

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

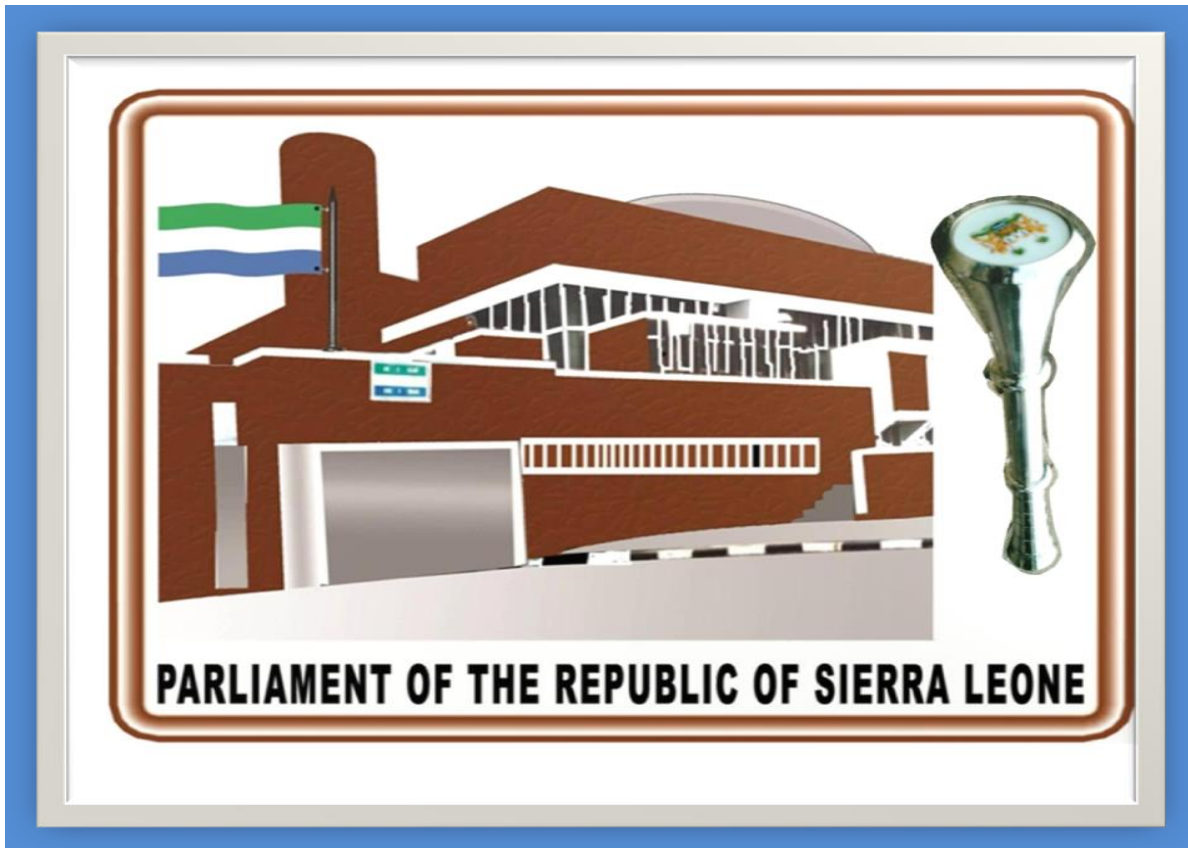
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

SECOND SESSION -SECOND MEETING

FRIDAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2019

SESSION – 2019/2020



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMEN TARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

VOLUME: I

NUMBER: 16

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Friday, 20th September, 2019.

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[B] GOVERNMENT MOTIONS:

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENTS WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON THURSDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER, 2019.

[i] GOVERNMENT CONCESSIONAL LOAN AGREEMENT ON SIERRA LEONE FIBER BACKBONE NETWORK PROJECT PHASE III BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AS BORROWER AND THE EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF CHINA AS LENDER, DATED 26TH AUGUST 2019.

[ii] PROTOCOL OF AGREEMENT AMONGST THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FUND [AS ADMINISTRATORS OF THE TRANSITION SUPPORT FACILITY] IN THE AMOUNT OF UA23,550,000 REHABILITATION AND EXTENSION OF THE BO-KENEMA DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM DATED 16TH APRIL, 2019

- [iii] LETTER OF AGREEMENT TRANSITION SUPPORT FACILITY [TSF] AMONGST THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK AND AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FUND IN THE AMOUNT OF UA2,150,000 [REHABILITATION AND EXTENSION OF THE BO-KENEMA DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM] DATED 16TH APRIL, 2019.**
- [iv] SUBSIDIARY GRANT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION AND SUPPLY AUTHORITY IN THE AMOUNT OF UA2,150,000 [REHABILITATION AND EXTENSION OF BO-KENEMA DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM] DATED 23RD MAY, 2019.**
- [v] SUBSIDIARY GRANT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION AND SUPPLY AUTHORITY IN THE AMOUNT OF UA23,550,000 [REHABILITATION AND EXTENSION OF BO-KENEMA DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM] DATED 23RD MAY, 2019.**
- [vi] FINANCE AGREEMENT [ADDITIONAL FINANCING FOR THE ENERGY SECTOR UTILITY REFORM PROJECT] BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION [IDA] DATED 17TH JUNE, 2019.**
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- [ix] SUBSIDIARY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE [REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE] AND THE ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION AND SUPPLY AUTHORITY REGARDING**

THE ADDITIONAL FINANCING FOR THE ENERGY SECTOR UTILITY REFORM PROJECT, DATED 6TH AUGUST 2019.

[x] FINANCING AGREEMENT [INTEGRATED AND RESILIENT URBAN MOBILITY PROJECT] BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, DATED 22ND JULY, 2019.

[xi] ON-LENDING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE [REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE] AND THE SIERRA LEONE CABLE COMPANY [SALCAB] THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS, DATED 22ND AUGUST, 2019.

[xii] SUPPLY CONTRACT FOR SIERRA LEONE FIBRE BACKBONE NETWORK PROJECT PHASE II BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES CO. LTD. CONTRACT NO. 0002881900010V, DATED 11TH APRIL, 2019.



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Thursday, 20th September, 2019.

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Mrs Bintu Weston, 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

Suspension of S. O. 5[2]

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please remain standing in memory of a committed, devoted, conscientious and faithful servant of this House whose love of Parliament was second to none. Honourable Ibrahim Sesay, former Clerk of this House who passed away last night. May we please remain standing in his memory and observe a minute silence. May Allah Almighty forgive his mistakes and grant his soul eternal rest.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, on that note, can I ask that we get a plaque so at least people would know that Parliament is mourning? It is just a suggestion, thank you.

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON THURSDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER, 2019

THE SPEAKER: Let us take 5 minutes to go through it quietly before we consider it. Honourable Members, let us now consider the Votes and Proceedings of the 15th Sitting on Thursday 19th September, 2019 and consistent with our usual practice we shall skip pages 1 through to 4 and I would ask for comments, amendments or observations starting from page 5. Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? Page 10 and the last page 11? Can someone please move for the adoption of the Record of Votes and Proceedings for the Parliamentary Sitting held on Thursday, 19th September, 2019?

HON. MOHAMED KANNEH: Mr Speaker, please.

THE SPEAKER: Yes.

HON. MOHAMED KANNEH: Having gone through the records, I did make a statement yesterday regarding compensation where possible but that is not recorded.

THE SPEAKER: I refer you to the Hansard, not in the Votes and Proceedings.

HON. MOHAMED KANNEH: Thank you Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Can somebody please Move?

HON. ALUSINE KANNEH: I so Move Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. NENNEH LEBBIE: I second the Motion.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the Parliamentary Sitting held on Thursday 19th September, 2019 has been adopted]

III. PAPERS LAID

THE MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES

THE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE REGULATION 2019.

THE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE ACT, 2018 [ACT NO. 10 OF 2018]

STATUTORY INSTRUMENT NO.6 OF 2019

HON. EMMA K. JALLOH *[Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources]*: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I apologise for the broken voice. I was bereaved, my dad died so I lost my voice. However, the business of government must continue. So, I am here and have the honour to lay on the Table the Statutory Instrument: "**THE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE REGULATION 2019**". Thank you. *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: I thought the Minister was going to make a short statement consistent with the Standing Orders [S.Os]. *S.O 18* allows you to do that.

HON. EMMA K. JALLOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on *S.O 18[7]*. The issues surrounding sustainable fisheries are paramount in developmental forum. More so, as there is emerging concept of blue Economy, of blue growth, the attendant of Sustainable Development Goal [SDG] 14, which urges states to conserve and sustainably use the Ocean, seas and Marine Resources for sustainable development. Sierra Leone like many other coastal countries is working assiduously to achieve SDG 14

but this will be impossible without proper reforms and implementation of robust Fisheries Law and regulation in the Fisheries Sector of the Country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to this end, the modernisation of the Fisheries Law of Sierra Leone is imperative as our legal instruments have been criticised by both national and international experts and organisations for falling short of some of the requirements for sustainable fisheries governance. The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources supports these views and thus, the need for modernisation of legal instrument.

The Ministry finalised the Fisheries and Aquaculture Regulation to compliment the Fisheries and Aquaculture Act 2018 with a view to improving the legal framework for the implementation of a robust monitoring control and surveillance system to reduce illegal fishing, ensure compliance and sustainable exploitation of our fish resources. The Fisheries and Aquaculture Regulation was reviewed by the Law Officers Department and validated through stakeholder consultation Meeting. The enactment of the Fisheries and Aquaculture regulation is one of the prerequisite for the Yellow Card issued by the European Union [EU] in 2016 to be received as well as for Sierra Leone to be provided with the Grant under the PTS 3. These regulations make a clear distinction between serious and very serious offences and prescribed fines and penalties relative to the nature of offence. The regulation also addresses the issue of high seas Fisheries Governance, environmental degradation of the Sea and Ocean largely due to unsustainable agriculture align with Government of Sierra Leone development objectives. The enactment of a new Fisheries and Aquaculture Regulation is key to implementing activities and actions that are needed to achieve one of the core priority actions that will directly contribute to achieving goal 1 of the mid-term National Development Plan 2018 of the Fisheries Sector improving the productivity and sustainable management of the Fisheries through combating illegal fishing. The implementation of this instrument would result to the

- increase in revenue generation,
- ensure transparency, and

- Improve the overall governance regime of the Fisheries Sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with proper investment and sustainable exploitation and conservation, our seas could be the benchmark for the economic growth of this Country. So, let us make good use of it by first and foremost enacting this well formulated Fisheries Aquaculture Regulations with a view to addressing emerging issues for responsible Fishing Governance and economic growth. I thank you all [*Applause*].

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources for her brief statement. Thank you.

IV. GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

DR. PATRICIA N. LAVERLEY [*Deputy Minister of Finance*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to commence my intervention with the discussion yesterday surrounding the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the notice of suspension that was received by this Honourable House. At the Ministry of Finance, the Department of Public Debt processes statutory payments. So, following the discuss here in the House yesterday, phone calls were made and we spoke with the Financial Secretary and the Director of Public Debts and Budget to ensure that the relevant documentation that is needed for the Ministry of Finance to effect payment is indeed in the Ministry. This morning, on my way to Parliament, I also made some phone calls to ensure that payment in relation to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference is effected. So, I would like to give you the assurance that the Ministry of Finance is doing what needs to be done to ensure that payment is effected.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, secondly, with respect to Members of the House that would like to participate in the Conference, may I suggest that the conversation is held with the Honourable Speaker for guidance on participation in the Conference in Uganda next week. I understand that there are rules on participation and this House would need to be guided by instructions from the Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, thirdly, with respect to the payment notice relating to the African Caribbean Pacific [ACP], you have your Finance Officer that works with Clerk on managing your finances. If there are issues regarding payments from our side at the Ministry of Finance, I am requesting that you channel all correspondence in relation to Parliamentary affairs not just to the Financial Secretary and the Director of Budget and the PDFS, also copy me in your correspondences, that way we can avoid incidence similar to what happened yesterday.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, next week, the policy hearing for the 2020 Budget preparation would take place here. At least the preparation process is about to commence. So, if you have your initiatives, training and so on, please come forward and engage your Clerk ensuring that your financial needs are reflected. That way, during the arbitration, we can ensure that we give you the financial support that you need.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Fourthly, the remaining balance of your 2019 Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 allocation, this would obviously need to be raised next week during the Budget discussion.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Let me now turn to the Legal Instrument – the Financing Instruments that were laid in the House yesterday.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, can I ask that the Minister announces her delegation to the House so we understand the composition of her delegation before we start to review or look at the Agreement tabled before this House yesterday. Well, the composition of the membership from the Ministry of Finance because there are laws. Yesterday we discussed about consistency in the laws and to be guided accordingly and in the Public Debt Management Act of 2011, I am sure if we are going to discuss whatever that has to do with negotiations and debts that the Country Sierra Leone is entering into, we must have the Director of Public Debt and we must have the Financial Secretary in our presence so that we can be properly guided on how the loans were negotiated in line and in tandem with the provisions of the Public Debt Management Act.

DR. PATRICIA N. LAVERLEY: For this specific Session, it is myself, the Honourable Deputy Minister. With me, I have the Director of Multi-lateral Development Financing as well as the technical staff that worked on all the Financing Agreements with the Director of Public Debt for all the Agreements that are been discussed here with respect to the Sector and Ministries. There is the Deputy Minister of Energy that is here and we are waiting on the Permanent Secretary from the Ministry of Information and Communication.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, can I draw your attention to few sections of the Public Debt Management Act of 2011? Section **23[1]** it says: ***"there is hereby establish within the Ministry a Public Debt Management Division which shall under the supervision of the Financial Secretary be responsible for the conduct of Debt Management activities in connection with government's debts lending and guarantees Local Council debts and public debts enterprise"*** [2], ***the Division shall be headed by the Director who shall report to the Financial Secretary"***. In Section 24: ***the function of the Public Debt Management Division shall be: to prepare an annual medium term debt management strategy in accordance with Section 6; to prepare annual borrowing plan, to participate in negotiations with creditors and advise the Minister on all government borrowing"***. The functions are many. I have chosen these because I think of the respectability of this Parliament. I do not see where Agreements that were negotiated by the Ministry and for which somebody has been given responsibility by an Act of Parliament and that person decides to abstain and not to face this House to explain and maybe guide us on some questions that would come up regarding the negotiation; that is on one part. On the other part, the Agreement before us has to do with an Agreement made between Exim Bank.

