

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMETARY DEBATES

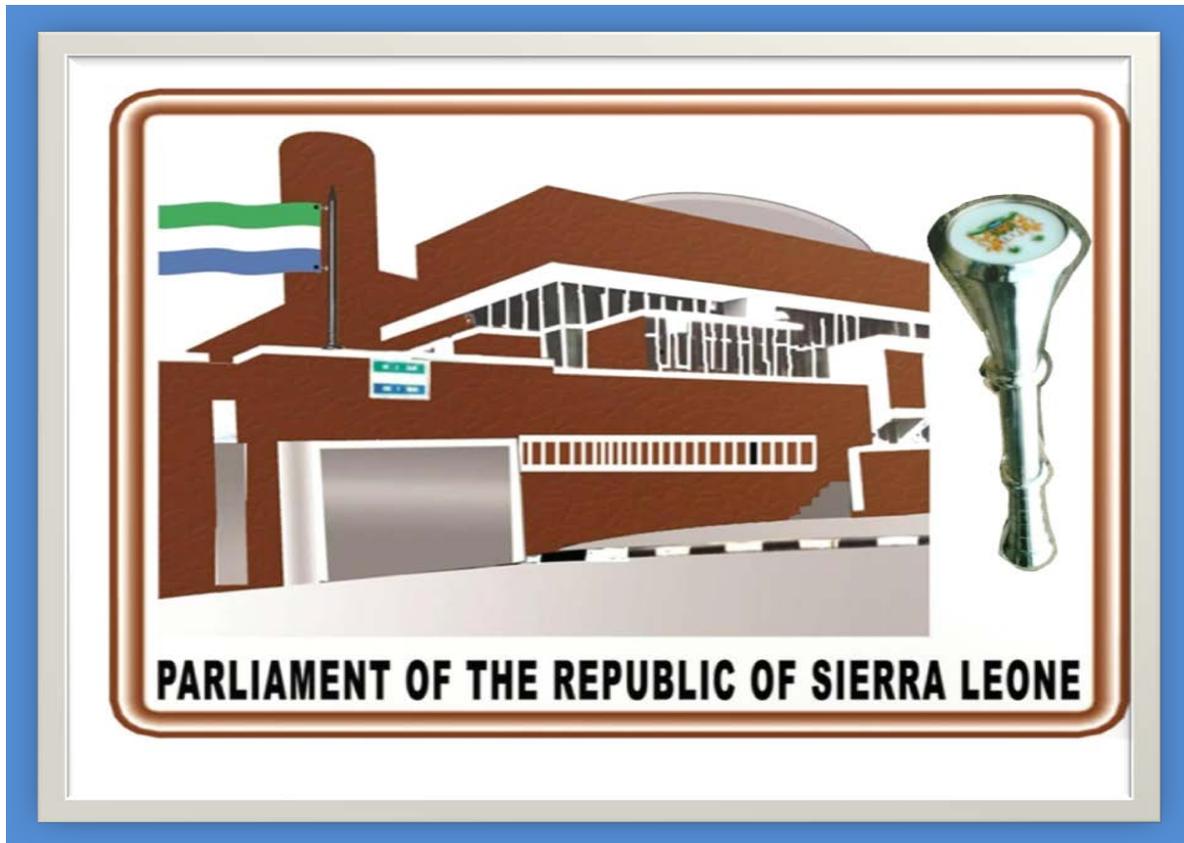
(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

SECOND SESSION-SECOND MEETING

THURSDAY, 26TH JUNE, 2014

SESSION – 2013/2014



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held on Thursday, 26th June, 2014.

C O N T E N T S

I. PRAYERS

II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR TUESDAY 17TH JUNE,2014

III. LAYING OF PAPER

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- (a) LETTER OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK ON FRAGILE STATES FACILITY (PILLAR 111) (GRANT SUPPORT FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORT PROJECT FOR ENERGY PLANNING AND MILLENIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION FOR COMPACT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS (TCB_ERPU & MCC), DATED 25TH APRIL, 2014

- (b) LETTER OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK ON FRAGILE STATES FACILITY (PILLAR 111); (GRANT SUPPORT FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR MINERALS/ EXTRATIVE INDUSTRIES REVENUE ENHANCEMENT AND GOVERNANCE PROJECT (TCB-MREG)

IV. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES
BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENT WHICH WAS LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON TUESDAY 20TH MAY, 2014:

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF FISHERY, DATD 15TH JULY, 2013



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Thursday, 26th June, 2014.

