

*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**(HANSARD)**

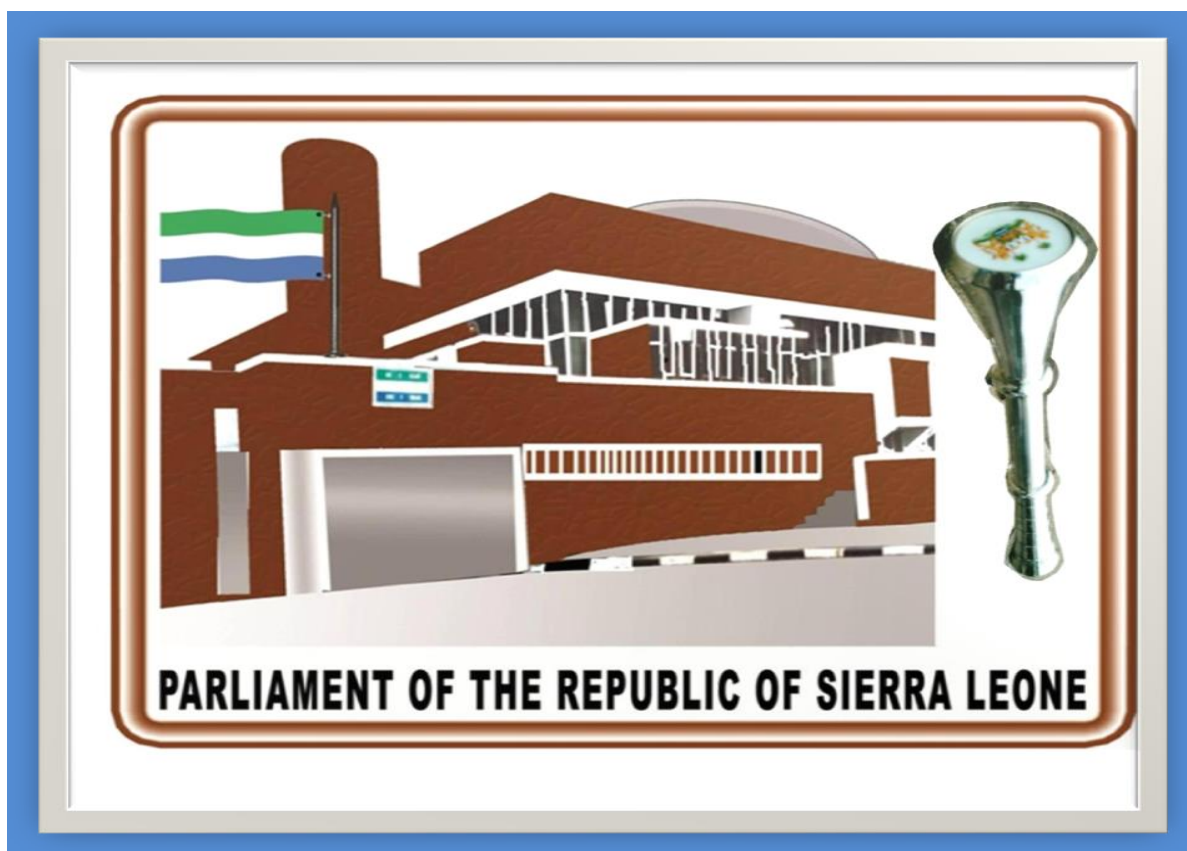
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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**SECOND SESSION-SECOND MEETING**

**TUESDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2014**

*SESSION – 2013/2014*



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**(HANSARD)**

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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**VOLUME: II**

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House  
Held on Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2014.

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## **CONTENT:**

### **I. PRAYERS**

### **II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE SITTING HELD ON THURSDAY, 20<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2014**

### **III. GOVERNMENT MOTION:**

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENTS WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON TUESDAY, 4<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, AND THURSDAY, 23<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY, 2014:

- a. Letter of agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Bank (as a lead financier of the project co-financed by the European African Infrastructure Trust Fund (Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, (CLSG) Electricity Network Inter-connection Project) dated, 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2013.
- b. Loan agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Bank acting on behalf of the Nigerian Trust Fund-(Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Electricity Network Inter-connection Project), dated, 28<sup>TH</sup> November, 2013;
- c. Loan agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Fund-(Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea (CLSG) Electricity Network Inter-connection Project) dated, 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2013.
- d. Protocol of agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Fund-(Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea (CLSG) Electricity Network Inter-connection Project) dated, 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2013
- e. Grant agreement relating to the Emergency Electricity Power Supply programme of Sierra Leone between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West African Power Pool (WAPP) on the one hand and the Republic of Sierra Leone and the National Power Authority (NPA) dated, 16<sup>th</sup> November 2013, which was laid on the table of the house on Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2014

#### **IV. BILL**

THE SIERRA LEONE NATIONAL-CARRIER (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2014

##### INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE

##### SECOND READING, COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE



*THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE*

## **Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House**

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

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**Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2014.**

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

#### **I. PRAYERS**

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

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

The House was called to Order

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU** (*Leader of the House and Leader of Government Business*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have few amendments to make on the Order Paper. Immediately after item II, we insert item III as 'Laying of Papers' and item IV becomes 'Government Motion.' Mr Speaker, item IV is now V; but the amendment there is to delete item V from the Order Paper. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, amendments have been made on the Order Paper for today, relating to the items as specified by the Majority Leader of the House.

*(Question proposed, Put and Agreed to)*

*(Amendment to Order Paper was adopted)*

## COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

### **II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON THURSDAY, 20<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2014.**

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, we go to the Record of Votes and Proceedings for the sitting held on Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2014. As usual, go through it page by page. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? Page 10? There being no amendment, can someone move for the adoption of Votes and Proceedings for the sitting held on Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2014?

**HON. DAVID JOHNSON:** Mr Speaker, I so move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

**HON. MUSTAPHA M. BRAIMA:** I second Mr Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Any counter motion?

*(Question proposed, put and agree to)*

*(Record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2014  
was unanimously accepted as presented).*

### **III PAPER LAID.**

CONCESSION AGREEMENT, RELATING TO A NEW JETTY AT KISSY, FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE.

