

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

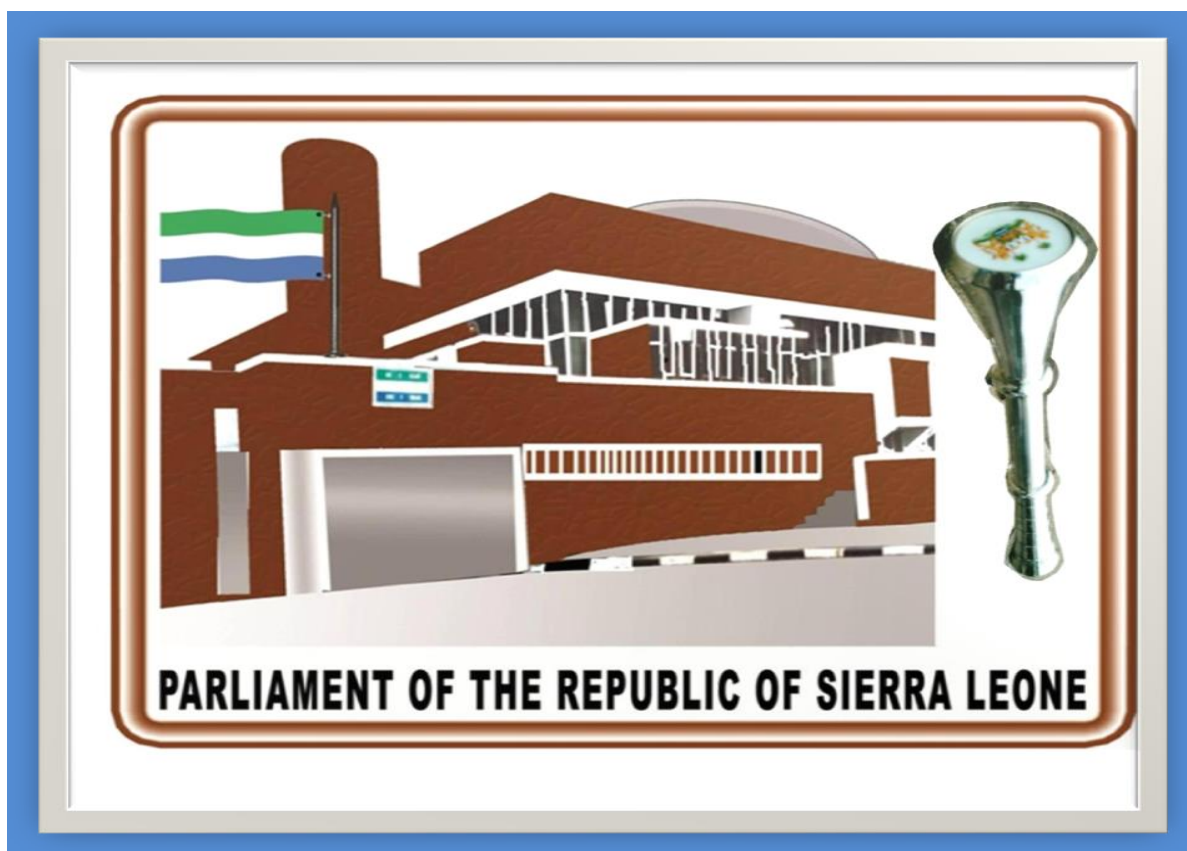
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

THIRD SESSION –SECOND MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 16TH DECEMBER, 2020

SESSION – 2020/2021



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[HANSARD]

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Second Meeting of the Third Session of the Fifth Parliament
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Wednesday, 16th December, 2020

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THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

THIRD SESSION – SECOND MEETING OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Wednesday, 16th December, 2020.

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Mr Ishmaila Kabba, Read the Prayers]

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

[The Speaker, Hon. Dr Chernor Abass Bundu in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY 15TH DECEMBER, 2020

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, good morning. We shall start the day's Proceedings with a consideration of the Record of Votes and Proceedings of the 27th Sitting that was Held on Tuesday the 15th of December, 2020. We shall do so by skipping the first four pages and start from page 5. Page 6? Page 7? Can someone please move for the Adoption of the Record of Votes and Proceedings for the Parliamentary Sitting Held on Tuesday 15th December, 2020.

HON. JOSEPH W. LAMIN: I so move Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON.: I so second Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the Parliamentary Sitting Held on Tuesday 15th December, 2020 has been adopted]

THE SPEAKER: Next item is announcement by Mr Speaker. I will keep doing this until I see a positive change in the Well. Once again, with great regret and dissatisfaction I observe the tardy attendance of Members of Parliament and I say this for the record that this is becoming rather perpetual. I hope and pray that 2021 would bring changes of a more positive note. Maybe I need the help of some of our clergies both to my right and my left. They are men of God, may be they would be listened to by God. Some of us who are ordinary mortals may not be so listened to by God. But in all honesty this is getting out of control and I will never tire of reminding Honourable Members.

HON. KANDEH K. YUMKELLA: Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O [23] I beg to take leave of you. I have just been informed that my uncle passed away and he is one of those who

raised me and he is a Muslim, so I have to go attend the funeral. For those of you Honourable Bashiru, it's Doctor Yillah in Bo.

THE SPEAKER: Before you go please Honourable Member return to your seat. I am sure the Members to my right will definitely agree with me that the bereavement is not just yours in a personal sense but is a bereavement that we all share particularly with Members to my right considering the role that Dr Yillah played when he was a very active member of the party to my right. And for that, may I ask all of us to rise and observe a minute silence prayer for the late man, may his soul rest in perfect peace amen.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA [*Leader of Government Business*]: Mr Speaker, we don't know if they are going to have the funeral today, thinking about his contribution to SLPP and OBBA and politics in general, I don't know how best you can speed up the sitting so that you can allow some of my Members to attend the ceremony especially my Members that are coming from Bo. If I can vividly recall during the struggle days he was with us, I beg you that you have to speed up the sitting so that you can allow Members to attend the funeral. It is plea on behalf of Members of Parliament. Thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: It is not only plea that I would like to heed but I think in memory of the late man, I would like us to consider taking item [IV] only for today and we start consideration of the item appearing under item [V] as from tomorrow. I don't know what the Chairman on the Committee of Finance will tell us about his preparedness because we only have tomorrow and the day after which is Thursday and Friday.

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: Mr Speaker, the first batch of the report are ready but if you so decide that we postpone to tomorrow so be it.

THE SPEAKER: And then again in deference and in memory of the late man we would be prepared to meet till the wiwi hours of the morning.

Is that agreed? I want the attention of the Leader of Government Business and the Leader of the Opposition. Welcome Leader of the Opposition, maybe you don't know what we have been discussing, come forward please. Shall we proceed please?

IV. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND AVIATION

THE SPEAKER: Mr Deputy Minister, before I allow you to say anything I would like your response to the specific directive that I gave the last time about the appearance of the substantive Minister before this House. Again, I see he has not turned up and he has decided to send you instead. I just want to know whether my message was delivered to your Minister and what his response was.

MR REX BONAPHA [*The Deputy Minister of Transport and Aviation*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament, as instructed, I went back and thankfully my permanent secretary was also there and indeed we had to go meet our Minister, he was in Choithram hospital for treatment and we explained to him so that we would not miss that particular instruction on that particular day. On Monday we came with him and some Honourable Members.

THE SPEAKER: How did he come if you took him from the hospital?

MR REX BONAPHA: You remember it was Friday that the instruction was given.

THE SPEAKER: No. You said on Monday you brought him here.

MR REX BONAPHA: Yes.

THE SPEAKER: How?

MR REX BONAPHA: He is still ill and we said to him that the Speaker said; you must come.

HON. CHERNOR R.M BAH: Mr Speaker, I know you are in charge but please I am kindly pleading with you that we don't go into the nitty gritty on this matter. I am kindly pleading with you please Sir. Thank you very much for accepting.

THE SPEAKER: I have not accepted your plea.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, I am fully aware of the situation of the Minister as I stand to speak, we don't to give out his medical details at this moment, but he is not feeling bright. I beg through your good office do allow him to present.

THE SEPAKER: I am beginning to suspect something between the two Leaders. I am a little taken aback that the first plea has come from the Leader of the Opposition and endorse by...

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, thank you very much for listening to the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of Government Business.

