have not ratified these Conventions are called, sometimes you may want to open the ground and burry yourself. Sometimes you are refrained from voting or taking active part in the discussions. If at all you are allowed to speak, you would not speak with confidence because you have the inhibition that 'you put your mouth where your money is.' Therefore, if you have not contributed financially or otherwise, you would be psychologically traumatised. I think there are more protocols and agreements that needed to be brought here for consideration.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to commend the Minister for bringing these Conventions here. When we were in Addis Ababa, he took the bold step to sign about twenty treaties and protocols. They are some of the treaties we have here today for ratification. I hope that the remaining ones would be brought here as soon as possible. Please, make sure you bring all treaties you have signed, so that there will be implementation. If you take the Maputo Protocol, for example, we have evidences of laws and policies that Sierra Leone has carried out in addressing the Maputo Protocol. We only needed to ratify those Protocols, which we did last year. If you also look at the Paris Agreement, we have done a lot of things and we are doing more in that regard. We have our national Action Plan we are executing. We have even set up the necessary institutions and the CSOs are also moving towards galvanising themselves in that direction.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to conclude by saying that we must put, at the heart of the implementation of these Conventions, the people that are hard hit. They must be at the centre stage; and they must take responsibility. They must also be well prepared, so that we move along with them to where we want to be. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU** [*Majority Leader of the House and Leader of Government Business*]: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank all the Members of Parliament for their constructive and educative lectures, not only to this House, but the public. You are very informative in the sense that you delivered the lecture very well. If people were to have this education from universities or colleges, it would have cost them money; but today, you have provided what you have learnt from the universities to the people for free. Members of this House have also been educated on a number of issues. That is why I want to entreat both the print and electronic media to help disseminate what has been discussed here today. We should not only engage ourselves in providing political lyrics or insightful music to the public, but we should also ensure that the information we have gathered here reach the public. Members of Parliament have provided very important lyrics to our musicians. They should now ensure that songs about the environment are sung for the benefit of the public. I entreat them to disseminate the good news for few thousand Leones, so that those who are interested in national issues that have been highlighted here by Members of Parliament get it loud and clear. Are these Members of Parliament some people are crying down as nonentities? I think what we have heard here today is enough to show that we have a well-informed House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the advantage of speaking last is the fact that most of what you intended to say would have already been said. So, one would actually want to be very careful, so that you would not be charged under the Standing Orders as being repetitive. From what I have gathered from Members of Parliament, most of their contributions were anchored on the issue of implementation. I want to reemphasised here that implementation is very key and must be treated as such. Somebody spoke about transparency and corruption. Well, I want to remind this House that we are about to ratify these conventions, so that we can move forward as a nation. But before you move forward, you are standing on a ground where you have been before you move forward. With "Ever since Sierra Leone has been participating and implementing decisions agreed upon during the conference of party meetings, Sierra Leone has also

received financial support from her different financing windows. For instance, the global environmental facilities have supported Sierra Leone with over two hundred million US Dollars through projects. I want members of the Lands Committee to take note of what we are saying here. I want Members of the Fourth Estate, Civil Societies to also take note that over two hundred million US Dollars is allocated to Sierra Leone by the Global and Environmental Facility.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, four of these conventions before us have to do with Climate Change, exposure of hazardous materials and protection of human health. These are national issues that touch our constituents, including Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Climate Change is a global fight because it is a threat to human life. Internationally, most countries are now suffering from what I call 'over development.' That is why they don't even place those countries under 'dispose of their hazardous wastes.' Africa, being the second largest continent in the World and with the smallest population, we have so much land space. Therefore, Africa is a vulnerable continent. Since this is a global menace, I want to encourage Members of this Honourable House to pay rapt attention to the implementation of these conventions. We have to put politics away because it is no longer business as usual. Great politicians are no more and their political careers have ended. Great people were in this House, but they are rarely referenced today in our discussions. This is not a political discussion, but a national discourse and I am very impressed this morning that Members of Parliament took it along that path. The Minister was very clear from his statement and he owes no apology to the facts and figures presented to this House. So, it's left with us since we have anchored our discussions on implementation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to remind this House that we are the most vulnerable group in this country. This is because anything that has to do with corruption and embezzlement is usually directed to Members of Parliament. Here is a situation where somebody has handle two hundred million US Dollars, which is a news to the ears of most people. What have they done with it? What impact has that money created in our constituencies? It is time for you to get up and chase that money.