The House met at 10:00 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown.

I. PRAYERS

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

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

The House was called to Order

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY, 17TH JUNE, 2014

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members we go to the record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday, 17th June, 2014. As usual, we go through page by page. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3?

HON. PATRICK FOYAH: Mr Speaker, I want to draw your attention on Page 3. I was absent with excuse. We went for Oversight function.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Clerk, please take note of that. Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? There being no more amendment, can somebody move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday, 17th June, 2014?

HON. ALIE KALOKOH: I so move Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. FRANCIS KONUWA: I so second.

THE SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that the Record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday, 17th June, 2014 be adopted as amended.

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

*(Record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday, 17th June, 2014
was unanimously adopted as amended)*

III. PAPER LAID

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MADAM MABINTY DARAMY: *(Deputy Minister of Finance and Economic Development):* Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table the following documents:

(a) A LETTER OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK ON FRAGILE STATES FACILITY (PILLAR III). A GRANT SUPPORT FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORT PROJECT FOR ENERGY PLANNING AND MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION FOR COMPACT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS (TCB-ERPU & MCC), DATED 25TH APRIL, 2014; and

(b) A LETTER OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK ON FRAGILE STATES FACILITY (PILLAR III); (GRANT SUPPORT FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR MINERALS/EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES REVENUE ENHANCEMENT AND GOVERNANCE PROJECT (TCB-MREG)

THE SPEAKER: Mr Clerk, I was expecting that there was going to be an amendment on the Order Paper. Mr Leader, I want a positive statement from you today or from the Chairman of Finance Committee, through you with regards to the status of the Constituency Development Fund. Mr Clerk, please proceed.

IV. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENT WHICH WAS LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON TUESDAY 20TH MAY, 2014:

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF FISHERY, DATED 15TH JULY, 2013

MR CHARLES ROGERS (*Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 20th May, 2014: *“Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the field of Fishery, dated 15th July, 2013.”*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement will allow the Ministry of Fisheries in Sierra Leone to cooperate with the Russian Federation in terms of undertaking fishing ventures in our waters. The entire process will be guided by a Commission that will be formed between the two countries and all operations will strictly adhere to the rules, laws and regulations of this country. In that light, I therefore ask that this Honourable House ratify the following agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 20th May, 2014.

(Question Proposed)

HON. PATRICK FOYAH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are all aware of the fact that fishery industry is a major source of revenue in this country. It is also providing a very substantial amount or percentage of employment as well. The contribution towards our GDP is very immense. However, with respect to the Agreement that has just been laid before us, ... - (*Interruption*).

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, stand up. What were you doing?

MR CHARLES ROGERS: I was listening to the comments of Honourable Members.

THE SPEAKER: You were not. You were talking to somebody across the Floor. Was that not the case?

MR CHARLES ROGERS: I am sorry Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: You should be taking notes and you are new in this exercise. Please concentrate on taking notes. Honourable Ansu J. Kaikai, do not distract the Minister's

attention. You were distracting him. Honourable Foday Rado Yokie, I agree with you that the Minister has to be focused.

HON. PATRICK FOYAH: With respect to the Agreement, certain observations and concerns were raised, which I presented to the leadership of this House for the attention of the Ministry. My main areas of concern have to do with:

- (a) adherence to the laws of this country and the laws of the sea in this Agreement.
- (b) the potential disadvantage that this Agreement will bring on to particularly the artisanal fishermen in this country. I also looked at the proposed benefits stated in the Agreement, whether these benefits outweigh the loss to our people or not.

However, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Ministry responded to my concerns in terms of addressing some of the points raised and assured me that those concerns were addressed appropriately. It is therefore my position to bring to light these concerns and look at them very carefully. I believe that if the Ministry is being supervised properly when this Agreement is ratified, it will benefit this nation. With that Mr Speaker, I will endorse the ratification of the Agreement. Thank you.

HON. ANSUMANA J. KAIKAI (*Deputy Minority Leader of the House*): I thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker Honourable Members, the Honourable Member that did contribute is the Chairman of the Committee on Marine Resources. What he has said is very important, especially to this Parliament. I am saying this because we are responsible to ratify or refuse any Agreement that comes to this Honourable House. I am therefore begging the indulgence of Mr Speaker and this Honourable House that the correspondences that he was referring to be circulated to all Members of Parliament before the ratification of this Agreement.

HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA (*Majority Chief Whip*): Point of Order Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Chairperson of the Committee on Fisheries made the observation as Chairman, specifically for the attention of the whole House. Mr Speaker, if the Chairman made an observation and directed it to the Ministry and the Ministry has responded accordingly. I hope he is now satisfied. I believe it was fitting for each and every Member of Parliament to have a copy, but that should not halt the ratification of this Agreement.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Ansu J. Kaikai, mentioning the correspondence by the Chairman does not necessarily mean that they have to be circulated.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI (*Minority Leader of the House*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you will recalled that during the last sitting, this very Agreement was on the Order Paper. It was later withdrawn because the Chairman of the Committee raised certain issues. Those issues were forwarded to the Leader of this House who in turn forwarded these concerns to the appropriate Ministry for response. The response was sent to the Leader for the attention of the Chairman. The Chairman would have taken the Members of Parliament through the concerns he raised. There were about nine of these concerns. I think it was based on those concerns that this House removed the item that had to do with this Agreement from the Order Paper so that those concerns would be addressed accordingly. Today, he has with him here the concerns he raised and how those concerns were addressed by the Ministry. It would have been proper for him to share with us those concerns and the responses he got from the Ministry. This is because this Agreement did not go through a pre-legislative scrutiny where Members of Parliament would have been given the opportunity to look into these issues.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, based on the submissions that have just been made, I want the Leaders of this House to also listen to the generality of the Parliament. I want the concerns of the Chairman and the responses made by the Ministry to be circulated to all Members of Parliament.

In addition to that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, other Members would have concerns that were not raised by the Chairman of this Committee. Therefore, we have to get a pre-legislative hearing, wherein additional documentation will be provided to us. By so doing, all Members of Parliament will have the opportunity to read those documents. We have to ensure that we adequately deal with those concerns. Once we have adequately dealt with those concerns. Later, we will still bring this document back for ratification. We have to satisfy about the background information of this Agreement. Therefore, I want to crave the indulgence of the Majority Leader of this House to give Members of Parliament the opportunity to share the concerns raised by the Chairman of the Committee in a pre-legislative hearing. I will also want to beg your indulgence to postpone the ratification of Agreement. That is my submission.

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU: Thank you very much Honourable Minority Leader and those who have made suggestions. You would agree with me that legislation does not stop after passing a Bill into law. We also have an obligation to oversee any legislation through our Oversight functions. Even if we had had a pre-legislative hearing, we are also obliged to make a follow up of what we have ratified. Therefore, my appeal here is follow-ups. In this circumstance, we have discussed with the chairman of the Committee and I was able to access his comments, and those comments were directed to the leadership and I responded by contacting the Ministry for their own response.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as soon as I got the responses from the Ministry, I forwarded them not only to the Chairman, but also to the Minority Leader of this House for her attention. Therefore, I want to appeal that we circularise the issues raised by the Chairman and the responses from the Ministry for a robust follow up. I say so because you would agree with me that fishing and mining programmes are capital intensive. We have rich natural resources in Sierra Leone. Like I usually say, in production, we have three factors; land, labour and capital. You may have the land but the capital to tap those resources effectively must receive what I call partnership. Fortunately in this House, we have passed the Private Public Partnership Agreement. We must abide by these agreements. But that is not suggesting that Members of

Parliament should not bring up their comments. I want to make a plea here that this is an Agreement between Sierra Leone and Russia. Let us, as a Parliament, look at the two documents and do a very robust follow-up later. We can go back and read the Agreement. Agreement is not written on stone, nor is it written on walls. And for every Agreement, you must have an exit clause where somebody can come up with any comment at any time to review the Agreement. Mr Speaker, if not because of the circumstance and the time, these responses would have been distributed to all Members of Parliament. I will immediately give 140 copies to the Clerk of the House for distribution to the membership. For the respect of Mr Speaker and the respect of the Chairman of the Committee, I want to ask that we ratify this Agreement. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Majority Leader, I would not want to agree with you because the Chairman of Marine Resources had said that it should be so. Are you saying that what he said should be accepted by the general membership of the House? I am therefore going to adjourn the House for an hour to ensure that the documents are circulated. We shall come back later to ratify this Agreement.