THE SEPAKER: Have I.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: This is the voice of Parliament. So we want to thank you as the father of Parliament, when the when the Leaders have spoken I think they have spoken on behalf of all Members of Parliament. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

THE SEPAKER: Is there a medical doctor in the House? Kindly see me after we rise. I have a special job for you to do. I will give you a new patient to examine. Yes Mr Deputy Minister again, go and repeat to your Minister this is the last time.

MR REX BANAPHA: Thank you. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Friday 11th December, 2020.

BUILD-OPERATE AND TRANSFER AGREEMENT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, FINANCING AND CONCESSION OF FREETOWN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BY AND BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND SUMMA AIRPORT (SL) LIMITED DATED 12TH NOVEMBER, 2020.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the new airport Build-Operate and Transfer Agreement would target the following:

CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW PASSENGER TERMINAL WITH A DESIGN CAPACITY OF 3,000,000 PASSENGERS

HOWEVER, THE INITIAL CONSTRUCTION WOULD BE FOR 1,000,000 PASSENGERS TO BE EXPANDED IN PHASES AS DEEMED NECESSARY UNTIL THE 3,000,000 MAXIMUM CAPACITIES IS REACHED.

CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW VIPP/PRESIDENTIAL 1000 SQUARE METERS AIRPORT TERMINAL

REFURBISHMENT AND RE-CEILING OF THE EXISTING RUN WAY 3.2 KILOMETRES BY 45 METRES.

CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TAXI WAY PARALLEL TO THE EXISTING RUN WAY WITH HIGH SPEED EXIT ENTRANCE TO THE RUN WAY

CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW APOM FOR THE NEW PASSENGER TERMINAL AND THE PRESIDENTIAL/VIP TERMINAL

CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER FULLY OPERATIONAL AND EQUIPPED

CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW SEARCH AND RESCUE AND AIRPORT FIRE FIGHTING BUILDING AND FULLY EQUIPPED

CONSTRUCTION OF A CAR PARK AND THE ROAD SYSTEM WITHIN THE AIRPORT AS WELL AS LANDSCAPING, MARKING, SIGNAGE AND TRAFFIC LIGHTS WITHIN THE PERIMETER OF THE AIRPORT

THE INSTALLATION OF GENERAL INFRASTRUCTURE SUCH AS WATER DISTRIBUTION, POWER SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION, WASTE WATER TREATMENT, EMERGENCY DIESEL GENERATOR, USB FOR THE BUILDING AND THE FACILITIES, LIGHTNING PROTECTION AND GROUNDING SYSTEM

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in his speech at the state opening of the fifth Parliament of the second Republic in May 2018 His Excellency Retired Brigadier Julius Maada Bio stated that his Government will plan, developed and implement infrastructural project on an integrated holistic and cross sectorial development basis. This statement has well as the President's speech at the launching of the second juba

bridge in November 2018 demonstrate the commitment of His Administration to deliver purposeful and well-crafted project that are affordable by the country manage in a transparent manner serves the inclusive needs of every Sierra Leonean irrespective of region or party affiliation, make community assessable and sustainable and conformed to the sustainable development goals. The office of the Presidential Infrastructure Initiative was established for the purposed of delivery infrastructures that serve the development need of our citizens and our nation over the past years. The office has developed a number of projects and has made significant progress in engaging in credible partners and investors to support Government in its effort to address development challenges by improving physical infrastructures in key sectors including Transportations, Education, Health, Energy, Water, Agriculture, Tourism, Trade and Economy. OPII is mandated to plan design and implement strategic and transformative infrastructure project across all sectors on an integrated basis that have high development impact and create job and skill development.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the strategic relevant and urgency of these projects cannot be re-overemphasise. The infrastructural development has been identify as one of the most critical drivers of socio economic growth and it is critical in Sierra Leone drives towards medium income status and self-sufficiency in line with the United Nation SDG and the Africa Union Agenda 2063. The vision of OPII is closely align with Government priority and all project support economic diversifications and growth. The existing Airport terminal was upgraded a few years ago but unfortunately the current facility are inadequate to meet future passengers demand. Currently, the total passengers tripled are about 3000 per year. A new Airport terminal would maximise Sierra Leone geographical location advantage unlock its vast tourist potential increased, air transport service and promote the Aviation Industry and most importantly established Sierra Leone as a regional Hub for both passengers and cargo traffic taking advantage of the proposed transshipment industry and international free trade zone to be established at Lungi close to the airport.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sierra Leone has the shortest distance from Africa to South America, Sierra Leone was a Hub and staging area for the British Government during the second world war and during the fourth war. The traveling time from Sierra Leone to most destination in Europe is under six hours, Sierra Leone provides regional fit for air transportation to and from west Africa and central Africa as a result it's could play the role of a transit hub for destinations such as the far East and China. The new airport terminal project will also upgrade Sierra Leone poor compliance with International Civil Aviation Organisation [ICAO] standard and recommended practices.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, currently, Sierra Leone is ranked 46 out of 47 Africa countries that were audited in 2006 by ICAO as part of ICAO universal safety oversight. Expected benefit and targeted beneficiaries, the timely and efficient implementation of this airport construction project would benefit the people of Sierra Leone and sub region in a number of ways. This proposal for a new airport terminal is prompted by the needs to maximised Sierra Leone geographical location advantage unlocked it vast storage potential increased air transport service improved aviation safety and promote the Aviation Industry and most importantly established Sierra Leone as a regional hub for both passengers and cargo traffic.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the construction phase of this project will create over 2000 jobs for young people and able body men and women including specialised trade and technical jobs will be created upon their completion this will encouraged tertiary Education and skill training institutions to prepare Sierra Leonean to work in the Aviation Industry. The authority to engaged investors and negotiate on the Bill agreement demonstrate Government commitment to operationalize its development plan for Sierra Leone and change the life of the people for better. It sense a strong message to global financial that Government is serious and only willing to work with equally credible partners. Most importantly a successful BOT for a strategic project has the airport terminal demonstrate the Government ability to implement major infrastructural project with minimal or no impact on its balance sheet and lending obligations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, evidence that the proposed intervention is needed and will work there will be an integrated approached project design and implementation an all effort to ensure that the financial model are off balance sheet with no solving guarantee and project implementation on an cost recovery bases by the private sector partner. The project and it BOT agreement has been rigorously scrutinise by cross sectorial Ministerial team to ensure feasibility, relevant, cost effectiveness, legal, soundness and compliance with applicable law and regulations.

Further, the Chairman of OPII and the Ministry will periodically update Cabinet on progress and will provide all other relevant information concerning the project. OPII has made significant progress in conducting preliminary project possibility screening and design for this project. This indicates high viability and high potential for public private partnership arrangement that will benefit Sierra Leone. OPII true it consultancy they had tipper group has develop the design concept and parameters for the construction of the airport terminal. The developers has concede and agreed to use this design concept for the project. In this regards, for the purposed of effective project implementation the minimisation of risks project variation and to maintain design consistency and project expectation OPII will retain TEPA group and its associate consultant and Airport De-parish has the project supervising consultant for this project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament, the financial terms for this project is guided by the Ministry of Finance and in line with our financial management objective. A key objective is to deliver well-structured deal that can be executed in the short time with maximum benefit to the country. Recognising that the Government has a limited boarding capacity and the current airport traffic is not very attractive. The BOT mode is probably the best option for the construction of this new airport terminal and its auxiliary facility. In addition, the current airport operations have not provided any revenue to the Government given that airport all over the World are major revenue generators and foreign exchange annex, Sierra Leone cannot continue to be the exception. This BOT model will maximise the airport ability to generate revenue but most importantly to provide a renew source of revenue to the Government based on air

traffic passenger volume. In addition, this BOT model will provide the Government with a brown new airport that will meet all international standards in line with ICAO and recommended parties. This will enhance airport safety and make Sierra Leone an attractive aviation and air transportation destination.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House here by rectify the following document which was laid on the Table of the House on Friday 11th December 2020 built operate and transfer agreement for the construction financing and concession of Freetown International Airport by and between the Republic of Sierra Leone and Suma airport SL limited dated 12th November, 2020

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, the question is that this Honourable House ratifies the agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Friday the 11th December 2020 entitle; Build Operate Transfer [BOT] agreement for the construction financing and concession of Freetown International Airport by and between the republic of Sierra Leone and Suma Airport Sierra Leone Limited dated 12th November, 2020. The Chairman you have the Floor.

