



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION-FIRST MEETING

FRIDAY, 5TH JULY, 2013

SESSION – 2012/2013



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

VOLUME: I

NUMBER: 38

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held on Friday, 5th July, 2013.

I. PRAYERS

**II. CORRECTIONS OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR TUESDAY, 2ND AND
THURSDAY, 4TH JULY, 2013.**

III. LAYING OF PAPERS

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Sierra Leone Infrastructure Development Fund Grant Agreement (Energy Access Project) between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association (Acting as Administrator of the Sierra Leone Infrastructure Development Fund), dated 20th June, 2013.

IV. GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

(I) THE MINISTER OF ENERGY

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENT WHICH WAS LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON TUESDAY, 2ND JULY, 2013:

"TREATY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CLSG INTERCONNECTION LINE BETWEEN COTE D'IVOIRE, LIBERIA, SIERRA LEONE AND GUINEA, ADOPTED IN ABIDJAN ON 5TH MARCH 2012."

II. MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

(a) "CLSG INTERCONNECTION FINANCE CONTRACT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK, DATED 10TH DECEMBER, 2012; AND

(b) ISTISNA'A AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK, CONCERNING FINANCING FOR LINKING SMALL HOLDER FARMERS TO MARKET IN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE, DATED 22ND MAY, 2013."



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Friday, 5th July, 2013.

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. Justice Abel Nathaniel Bankole Stronge, in the Chair].

The House was called to Order

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR TUESDAY, 2ND AND THURSDAY, 4TH JULY, 2013.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we have in our hands record of Votes and Proceeding for Tuesday, 2nd July, 2013. As usual, we go through page by page. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Can somebody move that the record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday, 2nd July, 2013 be adopted as presented?

HON. ALIMAMY G. KARGBO: I so move Mr Speaker.

HON. BUNDU SONGOWA: I so second Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any counter motion?

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

(Record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday, 2nd July, 2013 was unanimously adopted as presented).

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we have before record of Votes and Proceeding for Thursday, 4th July, 2013. As usual, we go through page by page. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Can somebody move that the record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 4th July, 2013 be adopted as presented?

HON. ALHASSAN JERO KAMARA: I so move Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. ALIEU B. MUNU: I so second Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any counter motion?

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

(Record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 4th July, 2013 was unanimously adopted as presented).

III. PAPERS LAID:

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MR MOMODU KARGBO (*Deputy Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as per the Order Paper, I have the pleasure to lay on the Table of this Honourable House "*The Sierra Leone Infrastructure Development Fund Grant Agreement (Energy Access Project) between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association (Acting as Administrator of the Sierra Leone Infrastructure Development Fund), dated 20th June, 2013.*"

IV. GOVERNMENT MOTION

(I) THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND POWER

MR OLUNIYI ROBBIN-COKER (*Minister of Energy and Power*): 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, 2nd July, 2013: "*Treaty for the Construction Operation and Development of the CLSG Interconnection Line between Cote D'ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, adopted in Abidjan on 5th march, 2012.*"

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is well known to all of us in this House that amongst our various successes and challenges is the issue of electricity and how the electricity sector is going to boast our prosperity. In spite of the various efforts that the

Government of Sierra Leone would make working with the Development Partners and the Private Sector across West Africa, there has been a phenomenon which has helped many countries to meet their electricity requirements. This is broadly described as the West African Power Pool, which allows for the trade of electricity amongst countries. To date, countries like Nigeria, Togo, and Cote D'Ivoire are all participating in the Power Pool Electricity that is being produced in one country and being sold to neighbouring countries via an interconnector line. The segment that is drawn from La Cote D'Ivoire through Liberia, Sierra Leone and to Guinea is yet to be constructed. Therefore, denying these four countries the opportunity to participate in a very vibrant and critically economic empowering opportunity. The four countries have come together and created a special purpose vehicle which will facilitate the construction and management of the said Line and be a catalyst for the trade of electricity amongst the four countries and also with other countries within the West African Power Pool. The projects receives the benefit of the development partners, funding with the European Investment Bank and the African Development Bank, funding Sierra Leone's part of the Line which is about 571 kilometers represents about one third of the total Line. The Treaty which was adopted in March by Ministers of Energy has subsequently been signed by Heads of States and now requires ratification. For the project to reach effectiveness and our development partners and financing institutions to begin to disburse payments which will allow for the Line to be delivered by 2017, ratification by all the countries is important. It is an important mile-stone and a condition for disbursement of funds.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, at this point, I want to tell this Honourable House that other countries in the segment like Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia and Guinea are also making strong advances to grab this opportunity. It is therefore thought expedient for Sierra Leone not to be left behind. I therefore put it to you Honourable Members that be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of Tuesday, 2nd July, 2013: *"Treaty for the Construction Operation and Development of the CLSG Interconnection Line between Cote d'ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, adopted in Abidjan on 5th march, 2012."* I thank you very much.

