

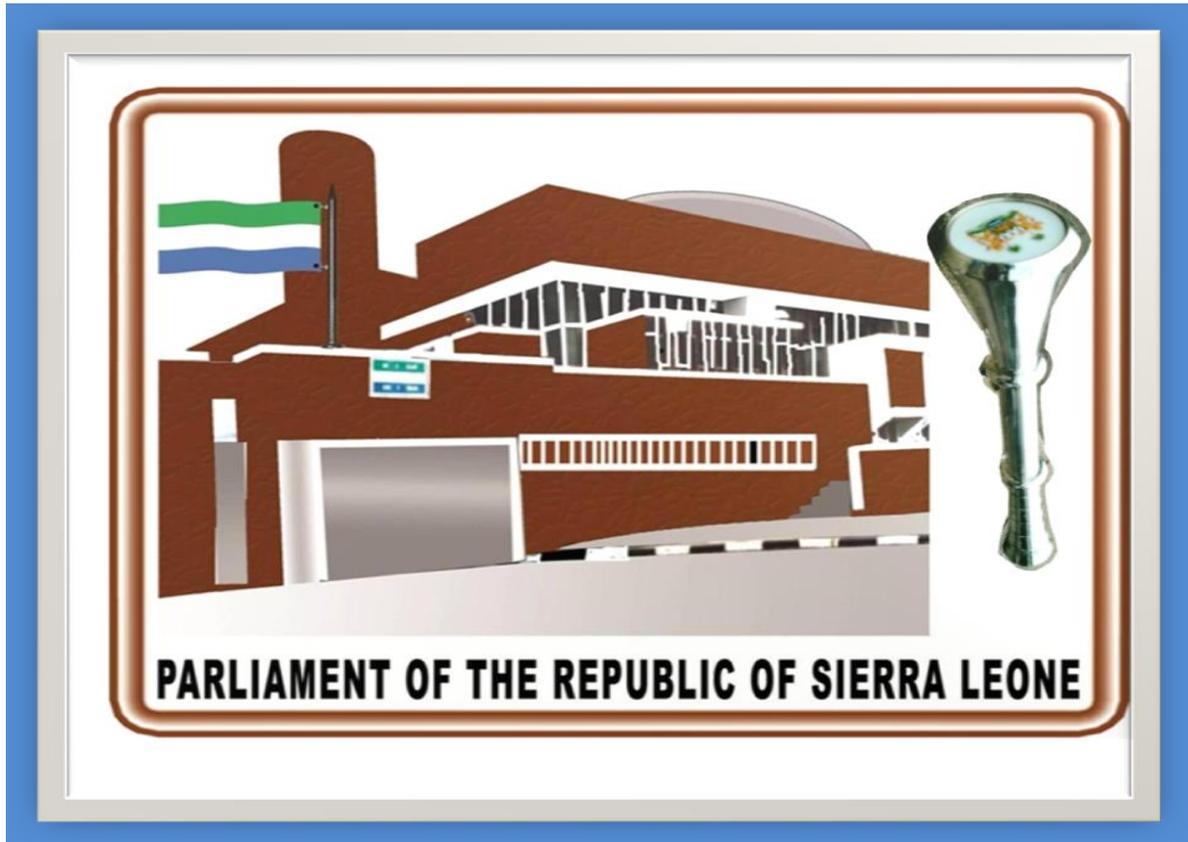
OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

SECOND SESSION-SECOND MEETING

TUESDAY, 16TH DECEMBER, 2014



SESSION – 2013/2014

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held on Tuesday, 16th December, 2014.

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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**

Tuesday, 16th December, 2014.

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

I. PRAYERS

[The Director of Legislative Services, Mr Cyril F. King, Read the Prayers].

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

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S.O. 5(2)

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU (*Majority Leader of the House and Leader of Government Business*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, item IV on the Order Paper talks about the 2015 Finance Bill. It's rather unfortunate that this Bill cannot be presented this morning. The Minister of Finance and Economic Development ran into some technical and administrative difficulties, so we are postponing the reading of that Bill to tomorrow. We regret any inconveniency this might have caused. Therefore, item IV on the Order Paper is deleted for today's sitting.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, this is the amendment relating to the Order Paper. Actually, there are two deputy ministers in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, but I came to understand that the deputy minister that used to come to this House is busy with administrative activities and most of the senior officials are out of the country. This is why we cannot transact the business under item IV on the Order Paper. In that case, item IV is deleted from the Order Paper for today. I hope there is no dissenting view.