THE SPEAKER: Do not talk in riddles here Honourable Member. Who is abstaining?

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: The Director of Public Debt is not here, I have asked for the Director of Public Debt who has the mandate to negotiate and who is supervised by the Financial Secretary. So, I am asking.

THE SPEAKER: And both of whom are accountable and answerable to the Minister.
[Interruption]

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Yes Sir, both of whom are accountable to the Minister but they have specific responsibility under the Act.

THE SPEAKER: That is an internal matter Honourable Member. Honourable Minister please proceed!

THE MINISTER: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House Ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of this House on Thursday 19th September, 2019? *[Interruption]*

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, Point of Order.

THE MINISTER: Government Concessional Agreement on Sierra Leone Fibre backbone. *[Interruption]*

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, Point of Order. Mr Speaker, can we also say that the Managing Director of the Sierra Leone Cable Limited [SALCAB] who has an unending Agreement with the Ministry is also supervised by the Minister?

THE MINISTER: We do not want to renegotiate the terms of the Financing Agreement Mr Speaker. We have spent the last few months with the various stakeholders that the Honourable Member just mentioned going through in details the different dimensions of the Financing Agreement and I believe we are here to Ratify the Financing Agreement. If Honourable Members do have reactions to the Financing Agreement, we would take them and we would respond accordingly. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: That should satisfy the House I am sure. Maybe you are the one who is not satisfied but I am sure the rest of the House is satisfied. Madam Minister, you may proceed.

THE MINISTER: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Thursday 19th September 2019.

[i] GOVERNMENT CONCESSION LOAN AGREEMENT ON SIERRA LEONE FIBRE BACKBONE NETWORK PROJECT PHASE III BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AS BORROWER AND THE EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF CHINA AS LENDER, DATED 26TH AUGUST, 2019.

[ii] PROTOCOL AGREEMENT AMONGST THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND AFRICA DEVELOPMENT BANK AND AFRICA DEVELOPMENT FUND [AS ADMINISTRATORS OF THE TRANSITIONS SUPPORT FACILITY] IN THE AMOUNT OF UA23,550,000 FOR THE REHABILITATION AND EXTENSION OF THE BO-KENEMA ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM DATED 16TH APRIL, 2019.

[iii] LETTER OF AGREEMENT TRANSITION SUPPORT FACILITY [TSF] AMONGST THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND AFRICA DEVELOPMENT BANK AND AFRICA DEVELOPMENT FUND IN THE UA2,150,000 [REHABILITATION OF AND EXTENSION OF THE BO-KENEMA ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM EDSA] DATED 16TH APRIL 2019.

[iv] SUBSIDIARY GRANT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND EDSA IN THE AMOUNT OF UA2,150,000 [REHABILITATION AND EXTENSION OF BO-KENEMA ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM] DATED 23RD MAY, 2019.

[v] FINANCING AGREEMENT [ADDITIONAL FINANCING FOR THE ENERGY SECTOR UTILITY REFORM PROJECT] BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND IDA DATED 17TH JUNE, 2019.

[vii] AMENDMENT TO THE ABOVE REFERENCE FINANCING AGREEMENT DATED 17TH JUNE, 2019.

[VIII] PROJECT AGREEMENT [ADDITIONAL FINANCING FOR THE ENERGY SECTOR UTILITY REFORM PROJECT] BETWEEN IDA AND EDSA DATED 17TH JUNE 2019.

[ix] SUBSIDIARY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE [REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND EDSA REGARDING THE

ADDITIONAL FINANCING FOR THE ENERGY SECTOR UTILITY REFORM PROJECT DATED 6TH AUGUST 2019.

[x] FINANCING AGREEMENT [INTEGRATED AND RESILIENT URBAN MOBILITY PROJECT] BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE IDA DATED 22ND JULY, 2019.

[xi] ON-LENDING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE [REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND SALCAB] THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION DATED 22ND AUGUST 2019.

[xii] SUPPLY CONTRACT FOR SIERRA LEONE FIBRE BACKBONE NETWORK PROJECT PHASE II BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES COMPANY LIMITED FOR CONTRACT NO. 0002881900010V DATED 14TH APRIL, 2019. I thank you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the rehabilitation and extension of the Bo-Kenema Electricity Distribution aims at upgrading and extending the Bo-Kenema Electricity Distribution network in order to increase its Power transfer capacity and increase the reliability and availability of power supply within the Bo-Kenema area communities. The present distribution networks supply power to about ten thousand customers in Bo and Six thousand seven hundred customers in Kenema including Blama's two hundred and fifty customers living more than 75% of the population without access to electricity. The completion of this project will provide additional thirty seven thousand households and seven hundred thousand people with access to electricity. This project has already been commissioned and it is on-going with funds from Africa Development Bank [ADB]. It will be interconnected between the Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea transmission line that will provide more than forty megawatts of relatively low price electricity to the residences of people in these areas. The project involves five key dimensions which are as follows:

1. Upgrading and construction of 80km between Bo and 3kV Power Transmission line between Bo and Kenema along with the construction of two substations in each city.

So, Mr Speaker, Honourable members, we have two sub-stations in Bo and two sub-stations in Kenema.

2. The project involves the rehabilitation of and expansion of the distribution network in the cities as I mentioned.
3. The third aspect is the implementation of the end user connection campaign. Residents in these areas need to understand as end users, what they need to do to obtain connection and we are targeting **37,000** households in Bo and Kenema so they can also obtain connection to the grade.
4. The project involves provision of service for preparation of designs and big documents so they bid on the related contract.
5. Provision of temporary electricity generation during the construction works.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is an unreliable and unlimited energy services at the moment in Bo and Kenema and the absence of energy in the rural areas along these transmission lines. The Bo-Kenema Electricity Distribution System is severely constrained due to obsolete equipment coupled with high losses that reached over 38%. The component for distribution networks went stalled in the mid-80s and many part of the system is in very poor state.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the estimated total cost of this Project is **\$50Mln** with distributions as follows: ADF Loan of **\$6Mln**, ADF Grant of **\$6.5Mln**, A DIFID Grant of **\$35Mln** and Government of Sierra Leone compensation cost of **\$1.29Mln**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will now move to the Second Project the Energy Sector Utility Reform Project in Freetown. The objective of this additional Grant in the amount of an additional **\$50Mln** is intended to improve the operational performance of the National Electricity Distribution Utility in Freetown. The parent project finance through an International Development Association [IDA] credit of **\$40Mln** was approved in 2013 and became effective in 2014. This **\$50Mln** is the first additional financing for the project bringing total IDA financing all grant **\$50Mln** under the project **\$2.90Mln**.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this additional financing is seeking to scale up the development effectiveness of the first project by financing the incorporation of modern management system in the Electricity Grid in Freetown. Through the project, we would be constructing additional substations and installing transmission lines as well as strengthening the current low voltage in Freetown thereby connecting new costumers and improving the reliability and quality of electricity services in Freetown.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the first component relates to distribution, capacity enhancement and performance improvement of electricity services in Freetown. The second component relates to actual hard infrastructure. Rehabilitating of the existing substations here in Freetown will be carrying out repairs and upgrading the underground cables, upgrading the overhead lines, designing new feeders and carry out all the relevant tests. Such as, to increase the reliability of the current electricity supply in Freetown.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this specific project in Freetown will increase electricity access to Freetown and will improve on the commercial and technical losses as well as generally improve growth and the standard of living of everyone in Freetown with improve access to electricity. The project will increase the distribution network, connect new residential, commercial and industrial uses in Freetown as well as build capacity not just in the substations but also within the Ministry of Energy itself and the relevant entities under the Ministry, Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority [EDSA] and Electricity Generation and Transmission Company [EGTC] etc.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would now move to the third project. This is an urban transfer project. The title is: **"INTEGRATED AND RESILIENT URBAN MOBILITY"**. The Integrated and Resilient Urban Mobility Project in the amount of **\$50Mln** all grant, is part of the **\$230Mln** that His Excellency the President negotiated with the World Bank during a visit in February of this year to Washington. As a result of this visit, the World Bank agreed to finance five projects all mostly grants. Three of these projects are now on going and two will be brought to this Honourable House for ratification.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Urban Transport Project will entail establishing a bus renewal scheme, strengthening the capacity of Sierra Leone Roads Transport Cooperation [SLRTC] to regulate public Transport, it will regulate the Private Sector and strengthen the capacity of drivers in Freetown by providing road signs, traffic lights etc. so as to improve safe driving in Freetown.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the expected benefit of this Urban Transport Project is that, it will improve the quality of life, reduce the accidents in Freetown, reduce the cost of doing business in Freetown as well as improve Private Sector participation by tackling road safety and building human capital in the Urban Transport Sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the primary beneficiaries of this project are of course the residents in Freetown, businesses, institutions and the daily drivers. Mr Speaker, there are about 75,000 daily drivers of public transport in Freetown and they will all benefit from this new project, street signs, road safety signs and so on. The project will also finance sport improvement for feeder roads etc.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this project is in line with the Integrated Transport Policy, Strategy and Investment and Strategic Urban Mobility Policy. The Project supports the Mayor's Transform Freetown Master Plan. You may be aware that our current Mayor has a very ambitious Master Plan and this project is directly in line with it. Giving the vulnerability of our road network to Climate Change, there is a strong commitment from Government and the Freetown City Council [FCC] to build a resilient and sustainable transport infrastructure in Freetown. Again, this is all 100% grant and it is for **\$50Mln**. The only commitment charge will be half of 1% per annum of the un-withdrawn balance and that is the case for all the other projects since they are IDA grants.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the last project is the Fibre Backbone Network Project Phase II. Information and Communication Technology [ICT] and Telecommunications constitute one of the main priorities in the New Direction's Agenda. To actualise these priorities, Government has articulated in the National Development Plan that we want this country to become a digitally inclusive society with the aim to

unleash the potential of every citizen in technology with the intention of fast tracking economic development in Sierra Leone consistence with the SDGs. Therefore, in pursuance of the above, Government has sort concessional financing from China through the China Export-Import Bank to implement the National Backbone Transmission Project Phase II. The Phase of the project will construct an optical transmission network that will provide a high capacity transmission backbone network which will flow and provide protection for the existing Phase I Backbone and connect the remaining districts which are Koinadugu, Kailahun, Bonthe, Moyamba and Pujehun to the current network. This Phase will provide Fibre rims in major Provincial District Headquarter towns including Bo, Kenema, Makeni and Portloko. As part of this implementation Plan, Phase II of the Fibre Optic Project will provide the last man access to Fibre in the cities along with the Fibre route to extend digital access and E-Governance solutions to critical institutions in the Rural part of this country connecting critical Government services including schools and hospitals which would now benefit from additional services using the new Fibre Optic network.

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, the Government of Sierra Leone through the Ministry of Information and Communications has to date implemented three Fibre Optic Cable Projects. The first was the ACE Submarine Fibre Project with support from the World Bank through the West Africa Regional Communication Infrastructural Project. There was also the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Wild Area Network Project with support from the Islamic Development Bank [IDB] and the National Fibre Backbone Project. This one is been financed with the China Exim Bank.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, despite increased investment in Telecommunication through the implementation of three Fibre Optic Cable projects the ACE Submarine Fibre Project supported by the World Bank, the ECOWAS, with support from the IDB confirm that challenges still persist with the high cost and poor quality of ICT services still prevalent in the country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Phase II therefore, seeks to address these inherent challenges through:

1. Creating the enabling environment for the provision of affordable access to ICT and Telecommunication services.
2. The Project will improve access to ICT and Telecommunication Services including improved mobile voice and data Communication Services.
3. Facilitating and holding out appropriate E-Governance systems to improve transparency and accountability in the delivery of Public Services.
4. Providing the required infrastructure for the implementation of the E-Cabinet system and to improve Cabinet management processes.
5. Providing a long term contribution and ensure the lower cost of ICT and Telecommunication service so that the customers and the end users can benefit from the lower cost and faster data and voice services.
6. Reduce the cost of doing business by the Private Sector particularly in the rural areas and thereby promote ICT and related services across the entire country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the implementation of the National Transmission Backbone Project phase II costs **\$30Mln** and will be financed to a concessional loan from the Exim Bank of China and the negotiated terms are as follows:

1. The maturity period of 20 years, a grace period of 5 years.
2. Repayment period of **15%**, interest rate of **1%** of the amount disbursed and outstanding, a commitment fee of **25%** of the undisbursed amount.
3. A management fee of **25%** of the loan amount.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, being informed that the three previous loans secured by the Government from the Exim Bank of China for the telecommunications Sector including the National Fibre Optic Backbone Project phase I will actually secure a **2%** interest rate while we have managed to negotiate the **1%** interest rate and we have done so to ensure the affordability consistent with our debt sustainability analysis and prudent debt management practices. The financing for phase II with the concessional credit fiscal prudence considering the contexts of the use of market based

lending to finance the development of telecommunications infrastructure is usually the global norm.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, an On-Lending Agreement has also been signed between the Ministry of Finance and SLCAB for the actual implementation of the project. This means that the burden of repaying the loan will not rest on the National Budget. I thank you for your attention. *[Applause]*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House Ratify all the above Agreements that I mentioned previously which were laid on the Table of this House yesterday Thursday, 19th September, 2019.

THE SPEAKER: I would like to thank the Honourable Minister for her presentation.