Members of Parliament have been chased and lambasted severally for handling Le63, 000, 000, which is less than \$15,000. We have been chased, molested and hounded to the point of being mobbed. But it is the human tendencies for everybody to protect his or her small cocoon. Consequently, Members of Parliament should come out more robust in ensuring that we provide effective oversight needed to move this nation forward. We are very venerable, especially when the elections are around the corner.

I am saying this Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, because in our constituencies, there are those who want to unseat us, so that they can have their way. This is why I am reminding you that we are very susceptible. Please, Honourable Members, I want you to take the right leadership to our people. We are under threat, but this should be a motivation for all of us to step forward and do what we have to do. Even if you are voted out, let your contributions towards the development of this nation be inscribed in the annals of this country. Let the generation yet unborn read our contributions. You have been very educative and constructive this morning. This is no longer a Parliament that is 'not doing anything.' We have heard eloquent speakers and there were those who wanted to speak, but time was not on our side. If you failed to do something, nobody will know that you did something.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to state here that timber logging in this country is contributing immensely to deforestation. Nevertheless, this is an issue that is not handled by parliamentarians. Timber is not a commodity like gold or diamond that you can smuggle into your pocket or suitcase. It is even almost impossible to take it by land and sea. They are bypassing our police checkpoints and our customs to other countries. What are we doing to stop those people? It is not the making of Members of Parliament because the laws and policies we ratify in this House are implemented by the Executive. Therefore, we have to pay attention to some of these issues we are discussing here. There are things we can do to change the negative impression people have against politicians. The time for patronage is over. This is about our survival. You can lose your health if you fail to do what is right for you and others. You can even lose your wealth, but when you lose your integrity, you have lost everything.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is no longer business as usual, but it is going to be business unusual to save your name. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister, please respond to some of the issues raised by Members of Parliament.

**DR SAMURA KAMARA** *[Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation]*: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me start my response by appreciating all those who have contributed to this debate. The issue of Climate Change and all its dimensions has sent a strong historic path; and today, our consideration of Climate Change Agreement is, in itself, historic because the Agreement itself is very historic. Therefore, what you have done today is very historic and you will certainly be remembered in the history books recording Climate Change activities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are two major issues I want to look at; i.e., the general consensus for the urgent need to ratify these Instruments and that is based on what you have articulated in this Well. Your consideration of the causes and effects of Climate Change, particularly to Sierra Leone, was edifying. I therefore wish to thank you very much on behalf of the institutions that are critical in carrying out Sierra Leone's ambition within the context of this instrument, the EPA, NRA etc.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the next consideration a Member of Parliament did mention is what happens after ratification. That is why you are able to articulate quite a number of lessons to be learnt if we say business as usual or we just keep this document in our cupboards. Well, I want to state here that after ratification, there has already been a comprehensive national action plan. It has been mentioned here by the EPA and I also indicated that in my submission. It was also considered by Cabinet and it is available for public consumption. I also believe that EPA has the ambition to popularise this document. It will demystify its contents to an extent that people like us, who have today learnt a lot from the varied lectures, would know where to begin. We understand the language of the layman in addressing Climate Change issues. The EPA has that ambition to popularise this document in terms of explaining its pros and cons

to the people. It is an inclusive document and is well written. It was done in a preparatory manner and it is available for the public.