(Question Proposed)

HON. ANSU J. KAIKAI (*Deputy Minority Leader of the House*): I thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what we have before us is a ratification of a treaty that is highly beneficial not only to Sierra Leone but to other countries within the context of our immediate neighbours. These kinds of co-operations are the ones that are highly needed by us. This is because we are a developing nation and we do not have all those things we need for our country to move forward. Sometime ago, this country committed itself to the PRSP and to the Millennium Development Goal. That was done deliberately because both the PRSP I and the Millennium Development Goal were in the best interest of us as a nation and the developing world. We cannot afford to be left behind and we cannot afford to forge ahead living our neighbours behind, otherwise the syndrome that is most prevalent, the poverty syndrome would not go away. Therefore, we have to share whatever we have with our neighbours. And they too must be obligated to share what they have with us. President Nkrumah did it for Benin. He brought in the AKOSOMBO Dam and shared the electricity with Benin and Upper Volta, which is now Burkina Faso. I think this Project would serve Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. This is good for this country. We have no quarrel as a Parliament when such remarkable cooperative agreements are brought here for ratification. And if anything negative should happen in the future, it should come out of this because of certain mistakes that may have been made.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I hope that the Attorney-General and Ministry of Justice's Office and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development have thoroughly looked at this document. Parliament will not be blamed for ratifying an Agreement with some hidden agenda at all. We pray that will not happen. But if it does happen, the blame would not be on Parliament. It would be laid at the doorsteps of the ministries concerned. This is because you brought it here.

On that note Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Minister for bringing up with this document for ratification.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member I felt uncomfortable with your last remarks. When a document is brought to Parliament it is the duty of Parliaments to study it thoroughly before ratifying it. Parliament should not shift the blame to any other person.

HON. ANSU J. KAIKAI: Mr Speaker, I appreciate what you have said.

HON. HASSAN SESAY: Thank you Mr Speaker. Let me say that if this Agreement is going to be good, Parliament will take credit for that. So, I take exception to my senior colleague wanting to shift the blame to the Ministers... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: Excuse me Honourable Member do you have any senior colleague here? This is a unicameral Parliament. As Honourable Torto said some time ago, he might have forgotten what he said. He said nobody sat to any exam to come here *(Laughter)*. Carry on Honourable Member.

HON. HASSAN SESAY: Thank you Mr Speaker. Let me first of all thank the Minister of Energy for bringing such an Agreement to this Parliament. We all know the challenges that are being faced in this part of the world when it comes to investment in relation to energy. And if there is a bilateral agreement between states brought to this House, I think we are duty bound to actually embrace such an agreement. This is because we know that if such an agreement is put in place, it will not only help in the energy sector, but it will also improve the element of economic integration between states in a particular sub-region. By so doing, it will increase the volume of trade between member states of the CSLG. I want Members of Parliament to know that every challenge we face now is related to energy and any effort that is been made by this Government to improve the energy sector in this country we must embrace it. And it is a responsibility of this House to ratify any agreement that is going to help us in trying to pursue the Agenda for Prosperity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement brought to us by the Minister of Energy is only one of the very many efforts that is made to combat those challenges we are facing in terms of investments. This will promote the cooperation between states. When we have such a connection Line, definitely we have to exchange energy expertise between states within the sub-region, rather than depending on people who do not understand the social dynamics of societies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was listening to one of our local radio stations when I heard the Minister of Energy talking about Ghana that has over 50 years experience in the operation of a hydro. Those are the kind of technical cooperations that we are looking for. This is because the cost is minimal than going to Europe or America. And we have always been talking about the South, South Cooperation. This is a move in the right direction. I believe this Parliament is supposed to embrace such a move just like we encourage indigenous business men in the country. We must also encourage cooperation between states and within sub-regions. We understand the challenges that we all face across the sub-region. We know that our problems are identical with those of other states. Therefore, if there is a method or something that is being designed to help alleviate this problem, I think this House should embrace such an initiative.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want also to commend the Minister of Energy for championing this initiative. One thing we must always be aware of, and which was discussed yesterday in this House is wastage of resource. The Minister was talking this morning about energy preservation. He made mentioned of electricity bulbs. I think those things must be associated with such a Project. People know the value of economising energy. How do we do it? We must do it collectively. We must do it with willingness and ability to improve the quality of what we get from this sort of Agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we must embrace such an Agreement and let us ratify it for the benefit of the people of this country. This will only help us translate Agenda for Change to the Agenda for Prosperity. I thank you very much Mr Speaker.