[Question Propose]

HON. AMBROSE M. LEBBIE: Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank His Excellency the President Brigadier Retired Dr Julius Maada Bio for his transformational skills in rebranding this country, I also want to thank him for given us Doctor Tambi to lead such process. Doctor Tambi, thank you so much for leaving all the lucrative jobs in the West to return home to serve the people of this country. I want to thank Dr Tambi and the OPII for putting together such design because such project is transformative, strategic and not the usual or traditional financing model project. This is the BOT but we must as well note that this particular project is not like the tollgate project, for this project we will have not...

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I can understand the frustration from the other side but let me make it very clear for this project there will be a unit that will monitor...

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, point of Order. Hold on my brother, we have just given **Le1Bln** to the people of Port Loko. My friends on the other side are the ones to support this project. Forget about the tollgate project focus on this one because this is what the people of Port Loko want to see.

HON. AMBROSE M. LEBBIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this project will be monitored by a particular unit that will be set up by Government to ensure they track every daily revenues generated by the airport which includes; weakly revenue, the monthly revenue and the yearly revenue so as to know exactly what the contractors have generated. It is not just a blank cheque project but there will be a particular unit to monitor the operations of the airport.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we all had it from the Minister when he was making his presentation that the initial project will host 1 million passengers with possibility of expansion as the need requires. We must as well realise that this project will create employment facility for the people of Sierra Leone specifically for the people of Lungi, Port Loko District, Loko Masama and Karforbulum Chiefdom. This project will as well transform the Loko Massama and Kaforbulum Chiefdom in to a free trade zoon. Lungi is gradually becoming a city that has been the dream of my colleague Honourable from Lungi and this is not going to be the white elephant project but it is going to be a reality. When this Bill is ratifies today, the project will kick start in January and it is a two years project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before the designed of this project, many researches were done. Doctor Tambi and his team realised that the Lungi International Air Port's location is really fit for the purpose because it is right or below the sea level. Those are some of the requirements for safety reasons in constructing an Air Port. This project initially people thought it was only limited to an expansion but I want to assure this House that this project is almost a new project. The Air Port is going to be a new one, I know my colleagues on the other side will question the accessibility, but let me tell you accessibility is not going to be issues in this case because there are plans and studies are on-going to refurbish the existing dilapidated jetty. The Port Loko route will be

there and the Suma group themselves are ready to run water transport and on that note Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am calling on all colleagues to speedily ratifies this project and get the contractors going. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I am sure you all agreed with me not because my pedigree has something to do with the District but because the location of this project is in the District very dear to all of us. I was actually trying to see that there is a particular Member trying to... I know the location is Port Loko but Kareneh is too far away and I am sure the impact will be felt as far away as Kareneh District. So, the Honourable Member from Kareneh, I give you the Floor.

HON. IBRAHIM KAMARA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Minister and by extension His Excellency, Retired Brigadier Doctor Julius Maada Bio for this particular agreement. I think the agreement is good in general and I think we have agreed in this side that whenever something comes to this Parliament which adds value to the development of this country we cannot oppose it. I am not speaking for the Leader but at least for Kareneh District. And this project for the extension of the Air Port terminal and other facilities it is good and it is going to add to International competitiveness and definitely brings money, and it is difficult for us to oppose it in anyway, but we need to examine the various implications of this project which is very good because it is going to bring money. I tried to look through few pages of the proposal given to us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am concern about the cost because the first phase of this project is **\$270Mil** the second phase is **\$20Mil** and the third phase is also **\$20Mil** all together makes **\$310** and of course there is lot tax concession almost everything is free including wavier and that is good but we can understand when a country is in an economic situation like ours to attract investors is difficult, you have to go through the extra mind and when we cannot get the liquid money as a loan to construct something big like this we have concede certain part of the country to let it be and so we see that just at the start of the operation of this project will seize all our control over the Air Port and the Suma Company will takes over the Air Port and I was

worried and I wanted to know if the Ministry has calculated how much income we have been getting from the Air Port which we are going to forego because we have learnt lessons from the past toll road project. When the Chinese company took over they created the gate when the work was virtually less than 50% done and they were collecting money and in the end we were funding the construction from the collection of the toll gate and this is exactly what is going on which was criticised at the start of the operation we shall have signed this agreement and approve all other cost the company takes over the Air Port and its management. I just wonder within that arrangement what is going to be our share of what they get because from what I read here everything is going to be with the company with concession to transfer all revenue to foreign banks and foreign exchange that is there also.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, of course as I said Government cash track and in a need to carry out development can agree to anything, but we have to think creating a new Air Port is good because it is going to add value to this country, it is going to bring investors, it is going to cost tourism to boost, but development is actually addressing competing needs. We live in a country where nearly 75% of the people are unemployed, we live in a country where 70% of our citizens are farmers and we have no problem investing **\$310Mil** in this project but we must advise that if we mean business with human capital development then our biggest capital is human. I will like to see the time when this country will invest **\$200Mil** to **\$500Mil** in promoting agriculture; I will want to see in the very near future where we put a very amount of money to create 100,000 of jobs for those children who in two to three years later will be graduating from the free quality education bit and pieces of development is good but we need to come radically into addressing the issue of unemployment. There are two ways to bring income in a country; you either promote a development like this and brings a lot of money into the consolidated fund through taxation and uses it to develop the whole country or pump it at the bottom and empower every citizen so that the income will flow up...

THE SPEAKER: Hold on. As you know ordinarily we don't meet on Wednesday, so may be the power and authority doesn't know that we are meeting on this day. So, I am asking the Clerk to ensure that they now know that Parliament is in Session. Honourable Member you may continue.

HON. IBRAHIM KAMARA: I raised this concern because my District which is Karene District is an agriculture area. And in as much as this project benefits my region with the North West and I believe some of the benefits are going to flow in Karene District. I will like to let the authority of Government know that we need to think about the bigger picture and the bigger picture is about when the farmers in Karene District at Katumpoh is able to access directly the element of development been pumped into the economy. With these I want to stop so far. In spite of all the considerations we consider this agreement as relevant.

THE SPEAKER: Let me take the opportunity... I did not get quite at the end of the contribution by the Honourable Member, but I am sure it was good one because I had Karene been mentioned. So, I want to thank him for that. Let me recognise the Honourable Member from Tonkolili. The impact will be felt as far away as Tonkolili.

HON. AARON KOROMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me thank the Deputy Minister of Transport and Aviation for bringing this very important BOT agreement to the Well of Parliament. I must say BOT of such nature are very much good, and I want to thank him that he has taking time to bringing to the Well. But from his submission and that of the endorsement of the Chairman of Transport, the Minister said this project upon commencement is going to create about 2000 jobs for Sierra Leoneans. If this is the amount of jobs that this project seeks to create I want to submit that this project is not a bible project because this project is going to make sure many more people are going to be left out of jobs than the 2000 jobs that the project seeks to create. I will justified.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I speak the Sierra Leone Port Authority has an employment about 500 workers upon commencement of this project the Air Port Authority is only going to become like a burden on Government because all of it source

of revenue will now be taken by this project. For it is a self-finance institution and there are financing almost everything about that institution Government is not paying them, and there are generating their money. Upon the commencement of this project we will now have an Air Port Authority which will definitely place a burden that will make a subvented agency to the Government.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are also many more facilities like the duty free section which employs about hundreds of tens of youths, we have the car parking that employs a lot of youths and there are whole lots of units within the Airport; one is the hotel management section. Government is given an exclusive right to the investor that even for the Air Port hotel management is now going to be determined by the private agent in this case. It is here in the schedule.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to refer you to page 37 of the agreement which shows the roles and responsibilities of the parties, and I will also refer you to page 39 in relation to the management of the Airport hotel which state that; ***"it is the exclusive right of the private party and not the public party or any other party,"*** which tells you that if even another investor comes to do investment in Air Port hotel they will have to get authority from the service provider of the Airport.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as we speak, even the Civil Aviation Authority stands to become a burden now on Government because one of its main sources of revenue is that whenever passenger travels out of this country they pay about **\$35** or **\$40** as a safety fees and the Airport Civil Aviation Authority is getting something like 30% from that proceeds in connection to the agreement. The agreement is also saying on page 18 of this document says; ***"all those aeronautical fees and all other revenues from the Airport shall be collected solely and exclusively by a private party during the entire operation period and shall not be subject to any deduction allocation or sharing with the public party or any third party."*** That tells you the 30% which funds start to the main source of revenue of the Civil Aviation authority is now going to be taken away from them but rather go straight to the management of the Airport, and which means we would now have the Civil Aviation Authority to also