[Question Proposed]

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take this singular opportunity to thank the Deputy Minister and her team for a presentation well delivered in this House on Agreements made yesterday. Generally, based on the explanations she has proffered on the Agreements themselves, Honourable Members will agree that these are noncontroversial Agreements and they are in the best interest of this Country. For example, on how to improve Electricity, on how to improve Urban planning and of course connectivity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will begin with the Energy Agreement. Successive Governments have made strives to increase electricity in this country but we still face serious challenges with regards to electricity. We all know that no country will develop without reliable and sustainable electricity supply. The Bo-Kenema Power Service Dam like you earlier mentioned, was constructed in the 80s and probably for very smaller towns of Bo and Kenema in those days but over the years even the cities of Bo and Kenema have expanded and the number of households and population that may need electricity has increased. Formerly, the Dodo Dam used to supply effectively Bo and Kenema communities. During the rains, the Dodo or Guma dams as the name implies used to supply electricity to both Bo and Kenema. Probably during the Dry Season other

thermal plants can supply light to Bo and Kenema but we are now constrained to an extent that even during the Rainy Season there is acute Power outages in those parts of the country talk less of during Dry season. Agreements like these talking about improving the transmission lines and to improve the entire electricity setup in that part of the country, I think it is welcome news particularly for those of us coming from Kenema and Bo. So, this is welcome news. As the Minister rightly mentioned, bulk of the Agreements are grants and that is very reasonable and preferable for us as a country. These are all grants and they will effectively increase electricity to 200 and more households in Bo, Kenema, Blama and other smaller towns. So, that is welcome news Madam Minister and your team. I want to take this opportunity as an indigene of Kenema District to thank you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister equally mentioned about a Transport Agreement that was signed to improve transportation, road signs, to reduce accidents, to empower Public Sector drivers and generally to improve on Freetown or Western Area transport Sector. I think that is a welcome idea and I want to take this singular opportunity again to thank the Government, a foresight Government, a Government that is thoughtful, that always sit and think for and on behalf of its people with regards to things they may need.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on the Fibre Optic Backbone Agreement, I would say ICT is a modern day technology. Every country in the world would have to rely on it to function effectively to do proper governance. So, one of the priorities of this Government is to improve on Technology, Telecommunication and ICT generally. Despite all of what has happened, there are huge challenges in those sectors as we speak and so this particular Agreement will seek to address all of those challenges currently in the ICT Sector. For instance, the Deputy Minister of Finance made mention of digitalisation. This will digitally improve the country and highly capacity transmission cables will be provided to connect major towns in the country. For example, she mentioned Bo, Moyamba, Kenema and Koinadugu as the case maybe. All of these areas

will now be connected and this will lower the price of Telecommunication and will improve on the quality of Telecommunication.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, again, it is about **\$30Mln** or so and the interest rate of **1%** she mentioned is so minimal which they negotiated. The previous one was something like **2%**. We must say kudos to the Government for thinking that even where we have to incur debt but we have to be very sure and negotiate them properly because already the debt burden on this country is so huge and it is unsustainable. So, any further debt we want to incur as a country, we have to be very careful of the consequences and so, therefore, I may want to say that these particular Agreements where the interest rate is **1%** is very minimal. Government will pay all of those debts without any serious recourse to the National Budget. In essence, I may want to say all those Agreements are fine Agreements. Most of them are grants; the one which is a loan is very minimal. Government can effectively pay and the benefits we get as a country are very enormous. So, as a House, I want to encourage all of us to look at these Agreements as national Agreements that are in the best interest of the country. They will improve our lives and the lives of our people and our families. Therefore, as the people's representatives, let us look at them and ratify them without any further delay or unnecessary or undue arguments because they are in the best interest of the country. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I recognise the Honourable Hassan A. Sesay.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the ratification of the loan Agreements in this House is nothing new particularly so when most of what have been brought to us are grants. You never give up a good offer. Like the Chairman of the Finance Committee was saying, it is a loan of **1%** interest rate and it is one that is welcoming. I think there is only one or two loan Agreements that we have approved in this House that are better like the loan Agreement with the South Koreans for the construction of the City Hall which was less than **1%** interest rate. We will be always looking for something better than **1%**

interest rate or less than that because that is what we believe is good for us. If you go for credit to the banks, you look for the less interest rate and of course that is what we will be encouraged to accept. However, **1%** interest rate is still within reach and must of the loan Agreements here are grants.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think the Fibre Optic cable was landed in 2011 and in the subsequent years it came into use. The only thing we want to ask is that, the service providers which are the Telecommunication Companies are to ensure that these monies are used to improve the quality of communication and when that happens, let the end users, the consumers feel that those monies are invested in this Industry by way of providing lower tariff charges. Our internet tariff charge is very high compared to other countries in the sub-region. You go to Liberia, they pay less for internet connectivity; you go to other countries in West Africa, they pay less.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Now, with all of these loans coming, we hope SLACAB together with the Africell SL, Orange SL, Q-cell SL and the National Telecommunication Commission [NATCOM] overseeing all of these arrangement would ensure that we as consumers get the benefits of what these monies are invested for because at the end of the day it is service to the people that matters and I am sure that is why the Government is trying to incur these monies to ensure that they improve connectivity and for the people to benefit from it. This is as a result of the fact that at the end of the day the Government do not look at what the cost is, it is the benefit the people derive that the Government is paying attention to more than the monetary aspect of what it spends to get it. So, if we are getting loans of this nature, with this kind of interest rate we will definitely welcome it. Like I have always said on this side of the aisle, we will always support anything that comes for the development of this country and to push this country forward. These are noncontroversial Agreements, as a result, we would support it and make sure that the people who receive these monies for which the loans and grants are meant ensure that the people benefit.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, those rural areas that are not connected with internet, we must try to ensure that we get the internet facility to them because this is

also going to improve on the quality of education. When internet is provided in rural areas, it improves the quality of our education. We are talking about how education has been impacted by the use of internet. A child who goes to school to study the periodic table will now be demotivated because you can get the periodic table in the palm of your hands through your telephone, it makes it easier. So, imagine a boy from Koribondo accessing the periodic table through his phone. That will only be enhanced by rural internet connectivity and by internet services. So, if cable is landed and much more is invested in it, definitely the quality of education and access to information will automatically improve. So, we would encourage the Government to use these monies wisely so that SLACAB which is the beneficiary of this loan will invest these monies in order to ensure that the people benefit from it by a way of providing lower tariff rates. If you provide internet with tariff rates that are prohibitive definitely it will not benefit the masses of the people because majority of our people are poor. So, we have to cater for those poor people and then it will mean much more sense to us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, again, I heard the Minister talking about people benefiting from the connectivity from Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea which I think if I can remember is the CNSG a project that we lunched, we already again here revisited that when they went for additional funding, we approved it here but now that is not what is mentioned rather it is the improvement of Bo-Kenema Electricity Distribution. Of course, that is music in our ears because improving the quality of service in two of our cities again is welcome news for us as we benefit along those lines. I am talking about the West Africa Power Pool and we spoke extensively about it here, we do not need to talk about it again because we approved two loans in relation to it. So, if we are talking about it now definitely it is a continuum, it is a process and I am sure by the time all of these are done, our energy supply system will be enhanced and that will improve the quality of life in all of these respective areas, it will lead to economic growth and when that happens automatically the people will benefit.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we also have to draw a line between Development and Modernization. How do these institutions impacts on the development of our people because modernising them is one thing and getting the development on the part of the people is yet another. All of these goes together because one lead to the other. Modernization leads to development, in itself it is not development but I hope and pray that all of these things that have been brought to us now will be utilized properly for the benefit of the people we represent in this House i.e. the majority of our people who are poor in the rural areas in Sierra Leone not only in Freetown. We thank you Madam Deputy Minister and I hope all of these things that have been brought to this House today for ratification will be ratified because I do not think they are controversial. What is not good will be always objected to but what is good we will support. *[Applause]* that is what we believe as a Political Party, as we are development oriented Party and we want to see Sierra Leone move forward. That is what we are and we will always support you for.

Madam Deputy Minister, do not have fear whenever you come with something that is non-controversial, that is good for Sierra Leone, we will all be for it that is what we are here for. So, I thank you very much, Madam Deputy Minister. I hope that our colleagues will approve these, for you to go and implement. When they fail to implement, it is that time we would raise question. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution and for acknowledging indeed the fact that the Agreements before the House today are not controversial. Let me recognise the Honourable Parliamentary Leader of the Coalition for Change [C4C].

HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA [Leader of the C for C]: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker for recognising me. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Government Motion on Floor at the moment is not controversial.

THE SPEAKER: What is happening there? Carry on Honourable Member.

HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the instruments we have now for ratification are not controversial and because they are not controversial we will lend credence to it because they are in line with the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs] at the same time with the 8 Clusters of the New Direction Government.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, ratifying Loan/Grants is welcoming. It is welcoming because targeting two Provincial Headquarters; Bo and Kenema makes it apt. Whiles we would also recommend, before this time we use to have four Provincial Headquarters; now we have five if you look critically to our decentralization. So, we recommend further to also look at the Provincial Headquarter of the North-West. Ratifying these particular Agreements will also be extended to about 75% of the population in the South-East and Provincial Headquarters. Bringing them on board with these contracts will go a long way, moreover where there is less than **1%** service of those grants.

Mr Speaker Honourable Members, in the early 70s, the Bumbuna Project came up. If, with these grants we would also look at the B-Kongor Dam, it will go a long way to salvage the many citizens that are suffering from electricity supply. I have no doubt that the naturalness of the B-kongor Water Fall will salvage many of our cities that are today in electricity catastrophe.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, extending this loan also to ICT is welcoming. It is welcoming because developing the Human Resource of which I believe ICT is the life blood of all institutions including schools. Developing the Human Resource to me, is the greatest and getting a loan to service the ICT sector of this country is also very important because at a click of a computer gives a whole compendium of education to the school going. I also understand from the Deputy Minister that it will be extended to schools and to colleges also. So you see how very soon our pupils and college students will be computer literate for them to also gain ideas in E-Governance as well as transparency?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all the loans/grants we are ratifying today regarding Power Supply, ICT and Transportation is welcoming but I also must state here that

whiles these particular loan Agreements or grants look at the West African Power Pool, let it also be extended to the B-Kongor Dam. Do your research and then you get to know the naturalness of the B-Kongor Dam which I believe will hold. Let me just give one caution; today, it is almost becoming a cliché that **"di gron dri, di gron dri, di gron dri"** [S.O 2] but how did we get to that? Take note, because of the many loan Agreements the last Administration went into, that is why we are getting the consequences today. So, we would recommend that we go more for grants. If my information is quite correct, we pay between **Le80Bln** to **Le100Bln** to service our debts which is huge. So, doing that in a perennial mode, will definitely give the consequence of **"di gron dry"** [S.O 2]. So, we would encourage the Ministry of Finance to go more for grants rather than loans so that the lives of the many suffering citizens will be improved socio and economically.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I call upon this Honourable House for the swift ratification of these loans/grants at hand. I thank you very much.

THE SPERKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I now recognise the Honourable Hafiju Kanja.

HON. HAFIJU M. KANJA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to first of all draw the attention of Madam Deputy Minister to a message I want her to take to the Minister of Energy that the natural water fall which Honourable Emerson Lamina just made mention of i.e. the B-Kongor Natural Water Fall, is located in Constituency 018, Kenema District in the Gorama Mende Chiefdom and it is just 17Km to Dodo Power Station; that is the Goma Hydro Power Station.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in 2003, the Tejan Kabba led Government made an arrangement in order to construct this beautiful and the biggest natural water fall in Sierra Leone called B-Kongor to serve seven districts in Sierra Leone and the entire Republic of Liberia. The seven districts that were mentioned in 2003 included Bo, Pujehun, Bonthe, Moyamba, Kenema, Kailahun, Kono and the entire Liberia. That particular natural water fall at B-Kongor was also made mention of during the tenure of the Ernest Bai Koroma led Government in 2013 but there was controversy. The

arrangement was, the Chinese were to construct the B-Kongor Dam but before the construction they were to draw the Electricity Power from the Goma Hydro Power Station to B-Kongor site and CIMAT Construction Company owned by Dr Andrew Kailie did the survey. After the construction, they were to take the light from B-Kongor to Kono, Makeni and Freetown wherein the Dam itself is located in Gorama Mende Chiefdom of Constituency 018 in the Kenema District. That was the controversy and we never allowed them to construct that particular Dam.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sometime this year, the Finance Minister and the New Direction Government also made mention of the construction of the B-Kongor Dam under the West African Power Pool. Now that there is Loan Agreement to improve the electricity facility of the Bo-Kenema Power Services [BKPS], I am pleading with Madam Minister to take this message to the Minister of Energy for him to pay attention to the construction of this biggest Natural Water Fall in Sierra Leone i.e. the B-Kongor Dam. If you construct the B-Kongor Dam, the electricity problem in Sierra Leone will be over. We do not need to politicise the constructions of dams or we do not need to struggle to construct artificial dams. With the B-Kongor Natural Water Fall, there was no need to construct Bumbuna. This B-Kongor Natural Water Fall is the biggest Natural Water Fall in Sierra Leone and it lies between Kono, Kenema and Tonkolili. It is in Gorama Mende Chiefdom in my Constituency. For the construction of the B-Kongor Dam, the Agreement was, there was the possibility that at the end of the construction, water will flow into Kono District and destroys farm lands therefore, there was special package for Kono District and because the water level was expected to reduce in Kenema and Bo districts, a special programme was put in place for the supply of water to Kenema and Bo districts including all the villages where the Sewa River flows. If you construct the B-Kongor Dam, that will be the end of the electricity problem in Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, currently I am seeing construction of a Pilot Line from Bumbuna, Matotoka, Makali and Masingbi I do not know where that Pilot Line is going but the construction is in progress. So, therefore, I am asking the New Direction Government to please construct that particular Dam. If we construct the B-Kongor Dam

today that will be the end of our problem and we will be the highest contributor to the West African Power Pool. I am kindly asking Madam Deputy Minister to take this message to the Energy Minister to pay more attention to the B-Kongor Dam. It is just about 17Km from B-Kongor to Goma Hydro Power Station; that is the BKPS, a short distance and they are all along the Sewa River.