HON. KARIFALA S. CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will start by allaying the fears of our Deputy Minority Leader, Honourable Ansu J. Kaikai and to reemphasize the point of Parliament having thorough understanding of whatever document is placed on the Table of this House. I will use this chance Mr Speaker. Please permit me to unfold this document for better understanding.

THE SPEAKER: Is it folded.

HON. KARIFALA CONTEH: This Project started right back in 1999. What we are now discussing is the subset of the West African Power Pool (WAPP), and on the 5th December, 1999, when we had the 22nd Summit of the Authority of ECOWAS Heads of States and Governments to address the energy deficiency within Africa, the Heads of states thought it wise that they must work cooperatively by creating a West Africa Power Pool for which what we are now discussing is the subset. Of course, committees were set up and this Project was guided by this Committee, typical amongst them is the Steering Committee of which our Minister is a member. The Steering Committee consisted of the Ministers of all the African sub-region. And this will be discussed by them and implemented in their various countries. It is formed against 5 pillars:

- to improve cross-border and reliable power flow of electricity in ECOWAS member-states;
- to integrate the national power systems operations into a unified regional electricity market;
- to assure citizens of ECOWAS member-states of a stable, affordable and reliable electricity supply;

- to develop a clear and measurable standard to harmonise electricity planning and operation of pooled electric system in ECOWAS member-states; and
- to increase the level of power supply in the region through the implementation of priority generation and transmission project.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, with respect to you, I think what you are doing now is sending a signal that Members of Parliament are not au fait with this document before us. I don't think that should be the case.

HON. KARIFALA CONTEH: Thank you very much. The essence why I am asking Honourable Members of Parliament to ratify this document is the fact that Sierra Leone is one of the most disadvantaged countries with respect to electricity and therefore stands to benefit greatly. This is because when we interconnect with these countries (as we all know the status of our electricity supply), means we stand to gain. We stand to profit a lot Mr Speaker. And what is in front of us now is to create the atmosphere and the convenience to receive this power from our neighbouring countries. I wish to commend the Minister of Energy for his proactiveness. I have been following his activities in this direction. He has been very proactive. And with this Agreement, we stand to gain massively. Mr Speaker, this Project consists of the West African countries. But as at now, what is in front of us is the CLSG, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cote D'Ivoire and Guinea. This forms the basis for us to get constant supply of electricity which will consequently lead to immense development in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to offer 3 pieces of advice to the Minister of Energy. The first advice has to do with the experience we share in this Well with respect to Deputy Minority Leader, Honourable Ansu J. Kaikai with regard to the Anglophone and Francophone countries. The reason is that we need to get ourselves very much involved, especially so with the formation of the Steering Committee. Mr Speaker these French countries always place themselves in front of Anglophone countries. And we stand to benefit from employment, contracts etc. We need to place

Sierra Leone in front of these benefits and we need to get involved strongly into the Steering Committee. We have to be sending representatives to any meeting that is going to be organised in the future so that we stand at the fore front in a bid to benefit from this Project. Of course Mr Speaker, this Project is good. It is good for this country. It is good for all of us as Sierra Leoneans. Mr Speaker even the Paper that was laid on this Table prior to this Project was as a result of this Project. The one that was laid last week was also as a result of this Project which is geared towards setting the proper system to accommodate and distribute this electricity supply. That is why our international partners have concentrated on ensuring that this Agreement is ratified. When this is confirmed, the distribution networks would be set up and we would have to confirm the infrastructural developments that have just been tabled here. All these are geared towards getting all components in place so that we would have accurate, reliable and 100% supply of electricity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in view of that I have no doubt that the Mr Minister of Energy will continue with what he has been doing for us to benefit from this Project. We would have lots of Sierra Leoneans being employed. Many Sierra Leoneans would get contracts that would earn them huge amount of money. We are not only craving for the electricity but other concomitant benefits like employments etc. In view of that I ask Members of this House for us all to ratify this Agreement. I thank you very much Mr Speaker.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. BRAIMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take a lone position of not dwelling on the advantages and the benefits we would get from ratifying this Project. Previous speakers before me have dealt with the supposed benefits we would get as a nation. But I want to go beyond that a little. Sometimes when people envisioned good things either by means of making philosophical statements we don't appreciate until when we are faced with the situation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to commend for this effort. But my commendation is limited by the fact that there is something we can also commend, that