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table of the House in my capacity as Leader of the House and Leader of Government Business Concession Agreement, relating to a New Jetty at Kissy, Freetown, Sierra Leone.

### **IV. GOVERNMENT MOTION**

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**MR MOMODU KARGBO** *(Deputy Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development:* Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> February; and Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2014:

- (a) Letter of Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Bank as a Lead Financier of the Project Co-financed by the European-African Infrastructure Trust Fund; Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea (CLSG), Electricity Network Inter-connection Project, dated 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2013;
- (b) Loan Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Bank, acting on behalf of the Nigerian Trust Fund, Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Electricity Network Inter-connection Project, dated 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2013;

- (c) Loan Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Fund, Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea (CLSG), Electricity Network Inter-connection Project, dated 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2013;
- (d) Protocol of Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Fund, Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea (CLSG), Electricity Network Inter-connection Project dated 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2013; and
- (e) Grant Agreement relating to the Emergency Electricity Power Supply Programme of Sierra Leone between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West African Power Pool (WAPP) on the one hand and the Republic of Sierra Leone and the National Power Authority (NPA) on other hand, dated 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2013, which was laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2013.

**HON. FRANK KPOSOWA:** I want to observe Mr Speaker. *"Be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> February; and Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2013."* I want it to read as: *"be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2013; Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2013;"* instead of January and February.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Majority Leader, any reaction to that observation?

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU:** Mr Speaker, my colleague wants things to be in sequence. His observation is noted Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Majority Leader, the observation of the Honourable Member is valid.

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU:** Exactly Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister, please have that corrected.

**MR MOMODU KARGBO:** I observed that as well.



**THE SPEAKER:** You have to make that correction. We call that contracting views.

**MR MOMODU KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, please permit me to make a clarification. If you go through the Order Paper, it says a, b, c, d, and e. It should be 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, and 3e. What stands as 'e' is an Agreement all by itself. Therefore, 'e' should not be regarded as part of these Agreements. Mr Speaker, 'a, b, c, and d' is a group of Agreements that constitutes one Project; which is inter-connection of electricity grid. What 'e' constitutes should normally be 3 because it is an Agreement by itself and it is different, although it relates to electricity.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister, how do you want to do this presentation?

**MR MOMODU KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, what you picked out is just the sequence as corrected by the Majority Leader. That is 'a, b, c and d' constitute one document and the 'e' is a separate document on its own. It may be labeled as 5.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Majority Leader, please take note of that.

**HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA:** Mr Speaker, there is no need to have item IV because item III is talking about Government Motions and all are Government Motions. During your presentation, you need to distinguish them, but they are all government motions.

**MR MOMODU KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will do the presentation, but I want to seek your permission to present them one after the other so that the debate can cover the two of them.

**THE SPEAKER:** If that suggestion is okay by Honourable Members, please go ahead.

**MR MOMODU KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, the first presentations will therefore cover item 3a, and 3d. The context of this Project is that electricity is regarded as one of the key ingredients in our development as a nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on this part of the world, we have been having a lot of problems in bringing regular supply of electricity into our homes. Therefore, this

project is conceptualised within the context of the Mano River Union. This is because these are countries in the Mano River Union. The intention that Cote D'Ivoire is a member of the Mano River Union and this is a project that originated from Cote D'Ivoire and transits at Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. The idea is that all of these countries are developing Hydro Power systems and other power generation systems. Therefore, we want to build a whole grid across the region so that every country can feed into the grid and take from the grid when and how they want. When they have surplus, they send it up to the grid; and if they want, they can take from the grid. So, this will contribute to the generation and making electricity available and accessible.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, four sources of funds have been identified and they are putting together the required resources to fund this programme. So, 'a, b, c and d' fall under one Agreement under the African Development Bank. That is: "the Loan Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Bank." It is from the EU infrastructure; and it is ten million Euros. This particular fund is being directed to the electrification of villages. Mr Speaker, I am saying this because any village where the system passes through should benefit from this Project. Therefore, every small village along the route will benefit from electricity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the total cost of this Project is 331 million dollars for the sub-region. And as already stated, it will be financed by the African Development Fund Fragile State Facilities and the Nigerian Trust Bank. Mr Speaker, the EU-African Trust Fund will provide 10 million dollars.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the objectives of this Project are:

- to facilitate sustainable energy between the participating countries;
- to establish a dynamic electricity access;
- electrifying communities located along the power line; and
- supply electric power to schools, health centres and business areas.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Project, if the construction phase goes through and implementation start, the expected outcomes are:

- increase the volume of energy trade in the region;
- decrease the average of electricity production cost. This is because we will be operating at a scale level. When you operate a larger electricity, the unit cost of operation is lower as long as it is running efficiently;
- decrease wattage to solve the problem of electricity;
- it will generate a lot of employment and the critical issue here is the technical aspect of it. The type of employment that it will generate is quality employment. People like engineers, technicians etc. will be targeted;
- it will increase women access to electricity. I think we should understand from the fact that even smaller villages will have access to electricity; and in those villages, farm work is usually undertaken by women;
- reduction in carbon dioxide emission; and
- increase availability and reliability of telecommunications in the participating countries.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, electricity is the foundation to a lot of what we do. We need electricity to switch on our appliances. The Project components we will expect include:

- the construction of infrastructure;
- rural electrification; and
- project studies and management.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, two of the aforementioned Agreements: the Protocol of Agreement between the African Development Fund and the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone, and the EU Infrastructure Trust Fund are 100% Grants; the other two Agreements: "the Nigerian Trust Fund Agreement and the Loan Agreement between the ADB and the Government of Sierra Leone are Loans and have different repayment conditions.