Madam Deputy Minister, your Minister; Dr Jacob J. Saffa, the last time during the Debate of the West African Power Pool Agreement made mention of the construction of this B-Kongor Dam as soon as possible and today the Loan Agreement here is talking about the Goma Hydro which is also a blessing to us because we are all from Kenema and I share boundary with the Constituency where the Goma Hydro Power Station is. So, if they are to reconstruct or to expand the Goma Hydro Power Station, let us also equally pay attention to the construction of the B-Kongor Dam and that will be the end of our problem in terms of electricity supply. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Let me express my discomfiture with somebody and I am definitely not going to recognise that person this morning. I would not call his name but I think he knows himself. I recognise the Honourable Abu Kemokai, followed by your good self and lastly the Energy Chairman.

HON. ABU KEMOKAI: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I want to join my colleagues that have spoken to the Agreements that are before us here to say the Agreements are non-controversial rather they are beneficial to our people especially for those that are living in Bo and Kenema. I do believe that we also benefit from the Power Supply that is going to Bo and Kenema. I also believe that having Power Supply in Bo and Kenema can boost the economic activities along those areas. Therefore, I want to join my colleagues in asking this House to Ratify these Agreements that are before us which are non-controversial.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, coming to the other Agreement that has to do with SALCAB, I do believe, like the Honourable Member from the other side said, it will boost our Educational System within the country especially for all those that are coming from rural communities. I heard the Minister mentioned Pujehun which happens to be my

District I am representing here but the caution I want to give to SALCAB or whosoever that is representing SALCAB is the fact that, we are approving these Agreements which are mostly grants. I do believe the grants are meant for the people of this country and the loan as well is meant for the people of this country which by extension we are going to be paying for whatever loan that we are going to approve here. Therefore, we have seen circumstances where cables were laid along roads, especially the Freetown-Bo Road, the Bandajuma-Gendema Road and so on. Probably surveys were not done to determine where cables were to be laid. We have seen circumstances where cables were damaged and I do believe that is a waste on the part of us as a Government. So, therefore, whatever Agreement on loan or grant that we are going to approve here, at the time of implementation of those projects, let us take into account where we place those cables where it cannot be damaged when it comes to road construction. Let us take that into account; it is very critical so that it cannot be a waste on Government and prevent another constrain of going in search of another loan or grant to do the same project. These are few of the issues that I want to bring to the attention of the Deputy Minister and whosoever that is representing SALCAB here. These are very critical and we have to take them into account. I want to join my colleagues in asking this House to speedily approve these Agreements that are before us. I thank you very much Mr Speaker. *[Applause]*

HON. DR. MAHMOUD M. KALOKOH: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, if it happens for you to drive from Waterloo to Masiaka, you will see the Fibre Optic cables been exposed and we do not actually know what the Government has done towards that. It is critical because in our days, you would be taught about State House without you physically seeing State House. You cannot even know the location of State House but you would be taught about State House and that was complete abstract and today we believe to enhance quality education, visual practice in schools is very key. So, that is why we want to ensure that the rural areas are being connected for them to have access to modern day technology.

Madam Deputy Minister, on the Agreement of the Urban Mobility; let me refer you to page 7. At the time of putting this Agreement together, an omission was made; look at the area of the Project Steering Committee [PSC]. You see when we talk about safety, sometimes we tend to neglect one important Ministry and that is key! That Ministry is the Ministry where you can get Statistical Data on accidents that are correct. You cannot even get all correct Data from even the Sierra Leone Police [SLP] because when accidents happen sometimes some of the victims die at the Hospital and not at the accident points. So, bringing the Ministry of Health into this PSC, I see it very necessary for you to be able to gather a lot of data that we virtually lack in the country. If you ask the Police, the other Ministries about correct data about accidents that happen; fatal and light injuries, you will not get the correct data. Even the data for vehicles; those that have gone off the roads, those that are plying the roads, you cannot get the correct data. So, I want to suggest that you include the Ministry of Health into the PSC.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the area of Electricity; like the Chairman, Honourable Kaisamba has said earlier; successive Governments have done their bits in terms of electricity but we still have huge challenges. As I am speaking, the area where I stay in the east-end part of Freetown, we have gone over a month without electricity but one could want to ask; do we really have serious engineers? This is because, over the years when a single line of electricity goes off, they will come to tell you: **"Da unda gron keabu don amborg o"** S.O 2 and you will see people coming there every week, every two weeks and fortnightly checking that area and at the end that will be the causative agent for the burning of transformer machines as it has happened at Thunder Hill. So, one may tend to ask; do we really have very committed and serious engineers? So, Madam Deputy Minister, I want us to consider that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these Agreements are not controversial. So, for us on our own side here, like our Chief Whip mentioned earlier, when issues of this nature come, definitely we will support them but when we see issues that are not in the best interest of the Nation, we will point at the grey areas so that you modify them and that is where sometimes our colleagues over there fail to adhere. Like somebody mentioned

in our group: ***"let us be political opponents and not political enemies"*** and I want to subscribe to that. We should be looking at issues and disagree for the progress of Mama Sierra Leone and we agree at a point where in that advantage will definitely touch all of us in this country.

Madam Deputy Minister, this Agreement only noted urban mobility. Go to Goderich Street where you get the vehicles that ply to Congo Town; assess those vehicles and come and tell us their status. Assess those vehicles that ply to Aberdeen, Tengbeh Town; assess those vehicles and come and tell us here where you see the safety of our people boarding those vehicles. For some of us here, we may say we have private vehicles but we are representing people who do not have private vehicles and their lives are important. The loss of any life of a Sierra Leonean impacts negatively on the socio-economy of the country. So, I want you to be mindful, I want the Ministry to be mindful of this Project, to be mindful of those defective vehicles. Some of them definitely should be out of the roads but they still encourage them to be on the roads. Watch the vehicles that ply the roads at night, some of them will come with defective lights and nobody cares I do not know why. The Sierra Leone Police [SLP] are so committed in extorting the drivers, it is not anything we should hide because they would see a vehicle that is completely defective and allow it to ply risking the lives of the people because he/she is not in the said vehicle. They are in the habit of collecting **Le5TH** which they call ***"book"***. I do not want somebody to say give me evidence, it is reality. I also do not want the Police to ask me to give evidence; it is the reality we are saying here.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to join my colleague Honourable Hafiju M. Kanja to say that Government has to be mindful of the natural gift God has given this country. I was involved in mining activity at Fomayia and when you go to Fomayia the B-Kongor Dam is located there and Fomayia is in the Kenema District but I do not understand why Government is dodging the construction of the B-Kongor Dam yet decide to construct the artificial dams. You cannot give a natural strength to an artificial Dam like that of a naturally created Dam which you just need to improve on so that we

can have consistent light. If those who carry the survey in 2003 had said let us consider seven districts including Liberia, it would have been good for us.

Madam Deputy Minister, let us consider the construction the B-Kongor Dam as a priority. I therefore ask my colleagues to ensure that we do not further waste time but to approve these Agreements. I thank you Mr Speaker. *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. Let us have the Honourable Paramount Chief. After the Honourable Paramount Chief, I will recognise the Chairman of the Energy Committee.

HON. P.C BAI KURR S. KANAGBARO III: Thank you Mr Speaker. When we see documents like these in the Well of Parliament, we look at them.

THE SPEAKER: Chief, just a moment please. Honourable Members, I have received very sad news that, one of us the Honourable P.C Meama Kajue Koroma was involved in a motor accident on the Masiaka High Way and she apparently sustained some serious injuries and I have allowed Honourable P.C Minah to go there and see her condition and report to us. Please let us remember her in our prayers for a speedy recovery from her injuries. Paramount Chief Bai Kurr, you may proceed.

HON. P.C BAI KURR S. KANANGBARO III: Thank you Mr Speaker. When I looked at the Order Paper yesterday and I picked up the document from the pigeon holes that we have in Parliament, I was very delighted, delighted in the sense that I see these as development but also when I looked at all these I started to wonder and ask myself where were we all these years? I begin to look at Sierra Leone particularly Freetown the city, then I begin to wonder whether these are going to serve the nation and the city of Freetown well. When you look at Freetown City, there is no proper planning. Everybody is building houses in a disorganised manner and it is terrible. When you look at the beautiful mountains we have, you will begin to wonder and ask yourself, are we really functioning as a nation or as a Government? You wonder, people are building two, three and four storey buildings around Freetown the Capital City which should be a reflection of the nation with no electricity, no roads, no water supply. This is something that worries some of us. You see people building on water high ways and water roads.

If you pass through Congo Town Bridge or Congo Cross Bridge, you see people trying to bank the water to build houses and during the Rainy Season in June, July and August people start shouting about flooding but people already saw the water road from the hills yet they build houses on those water roads and nobody would stop them. It is terrible. One may tend to ask the question, are we a serious nation? We have gone wrong all these years, now the "Paopa" Government is here with young energetic people, we want them to bring a change.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, look at the construction of buildings that are taking place from here to Waterloo with no basic social amenities. If you take a look at Waterloo, it is full of disorganised buildings all over to an extent of blocking the roads. I can say definitely that this Toll Road is not a Toll Road because when you talk about a Toll Road, it should have an exit towards the residential areas but when you are on the Toll Road you would find vehicles stopping to offload to an extent that you cannot even pass. Five to ten years from now, movement from here to Waterloo will be very difficult to an extent that you cannot even pass there again, You will spend another two, three or four hours to go through. I suggested in this Parliament that, if we want to build a Toll Road, let us leave our old roads and give the contractors the high way for them to build their own roads and let them not use our own roads that go through the residential areas. I said this, do not ask me. *[Undertone]* let me tell you something, the functions of a Government are continuous. The limits are from zero to infinite. If you read mathematics, then you will understand what I mean. *[Undertone]*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when you look at Electricity, I live at Aberdeen, when I want to put on my air conditioner at night, I have to use a generator machine because the voltage that is given by EDSA is very low. I have a machine there that regulates the voltage of 80 to 85 which cannot even run the refrigerator. Seriously, I have complained over and again, I have bought different electrical equipment like cables and so forth. I said, I have complained, not now but the functions of a Government are continuous that is why I am reminding you and myself because I am part of all of us. Mr Speaker, a country will never develop without electricity. No

manufacturing can take place without electricity. So, I am very happy to see all these coming in. I read them last night, there are many questions that I would have asked but we cannot change it anymore. I saw from the un-withdrawn amount, you have to pay $\frac{3}{4}$ of 1%. How can you give me money which I have not used yet then you begin to tax me? I read them, as a "munku" man from the village, I have to read. I read them and I wonder who signed these Agreements. You see, I have suggested in this Parliament since I have been here that, when we want to go and sign some of these Agreements or to negotiate, at least let the Chairman of the Energy Committee be part of the team. He would have been able to show Parliament why all these Agreements are going through because as a poor nation, if we say now we are coming to disagree then we are not going to get a cent. So, I can say the Agreements are foregone conclusions. So, therefore, we have to be thorough in negotiating. We are always complaining, the black race is complaining that we have been enslaved, we have been exploited. The great grandfathers of the Western Europe exploited our parents; our people or our great grandfather yet we still allow these young boys to come in and exploit us. So, what is this?

Suspension of S.O 5[2]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, do in future just suspend *S.O [52]*. I do not know where this new thing came from.

HON. P.C BAI KURR S. KANANGBARO III: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are many questions I would have asked if I would have gone to the negotiating table or before they signed the Agreements. I would have asked them for the clarification but there is no time even now for me to go over that because I will be wasting time and today is Friday and I hope the Ministry of Finance is considering that today is Friday, we are sitting particularly to approve these Agreements and you just saw our Honourable Paramount Chief was here yesterday. I am sure she left from Moyamba District on her way trying to speed to come back something happened that is uncomfortable for us but Mr speaker, since you already introduced the topic, I have visited so many Parliaments in the World, this is the only Parliament without insurance, it is the only Parliament you

have to live in the good will of the President, Government or Minister. It is terrible, horrible and disgusting. I have been here; we have argued this since former President Kabba's time from 1996 up to now, no insurance and no medical facilities for Honourable Members. I said these so many times; I am sure Honourable Dickson Rogers will bear me witness. Sometimes we quarrelled with him but sometimes he supported me more than anybody. Sometime I saw him when we were sitting there clapping but some other days he would say "**ah dis pa ya**". [Laughter] so, Mr Speaker, the Energy Sector, we need the support, we need dynamic people to move this Nation. This is what is lacking.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we do not even have what we call electricity metres. I have no good working metre in my house for the past six years. I have complained, I wrote letters to the engineers in charge. So, Mr Speaker, I am wondering, why we cannot order metres? Let us be allowed, let the people of Sierra Leone have the right to order metres just like we have the right to order rice, sardines, mobile phones and all other items that we bring in. They waste a lot of time in bringing in metres. A metre that would cost **\$10** in South Africa by the time they bring it here they now charge **\$200**. If you give everybody the right to order metres and everybody to install metre in his/her house, it will be very easy for us. There are no metres. So, when we talk of energy, I hope my Minister, I saw him yesterday but today I think he is very busy he could not come; the Deputy is here fine but let us seat down as a nation, as a Ministry to see that we really bring service that is beneficial to the nation. The Ministry of Energy and Power should be a money making Ministry but I was wondering from the tenure of previous Governments, why do we have to buy fuel all the time for electricity? What about the money that they are collecting. I am wondering why as a nation, why should we subsidise electricity? Why? When you look at the amount of money you spend on generator machines, it is too much. Why? I am here to grumble, I hope somebody would be listening, I hope people would be energetic and dynamic not lethargic. There is no water supply. Why? It is a pity. People are laughing at us. We are having the best rains in the world, in the Rainy Season, water falls in this country like nobody's business