Like what the Minority Leader has said, we need to spread the news as wide as possible. She also said that we have started implementing some aspects of these Agreements. Although it may sound symbolic ratification, but the truth is that it is a historic exercise and it has been very educative. All we need to do is to continue to understand the issues you have mentioned as one Honourable Member did say: **"work the work and not to talk the talk."** You have indicated the need to sensitise the people on this document and we need to broaden civil societies' understanding of the issues of Climate Change, especially its effects and actions we need to take to make sure we minimise its negative impacts.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members have also emphasised the need for strong institutional governance system to be able to implement these instruments. That is very critical because if we do not have effective institutional partnership, we would not benefit from the potential aspects of it. Therefore, I totally agree and I think the implementing agencies need to effect sanctions when they are deliberately infringed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, another Member of Parliament also mentioned the need for economic diversification through agricultural activities. That is very important because it is Pillar One in the Agenda for Prosperity [AfP].

Mr Speaker, I want to assure this Honourable House that we are certainly going to document the concerns you have raised here today and incorporate them into the implementation framework as we move forward. Also, I will like the parliamentary Committee dealing with climate change to work proactively with the implementing institutions, including the parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs. We shall also update that Committee with all aspects relating to the implementation of these instruments.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, though OIC is a household name in Sierra Leone, but When it began its operation, it was looked upon as a mitigating organisation in the

Middle East crisis. Today, however, it has broadened its agenda, just like the UN and AU have done. Certainly, Members of Parliament who are members of the Pan African and ECOWAS Parliaments, and other regional institutions would also realise that these institutions have also broadened their mandate; consistent with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century demands. Initially, people were only talking about peace and security in the United Nations. Issues like Climate Change and Terrorism were never in the United Nations Agenda. As one Honourable Member said, we have quite a lot that we need to consider and the OIC has been following this footsteps. The OIC is no longer a Muslim organisation. It is about the extent to which there is international collaborative action in addressing international challenges and threats to human existence.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, sometimes when you attend international conferences, you would hear people talking about gender and youth development; this is what happens in international organisations. That is why even in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Embassies and Consulates, we also have a responsibility to broaden our horizon and to think beyond narrow diplomatic considerations. The challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century are so numerous that sometimes we are not allowed to even have fun because the World is not waiting for you. You must have to be part of the change we are yearning for. This is why by ratifying the OIC Charter today, it will give us a stronger voice, a stronger representation and greater influence in the decision making aspect of that institution. Though this is almost late, but better late than never because we can now go there and raise our voice beyond what we are even doing now.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as one Member of Parliament rightly mentioned, there are certain obligations we have to meet after these Agreements are ratified today. After these Agreements are ratified and signed, there are financial and administrative obligations we have to meet. These obligations have to be met in a collaborative manner. Some Members of Parliament have emphasised the point that some of these treaties should have been ratified before now. Well, I want to inform this House that I inherited quite a number of international treaties, which we have benefited from and will continue to benefit from their implementation. Sierra Leone was not a member

because we have not ratified these protocols. Shamelessly though, we have been attending conferences and we even pleaded for support even when we knew that we have not done anything in terms of ratifying what we are discussing here today.

Furthermore, I want to follow the queue by thanking you for what you have done today. The discussions on the Minamata and Vienna convention on diplomatic relations have been very educative and interesting. These Agreements have been with us since 1960 and it is only this year we have ratified it. I would not say unforgivable omissions in our actions, but I am happy that we have now realised our mistakes and the inadvertent nature of our actions. Therefore, I want to promise this House that the remaining Agreements would be brought to this House as soon as possible. It is going to be a clean-up excise. So, I want to plead with you that when I come back, you give me the same attention and support I am now receiving.

In that regard, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2016:

[I] THE PARIS AGREEMENT;

[II] THE MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY;

[III] THE ROTTERDAM CONVENTION ON THE PRIOR INFORMED CONSENT PROCEDURE FOR CERTAIN HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL AND PESTICIDES IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE;

[IV] THE BASEL CONVENTION ON THE CONTROL OF TRANSBOUNDARY MOVEMENT OF HAZARDOUS WASTES AND THEIR DISPOSAL;

[V] THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL ON ACCESS TO GENETIC RESOURCES AND THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE SHARING OF BENEFITS ARISING FROM THEIR UTILIZATION TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY; AND

[VI] THE ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[Government motion by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation  
has been ratified]*

**ADJOURNMENT**

*[The House rose at 1.15 p.m., and was adjourned to Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2016 at  
10:00 a.m.].*