The repayment condition for the Nigerian Trust Fund is that the total loan period is 20 years. There is a grace period of 7 years; and is paid equal installment semiannually. The service charge is 0.75 on the principal amount of the loan disbursed and a payment commitment charge of 5% per annum on the undisbursed amount of the loan. And this will begin to accrue 120 days after the date of the signature of the Agreement. The repayment condition from the Loan Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the African Development Fund is that the repayment is for a period of 40 years and a grace period of 10 years. The interest rate is 1%. On the 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> year, it becomes 3% on equal installments per annum. The payment of a service charge will be point seven percent (.7%) per annum and a payment of commitment charge at 5% per annum on the undisbursed amount.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say here that energy generation, energy availability and energy access are very important to this country's future as we move the development process and begin to think how to ensure the availability of jobs for the youths. We are obviously talking about light industries. This cannot happen without reliable supply of energy. So, this is an important Project. This has been operated at a regional level and introducing considerable degree of efficiency.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is on that note I am asking this Honourable House to ratify the following Agreements:

- (a) Letter of Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Bank as a Lead Financier of the Project Co-financed by the European-African Infrastructure Trust Fund; Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea (CLSG), Electricity Network Inter-connection Project, dated 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2013;
- (b) Loan Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Bank, acting on behalf of the Nigerian Trust Fund, Cote D'Ivoire,

Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Electricity Network Inter-connection Project, dated 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2013;

- (c) Loan Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Fund, Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea (CLSG), Electricity Network Inter-connection Project, dated 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2013; and
- (d) Protocol of Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Fund, Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea (CLSG), Electricity Network Inter-connection Project dated 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2013.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the second Agreement is a Grant Agreement relating to the Emergency Power Supply Programme of Sierra Leone between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West African Power Pool (WAPP) on the one hand and the implementing agency on the other hand and the Republic of Sierra Leone presented by the Ministry of Energy and Power, dated 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2013. The Minister of Energy and Power and the Minister of Finance and economic Development signed this Agreement.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Majority Leader, do we have officials of the implementing agencies here?

**HON. IBRAHIM BUNDU:** No Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Majority Leader, I will give this as a concession because of the exigency of the situation. But next time, if we do not have officials of implementing agency here, when agreements relating to them are in Parliament for debate, Parliament will refuse to ratify such Agreements (*Applause*).

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. In addition to that, I want to humbly request, as I have said in the past, that the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, who will be presenting these Agreements must endeavor to inform the implementing agencies.

**THE SPEAKER:** Mr Minister, I hope that is noted.

**MR MOMODU KARGBO:** Noted Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister of Energy and Power together with the Minister of Finance and Economic Development jointly signed the said Agreement with the President of the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) in the tune of 21, 800, 000 United States Dollars on the 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2013. The objectives of this Agreement are:

- addressing the routine maintenance of diesel generators and auxiliary equipment;
- transmission network and revenue generation improvement;
- fuel and lubricant procurement;
- capacity building support to project management; and
- payment of preparation, monitoring and coordination cost incurred by WAPP in the implementation of the programme.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think we do import goods from Water Quay. If you go through the charge sheet, you will come across ECOWAS levies. When you pay money out of your pockets, you will grumble either openly or quietly. In this Agreement, money is coming back to Sierra Leone from that fund. And Mr Speaker, looking at the importance of this Project, these monies are going to be made available to help the National Power Authority (NPA) to become more efficient in its operations. Monies are going to be put aside, and it will help NPA to repair some of the generators they have. They will bring technical people to work with them. I think this Agreement is something worthy of considering. This Agreement also shares the responsibilities because three agencies are going to be working together. So, each one has to have a responsibility and that responsibility is distributed as follows:

- the ECOWAS Commission will provide a financial contribution in the form of a grant, amounting to 21 million United States dollars to Sierra Leone. The grant shall be financed by the ECOWAS Community Levy. As I have said, it is that money we have been paying to import goods. For instance, when you import a car into this country, there is an import levy. So, this is where that fund is going to come from. It is going

to impact on very important areas in our development programmes like energy and electricity generation.

- ECOWAS shall designate the WAPP General Secretariat which has accepted this as the implementing agency for the programme. In that regard, ECOWAS shall sign the Memorandum of Understanding with WAP.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the obligations of the government of Sierra Leone are:

- delegates responsibility for the execution of this Project to NPA who is the end beneficiary of the programme;
- grants tax and duty exoneration and waiver to NPA for the import of petroleum products, materials and equipment under the emergency programme and over the period of its implementation; and
- authorises an emergency procurement procedure for NPA to fast-track the implementation of the project. The procurement shall be done by a committee, chaired by the General Manager of NPA. We have our own National Procurement Act and this suggestion is not in contravention of the provisions of the Act because there is provision of accelerated procedures in case of emergency.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the National Power Authority (NPA) shall;

- take necessary measures to secure all necessary taxes and duty waivers, including sales tax from the concerned authorities on fuel, materials and services envisaged within the framework of the emergency programme;
- ensure operational security and proper use of products and consumables provided for the Power Plant;
- seek for temporary additional generation capacity of 10 megawatts during the diesel generation unit;

Mr Speaker, the Project will be implemented over a 1 year period and proceeds of the Grant will be utilised as:

- routine maintenance of 2 units of Wasilla engines and 2 units of Nagata engines at a cost of \$3.5 million;
- procure fuel and lubricants to the amount of 8.75 million US dollars;
- procurement and installation of meters to the tune of 2,300,000 US dollars;
- transmission and distribution network improvement at a cost of 5.4 million US dollars.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I can say that today is an electricity day for this Honourable House. I think we know the importance which we attach to this. That is the aim is to spread the benefit, stabilise electricity in this country. I therefore think that this is a very important Project I am commending to this Honourable House for ratification.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that this Honourable House ratify the Grant Agreement relating to the Emergency Electricity Power Supply Programme in Sierra Leone between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West Africa Power Pool (WAPP) implementing Agency on the one hand and the Republic of Sierra Leone represented by the Ministry of Energy and Power on the other hand, dated 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2013 which was laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2014. I thank you *(Applause)*.

*(Question Proposed)*

**HON. BLISS OSHO-WILLIAMS:** Mr Speaker, as Chairman of the Energy and Power Committee in this Honourable House, I rise to lend my support and to recommend that this House approve these Agreements before us this morning. Mr Speaker, permit me to say that the last time I spoke in this Well, I praised the Ministry of Finance. If these Agreements are approved, this will enhance the progress and the development of this country. Without electricity, there is no development in the entire country. Comparatively, I think there are improvements in the Energy sector. Mr Speaker, when Dr Ernest Bai Koroma came to power in 2007, he promised to provide electricity and we



realised that promise. These Agreements are timely because the people of this country will benefit from them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the grid will operate 512 kilometers and I want to suggest to the Minister that there should be five sub-stations. The five sub-stations should be situated in various villages. Considering what the Minister has said about the Loan, we are going to get \$10 million from Belgium. My question is, will this loan be able to sustain all the villages and will they be opportuned to have electricity from the grid? The Minority Leader of this House is the Chairman of Energy in the Pan African Parliament and she indicated to me that whatever we do and whatever we aspire to do, without electricity, the country will be at a standstill. I am appealing to this Honourable House to please approve this Loan Agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the Emergency Loan. We all know the state of affairs of this country. This Emergency Loan will be used for routine maintenance, fuel and capacity building. These are all necessary for the progress of this country. I want to say here that we should take the issue of electricity as important as anything else. We are progressing at a faster pace and should make sure that we get these loans approved. Thank you very much.

**HON. ANSUMANA J. KAIKAI:** I thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to support the ratification of the Agreements we have before us this morning. Mr Speaker, a country cannot retrogress without affecting the neighbouring countries.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in 1982, when the government of Sierra Leone, together with the other countries in West Africa decided to have such gesture in mind, it was because they wanted to progress together as far as energy is concerned. Therefore, this is not new to most of us. The Africa Peer Review Mechanism and the Millennium Development Goal had this in mind for the provision of energy, not only in West Africa, but Africa as a whole. This means that African countries must make sure that energy, being an important factor that leads to development in African must be our

priority to all of us. Since then, we have committed ourselves in making sure that energy must be provided. Today, we have several Agreements before us. I have no problem with these Agreements. In fact, I want to thank this government for being such a government that have been continuously making sure that programmes that were initiated by previous governments are continued.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will not deny what the people of this country and the sub-region should benefit from. We must make sure that our industries are developed. We must make sure that our backyards, including Madina in Tongo, Falaba in Koinadugu District, Bari Potoru in Pujehun District and Golahun Tonkia in Pujehun District and the ancient Island of Bonthe benefit. Therefore, I urge that we speedily ratify these Agreements.

**HON. ANDREW LUNGAY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Minister of Finance and his team for this initiative.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, I want you to take note of the intonation of Honourable Andrew Lungay (*Laughter*).

**HON. ANDREW LUNGAY:** I am a bit disappointed to an extent six years after Ghana gained independence in 1957, Kwame Nkrumah succeeded in getting sixty three (63) industries well established in Ghana. That was made possible because of the Akosombo Dam. Going back to history, we have approved many Loan and Grant Agreements in the name of electricity. Today, the city is still in darkness. Our energy sector in this country is a dismal failure.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, sacking Ministers and other Officials in the Ministry of Energy and Power is not the answer to our electricity problems at all. We have to make sure that the monies coming into the coffers of this country are expended properly and the actual results are got. The cry for electricity is now part of our culture. It started from 1961 and is still persisting. Mr Speaker, I think the problem with the issue of electricity lies on our shoulders. This is because if we are determined, Sierra

Leone will be energised in no time. There are investors coming to this country every day. But we don't have the required energy to open industries in this country. Our situation is very incipient from the days of colonialism. The colonial masters should have given us roads and electricity, but they did not. Today, they are giving us pittance to solve our electricity problem after they have siphoned our raw materials. Mr Speaker, the monies they are giving us are not enough to solve our problems.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should have a national programme for electricity. Once that programme takes effect, this country will proceed to development. But what we have now is not real development. The monies we are receiving are pittance, considering how we were exploited by the very donors. We need huge amount of money to develop the energy sector of this country. Without energy, we do not stand a chance to move this nation forward.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I welcome these Loan and Grant Agreements. But we should not depend on them. We should cut our expenses and invest into energy. Once the energy is incorporated into our daily lives, every other thing will follow. Mr Speaker, with those few words, I will urge this House to speedily ratify these Agreements. Thank you Mr Speaker.

**HON. P. C. PRINCE LAPPYA BOIMA III:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a renowned Scientist of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Albert Alstyle, once said, *"anybody that has not done any wrong has not tried anything new."* Honourable Andrew Lungay was saying that we did wrong. If what happened was wrong, we are now trying something new and that thing new will change the face of Sierra Leone. When you look at the mobile phone companies in this country, they are generating power for themselves. That is the reason why we are paying for credits at a very high price. Likewise, if we generate power for ourselves, I think it will have an effect on the price.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the mining companies can change their orientation as to how they are doing their operation. Maybe, we should try to follow them in terms of processing our raw materials in this country. We should start talking of smelting our

iron ore in this country. If we do this, it will also change our educational pattern. Instead of reading about the Greek and Roman Culture (GRECO), I think we will be thinking of industrial revolution as it happened in the 60s in Europe. What we need is the development of Science and Technology in this country. The President was emphasising on this issue. He said that we will be having modern technologies in Sierra Leone. Today, people are talking about 'Whats App, but a lot of people cannot afford it because if you have it in your mobile phone, you cannot be able to charge your phone in order to access it. But if we have abundant electricity, I think we can all be part of it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to humbly crave the indulgence of this Honourable House to speedily ratify these Agreements. Thank you.

**HON. SUAHILO M. KOROMA:** Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I rise to lend my voice to the Loan and Grant Agreements before us this morning. I am aware of the fact that these Agreements, if ratified today by this Honourable House will improve our Energy supply. This is a framework to improve investment into our country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, research has proved that 70% of the population in West Africa, especially people living in the rural areas does not have access to sustainable electricity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with the issues highlighted by the Minister, I still have a concern about the Bumbuna phase Two (2) Project. His explanation for this Project did not tell us anything about the integrated plans concerning the Bumbuna Phase Two (2) and Phase One (1) Projects. I want the Minister to explain to us the integrated plans the Ministry has for the integration of the plans so that this Project will not duplicate other activities. I believe these Agreements will go a long way to improve the Energy sector in this country. Therefore, I want to ask that this Honourable House speedily ratify these Agreements.

**HON. KARIFALA S. CONTEH:** Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am going to examine the benefits that this country stands to gain if these

Agreements are ratified today by this Honourable House. In the first instance, I believe that these Agreements are meant specifically for Sierra Leone and I will tell you the reason. This is an inter-connection between Sierra Leone, Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia and Guinea. It is like Sierra Leone doing business with Ivory Coast. Let us look at the scenario Mr Speaker. Ivory Coast is completely 100% independence of energy and as at present, Ivory Coast is supplying Energy to over four countries of Benin, Ghana, Mali and Togo. These are countries that are benefiting from Ivory Coast's Power Grid and Sierra Leone is about to tow the same line if we ratify these Agreements. In view of this, if we ratify these Agreements, Sierra Leone stands a chance to be fully independent as far as electricity supply is concerned.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I wish to thank the Minister for the effort made in ensuring that these Agreements are presented to this Honourable House. These Agreements are geared towards the development of this country. As we speak, Sierra Leone is about 25% Megawatts in Freetown and 5 Megawatts in Bo. In 2007 to 2008, Ivory Coast was generating 1, 400 Megawatts. I am using these countries as examples for us to learn the value of electricity in this country. There is need to be thankful to His Excellency, the President because as at 2007, Ivory Coast was generating 1400 Megawatts and 600 of wattage was coming from hydro sources. Guinea, our immediate neighbour, was generating 331 Megawatts in Conakry and the pre-independence hydro is still supplying electricity to the provincial areas. Unfortunately for us, Ivory Coast was generating 1,400, Conakry was generating 331, and Sierra Leone was 5 Megawatts of electricity, which cannot even supply Leocem, the only cement factory we have in this country. Mr Speaker, this government has made some strides towards solving the energy problem in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we look at this Project, it is merely receiving power from our neighbouring countries, which means that it is feasible. It is socially and environmentally feasible because it is the use of Thermal Plant that reduces the emission of expenditure in generating areas.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are numerous benefits in these Agreements. Secondly, there will be an increase in expertise in this country. Presently Mr Speaker, if you look at our National Power Authority, we are at a level of about 25% Megawatts generation. This means there is an obvious increase in expertise in understanding transmission distribution. To allay the fears of those who may be having doubts with respect to Bumbuna, this Project has the potential of solving the Energy problem in this country. Mr Speaker, let us assume that the National Power Authority and the Bo Kenema Power Station are zero, if we ratify these Agreements and this project is completed, we are at liberty to receive whatever Megawatts we want from our neighbouring countries. It means that Sierra Leone will have enough time to study about our hydro sources. As of now, Guinea has 240 Megawatts of hydro sources. The same wattage goes for Ivory Coast and Liberia. Consequently, as a result of this project, we will have enough time to thoroughly study our hydro sources to cushion our Bumbuna Hydro source.

However, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are disadvantages I want to mention here. As we all know, during the dry season, we experience waterfalls. We do have a potential of having 500 Megawatts in this country if all waterfalls are being managed properly. We have a design problem as far as Bumbuna is concerned. But this is an obvious solution to such problem. Mr Speaker, for the Honourable Member who was making reference to Bumbuna, this is an obvious solution because when this is completed, there will be sufficient electricity supply in the country. In fact, we have to record 4% of GDP growth to your projections and it is against this backdrop that when this Project is completed and when electricity is fully deployed into this country, we will have 10% internet facility. And this will be equivalent to 4% of GDP growth. Mr Speaker, if we ratify these Agreements today and the project is implemented as planned, 4% will be added to our GDP, which is very good for the development of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my concern to the Minister is that it is unfortunate that his technical team is not here to listen to us. There are 115 communities indicated

in these Agreements. I am talking about the villages or towns through which the transmission lines passes. For instance, if you are transmitting from Liberia to Sierra Leone, you have to go through Gendema to Zimmi, which is the vehicular path to Potoru and Bandajuma axis. This Project is talking about communities along the transmission line; and the transmission line is different from the vehicular line. If you are receiving power from Liberia, places like Potoru and Zimmi will not stand a chance of benefiting.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are individual responsibilities in this Project. In other words, the participating countries do have individual responsibilities. Some of these responsibilities have been default responsibilities of NPA as in the case of Sierra Leone. For example, the creation of pre-paid metres and the improvement of our distribution network are similar to default responsibilities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my problem is that I see that the participating countries are not fully ready to accept this Project. For me, it is a very good one. We appreciate it. Of course, the people of Wellington will have to benefit from this Project and we also believe that it is only out of this Project our energy problem would be solved. The people of Wellington are looking forward to the ratification of these Agreements. I want to thank the Minister and urge this Honourable House to ratify these Agreements. I thank you.

**HON. UMAR PARAN TARAWALLY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to lend my voice and to call on this Honourable House to ratify the Agreements before us this morning. But again, I want this Honourable House not to do this in haste. We have to look at these Agreements carefully, so that at the end of the day, the people of Sierra Leone, who are the beneficiaries, see the benefit.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say that the Loan is in place and for the Grant, 'a beggar has no choice.' This is because when you beg and receive it, make sure you utilise it wisely. I want to draw the attention of the House to certain issues

that have unfolded over the last few years and the subsequent implications of those issues on our developmental strides.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the issue of emergency power has become so monotonous that today, whenever we want to respond to energy, especially electricity, we always respond to them under emergency. Some six years ago, the nation responded to emergency power and no sooner we began to experience electricity, the emergency plan vanished away and the city experienced darkness again. Mr Speaker, this is just a cautionary note I am highlighting here. When we shall have ratified these Agreements, we have to make sure that the people of Sierra Leone, for whom this gesture is meant for, derive not only the benefit, but its multiplying effects on every sector of life.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a colleague Honourable Member said that energy is everything. And with energy, the nation's onward development can be fast tracked. Mr Speaker, it is unfortunate to note that instead of development being fast tracked today, we are seeing a slow pace in that regard. There are brilliant ideas and initiatives towards sustainable energy for Sierra Leone, but unfortunately, the implementers are the problem. I do not know whether they have been a stain of stupor to the development of electricity in this nation, or not. They are too apathetic to the development of Sierra Leone. I want to caution all of the people who might be involved in the implementation of these Agreements. That is we do not want to see a state of electricity emergency in this country again. We want to see a state of sustained electricity; rather than a state of electricity emergency in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is written in the Bible; and with your leave Mr Speaker, I read: *"if your left hand causes you to sin, cut it off."* Mr Speaker, when the Minister was making his presentation, he informed this House that the Emergency Grant will go towards the maintenance of machines, procurement of fuel etc. But I will want to inform this House that most of the machines at Kingtom Power Station are too old and dilapidated. We are spending too much money in terms of repairing these old and



dilapidated machines. Mr Speaker, if the old machines at Kingtom are causing us more problems, I think we have to discard them and purchase new ones. I am saying this because the maintenance cost is high. We have to cumulate those costs and use the money to purchase new machines.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on this note, I want to call on this Honourable House to ratify these Agreements. I thank you.

**HON. DAN Y. SESAY:** Thank you Mr Speaker for this opportunity to express my profound appreciation of what the Minister has brought before us this morning for ratification. I want to thank the Minister of Finance for bringing these Agreements to this House. I want to believe that in the early 70s, when the late Siaka Stevens was Head of State of this country, there were certain areas in this country that were enjoying constant electricity supply. I believe the leadership by then was concerned with those areas. I am talking about Bo and Kenema Districts. They were enjoying electricity whilst other areas in Sierra Leone were struggling. Let us say that when a leader is concerned with justice, he will make his nation very strong. Now, we want to say thanks to our leader, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma because he is concerned with justice. Therefore, he is planning to make his nation very strong.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a colleague Honourable Member was saying that we are overdue in terms of having electricity in Sierra Leone. Well, what he said was true. But the reason for this is because of the leadership of this country. Mr Speaker, after Siaka Stevens' regime, the only leader that has the interest of this country at heart is His Excellency, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. Even the children in the Nursery schools, can attest to that. This is because they have seen developments at every door step of this nation. I want to assure my brothers and sisters that if these Agreements are ratified today, the people in Pujehun, Kailahun and other districts will benefit from this Project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want this Honourable House to speedily ratify these Agreements for the benefits of the people of this country. Mr Speaker, when you leave this country to neighbouring countries, you won't be happy with the way Sierra

Leone is progressing. Mr Speaker you cannot compare Benin to Sierra Leone in terms of electricity. The question is why should other African countries enjoy such facilities? We have diamonds, gold, iron ore, rutile, bauxite and many other minerals in this country, but yet, we are still considered as the least developed country in the world. I know that we had leadership problem. But today, we have got true leadership and we have to continue to pray for this leadership. I thank you.

**HON. PATRICK FOYAH:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Minister for presenting to this House these Agreements to improve power supply in this country. If you could recalled, the Speaker asked the Majority Leader of this Honourable House why the implementers of this Project are not here to listen to our presentations. We do agree that since 2007, when this government came to power, unlike education, agriculture and other areas, the Ministry of Energy and Power has changed three Ministers. We all know the reasons for that. Now, we are going to have Grants and Loans to improve electricity in this country. We want the implementers of this Project to come here and tell us the changes that have taken place in order to ensure that the implementation of these Agreements will be made different from those in the past.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are talking about electricity for this country. Honourable Paran Tarawally made it very clear that we are now tired with this ad-hoc arrangements as far as electricity is concerned in this country. We should be looking at permanent structures to be put in place to have sustainable electricity in Sierra Leone. I think this is going to be good for the development of this nation, if these Agreements are implemented properly.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the previous speaker said that after Siaka Stevens, no other leader has done anything good for this country except Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. As far as I am concerned, when we came into governance in 1996, President Ahmad Tejan Kabba inherited war in this country and there was need for priority for the people of this country. But we had to prioritise peace. Electricity was important, but bringing

the war to an end was the most important thing for everybody. I am sure that is why we are seated here today to deliberate issues of national importance. I think we have to be very cautious when we talk about development in Sierra Leone. In fact, you cannot exclude the late President, Dr Alhaji Ahmed Tejan Kabba as far as the development of this country was concerned. Development is continuity. We had Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP 1), which was transformed to PRSP 2. The PRSP 2 is dubbed "*Agenda for Change*" and today, we are talking about PRSP 3, commonly known as "*Agenda for Prosperity*." We are all supporting it today because as far as we on this side of the 'ayes' are concerned, we want prosperity to flourish and to affect every Sierra Leonean.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in 2018, when we shall have taken power from the APC, we need prosperity to take off. With that note Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to join the previous speakers that these Agreements are laudable ventures for this country and I support their ratification. I thank you very much.

**HON. HASSAN B. SHERIFF:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand here this morning to support the ratification of these Agreements. It will be sad to end this debate without the contribution of the Finance Committee members. But I want to inform Members of the Finance Committee that any time we have an Agreement to ratify, loan or grant, we have to be heard.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to look at the financial aspect of these Agreements. It is necessary to provide energy to augment our development strides. It is also necessary to provide electricity to the various homes in this country. I want Honourable Members to know that the supply of energy to every home is very expensive. And that cost has to be financed by the government and not the private companies. I believe it is the responsibility of Members of Parliament to look beyond all reasonable doubts and ratify these Agreements. The Agreements we have ratified in the past are standard Agreements; and Mr Speaker, the Agreements before us are basically the same. These are standard Agreements and there are service charges. There are

fees and interest rates that should be met. I believe it is our responsibility as responsible government to look into these areas.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, without energy, you cannot provide nor have development in any country. We have seen electricity inter-connectivity around the world. For instance, America has electricity inter-connection with Canada and even within some States. So what is coming to Sierra Leone today is not new. What is coming to the sub-region is not new at all Mr Speaker. It is an international best practice to improve the lives of the people of countries concerned. So, I believe that Sierra Leone is moving towards the right direction. The President has done his best in terms of improving this country. But the issue of taking development to the door steps of the common man and woman is the responsibility of Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe that this is not a new phenomenon. If we muster our efforts together and work with the two Ministries: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and Ministry of Energy and Power, we will be able to achieve what we are trying to ratify here today. I think it is also necessary to invite Members of Parliament in the respective Committees to do the necessary monitoring. That is what I believe we should be doing as Members of Parliament. We have to be monitoring these activities when these Loans and Grants are received. We are expecting the Ministry of Finance to advise the appropriate Committees so that these Committees will monitor the activities of these Projects. If we do that, we will be able to achieve our objectives.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, somebody was mentioning the line connections and the Minister was trying to tell us that all the communities along the high tension cable will be provided with electricity. It is a welcome idea and I believe Mange Bureh, which is along the highway from Conakry, will benefit from these Projects. When these Projects shall have completed, the benefit from these inter-connections will be enormous for the people.

With these few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to ask that we speedily approve these Agreements so that the government will start to do the work it is confronted with. I thank you.

**HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI (*Minority Leader of the House*):** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, from what we have heard from the two sides of the ayes, there is a general concordance that energy is very necessary and it is the engine of development in any country. I am also with that opinion.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our energy sector has overabundance of challenges. But I think that is not enough reason to relegate it to the doldrums. Challenges are meant to be faced and addressed. And what we have before us is just one of those efforts to address the energy situation in the country. These Agreements before us are going to improve Ivory Coast, Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone in terms of electricity supply. We can liken this to what is happening between Kenema and Bo Districts in this country. In the rainy season, when the waters are up, Kenema supplies electricity to Bo District; and in the dry season, when the waters are down the Thermal generated electricity helps to provide electricity in Kenema. And that is why we have that inter-connectivity. So, if we look at that from this point of view, then what we are about to do is a microcosm of what is happening between the Dodo Hydroelectric Power and Bo-Kenema Power Station. What we are also doing as we seated here as Members of Parliament is also similar to what is happening in North Africa, South and Eastern Africa, Central Africa and even in the West.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when we are inter-connected, there will be inter-trade link among five or six countries. The market will be big and it will be dynamic. We are also aiming at regional integration and economics of scale because when we are inter-connected, we are bringing huge amount of resources together than Sierra Leone could have sourced small amount of money for its own electricity generation. So, this is what this Project is all about. It is not new at all. We have the East African Power Pool and even the North African Power Pool. We want to see the whole of Africa connected

by sustainable, improved and continental grid, thereby creating a big and dynamic market for energy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have here loans and grants and we have been given the objectives of these Loans and Grants. We have been given the implementation mechanism of these Loans and Grants and I am sure there is consensus that these Loans and Grants are needed because electricity is important to our development. Currently, Sierra Leone has a very high electricity demand and yet, the supply of electricity is restricted. The capacity of our current electricity is not up to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the needs of this country. So, every effort we can use to improve on the capacity of our energy sector will be an effort in the right direction because with energy, we can open cottage industries in the rural areas. It also opens a lot of commercial enterprises, both in the rural and the urban areas.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should not be wasting our time in terms of ratifying these Agreements. It is a welcome gesture and the people of Sierra Leone will appreciate it wholeheartedly. We cannot develop as a nation without electricity. Therefore, what we can do as a Parliament is to ensure that we monitor the implementation of these Projects. The Chairman of the Committee on Finance also made similar sentiments that we have the responsibility to closely monitor the implementation of these Loans and Grants. We should take our Oversight work very seriously. We should make a difference in this Parliament. I always say that under the new dispensation, we should make a difference. As a Parliament, we have no alternative; and we cannot afford to fail. Our Oversight system has to be overhauled. We have to rejuvenate our Oversight mechanisms so that when we go to oversee these Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), they will know that we are serious. This is very important Mr Speaker because if we fail to do our work effectively and efficiently, it means we are betraying the confidence of the people that we represent. We have to be naming and shaming those who normally say that Parliament does not have the capacity, skills and the man power to manage its own affairs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have to work together in order to achieve the 'Agenda for Prosperity.' Our destinies are now joined together because we will have no justification in future to call for our own self-determination.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the other Agreement that deals with the issue of emergency electricity, particularly for Freetown. This is very important for the development of this nation. We have a lot of problems in the generation of electricity in Freetown, especially the distribution and the transmission. Our transmission lines are all faulty. In fact, studies have shown that we lose 40% of the energy we generate from where it is generated to the consumers because of faulty transmission lines.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, part of this money will be used to ensure that our transmission lines are repaired. Of course, our machines are also old and we need to repair them properly. But again, the spare parts of some of these are not easily accessible in this country because of the changes in technological advancement. Mr Speaker, while we seek to maintain the existing machines, we should also invest in modern machines. Mr Speaker, even our own vehicles, the more you repair your vehicle at a regular bases, you should expect to get zero utility. In fact, you will spend more money and you will not realise any usefulness. So, this is a welcome idea but we have to work together to see how we can bring in more investments; and how the private sector can come in and help.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with these few words, we should not procrastinate the ratification of these Agreements. Energy is the engine of every development that any country can boast of. Therefore, we have to garner every effort we need as a people, as a government and as a Parliament to ensure that we provide energy to our people. We have to transform this country and bring in all the needed resources our people need. No effort is small in the fight for sustainable energy. Mr Speaker, from what we have been hearing since this morning, this is not a controversial issue. It is a needed resource and the earlier the better. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** I hope the message by the Minority Leader of this House, with regards to parliamentary Oversight Committees is clearly noted. I want to ask the Minority Leader to have pity on those who are in the habit of saying outrageous things. This is because they speak out of ignorance.

**HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU (*Majority Leader of the House and Leader of Government Business*):** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I want to also thank Honourable Members for talking to ourselves because the implementers that are supposed to be here are not here. But I want to tell the Minister of Finance and Economic Development that henceforth, it is now a precedence that every Loan or Grant he is bringing to Parliament, that Loan or Grant will not be discussed if the implementers are not here to listen to our observations and comments.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the various countries that have seen the need for the provision of sustainable energy in the region. It is an acknowledgement of the fact that electricity, being what it is, the more you get it, the more you demand for it. I will also like to allay the fear of my colleague on the other side, Honourable Paran Tarawally that this is a step in the right direction for these four countries to come together in trying to tackle this perennial problem. Electricity has been a perennial problem for most African countries.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the Minister was making his presentation, he said among other things, electricity will be made available to villages and towns where the transmission lines will pass through. Thank you very much Mr Minister, but that needs a lot of publicity, education and sensitisation. This is because we all know that electricity is not a cheap commodity. You should have the money in order to access electricity. It is not a free commodity. It has to be paid for. Mr Speaker, it will be very difficult for Members of Parliament to tell their constituents to pay for electricity, especially when we are representing them. They think that electricity is free. But if you tell them the conditions through which they can get electricity, maybe, they will comply. So, let us have this in mind that the implementing Agency or Ministry informs our



people adequately about the availability of electricity. That is their obligation Mr Speaker. In this regard, I want to ask the Committee on Energy and Power to ask the Ministry, Department or Agency that will be implementing this Project to come and engage Members of Parliament so that their absence here today will be recovered on that day. If we do not know how, where and when this programme is going to be implemented, we will have problems in the future. I want the Committee to fast track this process in terms of briefing us before they start the implementation of this Project. I thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want the Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Power to take note of what the Majority Leader and Leader of Government Business has said. Ministers initiate policies and programmes and when they come to Parliament, they talk about policies and programmes. Those who implement are the officials. Therefore, if a Minister fails, these officials should be held responsible. So, as the Majority Leader has said, make sure you engage them so that they will report to you as to how the implementation is going to be made. That is a very good point. Mr Minister, I am sure you want to react to some of the comments raised by Honourable Members.

**MR MOMODU KARGBO:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I actually want to make some clarifications. One of them is very important; and it is raised by the Majority Leader of the House. Honourable Bliss-Osho Williams, Honourable Andrew Lungay, and Honourable Kerifala Marah have different opinions on my presentation. The European Union funding of 10 million Euros is going to be used to make electricity available to all the communities along the transmission lines. I want us to understand that electricity is a commercial composition. Therefore, it is not going to be a free commodity to anybody. The sub-stations, transformers and the poles will be there and they are not free. It will be left with the individual household to ask the National Power Authority (NPA) to connect to electricity. People will have to pay for their meters and for the installations. They have to buy prepaid meters.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as already stated earlier, electricity is not going to be a free commodity. We have to understand that energy is commerce, and we cannot go on subsidising it. There are things we can subsidise, but certainly not energy. In general, energy is a private sector arrangement for which people have to pay for.

Mr Speaker, I want to make another point clear and it was raised by Honourable Kerifala Marah during his submission. He was more concerned about the inter-connection and the communities along the transmission lines for which we said we will make special provision for them. I think when Bumbuna was created, there was only a single transmission line from Bumbuna to Freetown. That was very bad protocol and a bad public relation for Bumbuna. Mr Speaker, how can you erect an electric pole over my roof without connecting me to it, especially when I need it? I think we have learnt from that mistake. And the correction we are making is called the benefit of hindsight. We have seen the errors in the past and we cannot continue the same errors. The only point I want to make is that special consideration is being made for the communities along the road, as have been identified. When the system is properly operational, electricity will be transported from that place and probably forwarded to Freetown. The system is designed for that purpose.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are many other comments raised by Honourable Members. But most of them are out of my reach. My focus here is to ensure that this Honourable House ratify these Agreements. I cannot handle the issue of Bumbuna at this time. This Honourable House had agreed to unbundle NPA. We are going to have a Regulatory Commission and a generation commission that will look at some these issues. I will only say that if you invite the Ministry of Energy for a hearing, we can come in and talk on the financial aspect. We have to support their programmes.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the second Agreement has to do with emergency. We are not talking about old generators. In fact, this is getting the ministry into where we want it to be. If Honourable Members could recalled, this Honourable House ratified Agreements for the Arab Bank for Economic Development and they funded two

generators at Black Hall Road. These are about three or four years old. The Japanese funded two other generators at King Tom. Therefore, maintenance of these machines is what this Project is all about.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to draw the attention of the House to the other component of this Project. The National Power Authority is going to be provided with 8 million US dollars to buy fuel and lubricants. The fund we well need to constantly monitor NPA will be coming from it. Equally important in that is the Prepaid Meters. At least, that is a beautiful discovery which seems to be helping NPA. Every month, a letter is sent from NPA, informing us that they have paid Bumbuna for the electricity. So, the notion of reading meter is virtually dying; and this reduces the cost of operation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the objective is to bring more meters so that every household in this country will have a Prepaid Meter. With these few clarifications, I move that this Honourable House ratify the Agreements as per the Order Paper. I thank you.

*(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)*

*(Motion of the Minister of Finance and Economic Development has been ratified)*

**HON. IBRAHIM BUNDU:** Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O. 23. I want to inform this House and the general public that we appreciate their coming to this House to listen to the proceedings of Parliament. But I want to caution members of the public that it has come to the notice of the Leadership of this House that the dress code for people coming to Parliament has been reviewed. We kindly ask members of the public, who have manifested good intentions of coming here to listen to parliamentarians to be neatly dressed. This is in conformity with other Parliaments we have visited. Please, this is your Parliament; and we are here because of you. But we also want to inform you how to appear in public places. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much Mr Majority Leader. I hope members of the public have noted that point. Shakespeare says: "*the apparel proclaims the man.*"

***ADJOURNMENT***

*(The House rose at 12.05 p.m. and was adjourned until Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2014 at 10.00 a.m.)*