yet still we cannot have running water in our homes. Why as a nation? South Africa is the 13th driest country in the world but believe me there is water. I have been there; there was no problem in my hotels. I have been there since 2008 but I am very disappointed with their killings of Africans.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank you and I thank the Ministry of Finance together with the Ministry of Energy and Power, the Aviation Ministry and all the Fibre projects. They said we have 4G but it is so slow like a 1G. You go to Guinea believe me by the time you turn on your data everything works well. Even the guys who came in to give visas to the people going to Mecca complained, they said they should do it in Guinea because the internet browsing there is fast. For them to give visa to eight or nine hundred people, it took them nearly ten days. They had wanted to move it from here we had to beg them not to move the process of giving visas from Sierra Leone. They said the internet is so slow, very slow and they said we have 4G.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, yesterday a Member of Parliament was asking if this is what we used to do here. He saw it as waste of time. I said no, we should be very dynamic; we should follow through these Agreements. We should not ask the Permanent Secretaries [PS] to give us petrol. When we go there, Parliament should give us fuel and our per diem for us to go and do our job but how are you going to assess somebody when he has to lodge you, give you food and give you your travelling allowance? Can you condemn? You cannot. Yes, exactly, conflict of the pocket. *[Undertone]* you are a Leader here but let us monitor these things. *[Undertone]*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, finally, I will say, we have to promote dynamism amongst ourselves. Interesting things happen in Sierra Leone. Everybody condemns corruption. Someone condemns when the sharing took place and he was not considered but when he/she is among those that benefit from the share, there is no corruption. Yes, sure. This is the secret about corruption. When I share or benefit from the share, I am not corrupt but when they do not give me then I say you guys are corrupt so, I can find a way for me to go and share. That is the hard fact.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, so, I will endorse and support all these Agreements because they are meant to be useful to us, they are meant to promote the welfare of our children and ourselves and future generation and to promote the economic development of Sierra Leone. Let us think of Sierra Leone as the number one priority, let us move Sierra Leone for the better. **"Paopa Salone for betteh nor to so?" S.O 2** well, we are measuring your betterment. We are going to watch and observe our betterment programmes. As Paramount chiefs, we are going to watch and keep watching. I know that sooner or later we will have electricity in Masingbi. So, therefore, I support and I am happy to see these Agreements. I am going to contribute and say let us all agree to give this to Sierra Leone. It is not to the Government of Sierra Leone alone but to the entire people of Sierra Leone. I want Sierra Leone for **"betteh en we fɔ betteh, paopa we fɔ betteh, if una nor bring betteh then paopa una fɔ go"** S.O 2. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Paramount Chief. As usual, he does not disappoint. *[Laughter]*

HON. KEIKURA C. VANDY: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today is a very fine day for us in Sierra Leone because even when we were in Secondary School, those of us that study economics, they say: **"location and localisation of industries"**. One of the requirements of that is the supply of electricity. If we are talking about economy, for our economy to grow, it has to come from different angles but we are getting there gradually.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Energy Sector had suffered a lot over the years, seriously suffered over the years but there are contributing factors to this suffering. One is poor planning. What do I mean by poor planning? Before now, the town planners used to measure the access of feeder roads by 25 feet wide. In those days, before I was born, at that time, when Dr Abass Bundu was a Minister, decades back, when they were erecting the poles, they placed them very close to the streets. If the wideness of the road was 25 feet, they just placed them 1 foot apart and that has created serious problems these days. If you go to the roads they are now rehabilitating

or reconstructing, especially the road leading to Limkokwing University and that of the Bo New Jerahun Road, the poles were right in the middle of the roads. They had to remove them and reinstall them which created a lot of problems. So, most of the problems in Freetown today with regards to electricity, those are all contributing factors.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, also, the transformer machines we are using, some of them were installed at the time when Honourable Keikura Vandy speaking was not born. I refer to them as stone-age period transformer machines. They are overloaded these days because of expansion of communities. They cannot withstand the test of time at all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these are all contributing factors and the most important one here; thank God the Deputy Minister and the Permanent Secretary of Energy and Power are here, is the issue of illegal connection. The illegal connection has contributed immensely to this energy challenge in this country not only in Freetown. You have people working in that sector and they are the very people that connive to do these illegal connections at the expense of the Government or State. You find out at the end of the day, of course we consider EDSA to be a Public Enterprise, normally Public Enterprises are not established to maximise profits but they must breakeven but at the end you find out these Public Enterprises are almost always indebted. They are always in problem because most of the staff there are not genuine workers, they are not working in the interest of the nation but thank God the Government thought it fit to rectify these problems and that was the time the Energy Sector Utility Reform Project came in but this Energy Sector Utility Reform Project initially was to change the entire out-dated substations, transformer machines, underground cables and the overheads. Those were to be rehabilitated in order to address the problem especially in Freetown but we have thought it fit that, that is not enough and as the right Paramount Chief said, governance is continuity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for the CLSG Project, we met it but we have done tremendously well to make sure that it kicks start very shortly. So, the Energy Sector

Utility Reform Project was to address these problems but is it enough? No, they are not enough at all. That is the reason why the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Energy are requesting that we need additional funding to expand on this rehabilitation if we really mean serious business here. So, that means, it is in place. Of course, everybody have accepted, even the Honourable Paramount Chief himself, when you stood I thought you were going to condemn something but I am happy that you supported but what is this additional funding going to take care of? Let us do not just say additional funding we should know what is it about. We as Honourable Members, when we go to your people they will ask us: "***una don go na parliament wi yeri sae den dae kam mek the electricity bisness, wusai en wusai e get for pas***", S.O 2 then you say I do not know then that means you are not representing your people. That is why I want to crave the indulgence of the Ministry of Energy and Power and I want to tell Mr Speaker and this House that they are in very good working relationship with the Committee of this House. Anytime we required any information from them, they give us adequately and that is why most times you hear me speak as if I am an electrical engineer or a Manager.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this additional funding is to take care of 30 Megawatts Solar at Newtown. It is going to be erected right at Newton. Let me tell you the importance of this, at the end of the day it is going to be Government owned. Let us try to have our own assets, that is the way a country or a rich man is assessed not by the physical cash you have in your bank accounts but your assets also need to be checked.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I speak to you, Bumbuna is giving us about 43 Megawatts and the Karpower Ship here is given us 30 Megawatts all put together is 73 Megawatts for Freetown but let me tell you, that is enough to take care of the electricity problem in Freetown. I have made mention of all the problems we are encountering in terms of electricity that is the reason Chief, it is not that the energy is not there, the electricity supply is not there but due to the line leakages. Maybe, before the electricity supply reaches your houses there are a lot of leakages along the way

which leads to the shortages of the actual electricity you are supposed to get. That is why the Energy Sector Utility Reform Project is going to take care of all of those leakages.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, secondly, of course we know about the CLSG West Africa Power Pool Project which consist of Cote' d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. We have five substations in Sierra Leone. There is also going to be an extension of Taloma substation in Kenema where the Acting Leader of Government business comes from. He is not here because he too has un-served communities in his area that the projects are going to cover. This extension will start from Kenema on to Koindu through Mannor Junction and Shegbwema from which Madam Bernadette Wuyatta Songa will also benefit and I do not want people to say it is only in the South and the East. I am coming to the North as well. We also have other CLSG substation at Yeaben, from Yeaben it extends way down to Kambia. So, you see, all the regions in this country are going to benefit from these Agreements.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is another one. We spoke of the rehabilitation and extension of the Bo-Kenema Electricity Distribution. Madam Deputy Minister, any time, of course, I have a popular programme in Bo called bringing Parliament to the people. I am on radio every Saturday in Bo to tell people how this Government is operating, to tell them about Parliamentary, the Executive and other functions. The other day I was nearly beaten. The Deputy Minister of Energy is here, he was also nearly beaten the other day because of continuous blackout in Bo and Kenema. It is a big embarrassment for us but I can understand. Before now, the initial installed capacity of Dodo Hydro was 6 Megawatts but because of lack of maintenance it has dwindled to 2 Megawatts. You do not expect to get your usual electricity supply in a situation where the usual 6 Megawatts has been reduced to 2 Megawatts. In Bo, we have one Hemko Machine, when put together it has been given us 4.5 Megawatts but the government owned Machine which is a CAT brand machine used to give us 2 Megawatts but because of lack of maintenance, as I speak to you it is only giving us now 900 Kilowatts and most times when the connections intertwine, light goes off. In

fact, Bo has the worst network system in this country and the issue of illegal connections are all contributing factors but now this Government has done so much well that we have even awarded contract to two companies Indian and Chinese companies to take care of the transmission lines between Bo and Kenema and all the towns and villages along Bo and Kenema and the other one is purely taking care of the service lines in Bo and in Kenema and we are going to remove all those transformer machines that were installed before I was born. We are going to install modern transformer machines and for Bo and Kenema alone, there are 50,000 metres. So, you see how important this Agreement is. When we have those 50,000 metres, maybe we would think of sending some of those out-dated metres not to Tinkoko but to Honourable Latiff who will be interested in some.

Mr Minister of Energy and Power, several times last week I was engaged by some Honourable Members of this House from Port Loko District. They are requesting for the expansion of the Bankasoka Dam because they have a lot of un-served communities there, they want the Government to intervene in order to ensure that those un-served communities are served just like the un-served communities in Bo and Kenema are going to be served.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when you go to Honourable Sama Sandy's Constituency known as Kendeyela, there is total blackout there. That is an un-served Community. The initial Agreement for this Project did not cover un-served communities. Now, the additional funding we are requesting is because we want the un-served communities to be involved. I am telling you this so that you will be equipped when you go to your Constituents who would ask: **"Wsaitin mek den sae den fo add da moni?"** S.O 2 you will respond by saying; because the initial Agreement did not cover un-served communities. This new Agreement for additional funding is going to take care of the un-served communities. Like the Honourable Yusuf who was seated here the other day called me and said: **"Honourable Keikura what do I need to do to bring light to my Community?"** I told him my friend do not bother me because I do not have money to electrify your place, you have to wait the rehabilitation is on the way

but most times they find it difficult to understand but today I know you will understand it. Now, your un-served communities are going to be served by Synotech and T&G Companies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I have said earlier, Sierra Leone is not only limited to Freetown. What this Government is working towards is to make sure that the Provincial Headquarter towns, the Chiefdom Headquarter towns also benefit from electricity and this includes Pujehun and Kambia. Honourable Zainab is enjoying sustainable light in Makeni. We want to make the Dodo Hydro sustainable so if you are boasting of light in Makeni, I too should boast of light in Bo District. I can assure you that in the next one year six months you will get envious of us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to crave the indulgence of this Honourable House for us to speedily endorse these Agreements. Approve and Ratify are the same as endorse, when you endorse it means that you have approved and ratified it. *[Undertone]* so, I want to crave the indulgence of this House for us to speedily do that one since today is "**Juma**" and we will be going for our "**Juma**" prayers. I also want to crave the indulgence of all present here today that when going for the Juma prayers, let us pray for these two Ministries before us here and by extension the Government. We have to crave the indulgence of Almighty God to give them more wisdom so they will be able to serve us adequately.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, of course Kono, you are also going to benefit from the reconstruction of the B-Kongor Dam. My colleague Honourable Hafiju was talking about the B-Kongor Dam. Off course there is CLSG substation at B-Kongor. When they say B-Kongor it does not necessarily mean it is just going to be 1Km from B-Congor but it falls within an axis of B-Kongor and Bumpeh. We are going to take light from there to Koidu and Yengema where my Deputy Energy Chairman will enjoy 24 hours light, where the Leader of C for C will enjoy 24 hours light and once we do that for them, we hope and pray that since we have seen them, they will see to us in 2023 which I am quite sure of and I know with what we are doing, we are going to finally of course equip you further in Port Loko District. I want to tell you that Port Loko does not belong

to you in 2003. It does not belong to you at all! Maybe except you decide to moderate yourselves otherwise you will suffer the consequence.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note, I want to thank you and I want to thank the two Ministers present here and their Professional heads and Administrative Staff for a job well done. They have made me so proud today because as a Member of the Energy Committee, if there are developments in the Energy Sector, I will have something to point at tomorrow. So, I want to thank the Minister of Finance who provides the funds for this activity and I want to thank the Ministry of Energy the beneficiary Ministry for supervising and implementing this project. I thank you very much. *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. The last Speaker on my list before we round up is Honourable Latif and you have two minutes.

HON. ABDUL L. SESAY: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today is a very good day, indeed because we are having very good documents here to Ratify. Let me add my voice firstly on the document about SALCAB. Of course, we all know that we are suffering in terms of internet connectivity in this Country even though we are having SALCAB itself here and now we are about to Ratify another loan Agreement for the expansion of the Fibre Infrastructure. Of course it is important nowadays more so when everything hinges on the internet. Meaning whatever we do in terms of Communication, Education and even Medical are all done mostly via the internet.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have few questions for the Minister of Finance. I do not know whether there is representative from the Ministry of Information and Communications because I noticed when I went through the contract that it is all about the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Finance. I saw almost nothing in terms of the involvement of SALCAB and SALCAB is basically the beneficiary. We have seen several times wherein Government goes out and source funds to finance certain projects but at the end of the day we see nothing happens. So, I believe SALCAB is supposed to have been part of the process whiles fixing up the contract. Therefore, I

want to know or this House want to know who is going to monitor and also evaluate the Project at the end of the day. We need to know because SALCAB is not involved. Also, Madam Deputy Minister, I want to know the Infrastructural Project because most times I think there are a lot of issues that are actually affecting SALCAB not the infrastructure but they are having some gadgets which they are supposed to purchase so that they can sell the bandwidth they are having to consumers but those gadgets are very expensive. I want Government to look into this. Meaning they should ensure that SALCAB is been considered in terms of budgeting. They should have a budget line.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, of course SALCAB just a year ago, due to the dynamic leadership of Ishmael Kebbey has done tremendously well because now we are looking at SALCAB as a business entity and they are actually progressing in terms of addressing the issues that us the citizens are asking for but again we are having problems with NATCOM because NATCOM should be the regulator, they should ensure that if SALCAB is selling it Megabyte at **\$40** and now we are having service providers retailing that **\$40** to **\$120** it means something is wrong. It is the work of NATCOM to ensure that if you purchase at **\$40** at most you should sell at **\$50** or **\$60** but **\$120** is too much and that is why we are still having high tariff in terms of data. So, I am calling on NATCOM or the Ministry of Information and Communication because the Ministry is also supervising NATCOM to ensure that you come hard on the service providers because it is too much. We have been yarning for this but there has been no time after the advent of the Fibre Optic we have had a reduction in prices or charges on internet service. We are still having increases rather than reduction and that is not how it is supposed to be. Before now, we were having internet service via satellites at a very expensive cost and with the advent of the Fibre Optic, we were hoping that at least it should have slashed that amount by at least **120%** but nothing is happening and we are still having the same prices I mean with no difference. So, that is why our people are asking, are we actually enjoying Fibre Optic Service? The answer is a big No to be honest because there is no difference absolutely. Be it the old system or new system nothing changes. In fact, when you look at the browsing speed, we were expecting a

very fast browsing speed but guess what, it is like when you open a page, you have to pray for God to allow the page to open.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we can actually utilize the Fibre Optic well we can even use it in the universities for lectures. You can be at home and get your lectures right there without going to the classroom. We can also utilise that within the medical discipline. For instance, in the Western World, Doctors can perform operations while sitting right at their homes, they use internet to command robots to perform the functions but here we cannot. We are calling on all stakeholders, the Telecommunication companies to please ensure that these monies that will be coming in which we are about to Ratify we use it judiciously so that our people can enjoy the internet facility.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now comments on the area of energy. It is very important because it is in the Bible that when God created the world, he created light first. Is it not? So, I think it is very important and we should ensure that we Ratify this very Agreement because it is of essence. For Port Loko, we hear EDSA complaining that they are not making profit in Portloko City. They are not the reason, we are having excess energy seated there without it being distributed to the people because the network is very small and Portloko City is a very big place. You cannot just have an infrastructure in the middle of the town and think you have covered the whole of Portloko City. Why cannot EDSA ensure that the infrastructure is being at least sent to other areas because people are actually ready to pay but they are not having the service. People even want metres but up to this moment they cannot access them. I have paid for more than **3** metres for over six months now but there have been no metres. Mr Minister of Energy and Power, you please look into this. In fact, now, I and the Honourable A.K.K are contributing our own money to purchase electrical poles just to at least help the people of Maforky to enjoy the light facility. When we asked EDSA they told us we have to wait for the Ministry of Energy and Power and that they have done this, they have done that. We are still waiting on them. I will be coming to your

office Mr Minister, it is very important. I thank you very much Mr Speaker and I wish everybody a happy weekend. *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much Honourable Member for your contribution. We now wrap up the Debate. Honourable I.B Kargbo, you have the Floor.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. By a way of making a brief introduction, I want to utilize this opportunity to congratulate Madam Deputy Minister for metamorphosing from a young lady to a very brave Minister who performed remarkably well in the well of Parliament. I think we should recognise that fact. *[Applause]* for those of us who have spent some time in this Well, will remember that as young men, during our Maiden speeches, it was not an easy task to stand in the Well to speak in the presence of the likes of Selatu Sherriff, S. I. Koroma and others but here is a lady who came for the very first time and she was able to stand here and present very knowledgeable documents. Thank you, you are congratulated.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have looked at all the documents that we must ratify and I am using the word "must" deliberately because must is must and we need all of these things for the development of this country. This is why I think that those people who thought out the whole idea of bringing these documents, these projects, these programmes to Parliament, did so in good faith and like we said on this side of this House, we always will support sensible and useful national projects and the Speaker will bear testimony to this.

Mr, Speaker, Honourable Members, now, may I simply state that Telecommunications happens to be a very important component on the time table of this Government. I was given the assurance because when we started the negotiations for the installation of the Ace Project, the Marine time Cable that was landed in this country some few years ago, the realization was that Sierra Leone should not be allowed to lack behind. We were fighting a war in this country when Nigeria, Ghana, Cape Verde and other countries had landed the Cable and we said no, we should not be allowed to lack behind and thank God the World Bank was quite capable and willing to fund us. We were funded **\$31Min** to land the Submarine Cable and today, the Submarine Cable is

performing well whether you like it or not. In fact, when it was been installed, during the 2nd month of installation going to the 4th month, Sierra Leone was classified as number one in terms of efficiency in installation. I am very certain that the administrators of SALCAB will also perform well to make sure that Sierra Leone continues to stand high in the area of implementation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, "*Sierra Leone Cables Limited*" that is the proper name as I am the one who gave it that name, it was created deliberately because the World Bank did not want to do business with SierraTel. I wanted to know why they would not do business with SierraTel as you always would need an All-purpose Utility Vehicle for these kinds of activities. The World Bank allowed Guinea to use their old National Telecommunication as an All-purpose Utility Vehicle, they allowed Liberia and Gambia to do the same but when it came to Sierra Leone, they said no, we will not touch your SierraTel and this was how we decided to setup another All-purpose Utility Vehicle and this is why we setup the Sierra Leone Cables Limited. Therefore, Mr Speaker, it is a company setup by the state of Sierra Leone to perform the duties of Telecommunications and therefore, like I said yesterday, they should continue to perform as a business.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am not surprised when Madam Deputy Minister said that some of the debts incurred for the purposes of expanding SALCAB will be met by SALCAB itself because they are a business. So, we want them to continue to remember that they are a business but like I said for you to be seen as a business, you must go through all those things that make you a business. You have to register with NATCOM, if you do not register you are not a proper business and I will continue to raise this point because if you are not registered as a Company, as stated in the M&A that created you then of course you would not have fulfilled all of those things that will make you a company. So, in as much as you are performing remarkably well and you are performing the technical duties, you should also work very hard to register so that you become a recognisable company. I am repeating this the second time because the

next time I come here I will move a Motion to compel SALCAB to register its Company properly.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state this point that when negotiations to establish utilities are made, let us do not forget that there are experts around who understand the processes involve in handling those utilities. Somebody spoke for example about electricity. The Energy Sector is very important but we also have people in Parliament here who are Members of that Committee on Energy and among them you must have one knowledgeable person in their midst. Why do not we take these people to be present at those meetings? Because when we come to this place sometimes we are not present at all meetings. Madam Deputy Minister, the Members of that Committee should be able to convince us why certain decisions were taken. Like I said also in the Sector of Telecommunications, we have a few people here in this House who are knowledgeable in the Sector. If you are going to negotiate a new deal for the expansion of the sector or to expand the broadband of this state; then of course you need to take one or two people to be present just in case they want to say a word or two in assistance in the negotiation itself.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, so, this All-purpose Utility Vehicle called SALCAB should be encouraged to perform its duties. It has been said that the resources necessary for the expansion of Telecommunications in this country are huge and for example, we want to expand our Telecommunications to the schools which I am happy to state SALCAB is attempting to do or in fact are doing it and they have also targeted universities which is also very, very important and the importance of Telecommunications Mr Speaker, can also be found that even adult Members of Parliament here can be introduced to Information Technology [IT] so that they can take their notes by using the desktop computers. I remembered a Magistrate in this country wanted to utilized or use the computer to take note in Court, the other judges were very furious, they say that he was very chickie for him trying to introduce a thing that had not become part of their system but the fact of the matter is that, as we move,

time and time move on and on and on, a time will come when Telecommunications, when the computer will be part and parcel of our daily activities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Last Mile solutions for example are very important. Why do we emphasis on Last Mile solutions? It is because sometimes you take a road, a target or the Terrestrial Cable to a certain point but it cannot get to it final destination. So, you put in place something that will make you go to that village to take the message, the facility or the utility there. Mr Speaker, we hope that SALCAB will be given more facilities and will be included more and more as part of the development of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have spoken about electricity and a good number of people have spoken about electricity. My recent experience was that, I went to Bo and I had to sleep outside because it was too hot inside for wants of electricity. Bo has serious electricity problems and I would say so simply because I have always seen Bo as my second home and Mr Speaker, I think you would accept that as well and if I find myself in a situation whereby I cannot sleep because there is no electricity in my own second home I may find it very difficult to fathom because as young boys we always saw Bo as the second city in this country and it is the second city even now but for us to continue to perceive a situation which seems to suggest that the second largest city in this country is without reliable electricity, is unacceptable. So, I hope that something will be done. Mr Speaker, if you remember, we brought the Danish Project in this country and we installed a system that created the Bo-Kenema District Electricity Project. We also make sure that the Dodo Hydro Electricity System was installed. At that time there was enough electricity in those two cities but as time went on, difficulties invaded those two cities and it is becoming more and more difficult. Of course, as I said they have now been listed down as very useful and necessary settlements for the expansion of electricity in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, people have been talking about the B-Kongor Dam. The B-Kongor Dam is a natural phenomenon which must be utilised. It should be used for the development of this country and I will support it because I always support good

things. My second dissertation in Geography was on B-Kongor so I know B-Kongor very well. So, what I would say here is that, if there are opportunities for us to expand the electricity system in this country through the utilization of the B-Kongor Dam, so be it. Let us help the situation. This does not suggest that Bumbumna is of no relevance anymore because even today if there is electricity in Freetown and other parts of the country it is because of Bumbumna and our worry is that when the Dry Season comes with what is happening now because in my house for example Mr Speaker, I must complain that I slept in my house for three days without electricity and my children were most unhappy. So, how can we in this century run a state without electricity? This is why I agreed that we must incorporate that very important need for us to expand the electricity system in this country. Days are gone when we must sleep in the darkness. We should not sleep in the darkness anymore. We are a civilized people; we should not be classified as a country without electricity. Mr Speaker, because of the importance of electricity, again, because the Government itself is determined to improve on the electricity status of this country, all we can say on this side is that we support the move itself; we will always support the move when it is a good thing. If it is something good to do then we will support.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague said Bumbuna is serving this country whether you like it or not. Well, the 'Yeaben' aspect of it should also not be ignored. 'Yeaben' Mr Speaker, is what they called the Bumbumna phase II. In another words, the Bumbuna phase II, if completed and added to the present wattage of the existing Bumbuna and the grid of Bumbuna, then of course we will have a very reliable electricity system. Mr Speaker, again like I said, natural phenomena in the area of water availability must be seen as important. If we take the B-Kongor Dam add it up to the Bumbuna and Yeaben, we would have electricity covering the whole country for years to come but we need to put in place the structures as well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is also this problem about transportation. I am not going to expand much on it but to state that if the Government is going to undertake such a noble project we should also be very certain that people take care of

the equipment like the vehicles, machinery and train the people how to run the vehicles. We must have confidence in ourselves to be able to run our own utilities. I was with late President Kabba in Kuwait years back and Mohamed Lamin of the Islamic Bank who is a great friend of yours Mr Speaker, just after the war, he wanted to help us with some busses and Mohamed Lamin said Mr President just after the war you may need 200 busses to help your people move from one point to another and the late President Kabba said: *"No, no, My people cannot handle equipment"* and they gave us ten busses. So, we came back after six months the busses were finished and he said: *"I.B you remembered I told you that these busses will not last long"*. I have given this short story simply for us to take care of properties, equipment we have. We are talking about challenge in terms of electricity but poor maintenance is also responsible Mr Speaker. Another factor responsible is poor recruitment of personnel because if you bring the wrong people you give them jobs that is of technical nature and you removed the ones who are readily trained for that purpose, you will never get good result.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like I said, the list of projects which we are ratifying today are useful and necessary for the governance of the state and for the development of the state and all I can say is that, we on this side will continue to support projects that are of a good nature, we will continue to support projects that are of national interest and of the common good for us it is important because posterity will judge us. People may tend to ask, you were in Parliament what did you do? I want them to quote the Hansards that this is what Honourable I.B Kargbo said and whatever I say here will be for the national good.

Mr Speaker, I want to thank you very much and I also hope that the Ministries that are responsible for the implementation of these projects will do so in the interest of the people of this country. Already, I started complaining yesterday but not too loudly about the non-presence of some Ministers whenever we discuss issues relating to their Ministries but I was not too loud yesterday and still today I am not going to be loud about it. I thank you very much Mr Speaker. We would ask that these ratifications be implemented without further delay. Thank you very much. *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Acting Leader of the Opposition. In the absence of the Acting Leader of Government Business, I will go straight to Madam Deputy Minister. Chief Whip, you want to respond? You want to have the last say?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, thank you very much. Let me first of all say thanks to my colleagues on the other side for contributing eloquently to those Agreements. There is a proverb in Krio which says: *"when you ask somebody to add to your honey it is not because you want the honey to get sweeter but it is because you want to have more"*. All what we are doing here this afternoon Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the pace was set by the Opposition. When Honourable Hassan took the Floor, he said: *"our Agreements before this House this morning are all non-controversial"* and that he urges us on this other side to speedily Ratify those Agreements, that narrows down the notes I had prepared earlier for this Debate. What is happening here this afternoon Mr Speaker is a testimony that our President is a listening President; it is a testimony of His Statement that He will build on every good foundation of this country and that is exactly what he is doing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I hope Honourable Latif is here. Honourable Latiff said SALCAB is now becoming a real business Enterprise and a profitable entity. I want to say thank you for recognising that every personnel His Excellency has appointed to those offices are capable and they can deliver for us in this country. Like you people said, the Agreements here before us this afternoon are non-controversial. We are only debating on this other side because we want to add more value to the documents. It is true. Let me say thank you to the Deputy Minister in front us here today. She is one Minister every time she is here, we feel happy to Debate because she is down to earth. All the Agreements before us here this afternoon, I wish for Honourable Tawa Conteh to have been here, we should be saying thank you to those who negotiated those contracts. Mr Speaker, I am saying this because there is only one loan we are going to pay for of the entire contract Agreements, the two are grants. So, I believe they properly looked into those Agreements and got the best out of it for this nation and for