is, the exigency of the circumstance surrounding electricity or energy production in this country. A very great Professor, Professor Alie Mansouri observed in trying to analyse the socio-political situations in Africa thus: *"If scarcity is the mother of inventions, then, abundance is the cause for inertia."*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when this Project started, there were very few people in Freetown nobody bothered because electricity was constant, there was no electricity scarcity. We have grown without catching up with the need and demand for energy supply. And so, I want to commend the circumstantial situation that has precipitated your venture in linking up with other countries to establish other lines. While I commend you, I also look at the circumstances in which we are now in. We have grown as a country. The need for electricity has increased almost unreasonably that we cannot easily catch up. And now you are forced to invent and create ways and means of generating electricity in the country. And that is how we should grapple with the challenges of the problems of the times and moments we see. I commend you for quickly and the Government for quickly catching up with the present circumstance we are facing now.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in terms of power generation, we are far behind. This is because at that time, we did not face this kind of problem, especially when the Government capitalised on scarcity in power supply as a campaign strategy. And now, you are forced with similar problem. We appreciate your efforts. But power generation is a very important thing in the economic development of any nation. A couple of years ago, when I was out doing Bursary in Uganda visiting power stations, they have a lot of innovations and creative activities to ensure that power supply was maintained in Uganda. Here we have the National Power Authority (NPA) always complaining about distribution of electricity, load shedding etc. In those countries, you have special agencies that generate electricity. They have another agency that is responsible to distribute the electricity. Another agency is there to collect the revenue. That kind of strategy has moved that country forward in managing power. But because we were

very small and we had a lot of energy we never imagine that. Therefore, Alie Mansouri has fallen on us today. I want to encourage you to position yourself properly. Government officials should position themselves properly to catch up with the prevailing circumstance and to see how they neutralise difficulties and problems. This kind of venture is very impressive and it will allow fast economic development which we need in this country now. You should not be having electricity in Freetown and forget about the people of Kailahun District. It is absurd Mr Speaker. You should not only supply electricity in Freetown and say there is electricity in the country. You have to consider the district headquarter towns. I know that Kailahun District would be the first to benefit from this Project because of its proximity to Liberia. And the people of Kailahun will appreciate what you have done.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with these brief remarks, I encourage us all to ratify this Agreement. I thank you.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI (*Minority Leader of the House*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand to make contribution to the instrument before us this morning, the Treaty for the Construction, Operation and Development of the CLSG Interconnection Line adopted on the 5th March, 2012.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, energy as we all know is one of the basic ingredients for development. If we look at our energy sector in the past, and even currently, we can say that over 80% of the population is without energy. When we talk of energy, particularly with regard to electricity, we think of Freetown and some of the districts headquarter towns. But majority of the other areas in this country are without electricity. They use biomass fuel, wood and charcoal for cooking and lighting. This has a negative effect on investment. This is because when investors come into a country, and they are to generate their own electricity, the cost of production would be very high, and the cost is often passed to the consumers if they are producing goods and services that are meant for the consumption of the Sierra Leonean population. So, energy is key towards the development of a country. What is before us is not only