(The House stood down at 10:30 a.m.; and resumed at 11:25)

THE SPEAKER: Mr Majority Leader, have you ensured the distribution of the documents?

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU: Yes Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Madam Minority Leader, are the documents in your possession?

HON DR. BERNADETTE LAHAI: Yes Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Clerk, you should have invited the Minister to occupy the Chair. The Honourable Patrick Foyah, are you now satisfied that the documents have been circulated?

HON. PATRICK FOYAH: Yes Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, you have heard the statement by the Minority Leader. The concern was first raised by the Chairman of Marine Resources. What is your reaction?

MR CHARLES ROGERS: In response to the discussions on this Agreement, the documents have been distributed, both the comments raised by the Chairman of the Oversight Committee and our response as a Ministry. Therefore, be it resolved that the Honourable House ratify the following Agreement that was laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 20th May, 2014.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, you should say: *"which was laid on the Table of the House"* Mr Minister, sit down. Mr Minister, who are you anyway?

MR CHARLES ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I am Charles Rogers, Deputy Minister of Fishery and Marine Resources.

THE SPEAKER: Wait a minute Mr Minister. Who are you Charles Rogers, and what are you?

MR CHARLES ROGERS: Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Please repeat what you have said. I want you to move the motion.

MR CHARLES ROGERS: I therefore move that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 20th May, 2014.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, which Agreement are you referring to?

MR CHARLES ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I am referring to the *"Agreement between the government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the field of Fishery, dated 15th July, 2013."*

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

*(Government motion by the Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources
has been ratified)*

THE SPEAKER: Yes Mr Leader.

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you would recalled that a task force formed to look into our current status of the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). I am happy to report that this Committee had worked so hard and has presented a report yesterday. But I think as it is the case, we want to also discuss this report in Committee Room 1. But before that, we will also like to discuss the report at leadership level because we just got the report to us yesterday. In fact, some of the members of the leadership got their reports this morning. Therefore, we need time to look at this report. We shall endeavour to avail you with this report on or before the next adjourned date. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Majority Leader, I only want to tell you that Members of Parliament are desperate about the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) *(Laughter across the Floor)*.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Mr Speaker, to add to that, I would also advice that we go to Room 1 to look at what the Committee has done so that the rest of the other membership will be opportuned to know.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Majority Leader, at the end of the day, the bottom line is to have access to the money.

HON. JAMES ALIE: Thank you Mr Speaker. I stand on S. O. 16. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I really want to extend my thanks and appreciation to the Chairman of Business Committee in this House. At least, there is some amount of improvement in the way items on the Order Paper are sent to Honourable Members. We have been yearning for that as new Members of this House. We are now informed of the items that will appear on the Order Paper beforehand. I want to appeal to this House that that gesture should continue. We are very appreciative of it as it gives every

Member of Parliament the opportunity to take active part in the debate. I am only appealing that in as much as we want it to continue, it should also be enforced so that we will be previewed to know the items to be discussed the following week. I am also appealing that voluminous documents brought to this House should be given enough time for Members of Parliament to go through them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my other appeal is that when Bills come to this House as part of the pre-legislative hearings, Members of Parliament should be empowered to go to their Constituencies to sample the views of their constituents on a particular legislations. Then, Members of Parliament will bring these suggestions made by their constituents during pre-legislative hearing. I am very appreciative of this and I hope that this gesture will continue. I want to thank you Mr Speaker.

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Just by way of reaction to the Honourable Member for acknowledging what we have been doing under S.O 16. I would ask that the document so laid this morning by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development be looked at for next sitting when this House shall have been adjourned to any date.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have made a very good point. But the tradition in this House is that the moment documents are circulated to any Member of Parliament, it is incumbent on any Member of Parliament to read it and familiarise yourself with everything contained in that document. But the issue of empowering Members of Parliament to go to their constituencies will be very difficult. But I have always said that what people know about Members of Parliament is that we are law makers. Honourable James Allie, I hope that is noted. Mr Majority Leader, please treat the issue of the Constituency Development Fund seriously.

ADJOURNMENT

*The House rose at 11:40 a.m. and was adjourned till Tuesday, 1st July, 2014 at 10:00
a.m.*