become another sub-vented agency to the Government which in its general sense also contribute in putting more burden on Government.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is saying that this agreement is not a loan except maybe one will have to define what a loan is but for all I know loans are liabilities and according to International Accounting Standard [IAS] all Government guarantees they are disclose as contingents liabilities. The reason why these contingents liabilities are not disclose in the Government books it is because of the accounting basis we are using, we are not using Accrual basis but rather using either cash base, it is not disclosing it in its books but in the event that there is any breach of any of these provision because of the security consent which Government gave in page 20 it is telling us that in the case of any breach Government will bear the burden.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members S.O [2] if you go stand as guarantor you are going to be responsible, if you are not pay then you go pay, that is the simple thing, then you don't have to hold because then you are responsible. And besides it even has a more negative impact on Government than even taking a loan because if you take a loan you will still maintain your Civil Aviation Authority, you will still maintain your Airport Authority, you will still have all your facilities, you will still control your security, and you pay the loan but now we have two agencies that are going to be burden on Government because the only source that is available to them is for registration of aircraft and license of them. But the main source which they are getting on a regular basis is now going to be taken away from them, so in other words it is now going to become more burdens. When you look at what it takes for Government to maintain that agency it is even far more expensive than paying for a loan on a monthly or a yearly basis.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me also refer this House to page 10 of the agreement. On that same page 10 it tells you how this agreement and the Ministry disrespect Parliament. If you still go to page 10 it tells you that; ***"condition precedent to effectiveness of the agreement."*** The first condition was for them to have brought the agreement to this House for ratification, but that was never done instead they went on to the second aspect which is the handing over of the sites. The

launching of the project before it was brought to Parliament for ratification. I am sure that is the greatest affront that is been mentioned on Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me also refer you to page 4 of the agreement. It is very much unfortunate why we have the Ministry of Transport and the Civil Airport Authority, why do we have the public private partnership agency? Instead we are having an ad hoc body which has no legal structure which is the OPII. In relation to the toll gate that is allocated at the Masiaka to Wellington high way, the Chairman of works knows that the public party is the SLRA and the Ministry of Works these are the public party but if you have an individual leaving the Ministry of Transport that has technocrat which is the Airport Authority or better still if we say President want to have a direct contact you have the public private partnership agency, why not that agency to serve as the public authority instead of an individual? The Act says the implementation and execution agency is OPII, is not an agency Mr speaker? For an agency to be created it has to be an Act of Parliament and we do not have any Act that authorizes the existence of the OPII that is just an addressing unit that design policies and then give technical advice to the Ministries or agencies for implementation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me also take this debate to section that talks about local content and that section says when this project comes into effect it will absorb the executive and the middle cadre employees of the Civil Aviation Authority and it will only absorb them for one year. The question is what will happen after the one year? And when you look at the schedule it only gives provision for the executive and the middle level. How about the junior workers that accounts over 80% of the work force of the airport? There is no provision in this agreement that provides for payment of benefit to those workers. In other words when this agreement comes to effect we will have people who will be losing jobs without any benefit nobody takes responsibility here as to whether the benefit are going to be paid by the private partner or the public partner.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one thing I saw so unfortunate in this whole agreement is that this agreement is also going to kick a lot of people out of business

and even the sea bird and the sea coach they are likely going to be out of business because Government is also giving an exclusive right or license to this investor to own a siting system. So, if you have the passengers and then you also direct them to where they are going what would happen with those that do not have access to the airport? They will be kept out of business.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what is also very unfortunate unlike the toll gate agreement they made clear provision for corporate social responsibilities. When you look into that agreement the Chairman of Works can attest that there are clauses that make provision for the construction of market. I visited a school in Jui which was constructed by that project, nothing is being mentioned in this agreement that will benefit the people of Lungi directly. So, in other words with all the taxes being waived, and for now you have those security services that are paying corporation tax and Government is waiving all of those taxes for 25 years, there will be no form of taxes with all that and yet there is no form of corporate social responsibility being provided by this company. So, on that note I want to submit here that this agreement is not a good agreement. It is not for the good of this country.

THE SPEAKER: Before you make that submission can I take you back to the very first submission you made which to my mind is very important and should attract the attention of this entire House. You referred us to page 10 and you said it seems the Ministry did not take this Parliament seriously. In that, there is a condition precedent specified on that page that has not been fulfilled and the condition precedent that I have read here is that there should have been an official gazette declaring the approval of the terms and conditions of the contract by the Parliament of Sierra Leone. I just want to know whether there has been such an official gazette as far as you are concerned, or there is an official gazette?

HON. AARON KOROMA: Mr Speaker, that is for the Clerk to confirm, but what I know is that for all agreements before Government commences they have to bring those agreements to Parliament for ratification.

THE SPEAKER: I know that and it is under 118.

HON. AARON KOROMA: Well the Clerk can advise but I know that is the procedure

THE SPEAKER: No! No! That is a separate issue. With respect, that is a separate issue. When you alleged in your statement that this Parliament has not been taken seriously because there is a condition precedent that has not been fulfilled, that is they ought to have come here first on the basis of which an official gazette should have been issued declaring and approving the terms and conditions of the contract that is what you are saying. Are you aware of any official gazette?

HON. AARON KOROMA: I am not aware Sir. I am not sure if any Member is aware of that Sir including the Honourable here, if there is then make it available.

THE SPEAKER: On this one speak for yourself.

HON. AARON KOROMA: Well I am not aware Sir, I am not aware of one.

THE SPEAKER: Well, why are you then saying that Parliament has not been taken seriously?

HON. AARON KOROMA: Because of the procedure say; it supposed to be brought to Parliament before the handing over of site.

THE SPEAKER: Okay!

HON. AARON KOROMA: But we all know that the site has already been handed over before the ratification of the very agreement that is what I am saying.

THE SPEAKER: Is this not what they are trying to do now that Parliament...

HON. AARON KOROMA: Mr Speaker, but why should it not come first to Parliament as the agreement stipulate. The agreement says it supposed to be brought to Parliament before any other thing is supposed to be done. That is what they are saying that we are only here for rubber stamp whatever issue. That is what they are saying.

THE SPEAKER: As the head of this Institution, I will definitely fight to preserve, protect and maintain the integrity of this Parliament at all times. If there is an agreement that says it must come to Parliament before X, Y, Z is done so it shall be. I want to know whether this has been done because this is what you are saying.

HON. AARON KOROMA: Yes Sir. God bless you Sir.

THE SPEAKER: But I am trying to say my reading of this that this very Act of coming now is fulfilment of the process that has now been setting motion.

HON. AARON KOROMA: Mr Speaker, it is clear for you to go to University, you must have sat to the WASSCE that is just the reality here. The first thing first is for the agreement to be brought to Parliament for ratification before any other step, it is very clear here.

THE SPEAKER: Is that not why they are here?

HON. AARON KOROMA: But why now Mr Speaker, the question is why now? When they have started already?

THE SPEAKER: Okay! I think the Minister will explain.

HON. AARON KOROMA: So, they are saying with or without Parliament they can go ahead because they have already went ahead before the ratification of Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: I would ask the Minister to please take special note of this point and we would definitely like to hear him address us on that issue. Have you finished?

HON. AARON KOROMA: Mr Speaker, on that note, I want to submit here with all what I have said about this project considering the two main institutions, which are the Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Authority, and the Sierra Leone Airport Authority which this project is almost going to make a burden now on Government rather than they be self-accounting agency. I therefore believe that the model of financing which is a loan, a liability contingent according to [IAS] and Government is saying it is not a liability to them because of the accounting system they are using to report. They cannot disclose that but it still remains as a liability.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what I am saying is that taking a loan would have been better than keeping over 3000 to 4000 people out of business, putting two institutions which are supposed to be revenue generating agency or self-account agency to put them as a burden on Government. I therefore submit that this agreement

is not a good one and I want to ask colleagues that we vote against this agreement because it is not good for the people of this country. Thank you very much.

HON. SENEGPOH S. THOMAS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before I go any further in to making submissions, I wish to state for the benefit of the public as Sierra Leone has become compact eligible. In spite of the criticisms Mr Speaker, in spite of the woes throes at us I wish to state for the benefit of the public that we have past the compact and for which as Sierra Leoneans we should be extremely proud *[applause.]*

THE SPEAKER: Congratulations. It is in place.