concerning Sierra Leone, it concerns transmission Line that will run from Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. We also see in the other sectors like the oil and transport sectors. We are seeing such outfit wherein gas pipe lines are moving. If you go to the Southern, Eastern or Northern Africa, some of these outfits are running through many countries. If you take the railways for example, are also projects that run through 4-6 countries. I think this no exception to what is already being done on the African Continent. In fact, not only on the African Continent but we also have outfits that are joining North Africa to Europe, particularly when you look at the solar from the Sahara Desert.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, already, legal frame-works have been brought to this Parliament in 2003. The ECOWAS Energy Protocol was brought to this Parliament. After that, we have also looked at the West African Power Pool (WAPP) Agreement. They are all in preparation of what we have before us today. So, we hope to have our own energy. If we look at Article 2, it states the purpose of this Treaty. It is meant to promote regional energy market with a view to optimising resources and their distribution in West African countries. It is very important that we explore more of the South-South Cooperation by optimising our resources.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we need not belabor the ratification of this Instrument. This Instrument shall come into effect when the last member of the four countries has adopted, ratified and deposited the ratified document to the necessary institution. And there is also a registration, not only with the ECOWAS Secretariat but also the African Union. That is where I want to bring to the notice of the Minister of Energy that the African Union works in close contact with the PAN African Parliament. The PAN African Parliament is one of the organs of the Africa Union and also the African Union Commission. In the African Union Commission, you have the vision on energy. Also, in the Pan African Parliament, you have as one of the ten permanent Committees, the Committee on Energy, Transport, ICT, Science and Technology. I want to inform you that the Chair of that Committee in the Pan African Parliament is myself, a Sierra

Leonean. Therefore, it is very important that we do give report as and when we go to Pan African Parliament Conference on what is happening in our countries with regard to the ten committees. I am on the Committee on Energy and the Majority Leader of this House is on Committee on International Cooperation. One of our new Members of Parliament is on the Education Committee. So as the Chairperson of the African Parliament Committee on Energy, I think we need to work together so that we achieve a positive result. I am very much au fait with what we are doing on the energy sector. This is because I work very closely with that Unit in the African Union Commission. And every time we are in Parliament, we have meetings wherein we are informed of the global activities that are going on in the energy sector. And we also give our own perspective as to what is happening at the national level. So, I think you are a lucky Minister of Energy having a Sierra Leonean that is handling that Committee. That, in itself is also a very big advantage for Sierra Leone. I hope that you take advantage of that opportunity by working together.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want us to ratify this Agreement. This is because we need energy in this country. Without which, our development prowess will be moribund. We want to do a lot of things but because of the intermittent energy supply in the country, we are not able to do so. We have to speedily ratify this Agreement. Mr Minister, my main concern has to do with the amendments. If you go to the section that has to do with amendments, it says that at least two countries can move for an amendment. We are dealing with two English speaking countries and two French speaking countries. We know the dynamics of the relations between the French speaking countries and the English speaking countries. If you say at least two, that is the minimum. Two countries can call for an amendment. Supposing two French countries call for an amendment and is allowed; or, three English speaking countries do the same, will that amendment be in the interest of the two remaining English countries or the two remaining French countries? If I had been there, I would have asked that at least three countries be involved in the process of amendment. Two countries of the same language cannot just come together and propose an amendment. There must be

a third country, either an English speaking country if the amendment is proposed by French speaking countries or a French speaking country if the amendment is proposed by English speaking countries. The English speaking countries must be convinced that the amendments that are to be brought by the French are in the interest of both the English and French speaking countries. We have worked with them before. And we have discovered that the French speaking countries are very aggressive. They are very dynamic in nature. When it comes to matters like these, especially in West Africa where we have more French speaking counties than English speaking countries. We always have problems when it comes to those negotiations. I wish we had not only said at least two, but at least three countries. You must have the concurrence of one English speaking country for you to be able to come up with any amendments. That is my concern Mr Minister of Energy. I don't know how we can address that, but I hope that would be taken onboard when you shall have met in the Stirling Committee. I thank you very much Mr Speaker.

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU (*Deputy Majority Leader of the House*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by thanking the Honourable Minister of Energy for championing this Agreement. He was very brief and to the point. I believe he did that deliberately because he has the conviction that this Honourable House doesn't need any lecture or tutorial to understand and appreciate the importance of energy in this country. We represent the people and we know how they feel when there is no energy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was almost tempted to say that this document does not need a debate after the Minister had made his succinct presentation. But Parliament is a House of debate and of course after the Minority Leader of the House has spoken, I was tempted to withdraw my earlier thought. This is because she has brought out very useful information. Sometime ago in this House, we ratified an agreement for the laying of the Fiber Optic Cable to enhance communication in this country. This morning, we are here to ratify a Treaty that has to do with Interconnecting Line for Energy. You cannot have an effective communication without