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU: Mr Speaker, I've just been informed by the Clerk that item II on the Order Paper, relating to the Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Friday, 12th December, 2014 cannot be presented this morning due to technical difficulties. However, both items will be presented tomorrow. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Madam Minority Leader, are you in agreement?

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Certainly, Mr Speaker.

PAPERS LAID

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH

THE SPEAKER: Who is the Deputy Chairman of Defense?

HON. KOMBA E. S. BOYAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the deputy is also unavoidably absent this morning, but if you can permit me, I can act on his behalf.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have my permission.

HON. KOMBA E. S. BOYAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, please permit me this morning to lay on the Table of this Honourable House two documents on behalf of the Chairman of the Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Defence and the Office of National Security.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I want you to use the Order Paper. In other words, please go according to what is on the Order Paper.

HON. KOMBA E. S. BOYAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable members, the first Paper has to do with the report on Oversight visits to various military barracks in Kabala, Makeni, Kambia, Pujehun, Gondama, Kenema, Kono and Moyamba from 14th to 21st June, 2014. The second report has to do with Oversight visits to the provincial and district security committees in Kabala, Makeni, Kambia, Pujehun, Bo, Kenema and Kono from 14th to 21st June, 2014 (*Applause*).

THE MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

MR J. B. DAUDA (*Minister of Internal Affairs*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table the Arms and Ammunition Regulations, 2014, containing the Statutory Instrument No. 8. 2014.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Minister. Honourable Members, the Paper laid by the Minister of Internal Affairs is the Arms and Ammunition Regulations, 2014, which is very important. Had it not been for the exigency of the situation facing us now, we would have asked for some elaboration, but that being as it may, after the expiration of 21 days, it would become law, provided there is no objection. I would want to advise the Majority Leader and Minority Leader that we invite the Minister for some briefings for Members of Parliament. It's very important.

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU: Mr Speaker, if I may add to what you have just said, in terms of the importance of this Paper, I want to ask that we suspend the counting of the days, so that it becomes mandatory for a pre-legislative hearing, so that Members of

Parliament will be fully briefed on the issues surrounding these regulations. Mr Speaker, after the hearing, we start counting the days. I am saying this because this is an arm and ammunition issue that directly affect each and every Member of Parliament, including our constituents. Also, I want to announce that another very important Bill is coming soon and it has already been circularised. The title of that Bill is "The Road Transport Authority (Amendment) Act, 2014, which is an Act to amend the Road Transport Act of 1996. I'm sure most of you have accessed this Bill from your pigeon holes. Thank you very much.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI (*Minority Leader of the House*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say something about the document that has just been laid by the Minister of Internal Affairs. Mr Speaker, some time ago, we discussed the Arms Trade Treaty in this House. It is a very important treaty and it is now in operation, but unfortunately, due to the exigency of the circumstances surrounding the ratification of that document, Sierra Leone wanted to be among the first 50 countries to have ratified the treaty, so that the treaty can be enforced. We did not have the opportunity to have a pre-legislative hearing on the 'Arms Trade Treaty,' which is very important and not many Members of Parliament are preview to all the processes leading to the negotiations and the adoption of that Act. So, I think that will be an added advantage because the Arms and Ammunitions Regulations are coming now as a result of the Arms and Ammunitions Act that we passed in this House. There are certain provisions that this Act is fulfilling now. Therefore, we need a full-pre- legislative hearing on both the Arms and Ammunition Treaty and the documents that have just been laid on the Table. Mr Speaker, since we now have the Treaty itself, we only need to domesticate and implement it. Aspects of it are already being implemented, but we need to work together. I therefore agreed with the Majority Leader that not only the documents be laid on the Table, but the treaty itself, so that every Member of Parliament knows the implication of what is in the treaty. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I agree with the Minority Leader. In fact, coming back to this Arms and Ammunitions Regulations, I will respectfully ask all Members of Parliament to read this Regulation. In essence, what it is seeking is that, henceforth, people may be allowed to have arms in their possession.

Honourable Members, I wish to inform you that a few days ago, Honourable Ajibola Manley-Spain was attacked by bandits. He was nearly going to be killed. They carted away with many of his valuables, but if he had his own gun, perhaps he could have defended himself. He is a very senior lawyer and a law-maker, but he knows that he shouldn't have one and that is why he doesn't have one.