HON. SENEGPOH S. THOMAS: Mr Speaker, sometimes you know I find it very difficult to understand the logic behind certain arguments.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if an augment should state that even though 2000 people will be employed but it is bad that 500 people will be jobless; I find it very difficult that kind of augment. We are talking about 2000 and more people been employed and it is interesting that somebody is using some kind of logic to say the 500 is better than the 200. Of course, I am going to be extremely brief Mr Honourable I am on my legs, if you can oblige me I am on my legs yes please. Thank you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my friend Aaron referred to this House to page 4 of the agreement to support his augment that in fact, it is only the office of the Presidential infrastructure that is mentioned, but I don't know whether he address his mind to the fact that we have before us a representative of Minister Transport and Aviation.

THE SPEAKER: Okay by all means.

HON. AARON KOROMA: I am submitting that this project is not variable because over 3000 to 4000 jobs will be lost already the Civil Aviation Authority had about 500 employees those people are going to lose jobs. Those that are in the duty free, those that are in the car packing all of them are going to lose their jobs. So, all put together we are talking about thousands of jobs that are going to be lost.

HON. SOLOMON T. SENGEPOH: No! I mean those are just the assumption.

THE SPEAKER: Frankly I don't think is something we can quarrel with, since the conditional "if" is an Effie Effie matter that he has not raised, no if that, if that. I am doing more than well. You are debating, but that is an assumption you are making. An assumption with very little bases, if, if no, no, then quit frankly I though he was clarifying the point, the clarification is based not on fact but on...

HON. AARON KOROMA: But we are saying the Act is base on probability Sir but we will approve.

THE SPEAKER: Okay thank you carry on.

HON. SOLOMON T. SENGEPOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Aaron is my friend normally when I on my way to my constituency I passed through his and I like buying drink in his constituency. Incidentally he was a Member of Parliament during the last Parliament and let me submit that this agreement is not different from the toll road agreement. I don't just know what has changed because he was so active, he was so vociferous in supporting the toll road agreement, he was so vociferous and he supported it. So, I don't know what has changed.

THE SPEAKER: That was yesterday.

HON. SOLOMON T. SENGEPOH: So, Honourable Aaron I know one thing about Air Port Mr Speaker let me state this for the attention of the public is a question, are we really proud of Sierra Leoneans to have and Airport, like the one we have. Are we really proud as Sierra Leoneans, when you visit other Nations, when you see the kind of construct of their Air Port and you come back home as Sierra Leoneans are we really proud?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I wish to state that it is must misleading for my friend to say this Nation will not benefit anything. Probably, he has not gone through the agreement properly; if you read the agreement properly you will come to the conclusion that this Nation has everything to benefit from this particular agreement. Maybe I will urge you to go into more pages of the agreement then you see exactly

what I am saying. Mr Speaker, my friend wants to say something just to clarify a few points. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Deputy Speaker for his contribution. I am going to be very fair on this one; this is a proposal coming from right for those to my left to accept. So, I am going to focus attention. Between the two of you who comes from Lungi? So, let me hear the MP from Lungi.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am into this debate today because it is affecting my constituency and my people. It for sure that we the Honourable Members are not expert in everything, so basically we may not have thoroughly understanding of the public private partnership; how its operate and what is the essence.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the PPP meaning public private partnership is a corporative ventured between the public sector and the private sector, so meaning both parties are coming together to undertake a business venture, and corporative agreement. And I asked myself question in the PPP there are over 15 models, I asked myself the question why the BOT because in the PPP we have the DP which is decision and build, we also have the O and M which is operations and maintenance, we have the DBFO which is decision bill finance and operate, we have the BOO which is Bill owned operate, we have the BOOT which is bill owned operate and transfer. So, I have to ask myself the inevitable rhetoric why did Government go for the built? I come to the realization that the BOT which is built operate and transfer has some significant advantage. Advantage in the sense firstly; Government has no upfront investment regardless of the cost that the entire project entails Government will not spend any money up front, thereby transferring the risk to the private institution because in constructing the terminal there are every possibilities that the target may not be reached and if this occurs the risk of the money that is invested in the project not been able to reap from the project to be reaped from the project the risk is on the private institution.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, even to operate the International Airport there are risks, but the BOT agreement makes it very clear that these risks will be transferred to the private investor. So, in as much as I want to thank the President and the Minister of Transport and Aviation for this agreement because the Airport is in my constituency and my people benefit from it; there are few reservations I have. You see we are in a Parliament in which before you talk they know what you would say because people have been premeditated there minds to know what comes from the Opposition and what comes from Government, until we are liberal, until we stand for Sierra Leone, until we put our country first, our country will not go further, somebody will not say regardless of the advantages I have stated here on equivocally that the contract is 100% correct. We must be magnanimous and parotic to be able to identify the pit fault if we love this country. If I am seizing this opportunity to identify some of the pit fault it doesn't mean that I am against the project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have said on reservedly that the project has unanimous advantages. Sierra Leone is geographically positioned in a way that the distance between Sierra Leone and South America is short. And if our resources or our airport meet International Standard you will agree with me that a good number of flights will use Sierra Leone to transits to the outside world. When we go to Ghana and other countries you will notice that big flight only stop in those countries, when you want to come to Sierra Leone the transfer you to a very small flight, just because of either the capacity of our airport or the number of passengers we have coming here.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, please bear with me I know whenever I am saying the goods of Government attentively listen but when I tend to unfold some of the problems I have with the agreement Mr Speaker, will invoke S.O [38] but I want to beg that we reserved S.O [38] whiles I look at some of the problems.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am saying this because this contract has a lives sperm of 25 years, those of us who are having kids now those kids would be 25 years and the will still meet up this agreement that we are making. So, I am saying we are setting a pace for generations yet unborn so we should be conscious, we should be

particularly concern because our Government will not be in power whiles this agreement will be in existence. So, we should do it with our consciences and with our right mind.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to my points; one, I was totally amazed, I was frizzed with the analogy made by my senior Honourable Aaron Koroma, he did say that the security of the current staff is questionable because it is not assumption. Once the terminal is built if anybody has a thorough understanding of BOT I am not sure these undertones will come out, but let me seized the opportunity to explain. Assuming that the airport terminal has been built, the operational responsibility lies on the head of Suma Company and they would have their right to exercise their discretion on who to employ it is not Government business. And even those who are currently working for the Sierra Leone Airport authority will be terminated, and when they are terminated who is going to pay their thermal benefit, who is going to ensure that those gratuity belonging to those employees are catered for.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am going to suggest it's very difficult in the sense that this contract has already be executed, the project has been resigned and the site has been handed over. So, whatever ratification we are going to make now to this document is simile useless, is simile useless that was one of the reasons why I was going to keep quiet in this debate because all we been saying now is just for the camera nothing is going to take effect Mr Speaker. And this is one model we should stop in this Parliament let there be respect for our Parliament, there be acknowledgement for our Parliament, we are Members of Parliament our responsibility is to represent our constituent. Is to hear out there views on any arrangement that will affect this country, I have saying this time without number that this arrangement is going to affect our country for 25 years, why shouldn't this Parliament have a saying in this arrangement. The document I see the land has been handed over to the private institution, and once the land is handed over whatever ratification this Parliament makes would be against the contractual arrangement between the Suma group and the

Ministry of Transport and Aviation, or the infrastructure unit in the office of the President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, please permit me to state here that the Minister did say that the current airport setting is not generating any revenue, and that I want to unequivocally and unexistantly state that very statement is questionable. The Suma group of Company is an established organisation that will not invest their money into an airport that is not income generating, it is not possible. Our Airport generates income and now we have already determined the price of the airport or the terminal, which is **\$2,70Million** and now we have stated that we are going to pay for this money in 25 years, you know when saw that very clause in the agreement what came to mind is the fall of the tie back. Some of you who are acquainted as to why the currency that is used in Thailand fell; you will agree with me that it is because they went into forward exchange agreement, forward exchange agreement is that you agree to pay for the exchange rate for the year that is unforeseen, maybe you say in 5 years' time, I am going to buy your dollar **LE6000** when it has not yet reach 5 years, and during the 5 years' time when the time reaches you find out that the price of the dollar is no longer **LE6000** but its **LE2000**. So, you have to take up the responsibility or you have to be the loser. This is the similar agreement that we have gone into, we have said it is 25years. What if the Suma group get more than **\$270Million** from the so call sophisticated agreement in the airport in 10 years' time? Are our children going to wait to have back there airport for the next 15 years? These are the arrangement we should carefully look into, we should carefully look at this agreement because we are setting a pace for unforeseen circumstances, we are setting a pace for what we don't know, we are setting a pace for what we are not seeing, we are setting a pace for what we have not had, we are setting a pace for what we don't even have the fullest idea of how it operate. That is what we are doing now S.O [2] somebodi say wi dae sell wi pikin dem privilege.

Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say here that this agreement needs proper observation. I am saying this not because I don't want my people to

benefit. In fact the possibility of my people benefiting from this project is very slim because I can tell you there are corporate social responsibilities that the airport undertakes in my constituency. You ask me how many indigenes are working at the Sierra Leone Airport Authority. I will tell you that they are few. People travel to and from to work at the Airport while we have graduates who are sited there in ataya bases playing draft, how long would that continue, Mr Speaker? And let me tell you, the Airport has a scheme, let me just correct you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I graduated from University of Sierra Leone during the days of APC, I went to Airport, I sent in my application with a colleague, with whom I sat in class...

THE SPEAKER: Are you responding to an undertone?

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: No, I am just educating him, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: No. Carry on with the substantive debate.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Thank you Mr Speaker. I am saying this because you heard the Deputy Speaker; with all due respect, he said there is no difference between this agreement and the toll gate. But he did say he was against the toll gate and he is supporting the agreement. So, the only difference now is that because his Party is coming with the project, he is supporting the project and when a project comes that is not his Party's project, he is against because he said there is no difference between this project and the toll gate agreement. And that is what we should stop as a Nation. I want to see Honourable Abdul Kargbo opposing the project brought to this Parliament by APC that is against the interest of this country, and I want to see who are SLPP Members of Parliament prioritizing the interest of this country and unhesitatingly going against projects that have no benefit to this Nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say again that I am happy that in the project there is going to be a new taxi way, there is going to be a new passenger terminal, there is going to be a fire fighting opportunity, but all of those things are

going to be run by Suma. By the time it reaches 25 years that infrastructure would have been dilapidated. What is the onus, what is the burden on the Suma Companies?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would go out for this very Video. Why I would go out for this Video is because I want to play it for my kids after 25 years when the Airport would be handed over to the Government of Sierra Leone so that my kids will know that there were set of MPs who were very jubilant because this project was brought in this House by their Political Party, who mortgaged the land of Sierra Leone to a foreign company to come and build, operate and later transfer.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I remain your boy, Honourable Abdul Kargbo. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I am now going to limit your contributions to five minutes.

HON.: Mr Speaker, thank you very much. Let me first and foremost thank the Ministry of Transport and also His Excellency, the President for this project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a lot has been said about this project; mixed feelings about this project, but let me just see how best I can deduce from this agreement and lay the positive and the negative sides of this project. Of course, I was listening to the submission made by the Minister, but it has been cleared by some Honourable Members about the current running of the Sierra Leone Aviation Authority at Lungi which is not generating any income. Definitely, let me re-eco this, no investor would come and invest in a project that he thinks it is not generating any money and it is not viable.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague have highlighted various PPP Projects, and I want to also highlight another one which is called the BLT; which is the Build, Lease and Transfer. When I looked at that project, that type of Agreement, I think it is very good and viable because you build, the Government lease it to the private investor and they operate it. So, I think some of those projects if you take a look at them and compared to the BOT, it will be very much viable for this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the total cost for this project according to this document is **\$270Mln** just for phase one. When I looked at the project that the past President wanted to initiate in this country, the first phase was just **\$200Mln** from the Exim Bank of China and **\$100Mln** as a Loan. So, in total it should have been **\$312Mln** for a brand new Airport and a new Commercial viable city. And today we are talking about just a first phase which will cost **\$270Mln**. Let me tell you this again that just an extension of a Terminal, not a brand new one, when I take a look at some of the benefits within this new extension that they are proposing in Lungi, and I juxtapose it with the one that the past President wanted to initiate in this country, that one would have benefited us far above what is about to be created today.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, they are talking about a taxi runway; I know is a single taxi runway. But what we proposed to this nation was two taxi runways which should have been beneficial for this country and for the Airport we were about to create in Mamamah.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the **\$270mln** that this project will cost, I will tell you it is also born by the Government. If one Million Passengers use that Airport, it is incumbent on the Government again for another one million people to use that Airport to pay **\$20Mln**. So, it is burden on the Government to pay **\$20Mln** for every one million passengers that use the Airport. So, yet still, as my Honourable Member was saying, I don't think there is anything that will make you say it is not a loan, it is a loan! So, if you take a look at it now in essence the Government will contribute towards this project **\$60Mln**.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go to page 16 of this agreement you will see all what I have said it is in there. It is just by phases; after the phase one if they see that the amount of passengers increase by one million, the Government will be liable to pay **\$20Mln**; same to phase two and phase three.

Suspension of s o 5[2]

THE SPEAKER: You may continue.

HON. Mr Speaker, let me take you to page 24. Again it has been said but let me re-echo it again Mr Speaker. If you take a look at the tax exemption given to this Suma Group, for the edification of the public it says; ***"the private parties and its shareholders, its group, companies engaging with this project and its sub-contractors as well as the transaction document, and any transaction, work or services conducted thereon shall be exempt and not be subject to any taxation during the construction of this project."***

Mr Speaker, of course they are going to give these people 25 years to operate this project, and definitely nothing, no obligation for this Suma group towards the country or the Government. So, definitely it will be free; they run it, they operate it free, no tax obligation, and you know of course Government needs tax to see how best it can meet all its service delivery. So, from this project we see that no tax obligation will be burden by this private party.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if I can take you further again to page 26, of course today, if you are making an agreement of such nature, if you take a look at the compensation on 24.5; reads ***"in the event of termination of this agreement pursuant to clause 2, 24.1 and 24.3, the public party shall pay to the private party an amount equal to the hire of the:***

- 1. The unamortised investment cost as of the date of termination and***
- 2. The senior debt termination amount."***

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Government is continuity of course, but we have seen in this country since this Government took over there are some contracts which are legally binding; they were ratified in this House of Parliament but you will see that some of these contracts have been terminated without reverting to Parliament. So with this clause I am seeing, I am afraid. There are so many projects; what about the Lee Way Sea Port that is undertaken now under the Seaport Authority? So that is one of the projects. So definitely I have seen that this one will undermine the objective and the principle of Parliament ratifying documents because we have seen contract being

ratified in this House of Parliament and later we see that when this Government took over those contracts were terminated without reverting to Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Let me give you some of the disadvantages of the BOT; my brother has just highlighted some of the advantages so let me quickly give you the disadvantages. I will tell you, and I am putting it to you Mr Speaker that this BOT type of Partnership will have higher transaction cost to the Nation if you are operating a BOT when it shall have been transferred to the Nation in 25 years' time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it will also add a substantial operation revenue to the investor as opposed to the revenue generation to the Government. That is, the Suma group will make more money and make more profit towards this project as opposed to the Government, which in essence, in any investment you are embarking on you definitely need to realise some benefit from this project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before I waste more time, let me just tell you that of course my brother and my colleague here have said it all that yes, the project is viable but there are some loopholes in it because as opposed to what we presented to this country for a viable project. Of course, they are saying that this project will be for Lungi, the project again that we proposed to this country was also for Portloko District. It was not for out of Port Loko District; the Mamamah project was for Port Loko District. So, definitely if you are saying we wanted to transfer the Airport from Lungi to another District, no, it was going to be in the same District; Port Loko District. And also, there was no intention of removing the Airport from Lungi; we had only wanted to create another Airport because Sierra Leone has grown to a level that we need more Airports, we need more Stadium. So, definitely it is of essence that we see how best we can broaden this country for investment purposes.