energy. These are joint demand items. I am glad that all members on both sides of this House are all willing to push the Agenda for Prosperity forward.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank those who have contributed this morning. I hope that the Minister of Energy would take into consideration all the concerns raised. I want to call on the Committee on Energy in this House to provide oversight function towards this Project. I am saying this because what is lacking in this country is the follow-up to ensure compliance. We have passed a lot of Bills into laws. We have ratified lots of loan agreements and grants in this Parliament, but the follow-up mechanisms are poor. The follow-ups are our greatest challenge. We hope and pray that our oversight role will do just that. We shall go the length and breadth to monitor the implementation of this Project. We would continue to look at this document closely. We observe the timelines that are involved in this Agreement. Mr Minister, this Parliament is watching you. The Oversight Committee on Energy in particular is watching you. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister you may like to react to some of the issues raised?

MR OLUNIYI ROBBIN-COKER: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is a pleasure to be able to present a Treaty which receives commendation from both sides of the House. Electricity is vital to the development of any country, and Sierra Leone is no exception. Let me first of all assure the Deputy Minority Leader of this Honourable House that the Treaty was scrutinised by the Attorney-General's Office and the Ministry of Finance prior to its submission to His Excellency the President to append his signature. Therefore, we expect that this Treaty lives up to its requirements.

Having said that Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to note the concerns of the Minority Leader, Honourable Dr Bernadette Lahai, with respect to the qualification of at least two countries can go for amendment. This has been a thorny issue in terms of negotiating agreements within this environment. And all I can say is that we would try to achieve consensus at the Steering Committee level. I hasten to add that as you have

noted the countries on this segment of the Line are all Mano Rive Union countries. And it was agreed at the Heads of State level that Sierra Leone is the champion for energy within the MRU. Therefore, we are going to take a leadership position in the Steering Committee for the CLSG Line. And hopefully, that will enable us to protect our interest and ensure that the economic benefits are realised in Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me quickly mention that the Line has been deliberately designed to cover about 5 hydro power stations we have in Sierra Leone, including the Goma Hydro, Bigongor, Bumbuna Phase 1 and 2 etc. And the good news is because the Line has been so designed, it will help investment into the development of those hydros. This is because the West African Power Pool sees those as potential sources from which they will buy power at a later date.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I noted the Honourable Member's comment about the tidiness of this intervention. Suffice it to say had we had the privilege of being earlier participants in the West African Power Pool, some of the challenges we have had recently with energy sector could have easily been mitigated by being able to buy power from other countries. We hope that once this Line is implemented, we would not experience these kinds of challenges we are currently experiencing. We would have a ready substitute available. Kailahun remains a high priority area as every other district in the country. Almost every district in the country has some hydro power assets. I recently asked a team to visit Kailahun District, specifically to look at a water fall which has been earmarked as potentially a hydro-power source. It is on our list of cites to visit for pre-feasibility and then feasibility studies. Additionally, we are in discussions with Liberia for the development of the Mano River into a Hydro-power Station to be able to provide power to both countries on either side of the river itself.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me conclude by saying that I am very pleased to hear from the Minority Leader of the role she is playing in helping to shape Africa's energy sector. It is without any doubt that energy is the key to Africa's sustainable development. And as the current Minister of Energy in this Government, it will give me

great pleasure to be able to collaborate with her effectively to ensure that what we do in Sierra Leone is best practice within West Africa and the Africa region. We would ensure that Sierra Leone would be in position to make good contributions in terms of what we develop and learn in our energy sector as the region moves forward.

On that note Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank you very much and once again move that this Honourable House ratify the Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 2nd July, 2013: "*Agreement for the Construction, Operation and Development of the CLSG interconnection line between Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea adopted in Abidjan on 5th March, 2012,*" and subsequently signed by the Heads of States. Thank you very much.

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

(Government Motion by the Minister of Energy and Power has been unanimously ratified)

(II) THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MR MOMODU KARGBO (*Deputy Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand here to honourably request that this Honourable House ratify the following agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 2nd June, 2013:

(c) CLSG Interconnection Finance Contract between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the European Investment Bank, dated 10th December, 2012; and

(d) ISTISNA'A Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and Islamic Development Bank, concerning financing for linking Small Holder

Farmers to Market in the Republic of Sierra Leone, dated 22nd May, 2013.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me start by noting the comments of the Deputy Majority Leader to the effect that the House does not normally need lecturing in matters like this. There was one Honourable Member who was going into details. But the Speaker cautioned him that the Honourable Members of this House have the documents, and that they have read them. Therefore, the documents need not to be read to them again.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, maybe in the mode of the circumstances, one has to be very brief this morning. My job has been made easier for the first Agreement. This is because it is a follow-up of the document that has just been presented. This document that has just been presented is the Treaty. The Treaty governs the relationships of the four countries and what I am now presenting to the House is the bit of the money that governs us. It is a linkage sort of. As has already been explained, the countries of the Mano River Union are to be linked through an electricity arrangement. All of them would be connected to the hydro schemes which these countries have identified. In the case of Sierra Leone, it has been linked to various points. If we turn to Page 38 of that document, we would see the details of the linkages. Therefore, what this is telling us is that, we are proposing a loan of \$75 million at an interest rate of 1.9% per annum to be repaid semi-annually with a grace period of 7 years after the signing of this Agreement. And it shall be paid in 25 years after the signing of this Agreement. In other words, it is a loan for 25 years with a grace period of 7 years. It is a much bigger package, but we are only dealing with the package that is coming to Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you look at Page 38 of this document, the details of the sections that will cover Sierra Leone are all spelt there. The important issue to note is that it is a loan and it adds to the debt portfolio of the country; and along the line, we have to think of repayment. But I consider this particular Agreement as

significant because of the source. It is coming from the European Union. European Union gives us a lot of grants, an average of about \$50-60 million a year. They do a lot of work in Sierra Leone. And most of what they give us is grant. This is the first time they are advancing a loan and the lesson there is that they could have given a grant, but they said no. According to them, they said that electricity generate income. And I think that is the lesson.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the second proposal is the Islamic Development Bank of which a loan of \$20 million is proposed. That mostly will be going to the Small Holder Farmer Scheme to continue the linkage. Again, I will be guided by the comments of the Deputy Majority Leader and the retort of Mr Speaker. The details of the Project or the specifics would be found in Page 18 of the Agreement itself. And for a lot of people seated here, most Honourable Members are from the rural areas. The Smallholder Scheme is hammered into our memory as we go around we see these ABC's. And this particular time as I said, the total cost of the Project as per the items on Page 18 is 20 million United States Dollars. It carries an interest rate of 2.5% per annum. Government has a counterpart contribution of 2.8 million. The terms of the agreement include 15 years repayment period and 4 years grace period.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, that is what I want to say this morning with respect to the 2 Agreements. I move again that this Honourable House ratify the two agreements that were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 2nd July, 2013:

(e) CLSG Interconnection Finance Contract between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the European Investment Bank, dated 10th December, 2012; and

(f) ISTISNA'A Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and Islamic Development Bank, concerning financing for linking Small Holder Farmers to Market in the Republic of Sierra Leone, dated 22nd May, 2013. I thank you.

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

(Government Motion by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development has been ratified).

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you would recalled that we lost our Minority Leader of the House, Honourable Momoh Pujeh sometime ago. I think the experience we had in respect of his death, following the death and payment of benefits to the bereaved family has some legal procedures which I am about to announce to you. And henceforth, the administration is putting in place a mechanism by which Members of Parliament would have to give the names of their next of kin and sign the list he/she will submit to the Administration. We would prepare the document, but pursuant to Section 12, Sub-section A of the State Salaries, Pensions, Gratuities and Other Benefits Act, 2003, With your permission Mr Speaker, I read: *"Where a person ceases to be a Member of Parliament by death, the gratuity which would have been paid to him if he had ceased to be such a Member otherwise than by death, shall be paid; (a) to any widow, dependent child, or relative of the deceased Member of Parliament and (b) in such proportion and in such manner as the Speaker may determine, acting on the advice of the appropriate Standing Committee of Parliament."*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, that is where the announcement is anchored on. Acting on the advice of the appropriate Standing Committee of Parliament, there has not been a Committee of this nature before. So, it is therefore advised that this Committee be set up pursuant to Section 93, Sub-section 1(h) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No.6 of 1991 and consistent with Standing Order 71(1).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with the leave of Mr Speaker, I announce the following to constitute the special Select Committee that will sit to advise the Honourable Speaker for this particular case and any other case. We are not praying for us to loose any other Member for now, but since we are faced with the present circumstances we have to set up this Committee.. The Committee would be called 'Committee on Gratuity and Death of Members of Parliament. This is because if you look

at 93:1(h) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, it makes provision for special Committee to be set up apart from the Standing Committees. The following Members of Parliament constitute that special Committee:

Hon. Chernor R. M. Bah, Deputy Speaker, Chairman;

Hon. S. B. B. Dumbuya, Majority Leader;

Hon. Ibrahim R. Bundu, Deputy Leader;

Hon Dr Bernadette Lahai, Minority Leader;

Hon. Ansu J. Kaikai, Deputy Minority Leader;

Hon Claude D. M. Kamanda, Majority Whip;

Hon. Sidi M. Tunis, Minority Whip; and

Hon. P.C. Bai Kurr Kanagbaro Sanka III, Representing the Paramount Chiefs.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Clerk, please state a time frame.