HON. ANSUMANA J. KAIKAI: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I heard the Majority Leader giving oral notice of a Bill that is supposed to come tomorrow, but by way of an amendment to the 1996 Act, I am craving the indulgence of the Majority Leader that he circulates the document before that Bill comes to the Floor of this House.

THE SPEAKER: That is the normal practice and I want to agree with you, but again, because of the exigency of time, I would ask you, as a responsible Member of Parliament, to go to the Library and ask for the 1996 Arms and Ammunition Act.

HON. ANSUMANA J. KAIKAI: Mr Speaker, I was among those who passed that Bill into an Act of Parliament in this House and I know what it contains.

THE SPEAKER: Well, Members should go to the Library because this is time-bound. At least, it should come into effect before the end of the year although that should not be at the expense of what is right. I agree with you, but as Members of Parliament, there are certain things we have to do on our own.

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU: Mr Speaker, this is just a change of name from Road Transport Authority to Road Safety Authority. I don't think whether Honourable Members should waste their time in terms of going to the library. The Bill is very straightforward and simple. Thank you very much.

HON. MULUKU SULAIMAN SISAY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I don't know whether the deputy Minority Leader is now the Speaker of this Parliament. He mentioned that a Bill is coming tomorrow.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, the Minority Leader was right in doing what he did.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. BRAIMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on S.O. 23. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have very often advised in this House that it is always good to be careful with our interactions and the information we give out to the Press. Mr

Speaker, I want to inform this House that Parliament was under attack by the media this morning. Mr Speaker, when we were presenting our Committee report, Kenema City Council refused to appear before our Committee and that was a contempt of Parliament. Therefore, we suggested that their budget be held.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, based on the decision of the Committee, the Mayor of Kenema City Council was on air; and he said that the reason why the budget of his Council was withheld was because he was asked to pay Le20 million, but because he did not pay that money, that was why the Committee withheld his Council's budget. His allegation against Parliament was followed by a plethora of text messages from the general public. Mr Speaker, this attack on Parliament is unfortunate and very unsavory. I felt very uncomfortable this morning and this is a pointer to the fact that our creditability and integrity is gradually degenerating in the eyes of the public. This incident is unfortunate because according to the laws of Sierra Leone, if I were the Manager of that radio station, when you broadcast unprintable words, you are also an accomplice or conspirator to that crime. This is very unfortunate for this House because the credibility we are trying to build and protect has been undermined. This is the reason why I thought it fit to bring this grubby incident to the general membership of this House, so that remedial action is taken.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honourable Mustapha Braima. I did listen to that broadcast this morning and I was very uncomfortable about it, but as far as I am concerned, the hallmark of recklessness is for you to say what you are not sure of (*Applause*). In other words, you should not say anything that you have not verified. In this regard, I am asking for a meeting of the Leadership of Parliament, i.e., the Deputy Speaker, the Majority Leader, the Deputy Majority Leader, the Minority Leader, the Deputy Minority Leader, the two Whips of both parties, the Finance Committee Chairman, the Director of Committees and Clerks of Sub-Appropriation Committees 6 at 1:00 p.m. in the Conference Room. However, before that meeting, we shall have a very important meeting of key people, comprising the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and the two Leaders of the House. That meeting will be the precursor to the meeting that we shall have at 1:00 p.m. I want Honourable members to know that whatever I say here, I don't say it out of carelessness or joke, but I say it on purpose. I said the other day that 'Freedom of Speech' is not a prescription for reckless behaviour. Someone did say the other day that it is one of

the abuses of democracy. Nevertheless, this is the type of government we feel is the best, but there are many wrong things that are inherent in it, as some of us would know.

Honourable Members, what I want to say is that, I have faith in the integrity of Members of Parliament (*Applause*). Somebody went to the extent of saying that, he is challenging the Anti-Corruption Commissioner, since the Commissioner is always saying that he is an expert in that area. In other words, he wants to throw a challenge to the Commissioner of the Anti-Corruption to probe Parliament and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. I want to say in this Well that let the Anti-Corruption Commissioner comes to Parliament and we are ready to be investigated. Honourable Members, one can only talk about what he or she knows. If you are ignorant of certain issues, you shut up (*Applause*).

ADJOURNMENT

The House rose at 10:35 a.m. and was adjourned to Wednesday, 17th December, 2014 at 10:00 a.m.