Mr Speaker, I vow that definitely we need to review this project but I think it is too late because the project has already started. But definitely we would not support this project, we would vote against it.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I would take one last speaker before we wind up and that person is the former Chairperson of Transport.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you very much. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what my colleagues from the other side are doing is their perfect responsibility to portray to the Nation that this agreement is a bad agreement. Let us look at the intent of the agreement. We are going to have an ultramodern Airport that will not only create more employment but that will bring more investors and tourists in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleagues on the other side were saying we have 500 workers at the Lungi Airport, and this project will provide job for more than 2000 Sierra Leoneans, meaning this project will create additional 1,500 jobs. And let me tell my colleagues on the other side that those 500 workers are not going to be terminated. This project will add on that number to give you more than two thousand jobs. And those 2000 jobs that this project will create are only for the Suma Group of Companies. But let me tell this House how many more jobs this project will create. This project or that runway after completion, we would now know how many flight will start coming to Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for every flight coming into Sierra Leone, they have their representatives in this country that is additional job, for every flight coming to this country they have an office at Lungi airport that is another job that it created. And my colleague was also talking about the duty free; this project will add more than five more duty free shops that are creating more than 200 additional jobs. All of us in this House have travelled as the Deputy Speaker was saying when you leave Sierra Leone you go to Ghana or Guinea you see their airport, when you come to Sierra Leone you think that you are landing in one small village in Pujehun District. Let me say to this House that the 75% my colleagues on the other side was talking about it is after the completion of 75% of the job is be done before they can start collecting money. It is not like other project wherein you begin to collect money before the completion of the job. I want the people of this Nation to know that this Government did not terminate the Mamamah

contract, it was the International Community, the IMF that said the contract was not proper, it was a very bad contract so it was not this Government.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me take this House to page 7, which talk about the commencement date of the collection of the taxes we are talking about is not the day they start operation, it is not.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, can I refer this House to page 11 I want my colleagues on that side to read page 11; ***which tell us that this project has not started, they were saying the project was supposed to come to Parliament even before the commence date.***

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when we are talking to the gallery let us make sure we inform the people, we are Honourable men and women therefore we should behave like Honourable men and women. I believe this project is not only about giving the Lungi Airport a face lift, this project is about giving Sierra Leoneans, is about making us proud as a Nation, is about taking our position at the global stage that yes instead of giving us smaller flight we will now be receiving bigger flights in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want this House to own this agreement; I want this House to look at the positive side of this agreement and not the negative side. Let us start looking for things that will benefit this country instead of opposing everything that comes to this Parliament. I want to thank my colleagues on the other side; they have said that this project is viable yes I agree this project is viable. They have said this project can be implemented yes it can be implemented therefore I want them to remove the negative side of this project and look at the positive side. I thank you very much [applause.]

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. Leader of the Opposition we will wind up. Leader of the opposition you have the Floor.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH [Leader of the Opposition]: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I would be very glad if the Minister can turn the other way, he is intimidating me, I will not look at his face.

THE SPEAKER: Look at mine.

HON. CHERNOR R.M BAH [*Leader of the Opposition*]: Okay Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to join others in confirming the need for a new Airport even if not just a new terminal, all others that have subscribe to the fact that we need a new airport. But I also want to specifically subscribe to some comments and contributions made by the Honourable Member from Lungi, Tonkolili and Bombali. Mr Speaker, I participated in the Pre-legislative hearing and I on that day I confirmed the need and support for a new Airport, this is not an exception but as I said during the debate on the Budget my challenge personally still has to do with access. All what have been said is beautiful, increasing passenger volume, have attracting new Airlines, having a first class terminal, all of these things are beautiful, definitely we need them because even the United State of America which is the most developed country in the world is challenged with infrastructure compared to other countries in Asia. So, they are moving, there is no need why we too should not move.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have been compared to Ghana and Senegal, in Ghana they took a loan from the Turkish but that is separate whether it's a BOT or a loan the fact is that we need a new Airport, but Ghana is benefitting because of their location. Let us don't forget that it is true we have an advantage when it comes to distance, to South America or the Americans but we are not too different from Senegal and Ghana in term of distance, the difference is not too wide and in Senegal they have had direct flight to United State for quite a while now, delta, South Africa Airwaves, Dakar New york, Dakar Washington for years and they themselves have built a new Airport which is the Blaise Diagne Airport for those that have gone to Senegal recently, it is a modern Airport I am sure you saw, you have seen it, it a new Airport, they took a loan too but the IMF and the world Bank kicked against it but they were bold enough to take the challenge, and today the Airport is moving.

So Mr Speaker, not to lose my point again, I am not against the new Airport but the location. I came back from Ghana last Tuesday when I left the Honourable Member from Moyamba we arrived at the Lungi International Airport somewhere around 16: 45

hours, I was only able to catch the boat at 19:00 hours, after 2 hours if I had no need crossing with the boat, I would have been home by then, we don't want to put the cat before the horse.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it doesn't matter who would have built the Airport; the fact of the matter is Government is continuous. If we were unable to build Airport at Mamamah or elsewhere within land there is nothing stopping this Government utilizing the same land, who would have built it, the SLPP Government under President Bio but then why insist on Lungi? Because it is not about who would have built it, we have to be honest to ourselves, and this is not politics Honourable Members please! I am supporting the construction of a new Airport and if it's going to be done by the President through Doctor Tambi and his team, it is a laudable venture, but why insists on Lungi as a location that is my challenge. We want the Airport now, we can move the resources to better location so that we would have monies worth, Bo is not bad, if you do it in Bo when I get out of the flight exit through security and customs, I will go straight into my vehicle and drive to where I want to go. Some countries when you go Mr Speaker, you go to the UK, driving from Gatwick to central London take you minimum 1 hour, when you go to Dolly's it takes almost the same or even more, Hitro is between 45 and 50 minute.

Mr Speaker, as I say this is for posterity, Mr Minister I am not against the new Airport and I will be very pleased if the new Airport is constructed in a better location where value for money will be delivered under President Bio, I would be happy trust me because Government is continuous.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the toll road was criticized but today everybody is benefitting from it, so the bottom line here is the toll road value for money? I am saying again the Airport is it value for money? I am happy that the Minister of Finance is here for tomorrow they will not say I did not say it, they will not say I did not. Now, when you go to Bamakonta, your time is shorter and accidents are fewer now between Jui and Waterloo because going and coming traffic are now poles apart that alone, we have save so many lives. So, I know Doctor Tambi is a seasoned engineer; he has a lot

of expertise. Mr Speaker, that is my position that I am looking forward to a new Airport, it could start tomorrow or in January but my preference and belief, I don't want to go into all other things that have been said you know I don't like repeating people but location, because this is the only country in the world where you fly by air, you come by sea and then you use land. Our colleagues in ECOWAS, I don't want to call for witness but most times when we want to have programs here, some of them will tell you I am not going to your country because I don't want to use the sea and we need more people to come, the traffic will only be realistic when those who are supposed to venture are ready to venture.

So on that note Mr Speaker, I hope I have made my point and that the records will be there and posterity will define and judge us at the right time.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of the Opposition. Leader of Government Business, make it swift and short.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE [*Acting Leader of Government Business*]: Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want thank my colleagues who have contributed to this debate. Of course, on the side of the Opposition, what they have done is just what they are supposed to do.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the last Parliament when the toll road was brought to this Parliament, we critic the toll road agreement but we did not criticize it; it was brought to this Parliament, we raised the issues but they were explained to us and we understood, collectively all of us voted for the toll road contract. The former Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member from Brookfields can testify, we understood, it was difficult because it was at that point not a practice in Sierra Leone, BOT was not a news to us, but today we are now reaping the benefit as he said; we have reduce the death rate on the Wellington Masiaka road. Before now or weekly basis the accident rate was very high and again they have critic this document in the longest time we will reap the benefit, it is also very new because this agreement will be the second BOT

agreement that have been brought to this Parliament after the toll road, we will use to it, we will definitely use to it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the benefits of this agreement are very numerous, we are not just talking about the employment it will create. The Honourable Member from Tonkolili spoke that we are going to lose jobs; I beg to defer his statement. For a start, this agreement is going to provide minimum of 2000 jobs but don't forget the Suma Group is just going to manage the Airport system a lot of other sectors would be privatize and those are all employment. Of course, we have duty free shops that are going to be privatized and when they are privatize the Suma Group will employ people; we have the garage they are going to be privatise. So, if you say we are going to lose jobs I believe more jobs will be created after the completion of the project than now. Today, the Airport management has not even employed more than 300 to 400 staff and for a start just the Suma Groups is going to employ 2000 or more staff. So, if you say we are going to lose jobs, we are not. One of the Honourable Member from the other side was saying a lot of agreements that have been signed are going to be submerging no! They are not going to be submerged, the contract is very clear, all binding agreement is law, and we are still going to be binding on Suma or on the Airports. So, these are all job creation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what interest me more about this project is the touristic aspect that is going to be developed. For now the cost of ticket to Sierra Leone is very high, but when we now have an ultramodern Airport, when we now have securitised Airport, the interest rate, the Insurance rate will be reduce, and that will make price of ticket to and from Sierra Leone would now be competitive to other countries, so now we have more tourists coming to Sierra Leone than going to other countries. If you go to our beaches you will see the touristic environment we have, but we don't have the tourists coming because of the ticket cost, and the reason why ticket cost is high it is because of our Insurance. The Airport does not match the modern Airport, the Airport do not have the security it should have so bigger planes do not