this Government. I want to say kudos to the Ministries of Energy and Power, Information and Finance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is one thing in these Agreements that I want to pick up and I like so much but let me first of all comment on a statement made by one of my colleague on the other side about the Transport Industry or the way people are suffering for transportation in the city. I want to say to him that, that is all the more reason why the Ministry of Finance thought it fit that we should improve the Transport services in this country. Mr Speaker, you will bear me witness that, in as much as you were a very rich man when you were in the University abroad, the bus system in some of those countries are very good and those are the things we want to replicate in this country. For example, assuming that I am a student in the U.K and I want to leave Peckham for **Elephantine Council** with bus 34 to attend lectures at 8:00 a.m. in the morning, I will make sure I am at the bus stop at 7:00 a.m. knowing that bus 34 arrives at the bus stop by 7:30 a.m. those are the things we are trying to introduce in this country. We want to make sure that you have a Bus Information System that would ensure that, let say I am going to Makeni and I want to leave at 2:00 p.m. and when I get to the bus station there should be bus at the bus station for Makeni at 1:30 p.m. Madam Deputy Minister, I want to say kudos to you and to the Government for making path for us to realize some of those dreams.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to assure Honourable Latif that when once those Agreements are Passed, the Communication System in this country will not only improve but we will make sure that the tariff comes down because when once we have all of those gadgets that we are supposed to have it will be a matter of must for all the mobile operators in this country to operate within the Fibre system and with that the tariff will come down.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was thinking that the women that contributed to these Agreements would have made mention of capacity building of our business women in this country. I, like most of us here have given our sisters or wives monies to undertake businesses but because some of them are not trained to handle businesses,

they were not successful. Therefore, I am particularly happy for the Ministry because they are going to introduce a system of educating our younger sisters, mothers and wives on how to handle businesses. When once that happens in this country, I can assure you that even the issue of the appreciation of the foreign currencies against the Leones we are complaining about will be a thing of the past. It is very good, it is a laudable idea and that is one of the reasons why particularly I am supporting the passage of these Agreements.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the rehabilitation and the extension of the Bo-Kenema Electricity Distribution system, we have all alluded that it is important. It is not only important because we want to provide light for the people of this country but it is important for the actualisation of the Free and Quality Education Project. It is as well important for our business people because if you go ahead and give your wife or sister business money and you do not have electricity either to make sure that, be it ice cream or yoghurt or whatsoever is preserved, that money will go in vain. Therefore, the essence of electricity cannot be over emphasized like all of my colleagues have said. It is a good Agreement, like Honourable Hassan said it is non-controversial, I want to say thank you to them for at least supporting these Agreements and letting the people of this country know that this Government, the Government of His Excellency Rtd. Brigadier Julius Maada Bio is doing exactly what the people of this country deserve and we will do that until 2023 when we shall have given him a second term. *"Afta wi, na wi"*
S.O 2. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Madam Deputy Minister, it is now your turn to respond to the many, many comments and statements made but before you do I want to take this opportunity to add my own voice to the very loud chorus of appreciation and congratulations that have been extended to you personally. I think it should go on record that you truly well deserve the commendation of this House because each time you have appeared, you have come here and you have performed to the satisfaction of this House. *[Applause]* you may now respond to the many concerns and comments made.

THE MINISTER: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. You know each time I come to this Honourable House, I tell myself there is only one Speaker in this Country and some reference and respect that I personally have for this House is partly as a result of your Leadership of the House. I will also like to thank you very much for your positive sentiments, your appreciation of my work here.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me now respond to the comments from Honourable Members. Through the interventions, some of you have already answered the questions that came up. They were presented by other members. SALCAB is supervised by NATCOM, so this invariably means that NATCOM as a regulator of not just SALCAB but the service providers as well has primary oversight to help reduce the cost of internet, data etc. so that we can all enjoy better internet services that we are all craving for. I was pleased yesterday by the comments made when the new Chairman of NATCOM was accredited and the comments further were encouraging thinking through the interventions that will be delivered through this new project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with B-Kongor, oh! The C for C Leader is not here, with B-Kongor, the Bumpeh substation will in fact install transmission lines to Koidu, OCTEA Holdings will benefit and so on and all these will happen by the second quarter of next year. So, in a matter of months Koidu will have electricity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for the Urban Mobility Project and the observation by Honourable Kalokoh that the Ministry of Health should have been included in the PSC, we will take that back to the Ministry of Health so that the Ministry of Health is included in the supervision to ensure that data related to injuries and accidents on the roads are duly corrected.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on the question whether there are serious engineers at EDSA, well under the Energy Sector Utility Project, the 3rd component focuses on capacity building and training. So, training will be provided for EDSA engineers through this Project and 5,000 metres have now arrived but we realise that the roll-out process of the metres is slow; we need to engage EDSA and the Ministry of Energy to speed up

the roll-out of the EDSA metres to those that need them the most. That is it from my side Mr Speaker, Honourable Members.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House Ratify the Applicable Agreements which were laid on the Table of this House on Thursday 19th September, 2019.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[Government Motion by the Minister of Finance has been Ratified]

THE SPEAKER: We are now at the end of today's Proceedings but before we close, I want to take this opportunity to remind, first of all, let me thank all Chairmen of the Select Committees who have complied with my earlier directive, to lay their reports on the Table of this House. Congratulations and well done! This is a gentle reminder to those who are yet to do so in compliance with *S.O 76[5]* particularly. So, I am pleading once more with Chairmen of the Select Committees who have not done so to kindly consider doing the needful by the time of our next Sitting that is why you are Chairmen. I have been extremely accommodating, understanding and tolerant but there is always a limit to tolerance. So, please, let us do the needful.

Honourable Members, I did promise Honourable yesterday that I will entertain his *S.O 23* although I do so very reluctantly, I keep asking myself each time I hear *S. O 23* a question, where is *S.O 23* going to lead you to? What kind of result are you seeking to get but if it is just for the information of the House fine, there is no harm but if you want to obtain results beyond providing mere information, then perhaps you should be considering doing it under another S. O. Again, in this context, I will remind Honourable Members that, I have introduced "Question Time" and since then, I have been reminding Honourable Members about the value of "Question Time". I do not think we need another set of British Members of Parliament from the House of Commons to come and hold seminars here about that. I have always said, the Legislative Department is available to you to assist in the drafting of questions that you might wish

to address to relevant Ministers. You elicit more, going beyond mere information when you utilize that route than depend almost entirely on the *S. O 23*.

Honourable Members, be that as it may, I remain hopeful that there would be a few bold souls amongst you who will venture to utilize "Question Time" and once one person does and derives the benefit of "Question Time", I know many others will follow. Oh! I am delighted to know that two questions have already arrived in the Clerk's Office. So, I am very pleased about that and I hope every effort will be made to make sure that they see the light of day dwells for too long. I do not know whether what I have said is what has suddenly provoked your own thoughts but kindly take your seat because I want to recognise the Honourable who yesterday requested to stand on *S.O 23*.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, before the commencement of *S. O 23*, I want this House to be recognising *S.O 32[3]* because what I have observed is that most of the times when you are addressing the House Members of Parliament usually stand up and switch on their mikes and *S.O 32[3]* is saying whenever the Speaker is addressing the House, even if an Honourable Member is standing should resume his/her seat let alone when the Speaker is addressing the House and Members of Parliament get up and switch on their mikes to talk. I want to crave the indulgence of this House for us to please recognise *S.O 32[3]* in future. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much for reminding your colleagues about that. I have even witnessed instances where two or more Members of Parliament joggling to catch my eye, refuse to take their seats when I am speaking. "*Good habits come hard*", *good habits come hard*". So, as they may come, I know one day they would reach their destination. Yes sir, Honourable Kanja, you have the Floor.

HON. HAFFIJU M. KANJA: I thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you can remember, I stood up yesterday twice on *S.O 75* and today, thanks to Mr Speaker for allowing me to express what I was constantly standing up for. It is *S.O 75* which talks about premature publication of the contents of Select Committee reports.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Defence went on Oversight visit at the 34 Military Hospital and after the Oversight visit, a lady called Josephine Lagao attached to the Press Gallery in Parliament here who went together with the Committee on this Oversight visit on Friday, has now made a publication headline out of that Oversight visit which reads: "*Millions in Limbo at the 34 Military Hospital*". After the Oversight visit on Friday, she published this paper on Monday i.e. after I called upon her and advised her to allow the Committee to do their work. We went on the Oversight, we have asked the witnesses for documents, whilst they were preparing the document for the Committee, she went ahead and do the publication even after advising her not to tamper with the Committee work, she deliberately told me the Chairman of the Defence Committee that the following day, that was on Wednesday, the day before yesterday she was going to publish another one and indeed she published this one on Wednesday that is the day before yesterday with the headline: "*34 Military Hospital in shambles*". She continually keep on repeating the story by quoting the Chairman directly who happens to be myself and she keeps talking about so many documentations that were requested from the witnesses for onward presentation to the Committee in Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in lieu of this, *S.O 75[1]* is saying; "***Evidence given before or any papers forming part of the records of the Select Committee may be printed for the exclusive information of the Members of the Committee but shall not be published before the proceeding of the Committee had reported to Parliament***". After the Oversight visit, my Clerks and myself were engaged in the writing of our Report for the onward presentation to Parliament and now she has published our Report prematurely to this nation twice. Therefore, I am submitting to Mr Speaker or to the House for necessary action to be taken. I rest my case.

THE SPEAKER: Without pre-empting what the Committee on Privileges might have to say, I consider it an effrontery that even though you warned her after the 1st publication, she insisted on making a 2nd publication. Is that what you are saying?

HON. HAFFIJU M. KANJA: Exactly sir.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, over to you before I take a decision. By the way, let me remind Honourable Members; there is a provision that the Honourable Member did not go on to recite and that is *S.O 75[3]*: "***Contravention of this Order constitutes Contempt of Parliament***". Yes sir, Honourable Member, you have the Floor.

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: Mr Speaker, this is the House of Parliament, we make laws and the Standing Orders are our guidelines as we all know. If we have got such a situation at hand where the person is doing her job with prejudice against the very laws that guide us, I think it is but necessary that we put into effect the Standing Orders as they speak i.e. *S.O 75[3]* "***Contravention of these Orders constitute Contempt of Parliament***". It is glaring that a Journalist has contravene *S.O 75[2]* by publishing prematurely the information pertaining to Committee work before the Committee themselves publish it to the public and we cannot afford our jobs divulged to the public even before we conclude because we do very sensitive jobs here, we have the Committee of Transparency, we have the Public Accounts Committee [PAC] that deals with MDAs. If we now start getting those information out there and the public start indicting people even before an indictment is made, their safety will be in question. Like the Honourable has reported, if anybody meet any personnel working in the 34 Military Hospital and attack that personnel on the grounds that, according to what the Committee in Parliament did, you have syphoned A, B, C, D or 34 is in Limbo. We have to take this very serious because it is a violation of the very rules that guide us in the House of Parliament and the public should be seen respecting this Arm of Government because the law itself do not only just gives us power, it gives us power in case one violates the very regulations that guides us, for us to determine what to happen and it is clearly stated that, it is amount to Contempt of Parliament and it seems to be contempt on the face. It is glaring Mr Speaker. So, for me, let us put to test *S.O 75[3]*

HON. DR. MAHMOUD M. KALOKOH: Yes, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, you have the Floor.

HON. DR. MAHMOUD M. KALOKOH: I want to ask that we refer the issue to the appropriate Committee for probity.

THE SPEAKER: No problem. That is exactly what I was going to do.

HON. DR. MAHMOUD M KALOKOH: So that we get the feedback and then we will take the necessary action.

THE SPEAKER: Is the Chairman on the Committee on Privileges here? You are here. So, I take it, it is the wish of the House that this matter be referred to the Committee on Privileges. *[Interruption]*

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Sorry Mr Speaker before you pass a verdict, Can I?

THE SPEAKER: You may.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: What I am not sure of and I need to be enlightened about is, if the Committee on Privileges covers somebody who is not a Member of Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: Of course.

HON. DICKSON ROGERS: Thank you Sir. Otherwise, I would have asked that we set up a special Committee.

THE SPEAKER: No sir, it does.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Fine. If that is clear, then I concede.

THE SPEAKER: Contempt can be committed not only by a Member of Parliament but by a non-member of Parliament. Let us refer the matter to Privileges Committee. Is it the wish of the House that I refer this matter to the Committee on Privileges? It is so decided.

Honourable Members, my attention has been drawn to the relevant S. O which is *S.O 709[b]* ***"it shall be the duty of the Committee to oversee and uphold the privileges laws and customs of the House as well as the responsibilities as Member of Parliament and standards of Parliamentary conduct pursuant to***

subsection [1] subparagraph [e] of Section 77 of the Constitution.” So, this matter is referred to the Committee on Privileges.

Honourable Members, in addition, something happened yesterday which I want to make reference to. I would like to listen to the recording that contains the utterance that was made from that side of the House more precisely, in and around the seat allocated to Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara [AKK]. I heard myself the insulting comments that emanated from that area. What I was not able to determine since the Honourable Latif has somehow gratuitously left his seat to go and keep company with the Honourable A.K.K, I could not determine which of them actually made the utterance. Therefore, I am now demanding the recording and after listening to it, I will take appropriate action. I have been warning Members of Parliament repeatedly, severally that one day I will exhaust my patience and that I will begin to use the disciplinary procedures available to me for the maintenance of decorum and harmony in this House. So, I am going to listen to that tape and after listening to the tape, I will decide what should be done.

Honourable Members, lateness is my last observation for today. You recall several Sittings ago before actually we rose for the recess, I made it clear that I will begin to enter the Chambers; the Well of this House in order to obviate the need of using *S.O 5[2]* all the time. Since the beginning of this Sitting, we have not resorted to *S.O 5[2]* and I hope we will maintain that but I noticed that, I seat here for quite some time before Honourable Members begin to troop in rather lazily, casually. This is your place of work! We cannot discipline MDAs if we do not come from a higher moral standing. Let us start by disciplining ourselves first then we would have the moral authority to extend it to others. So, I hope this is the last warning about lateness, if we persist again, there are certain avenues open to me and I will not hesitate to use them and I want to place special responsibility on the two whips; the other will inform his colleague.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: The Vote and Proceedings only state the Members of Parliament that are present. What I want to suggest Mr Speaker is for the electronic machine to be timing us. For example, if you clock in at 9:30 a.m. let it state that you

clocked in at 9:30 a.m. so; any Member of Parliament that clocks in at 10:01 a.m. that Member of Parliament should be marked absent even if he/she is in the Well. Mr Speaker, it is not about a Member been here, we are talking about lateness. You cannot come in at 11:00 a.m. when the actual Sitting time is 10:00 a.m. and say I am present. You can be present for that day but let the time you clocked in be stated. I think punctuality is important. Mr Speaker, I think that will be one of the best ways to resolve this problem. You cannot come at 12:00 a.m. and clock in then you say I was present.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, take your seats. In light of what has been said by the Chief Whip of the Ruling Party, I wish to take this opportunity to draw attention to *S.O 77*. Those who without good cause make it a habit of absenting themselves from the House will one day suffer the consequences of *S.O 77*. Let me tell you what it says, perhaps let me read it aloud; ***"Any member who for good cause is prevented from attending a Sitting of Parliament shall acquaint the Speaker in writing as early as possible of his inability to attend and the cause thereof"***. *S.O 77[2]: "Any member who, without good cause, during any Session, is absent from the Sittings of Parliament on a number of days amounting to an aggregate period of thirty days shall vacate his seat"*. It is that serious. If you do not consider it serious, I do and I will very soon begin to implement this S.O. It has been suggested that the Electronic Machine should be calibrated to indicate the time that Members troop into the Chambers. We would look into that and indeed if a Member works in at mid-day really, can he reasonably consider himself to be in attendance? I am sure the Chief would want to assist me in this one; I will give you the Floor especially being the veteran that you are.

HON. P.C BAI KURR K. SANKA III: Well, in our local parlance which is krio, ***"den sae, if yu dro rop, di rop go dro bush"*** *S.O 2*. I am sure this is going to be the beginning of running a better system of Parliament. Mr Speaker, how many times have we arrived here and sit down without even knowing what is in the Order Paper? We come in; we do not even know what we should bring to this House. That is the fact and

you the Leaders of this Parliament, how many times have you entered the Well on time?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Paramount Chief, let us assume for the sake of argument that we have been over indulgent in the past. What we are trying to say now, we have reached the point of departure from the past. Going forward, we want to be as responsible as the public expects us to be. I say the public because we are answerable to the public! We must never, never lose sight of that. We are answerable to the electorate, to the general public of this nation. We owe them a duty to set the standard and to set the bar as high as we can for others to emulate. If in the past that has been the case, let us all agree to turn a new leaf and move forward in a manner that will broaden and heighten the level of respect that this House deserves from the general public. So, let us not begin to rehearse about what happens in 19 jubilee to justify certain things that are happening today. With the greatest deference to you Chief, let us not use that Order Paper business to justify the short comings that we are all guilty of. Let us all agree that we have reached the cut-off point, that we are going to move forward in full compliance of both the Constitution and the Standing Orders and try also to be responsive to the expectations of the general public. I say no more. Madam, a concluding remarks from you, you have the Floor for the vote of thanks.

HON. P.C BAI KURR K. SANKA III: Mr Speaker?

THE SPEAKER: Yes Sir. I am sorry Madam. Honourable Paramount Chief, carry on.

HON. P.C BAI KURR K. SANKA III: I was on my legs when you intervened. Mr Speaker, what you said is so correct but I was just laying a preamble to prove that we have been here for some time and you have been here for some time both as a Minister and now as Speaker. I am happy that you said you are going to start a new era in the Administration of the Parliament but believe me Sir, by bringing in this idea of "*we do not have Order Paper*", sometimes they would call us, some of us have to travel like 200 miles to come here. From Masingbi to here is about 180 miles and we leave very early in the morning. Sometimes, it is when you are at Matotoka or Makeni that you would be informed that Sitting has been Adjourned to another date. For example, last

week, we were supposed to be here on Tuesday but later I was already in Magburaka when I saw the whatsapp message that Sitting has been postponed to Thursday. So, it is not easy for some of us travelling from the provinces. Also, Mr Speaker, if you are going to pressure us or you are going to use the good offices for us to come in very early, let us have the Order Paper on time so I could read my document, prepare my statement then I know definitely when and what is going to be debated. For last night, when these papers were given to us and you said today, I was able to read them thoroughly and I know what is in there.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I was here before in 1996, with the blessed memories of the then Speaker Kutubu, all our documents were sent home including the Order Paper two days ahead so you can read there. Even our documents that we had to Debate upon were carried there. They had dispatchers that go in and leave these documents to you then you can read them but how many times have I come here without knowing the content of the Order Paper? The Order Paper comes in like 10:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m. we cannot even Debate because you do not have the documents with you and I cannot bring all the documents. Like for example, this morning, they have given me these documents: "*The Fisheries and Aquaculture Regulations*". I do not know when somebody is going to Debate them or challenge them. So, let us look at Parliament in its entirety. For example Sir, I agree with you, that Machine, I do not know I have tried it more than fifty times to put in my finger but it does not work. So, I came in here yesterday, I did not register and I came in this morning also I did not register. I was here like at 9:45 a.m. So, as you said, it is going to be upgraded, let it be upgraded and put in place so that it works well and we will try to do our utmost best, with also the financial situations, coming in the Well from Masingbi, you have to use about 64 litres of fuel to and flow. So, all that comes from our salaries and not from the travelling expense and as Paramount Chiefs, we also have to do Administrative work in our different towns and villages. So, I agree with you but also, let us be considered; now that we have the Minister and the Deputy Minister whom you have just congratulated, let them be kind enough also to think of all the good work

Parliamentarians are doing and I know so many Parliamentarians that are living in Bo, Kenema, Makeni etc. who always come and go. So, if you spend **Le500TH** from your salaries any time to travel, it is really not easy. So, please, we need more fuel Sir. Seriously! I cannot stay in Freetown all the time; you know I live in the village and I have to be there. There are so many people who are leaving Koidu Town, Bo Town, Makeni, Kailahun etc. in the morning to come here but it is not easy. Mr Speaker, believe me, transportation is killing us! We do not have vehicles and Mr Speaker, may I take the opportunity to let you know that in 1996, one Sheika Tarawally wrote a paper; he said: "*Parliament was bribed by President Ahmed Tejan Kabba*". We were only being paid **Le250TH** a month; that was our salary here. So, we went and talked to the President, he authorized Sierra Leone Commercial Bank to loan us **Le4Mln** each so that we can even buy rotten used cars. This guy went and said: "*Pa Kabba bribed Members of Parliament Le4Mln*". We brought him here, we indicted him and we locked him up at Pademba Road Prison now Correctional Centre. Even though, he later became Deputy Minister of Information and later Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs but we locked him up for him to know that we have the High Court powers in the Constitution. So, if you are going to urge us to come very early, let us also have something that is good enough to make us come. If you are a Member of Parliament and also a Lawyer and you have a case that you will be paid **Le2Mln** for appearance then on the other hand, you are to come to Parliament where you have to spend **Le500TH** from your stagnant salary. That Lawyer will definitely go to defend the **Le2Mln** so that "*di gron nor go drai*" *S.O 2*. So, please Sir, as third in command and as a senior man in this country, think of Parliament; think of the young guys and see that we get enough petrol to be travelling. Thank you very much. *[Applause]*

HON. BERNADETTE W. SONGA: Thank you Mr Speaker. I will definitely give a vote of thanks. I stand on *S.O 23* with regards to Members of Parliament welfare relating to health in particular. Mr Speaker, as a Health Practitioner, I keep asking colleagues; it is not something that I constantly want to bring to the Well of Parliament because sometimes it is best to wash your dirty linens behind closed doors than in public. It is

particularly a concern to me that when I come to this Well, I might end up with a weak bladder because I am holding on to urine so badly because of the state that our toilets are in and if we are not careful, especially we the female Members of Parliament, would end up with infections. Sometimes, when the Clerk is here and other Leaders, I end up using their toilets. Therefore, I implore that the Leadership of this House go to these toilets and see what is happening there; you really cannot use the toilets, they are that bad and are even worst at the moment that the female toilet is locked. Yesterday, I went down stairs and I was told to use the male toilet because the female toilet was locked for whatever reason, it has not been communicated to us and by the time I was opening the door, I saw two male colleagues coming out and I was asking myself do I really have to do this, go into a male toilet to use it when in fact the doors cannot lock? It is unacceptable Mr Speaker! I cannot imagine I probably have not lived in this country for years but I feel like crying sometimes; why am I being subjected to something like this? It is not fair and we do not deserve this! Earlier on, you saw me left; I went to Circular Road to use the toilet where my office is, I have to do this constantly. When I want to use the toilet, if there is no Leadership, I leave the building for my office and if they are in the building I use their toilets. It is something that needs immediate attention and I cannot over emphasis it Mr Speaker but we need it.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Lady, I cannot agree with you more! The deplorable state of this building is beyond description. All I can tell Honourable Members is that mercifully we have received a Grant from the European Union [EU] and we have now concluded discussions with the EU to give the supervisory contract to UNOPS and hopefully, before too long, changes will be effected to the sanitary condition of this building. A lot of work is going to be concentrated on that as well as on the water system of Parliament. It will come to you as a big surprise that when we got that Grant from the EU, one of the things that the engineers wanted was the Architectural Drawings of this building. Believe me those drawings were not available; they are not available in this country, not from the Ministry of Works, not from any other MDA! I had to use my own personal contacts abroad which helped me finally to lay hands on both a

soft copy and a hard copy of those drawings [*Applause*] and even at that, I do not want to tell what means I used but they were not correct because the people who were the Architects and who held on to those drawings did not even know the identity of the person requesting them because had I disclosed my true identity, I would not have laid hands on them. So, I had to use devious means of reaching those drawings. The important thing is we now have them and they are hopefully going to help the new contractors to do the needful; to make sure that the sanitary condition particularly is addressed without further delay. They have already started work, they may be a bit too slow but you know, what I am saying here speaks volumes; I do not know how many public buildings of this country are in that same state. I am sure there are many, many public buildings whose Architectural drawings are also not available in country. For me, that fact that we asked the Ministry of Works and they could not provide anything in the nature of drawings for this building, was an eye opener in itself; not only to us but in the generality of Government. It is a very, very sad story that many, many public buildings do not have the original drawings. So, when there is a substantial repair to be made, we do not even know how the pipe systems pass; the water pipes, we do not even know! In fact, I am told there is a huge reservoir under this building, yes! It is the drawings that are beginning to tell us the features of this building. The Israelis held on to those plans; they said for want of payment at the time and maybe that issue has never been resolved since I do not know what the true story is but anyway, Madam you have been very eager for the Floor; it must be something extremely important!

HON. EMILIA L. TONGI: Thank you Mr Speaker. Yesterday I asked you whether I could stand on *S.O 23* and you said no. Actually, it was not anything about Sierra Leone; I wanted us to talk about South Africa. You know horrible things are happening in South Africa and I actually wanted to condemn that situation in that country but I wanted to do it front of Cameras because the Well was full yesterday and it would have had a strong impact but you did not allow me. However, it is still not late; maybe we do it next week.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, secondly, since you were talking about the environment of the Parliament, let us look at these computers that are actually beautifying our seats in the Well. What are they doing? Nothing! When you come in here, it will appear as if IT is really working in Parliament but that is not the case. I hope you are listening Mr Speaker because it is important.

THE SPEAKER: No, I am half listening to you. There is a very important thing I am doing now; the job we did yesterday needs Presidential Assent. I am just browsing through very quickly to make sure that it captured our work yesterday so that His Excellency the President can give it the Assent before he leaves the jurisdiction but go ahead, only that you will not have my full attention.

HON. EMILIA L. TONGI: Mr Speaker, you are taking strict actions against us so you need to actually listen; it is just about three minutes expression and I will let you go ahead and do whatever you are doing.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Madam.

HON. EMILIA L. TONGI: Mr Speaker, I actually would like you to make Parliament very exciting for us. When we want to come to Parliament we think about the toilet, we think about the papers; we have tons of papers all around and these computers are made to stop those papers but they are not working. We actually do not need that! So, we have all these issues that make us become less enthusiastic with our work.

THE SPEAKER: You have now prompted me to reveal something.

HON. EMILIA L. TONGI: Okay.

THE SPEAKER: Have a seat.

HON. EMILIA L. TONGI: So, let me land by telling you that I have made my own questions on insurance companies in this country, Housing and Country Planning as well. So, you will hear from me as soon as possible.

THE SPEAKER: Very Well! Let me let the cat out of the bag; I wanted to give all Members of Parliament a very pleasant surprise but unfortunately, the surprise is late in

coming. I have engaged SALCAB, they have connected State House already and I prevailed on them that Parliament should be the next institution of State. They have carried out the survey and even today I was assured that something further on the technical side will be done once we rise from this Sitting. We plan to run an E-Parliament; a paperless Parliament. For example, when the Chief was bemoaning the fact that he had to travel long distances without foreknowledge of what is on the Order Paper, all of that will soon be a thing of the past because you would be able to access these little tablets that you have around with your telephone but then you must begin to practice how to read documents from your phones because a lot of things will be uploaded and once we up load them, you can no longer come here and say you have not received your documents.

Honourable Members, if you are computer illiterate try to be computer literate but frankly, we are going to start a process of E-Parliament and SALCAB has agreed, the survey has been done and gradually a new system is going to be installed and these furniture stuff here you see are going to become efficient and effective and useable. That is the surprise I had kept for you hoping that all of that would have been done before we resume Parliament after the recess but we have been late in getting everything done but the process is on and hopefully before the end of the year, we would also have become a Member of the E-Parliaments around Africa. So with that, Honourable Members, if you have announcement please go ahead.

THE SPEAKER: Oh the recording! Fine! Good! Let us listen to it. No, let us listen so that nobody will say I am bias.

[An Excerpt of Previous Sitting Record is Replayed]

THE SPEAKER: Can you go back to where the interjection was made. Let us rewind it to just that point.

[Tape is Rewind]

THE SPEAKER: I think I comfortably now know the owner of that voice; the natural owner of that voice, thank you. Thank you very much. What needs to be done will be done.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I wish all of you a very blessed and rewarding weekend.

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at 2:30 p.m. and was adjourned Sine die]