MR IBRAHIM S. SESAY (*Clerk of the House*): This is as urgent as possible Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: No, it not as urgent as possible. What is the time frame?

MR IBRAHIM S. SESAY: The Deputy Speaker would be arriving today from the Gambia. And as soon as he comes today, I would let him know that this Committee is now in operation so that we can meet as early as next week to provide the necessary advice Sir.

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just want to draw your attention to an observation, particularly the statement made by the Clerk of Parliament. He said we have never had such a Committee that looks into the affairs of Members of Parliament. I want to draw his attention to S. O. 70(4), under the caption:

"House Committee." Maybe, if I read it for the benefit of the House it will guide us. With your leave Mr Speaker I read: *"There shall be a committee to be known as the House Committee to consist of the Speaker as Chairman and six members to be nominated by the Committee of Selection as soon as maybe after the beginning of each session, but in any case not later than twenty-one days thereafter, to consider and advise the Speaker upon all matters connected with the comfort and convenience of Members of Parliament."*I don't know if that Committee can play a role

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Deputy Majority Leader, you are assured that the Clerk looked at all available Standing Orders of this House and with my active participation; we agreed that this Committee does not cover the instant case.

MR IBRAHIM S. SESAY (Clerk of Parliament): Another important announcement Mr Speaker. You could recalled that over the years, this House has been fighting very hard to get this relationship with the African Capacity Building Fund. I am happy to report to you that we have gone through the process and have succeeded in making that relationship a reality. Two million dollar (\$2, 000,000) Grant was signed and was ratified in this Parliament. We have gone through all the official processes that are needed to be done. We have signed the Aide Memoir, and the total amount is two million dollars. The banker is the Rokel Commercial Bank. And we have just received a credit advice for the first transfer of \$100,000 (One hundred thousand dollars) to this special account. And the signatories to this Account are Category A and Category B. Category A consist of the Clerk of Parliament and the Deputy Clerk. Category B consists of the Director of Finance and the Head of PACO. And at each particular time you have two signatories, A and B. Now, there is a Technical Committee which constitutes the Director of Finance, the Director of Committees, the Director of Official Reports, the Director of the ICT, the Parliamentary Counsel, the Deputy Clerk and the Head of PACO. In addition to that also, we have a Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is made up of the following:

The Hon. Chernor R. M. Bah, Deputy Speaker;

Hon. Dr Bernadette Lahai, Minority Leader;
Hon. Ibrahim R. Bundu, Deputy Majority Leader;
Hon. P. C. Mansa Paki Kabombor II, Paramount Chief Representative;
Hon. Helen Kuyembeh, Women's Caucus;
Hon. Hassan Sheriff, Chairman, Finance Committee;
Hon. Ajibola Manley-Spain, Chairman, Legislative Committee;
Mr Ibrahim S. Sesay, Clerk of Parliament; and
Mrs Finda Fraser nine as ex-officio and project coordinator.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is composition of the Steering Committee. Now, what we have done so far is to look at the Aide Memoir, the activities outlined and the first trench of \$100,000 that has been deposited so far, so that that we can present to the Technical Committee. Through the Technical Committee, we will pass it to the Steering Committee for their approval. After that, we will convey the approval of the Steering Committee to the African Capacity Building Fund for their perusal, before we can start the implementation process. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much Mr Clerk. Honourable Members, you have heard in detail the organisation of this Grant which has been given to Parliament and the organs established for its implementation. I shall ask the Clerk after this sitting to make a print out of this announcement which, hopefully will be circularised to each Member of Parliament. I am emphasising this because when you want to make enquiries or queries you know where to direct them to.

ADJOURNMENTS

(The House rose at 11.20 a.m. and was adjourned until Tuesday, 9th July, 2013, at 10.00 a.m.).