come because they are not sure of their security, and the smaller planes which comes to Sierra Leone the Insurance rate is very high.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before now of course it is no secret that from Sierra Leone to America and Europe within Africa is the shortest route, we spend nothing more than eight hours if we are going to travel from Lungi to America. But today we spend like fourteen to eighteen hours to go to America because we don't have planes coming. So, let us support the process as I said we are not used to BOT, this is our second BOT agreement that is coming to this Parliament and we will use to it. When we were in the Opposition these were the issues we raised, we keep the document but we understood it, and today Honourable Members you will benefit. Of course, the Airport has been in existence for more than forty years, and forty years down the line this is the same Airport we are enjoying. If we don't have an ultramodern Airport twenty five years agreement you are saying is very long but it is very short.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the toll road agreement was brought to this Parliament it was **\$61Mil**, and we are spending twenty seven years paying that money. Look at an agreement coming to this Parliament which is **\$270Mil** and we are paying it for twenty five years, so which one do we want to compare and should we pay **\$61Mil** for twenty seven years, or we pay for **\$270Mil** for an ultramodern Airport that we can compete all over Africa for twenty five years. I know Honourable Members, it is very difficult for people to adapt to change, but the change must come. We as Sierra Leoneans, the Leaders before us were also very much fear of change that is why we are where we are today. These are the challenges, these are the risk other countries took that they are now far developed than Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, take a look at Senegal Airport, the Honourable Member said; the Senegal Government took loan even at the expense of IMF and World Bank, we are doing BOT, we are not paying anything for which somebody is doing it, and at the end of the day it will be handed over to us. Our children are young, twenty five years down the line we will still be very strong to enjoy the benefit of what we are approving today.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know the Honourable from Brook Fields is very happy for this project, we have listened to them, Dr Tambi, the Ministry of Transport please take their concerns seriously, we are a listening Government, we will not discard the issues you have brought, some of them are very serious, some of them are very important. As a listening Government, we will listen to them, that is why we advise Dr Tamby and his team to take the work serious and leave those that are political for this House. There are issues raised which are very serious, take them seriously and consider them in the implementation of the project, and please those that have being said here for political reasons let them stay here.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with these few words I believe we all as Members of Parliament, we are not doing it for ourselves today, we are doing it for the development and for the progress of this nation let us all do it collectively. The Honourable Member, from Tonkolili we have heard your saying, we will take them very serious, the Honourable Member from Port Loko, the Honourable Member from Bombali we respect all of what you have said, let us collaboratively support this documents for the benefit of Sierra Leoneans. The Honourable Member from Tonkolili twenty five years downs the line we will still enjoy this from this document. Let us vote for ourselves, we are not voting for Mr Speaker but for us as young people would have to enjoy the benefit after twenty five years.

Mr Speaker, I ask that all of us support this document for the good of Sierra Leoneans. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I know I am still a youth, and I am satisfied with that. After all youth is a function of performance not of phonology. Mr Minister, you have a couple of points to respond to. I will invite you to do so and so very quickly please.

SADIQ SILLAH [The Deputy Minister of Transport and Aviation]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament, I have two dear brothers in this House, one is Honourable Dickson Rogers that always remind me of Paopa and Honourable Chornor Maju that always remind me of pay attention. So, I would on those two notes try to bring my younger Honourable Aaron very quick to the issues; I said during the

construction phase 2000 jobs would be created that is on record. Honourable Chernor Maju Bah and Honourable Dickson Rogers would bear with me that I have being in the corporate world, and under the regime of SLPP and APC I have negotiated two successful agreements like this and they still survive in this country, perhaps the only surviving one in mining one in agriculture, so I pay attention and I go for details. In the agreement it says 75% completion before you take over, and it says you take over the operations nowhere in the aviation world right from ICAO which is the UN arm of aviation globally. The question of ATU which is the Air Traffic Control always remain the function of the state, because nobody is go to allow any private person to have the authority to determine which planes land in your country or not that is because it is a security issue, so that function is there. Both SLAA and CAA which is the regulatory body still remain intact it is an Act of Parliament, I gave an example during, I was also part of that regime, mind you I was a local council Chairman of Pujehun. During the regime of the past President we had the Bollore at the port that doesn't extinguish the function of the Sierra Leone Port Authority; they are there, so it will be defined in such a way. When my brother was speaking he spoke about Senegal and the argument fit exactly, it started with a loan issue and when it came to 80% it became so difficult for Senegal it wanted to put Senegal into solving guaranteed issues. Therefore, they invited Suma to come into BOT, as I speak to you Shuman operate Senegal Airport that you are making a good reference to. So, let understand that clearly and know the difference why the BOT is the best option because even Senegal that tries it and today like you saying they enjoy all the benefit. Why do people it's very straight forward Sir my Honourable Member from Tonkolili don't forget my wife also is from Port Loko, and I am very proud of that, don't forget that if you go to some other serious Airports Honourable Members, you realise that right there in the terminal building, or right there in the perimeter of the Airport they have hotels true or false? So, therefor in these agreements, we say they have the right to operate and build up hotels which is separate from what we are talking about, if you want to do that SHUMAN fine for you. You and I know Sir that in the construction phase even in the operational period of twenty five years they have to be moving between Freetown and Lungi by all mode of

transportation, it could be air, land and sea. So, you have to give them that right that is not an exclusive right. When you said that would now take away seabird and that is not the agreement says give them licences to operate their own speed boats and whatever and allow them landing site on both sides, which is just a fair deal for anybody.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you would not tell the company to come construct they don't have a means of moving even their building materials. Sir, when you dived into a profession that I am very comfortable with, I mean when you dived into finances and economics you just make me smile, when we are talking about foreign exchange Sir, the best issue you do in the world, my Doctor can agree with me that you always have to use the constant formula, so that whatever the fluctuation the currency is the constant pricing approach is the best. So, you now say for instance since we know that our Leone the tendency for it to be depreciating and appreciating is there. So, let peg all these things to a currency that is a bit stable and that we use the constant pricing formula so that what we did and that is what serious and credible Government or business people would call for. They would not go for anything that is losing, you have to understand that and I have got those proven background, I mean in negotiating agreement as such. I did not say Airport is not generating funds, I said Airport is not contributing to the TSA which is the fact and you said it, they generate their own money and they carry their own operations, but they do not transfer into the TSA and we have to change that trajectory if we are going to move forward.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you said the agreement is tax concession and tax free for twenty five years that is not correct, nowhere in that document that says tax free for twenty five years. You said benefit employees believe you me the human resource guide lines anywhere in the World be it private, semi-private, corporate institutions it is you that employ the people that speaks directly to their welfare, be it terminal benefit or enumerations. Then when we talked about CAA which is the regulatory body and believe you me Sir, wherever they got that idea whosoever injected that their traditional sources of funding should not be taxation on the passenger this is what is killing us no matter what we do you still add that one, these people are regulating bodies they have

the right to licenses pay, they have the right to give landing permit, this is where they should be getting money, and they have the right to fine anybody in the aviation industry that violate the laws, these are where other countries like America or other nations even Ghana, even Banjul this is where they are getting their money, they are not going to tax things of passengers just to be running, it is a regulatory body. So, don't take things that are not traditional source of funding and you try to put it on them. Somebody said where is the benefit and if you see the projection of the passenger volume, it means forecasting and we said if we all do well because Shuman believe that with the modernisation as my Leader of Government said if we improve on that then the volume will increase, and they believe in that that is why they are putting their money and we believe in that too. So, therefore we have 30% share of any profit that we make above those pay. Then we also have an option of having 25% share of the whole business that is an option pegged on the 270 investment figure, which is also clear.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following agreement which were laid on the Table of the House on Friday, 11th December, 2020. Build, Operate, and Transfer agreement for the construction, financing, concession of the Freetown International Airport by and between the Republic Sierra Leone and Suman Airport SL Limited dated 20 November, 2020.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you Deputy Minister. Honourable Members, the question is that the House ratifies the agreements that were laid on the Table of the House on Friday, the 11th of December, 2020 entitled build, operate, transfer agreement for the construction, financing and concession of Freetown International Airport by and between the Republic of Sierra Leone and Suma Airport Sierra Leone Limited dated 12th November 2020.

[Question proposed, put an Agreed to]

[Government by the Minister of Transport and Aviation has been ratified]

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, you may take your leave, but before you do give me a moment I want to speak with you before you go. Yes, any announcement? With that we stand adjourned to tomorrow Thursday the 17th December at 10 am prompt.

ANNOUNCEMENT

[The House rose at and was adjourned to 17th December, 2020]

HINGA BANGALI: