

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

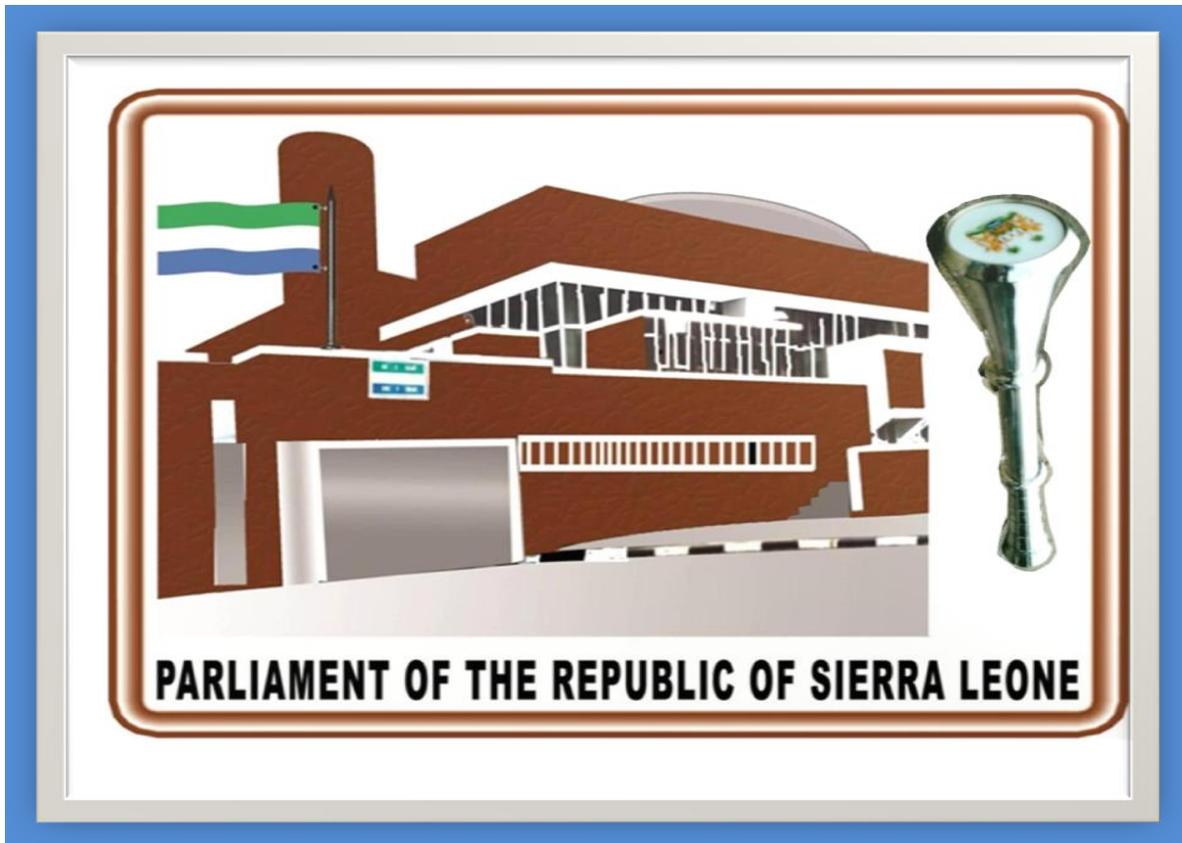
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIFTH SESSION - FIRST MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 29TH NOVEMBER, 2017

SESSION – 2016/2017



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMEN TARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Wednesday, 29th November, 2017.

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IV. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENT WHICH WAS LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON TUESDAY 28TH NOVEMBER, 2017.

IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT RELATING TO THE BUMBUNA II PROJECT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND SELI HYDROPOWER LIMITED [AS THE COMPANY] AND JOULE BUMBUNA [HOLDINGS] LIMITED AND ENERGY SERVICES COMPANY LIMITED [AS THE SHAREHOLDERS] DATED, 4TH AUGUST, 2017

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[a] REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON THE BILL ENTITLED: THE FOOD AND FEED SAFETY AUTHORITY ACT, 2017

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[II] THE SIERRA LEONE SEED CERTIFICATION AGENCY ACT 2017

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THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FOOD SECURITY

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INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FOOD SECURITY

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THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FOOD SECURITY

V. COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

THE APPROPRIATION ACT, 2018



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

FIFTH SESSION – FIRST MEETING OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Wednesday, 29th November, 2017.

I. PRAYERS

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

[The House met at 11:03 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown].

[The Deputy Speaker, Hon. Chernor R. M. Bah, in the Chair].

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S. O. 5[2]

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY, 28TH NOVEMBER, 2017

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Tuesday, 28th November, 2017. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? There being no correction or amendment, could somebody move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Tuesday, 28th November, 2017 as presented?

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: I so move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. KUSAN SESAY: I second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

III. PAPERS LAID

[I] HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table of this Honourable House the following document:

Annual Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Report of the Auditor General on the accounts of Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Local Councils for the Financial Year, 2015.

[II] HON. FODAY RADO YORKIE, MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION

HON. FODAY RADO YORKIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table of this Honourable House the following document:

Report on the 2017 Ministerial Workshop on China's Experience for Developing Countries from Tuesday, 22nd to Thursday, 31st August, 2017, held in Beijing China.

[III] THE MAJORITY LEADER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, please permit me to lay on the Table of this Honourable House the following documents:

The Project Document for a 50mw Solar PHOTOVO TEC Energy Generation Project Memorandum by the Minister of Energy.

[IV] THE MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, unfortunately the Minister is held up in another meeting this morning and that is the communication I received from him.

THE SPEAKER: Noted, Mr Majority Leader. If I have time, I would take it in the afternoon.

IV. BILLS:

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FOOD SECURITY

THE SIERRA LEONE SEED CERTIFICATION AGENCY ACT, 2017

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

MRS MARIE JALLOH [*The Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency Act, 2017 be read the first time.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Bill entitled, the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency Act, 2017 has been read the first time]

SECOND READING

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency Act, 2017 be read the second time. Mr Speaker, the purpose of this Bill is to establish a Seed Certification Agency, which will be responsible for the control and regulation of agricultural seeds and other related matters. The Bill is divided into fourteen parts. Part 1 deals with the preliminary provisions. Clause 1 defines words and phrases used throughout the Bill, whereas Clauses 2 and 3 deal with application and non-application of the Bill respectively.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Bill applies to the following seeds, serial seeds like rice, maize, etc. They also have leguminous seeds such as groundnut, soya beans, root and tuber vegetables, etc. Furthermore, the Bill is not applicable to non-certified seeds and certified seeds multiply by farmers on their own.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, part 2 of the Bill deals with the establishment of the Seed Certification Agency Board and other committees. Clause 4 establishes the Agency and Clause 5 establishes the governing body, which is the National Seed Board, consisting of the Chairman and fourteen other members drawn from MDAs and the private sector. Clause 2 deals with committees appointed by the Board, such as the variety release and registration committee and the financial resources mobilisation and monetary committee. Part 3 deals with the functions of the Agency; whereas Part 4 deals with financial provisions. We look at Clause 21, which deals with accounts and audit of the Agency in keeping proper books of accounts and other records approved by the Auditor General. Also, Part 6 of this Bill deals with the procedures for obtaining license. Clause 24 stipulates that persons wishing to import, export and grow or processes in commercial quantities or distribute or self-certified seeds shall apply for a license, while Clause 24 outlines the various types of seed operators' license to be issued by the Agency.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, part 7 deals with the procedure for the export and import of seeds. Clauses 35 and 36 define the rights to sanitary compliance and other requirements prescribed in regulations made under this Bill. Part 8 deals with the seed quality and production control. Clause 45 states that the seed operators should operate on a basis of attaining the standards for both field inspection and laboratory test, as may be determined by regulation made under this Bill. Part 9 deals with packaging, splitting and repackaging of the seeds. Clause 56 makes provision for packaging of the seeds in which seed lots shall be in package seal and label containers. A lot of seeds have to be repackaged; and repackaging shall be done under the Agency's supervision. Part 10 deals with seed testing stations. Clause 59 establishes the National Seed Testing Station, which would be responsible for the testing of seeds in other to

determine their quality for germination, purity and also determine the moisture content of the seed. Part 2 deals with the national catalogue of plants species and varieties, while clauses 6 and 7 provide that the Agency would maintain a catalogue known as the national catalogue of plant species and varieties, which should be the official document containing the list of all registered varieties. Part 12 deals with Release and Registration Committee. Part 13 deals with seed Inspectors and Clause 82 provides for the appointment of persons qualified to be Seed Inspectors. Part 14, which is the final part deals with miscellaneous provisions, while Clause 19 provides the Agency to make regulations in other to implement the provisions of the Bill.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency Act, 2017 be read the second time.

[Question Proposed]

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to make my contribution to the Bill entitled, the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency Act, 2017. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security is on the move to increasing production and productivity in this country. You would recall that the President places so much emphasis on agriculture in order to ensure that the country actualises food sufficiency, and one way to do that is to assure our farmers and the people of this country that quality seeds are being supplied to them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the seed is of course a basic agricultural inputs that plays a vital role in increasing production and productivity. Scientists have proven to us that when you have quality supply of seeds to farmers, you are sure of having a quality yield of over **40%** without applying fertilizers or any other nutrients. If we are committed to achieving food security, we must ensure that quality seeds are supplied to the farmers. We know what used to happen due to lack of regulation agency or regulatory body in this country. People were purporting to be a dealer of seeds, when in actual fact they lacked the necessary expertise. We have been getting all sorts of seeds in this country. There was no certified method of testing the viability of those

seeds. We all saw what happened during the post Ebola era, when the seeds were distributed. Some seeds were bought from neighbouring countries and a good number of those seeds could not germinate because there was no Agency to really test the viability of those seeds; thereby giving quality assurance to the farmers. This led to the Government losing resources in the importation of seeds.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Bill also seeks to liberalise the seed market; and by liberalising the seed market, we would have many players in the seed industry. They would invest into the industry. There is a mechanism to test the seeds in order to ensure that they are of quality nature and are always available at every point at various dealer stations for the farmers to procure them. I am sure this Bill would also seek to promote employment because in as much as provision would be made for the Agency to certify dealers or to give license to seeds importers, this in turn will also create employment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I need not to say much about this Bill because as Members of Parliament, **75%** of our constituents depend in agriculture. I am sure any Bill that has to do with addressing their welfare must be a priority for all Members of Parliament. That is why we should support the passage of this Bill with alacrity. I believe the Honourable Kombor Kamara that **70%** to **80%** of his constituents in Lokomasama depend on agriculture and this Bill seeks to assure them that the seeds that will be meeting them will be of quality.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to crave the indulgence of my colleagues to speedily pass this Bill, so that we can assure our constituents of getting the required seeds that will boost agriculture in terms of productivity. I thank you very much.

HON. MOHAMED K. THOLLEY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to equally add my voice to the document that is before this House. I want to state here that seeds certification is nothing new. Agriculture has been a priority for successive governments, but for agriculture to flourish, you need very good seeds to meet farmers, so that production and productivity will be realised by our farmers. A good number of this rural-

urban migration is as a result of total neglect of agriculture. For the past years, we have not been able to make agriculture lucrative, but if we have very good seeds for the farmers and within a specific timeframe, it will enable the youth to stay in the rural areas and engage in agricultural activities. Over the years, we have not had any document to check on the type of seeds entering this nation. Mr Speaker, good seeds have the tendency to increase palatability and that will also increase good health of the people. It will also increase growth in every aspect of the citizenry.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we are to make agriculture a lucrative, we have to ensure that the seeds are viable. Germination of seeds is something we should not toy with and increased agricultural productivity depends on the viability of seeds. I am very much interested in agriculture because it is in me and I stand to talk about it anywhere. I want to state here that I will die as an Agriculturist. I talk agriculture, I drink agriculture and I do anything in agriculture.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the admiration of this document is great and I want to commend the Minister and team for not politicising this document. It is a legacy you are going to leave as a government, so that the next Government will come and work on it. We are going to use this to boost green all over this nation. The green revolution is on its way. I want to remind this House that any nation that is ready to grow starts with agriculture. I must state here that the Minister has done extremely well in this direction. I must single her out that she is a serious woman who means good for this nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am now calling on us all to speedily ratify this document without any hesitation, so that it becomes a working document for this nation. I thank you all for listening.

HON. ANSUMANA J. KAIKAI: I thank you, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by saying that I come from a farming family and majority of my constituents are farmers. Therefore, agriculture is part of me and I am part of agriculture.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Member of Parliament from Tonkolili did say that year in year out past governments have always emphasised on the importance of agriculture. He is correct and it has to be that way, but the problem is associated with the fact that with all the efforts of governments over the years, we have not been able to feed ourselves as a nation. That should not have been the case by now. I want to ask rhetorical questions. Do you think this Bill should have never come to this House? Will this Bill make all the difference we need in agriculture as payback to the people of this country for all the natural and financial resources we have? If it is so, I am going to support it; but if it is not [which after a year or two], we cannot get the relevant results. If passed into law, it is going to follow the path of other Bills. I want to call on the attention of this Honourable House to the composition of the Board, which includes even the Director of Budget in the Ministry of Finance. Almost all the professional heads in the Ministry of Agriculture are on this Board.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Board consists even some of the farmers that can barely make it if not with the imported rice that comes from India and Pakistan, especially during the months of July and August in this country. Therefore, I will support this Bill, but I also want to state that I know the Deputy Minister who is seated here as a person. I am also aware of the fact that she was one of us. She was a serious Member of Parliament and not a slave driver. Again, the substantive Minister of Agriculture, Professor Monty Jones, was my classmate at the St Edwards Secondary. He was a very smart pupil. Their efforts in putting this Bill together should not go in vain. I want to wholeheartedly support this Bill. However, after two years of its implementation, I want to ask this Honourable House to review the successes that the Ministry of Agriculture may have achieved as a Ministry. All good things and efforts normally have the intention of successful conclusions.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable members, I want to urge my colleagues on our side to support this Bill. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have had agricultural activities from time in memory and we have not had a seed certification Bill

or Act in this country. Whether the seed certification Act is going to be the magic to ensure some revolution into our agriculture or not, we do not know as of now, but the fact of the matter is that the Seed Certification Bill that we are now talking about is a necessary injection into the area of agriculture. If you heard the Deputy Chairman of the Agricultural Committee, he said that **40%** of agricultural productivity depends on the quality of seeds that the farmer uses.

In that respect, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the quality of seeds used by farmers goes a long way to determine his production and his productivity; hence this Bill is an important segment in the implementation of agricultural activity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have had a lot from former Ministers of Agriculture in this country, but as the Acting Minority Leader has said, we need to give credit to where credit is due. Governments have come and gone, but this is the Government that has brought this Bill because we want to enhance agricultural productivity in this country. That is the reason I want to allay the fears of the Acting Minority Leader that we are indeed going to continue to increase agricultural productivity in this country.

In my submission to Parliament yesterday, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, various questions were put to the Director of the Board of the Bank of Sierra Leone. One of those questions put to him was what policy measures would the Board Members put in place to enhance our exchange rate stabilisation program in this country. In his respond, he included the report that was read to Parliament yesterday that if Sierra Leoneans could only afford to do away with imported rice and give preference to the locally produced rice, it would reduce the exchange rate that we are now paying for the Dollar. He mentioned that 'we are importing a large quantity of rice into this country for the consumption of Sierra Leoneans. There were times in the history of this country when we were exporting rice. However, the population growth over the years since independence has turned the scales down and we are now dependent on imported rice. We are no longer able to feed ourselves because of the preference we are giving to imported rice.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Seed Certification Bill is not magical, but it is going to enhance rice production and other vegetables that we are producing in this country. This is because once quality seeds are available to the farmers, we would be able to produce more.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the seed certification is just one instrument, but because of the importance of the Board of Directors, I suggested to the Minister yesterday, during the pre-legislative hearings, the membership of the Board be reviewed, so that the five regions in this country are represented on the Board. This is not only an issue of the Civil Servants on the Board, as we have seen in the draft Bill. We want to make sure that the five regions are represented effectively on the Board, so that even the distribution and the discussions that will be taking place, the farmers will be represented by their own people from the various regions. I think that suggestion went very well yesterday with a lot of Members of Parliament, including the Minister herself who is now piloting this Bill. When we get to the Committee Stage, I will suggest that the relevant changes in the Certification Act are made, so that those regions, provinces and the newly created ones are represented on the Board. Once we do that, I believe Honourable Members would be pleased with the Seed Certification Bill. When we also come to the second Bill, the same suggestion would apply.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is not a controversial Bill and I want to request that we speedily pass this Bill into law. I thank you very much and wish you well.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me thank colleague Honourable Members from both sides of the isle for their contributions towards this Bill. I want to believe that this is not a controversial Bill. I therefore move that the Bill entitled, the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Bill be read the second time.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency Act, 2017 being an Act to provide for the establishment of the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency, responsible for the Control and Regulation of Agricultural Seeds and for other related matters has been read the second time]

[THE HOUSE RESOLVES INTO COMMITTEE]

Parts 1, 2 and 3, Clauses 1 to 14 proposed

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that parts 1,2 and 3, Clauses 1 to 14 stand part of the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we go page by page. Page 1? Page 2? Page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6? Page 7?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, I want to support the recommendation of the Majority Leader. We can do that based on the recommendation of the Majority Leader. Another point was raised yesterday that the membership is too large. If there is sense in that, then we can adjust the membership of the Board. However, we have to look at regional representation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, if we make additional representation, it will make the membership even larger.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: That is true, Mr Chairman. Well, based on the first suggestion, I am suggesting that 'd,' which deals with the Director of Environment, Ministry of Lands for seeds is looked into. I think the Ministry of Lands has less to do with the Seed Bill. In that case, we have to delete 'd.' We should also delete the Clause that has to do with the Director of Domestic Commerce and Industry in the Ministry responsible for trade.

THE CHAIRMAN: In that case, you are referring to 'e.'

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: In that regard, who will be representing the Ministry of Trade?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: There should be no representation from the Ministry of Trade.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you need a representative from the Ministry of Trade because the seeds will be imported and eventually exported if we have excess. So, we need a representative from the Ministry of Trade.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: In that case, we leave that one.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have the Chief Agricultural Officer, Director of Crops and Director of Extension from the same Ministry. I think we should look at those areas.

HON. DANIEL KOROMA: I think we should delete the Clause that has to do with 'Director of Crops and Extension' because according to the Minister, the Director of Crops and Extension' is under the crops division.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you suggesting?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Yes, Mr Chairman. I am suggesting because according to Clauses 'c,' 'd,' and 'j' deal with the Dean in the School of Agriculture at Njala University. I think they are responsible for the academic aspect.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, I think you need them.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: We need them, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN:: You need them because they will be doing research and above all, they are teaching students.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Well, I want to suggest 'k.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you suggesting 'k'?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Yes, Mr Chairman. I think those are the three, except if there are other suggestions. However, we need regional representation.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have the President of the National Federation of Farmers and he should be in the position to represent the Farmers. I am saying this because they have their own meetings. In other words, he will be representing them on that Board. We have to be very careful with some of these issues. Madam Minister, can you tell us something on that issue? There must be a rationale behind this.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a sneaky suspicion arose yesterday on the floor whilst discussing this particular Bill; i.e., both the Seed Bill and the Fertilizer Bill, particularly in the area of fertilizer... - *[Interruptions]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Majority Leader, let us focus on this particular Clause and address the issues.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: A representation that was suggested yesterday had the acclamation of all the Members of Parliament. In that regard, I would doubt whether if it is not included here. It is going to be a good Bill because in terms of serving the people, the regional representation has to be very strong. We are talking about the Farmers' Federation and the Farmers' Federation is an organisation that is settled in Freetown to attend conferences, both national and international. They will not be seeking the interest of the farmers.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Majority Leader, who is going to be responsible in selecting those individuals representing the various regions? I am asking this question because the Ministry cannot impose on the farmers.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: That is correct, Mr Chairman, but the list we are seeing here is composed of people from the Ministry. This is an Agency that has to function independently.

THE CHAIRMAN: I agree with you. Let us listen to the Minister.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Thank you, Mr Chairman.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with regards the composition of the Board, we realised that some of the issues raised the Members of Parliament are in place. We want to maintain the Chief Agriculture Officer, since he supervises the Directors in the Ministry, we also want to maintain the Director of Crops. However, I want to agree with the House that we remove the Director of Extension, so that in his place, we put a representation from maybe the Committee in the House of Parliament here. But with regards to the membership of the regional representation, I am afraid because it will be controversial. I am saying this because we already have the

National Federation of Farmers. Maybe, we should encourage the Federation of Farmers to ensure that they have Regional Representation, but again, it will be a duplication of efforts because we already have an umbrella body governing the whole country, which comprised regional, district and national.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is your position.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr Majority Leader.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Another one that comes to mind immediately is the Director of Environment. In the seed certification processing, we do not need a... - *[Interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: No! It has been suggested by Honourable Daniel B. Koroma that 'c,' 'd', and 'k' should be deleted; i.e., the Director of Extension, the Director of Environment in the Ministry of Lands and Executive Secretary for the Sierra Leone Chambers of Agro-Business.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: The Coordinator of Seed Multiplication attends the Board meetings. Therefore, he does not need to be there as Board Member.

THE CHAIRMAN: In what capacity, Honourable Member?

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: He can be there as an Executive Director. The Executive Director is going to be on the Board as Secretary to the Board. Therefore, you do not need again... - *[Interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you referring to the Executive Director of this Company?

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am not referring to the Director of Seed Multiplication, but the Executive Director of this Agency because the person will be serving as Secretary.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Chairman that is the Chief Agriculturist who is already on the Board.

THE CHAIRMAN: That could be said, but not the Executive Director.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Therefore, we do not need to have a junior person from the Ministry when his supervisor is already there.

THE CHAIRMAN: No do not say that loudly please; if that is the case then the Director of Crops has no business there as well so do not say that.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: My suggestion was going to be that we give a lump sum and make sure that the region is effectively represented by using the Federation. We will not be at the Federation's disposal to represent the farmers absolutely.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr Majority Leader.

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: Mr Chairman, we do not even have farmland within the cities.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, we are talking about regions and not the cities.

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: I am talking about... - *[Interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: He is talking about regions and not the cities.

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: I want to support and at the same time try to lay a premise. We do not have a farmland in the city and one thing that has always been occupied by most of our decisions here is the number of people living in the urban areas who are appointed to these Commissions. The people in the rural areas are the ones suffering at the end of the day.

THE CHAIRMAN: You are in the Urban Area.

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: Mr Chairman, my constituency is in the village. I want to support what the Majority Leader of this House has said. I want the provinces or regions to be represented.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, your point is off tangent. Are you saying that the Director of Agriculture has no business in here?

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: No, Mr Chairman. He is the Director and he is supposed to liaise with the Ministry.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, you did not say that?

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: But what I want to say is that if we have Board Members, let us make sure that some are from the provinces... - *[Interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Accepted, Honourable Member.

HON. JUSUFU B. MANSARAY: Thank you, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, the question I asked has still not been answered. How are we going to identify the representatives from the regions to serve on the Board? That was the question I asked. He made the statement and I want him to answer the question. I talked about the Farmers' Federation and I was told that the Farmers' Federation is in Freetown.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are laid down procedures in every organisation or Ministry.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, what are the procedures? This is a Bill before us, but the procedures are not there. What are the procedures, Mr Majority Leader?

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: If they are going to take representation from the regions, they will contact the Provincial Secretary, who is responsible for administration.

THE CHAIRMAN: If that is going to happen, then it becomes political.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: In that case, the Provincial Secretary will nominate a number of people and the Ministry will select from among the nominees. The nominees should be credible farmers in their own rights.

THE CHAIRMAN: I want to suggest that we save time by agreeing. Let us start with that as the first point, before we go to the next stage. The suggestion was 'c,' 'd,' and 'k' should be deleted; i.e., the Director of Extension, the Director of Environment in the Ministry of Lands and the Executive Secretary of the Sierra Leone Chamber of Agro-

business. That was the suggestion. What is the position of the House? Mr Majority Leader, you need somebody from the Ministry of Finance.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Mr Chairman, I want to know those who are on the Board from the Ministry of Agriculture. That is concern because we want the independence of the Board.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we narrow the discussion, Honourable Member? There are suggestions made and I want to know if there are further suggestions.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Well, let us agree on the number of people we want to expunge in the first instance.

THE CHAIRMAN: There are suggestions for three. Do you have an addition to make?

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Mr Chairman, I agree that we expunge those ones and replace them with other representation as already suggested. I am saying this because I am concerned about the total independence of the Board.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have to finish the first phase before we proceed. First, we have to take note of the available space before we talk about it. We have not made any progress.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: This means that we can delete 'm,' which deals with the National Federation of Farmers. The National Federation of Farmers can be deleted, so that when once representations are coming from the regions, he does not need to sit on the Board again.

THE CHAIRMAN: The President is one, but we are talking about five people. You cannot get Board Members without addressing the position of the President. It will be an affront to the institution.

HON. IBRAHIM BEN KARGBO: Mr Chairman, I want to clarify the structure of the National Federation of Agriculturist because the Federation itself depicts the sum total of a larger body. Therefore, there must be smaller bodies that are part of this Federation. I just want the Leader to know that the Federation itself is a representation

of many parts of the regions. In that regard, I would want the Minister to clarify that issue, so that we are satisfied that the regions are not left out.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, I have mentioned here that the National Federation of Farmers is a countrywide representation because they have representatives at Chiefdoms, districts, regional and national levels. I think the only thing we need to do is that we need to agree to expunge the Sierra Leone Chamber of Commerce and even the Director of Seed Multiplication.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member.

[Suspension of S.O. 5[2] being 12:00 noon]

THE CHAIRMAN: We have four representation; i.e., the Director of Extension, the Director Environment, the Co-ordinator Seed Multiplication and the Executive Secretary Sierra Leone Chamber of Agro-business. Madam Minister, are you in agreement that we replace them?

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we are going to take these four out with the exception of the Western Area. Let us get the four regions to be represented on the Board. I am from the Western Area and I want to ask the Minister if she is in agreement with that. There are more activities outside the Western Area.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: If I may ask, where are the draughtsmen? They should be told because even the way they couched 5[1] is also not correct. That has to be adjusted. Honourable Minority Leader, do you have the Bill with you? So, the impression is that the other members are not going to be approved by Parliament. They have to be approved by Parliament. Mr Clerk, please take note of that. That has to be corrected. Mr Lamin Yansaneh, I hope you are taking note of 'c,' 'd,' 'I' and 'k.' Those Clauses have to be replaced by the South, East, North and North-West correct. Page 7?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Page 7, Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, I do not know if Clause 5[1] should remain as it is.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have to redo it. I have told them that it has to be rephrased.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: It included 3 different Clauses.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have to finalise it. Mr Lamin Yansaneh, make sure you show it to him as soon as you are done. Page 8? Page 9? Page 10?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Page 8, frequency of Board meetings.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, what Clause are you referring to?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Clause 7[1] says: **"The Board shall meet to discuss its business at least once every six months..."** To me, it is better that we put it as quarterly, so that they meet at least four times a year. If we say they should meet twice annually, would that be effective?

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, please take note of 'at least.' 'At least' could also mean they meet fifty times.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Yes, Mr Chairman, but meeting twice per year is not enough.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, what are you suggesting?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I am suggesting that the Board meets quarterly.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is good for every Board to meet quarterly for financial propriety.

HON. DANIEL KOROMA: Exactly, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Clerk, please take note. Honourable Members, there is a suggestion and I hope there is no objection. We move to Page 9. Page 10?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Page 9, sub-clause 4. It says, 'the Chairman or in his or her absence.' I do not think whether that phrase is necessary, otherwise this Bill will be full of these pronouns.

THE CHAIRMAN: Please delete the pronoun 'her.'

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: It is also in the last lines.

THE CHAIRMAN: Please make the necessary corrections. And if you say the Chairman or Chairwoman, you keep repeating the same thing.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Sub-clause 7[5] talks about the quorum.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Lamin Yansaneh, please take note that wherever you see these repetitions, make the necessary adjustment accordingly.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: It says: **"The quorum at any meeting of the Board shall be 7."** We have made some adjustments. Can we consider them?

THE CHAIRMAN: No, Honourable Member. What we have done was to remove Clause 4 and replaced. It is the same, Honourable Member.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: So, you are saying that 7 out of 14 is reasonable?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Honourable Member. It is still too much.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: It is too much and that will be too demanding. I am suggesting five Board members.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, I hope we are in agreement. Mr Lamin Yansaneh, please make the necessary changes. Thank you very much, Honourable Daniel B. Koroma. Page 10? Page 11? Page 11? Page 12?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Page 12, Parts III, which talks about the functions of the Agency. They said 'Functions of **"they"** Agency,' but it should be Functions of 'the' Agency.'

THE CHAIRMAN: It is on the side notes?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: The mistake is in the topic and the side notes.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is reasonable. Page 13? Page 14? 14. Madam Minister, please move.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, I move that Parts 1, 2, 3, Clauses 1 to 14 as amended stand part of the Bill.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4, Clauses 1 to 14 form part of the Bill as amended]

Parts 4, 5, 6 and 7, Clauses 15 to 41 Proposed

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 4, 5, 6 and 7, Clauses 15 to 41 stand part of the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, as usual, we go page by page. Page 14? Page 15? Page 16? Page 17? Page 18? Page 19? Page 20? Page 21? Page 21?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Page 21, Clause 31[i]. I am not too comfortable with that Clause. It says: 'Subject to Paragraph 'A' of Sub-clause 3 of Clause 24, the Agency may, if it is satisfied, that 'any...' The condition after any should be removed.

THE CHAIRMAN: It makes sense, Honourable Member. Mr Lamin Yansaneh, please take note of that correction.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Again, let us look at the next line. It says: "A seed dealer was registered has not..." The 's' should be removed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Lamin Yansaneh, please delete the 's' and then replace 'have' with 'has.' Any more on 21? Page 22? Page 23? Page 24?

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 4, 5, 6 and 7, Clauses 15 to 41 stand part of the Bill as amended.

[Question proposed, put and agreed]

[Parts 4, 5 and 6 and 7 clauses 15 to 41 form part of the Bill as amended]

Parts 8, 9 and 10, Clauses 42 to 66 Proposed

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 8, 9 and 10, Clauses 42 to 66 stand part of the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we go page by page. Page 24? Page 25?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Page 25, Clause 44[3]. The use of the word 'summary conviction,' is not in agreement with the fine of **Le10mln**.

THE CHAIRMAN: Please remove the word 'summary.'

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: If you remove the word 'summary,' you have to maintain the **Le10mln** fine. Again, the 6 months imprisonment is not also proportional. Usually, it should be 2 years. If you maintain **Le10mln**, then the 6 months custodian sentence is not proportional to the **Le10mln**.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, the court can decide on that. We are only removing the word 'summary.' Mr Lamin Yansaneh, I hope you are taking notes. Thank you very much, Honourable Member. Page 26?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, the same goes for Sub-clause 2 and we should remove 'summary.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Any more on Page 26? Page 27? Page 28? Page 29? Page 30? Page 31? Page 32? Madam Minister, please move.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 8, 9 and 10, Clauses 42 to 66 stand part of the Bill as amended.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed]

[Parts 8, 9 and 10, Clauses 42 to 66 form part of the Bill as amended]

Parts 11, 12, 13 and 14, including the Schedule, Clauses 67 to 91 Proposed

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 11, 12, 13, 14, including the Schedule, Clauses 67 to 91 stand part of the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 33? Page 34? Page 35? Page 36? Page 37? Page 38? Page 38? Page 39? Page 40? Page 41?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Page 41, Clause 85[b], the last paragraph. In this case, the summary can remain, but if you check the next page, you will get better understanding. I noticed a lot of inconsistencies.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, it depends on the type of offence. The amounts are the same, but the terms of imprisonment are not. And do not forget that it has a commercial connotation because it is dealing with business people. I am sure it is deliberate.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: The summary can remain.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 41? Page 42?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Page 42, Clause 90 states: **“Where an offence under this Act is committed by a body corporate, every director or officer of that body shall be deemed to have committed an offence.”** if we check this Clause, it is not in agreement with Section 9, Clause 10[2] of the Company Law.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, we can go back and compare them.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Clause 10[2] of the Company Law states: **“No member of the board shall be personally liable for any debt or obligation of the Agency.”** I think that is ideal and we must... - *[Interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, Clause 10[2] is different from that and it has to do with liabilities, whereas Clause 90 of this Bill deals with crimes.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: It is okay, Mr Chairman.

THE SPEAKER: I agree with you, but the cases are not the same. Madam Minister, would like to say something on this issue.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, if they are in agreement because before they take a decision for any Company, they have to sit together in a Board meeting and take a decision. However, I want to believe that all of them should be part of those who committed the crime, and not one to be singled out for posterity.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think I have seen what the Honourable Daniel B. Koroma was saying. Have you read the proviso? I agree with you that it is against the Company's Act, but this Act wants to stand on its own as well for this purpose. Nevertheless, the

proviso states: **"Provided that no one such person referred to in paragraph 'a' or 'b' shall be deemed to have committed an offence under this Act if he proves or that the offence was committed without his knowledge or that he exercise all due diligence to prevent the Commission of the offence."** So, I think we should allow it to stay, so that those rouge directors will be prevented. It should stay as it is. Page 43? Page 42?

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Page 42, Clause 91. It says: **"The Minister may, after consultation with the Board by statutory instrument, make regulations for giving effect to this Act."** Clause 91[2] also says: **"The Board may also make regulations...."** I am seeing some conflict between the Minister and the Board. I think it should be the Minister rather than the Board in terms of making regulations.

THE CHAIRMAN: It should be the responsibility of the Minister to make regulations.

HON. AARON KOROMA: Yes. Mr Chairman, and not the Board.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, we can suggest another phrase.

THE CHAIRMAN: Please make your suggestion, Honourable Member.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Sub-clause 2 can be rephrased as follows: 'without prejudice to the generality of sub-section 1, regulations made under this Act may provide for the following matters...'

THE CHAIRMAN: Amongst other

HON. DANIEL KOROMA: Amongst others, but the understanding is that the regulations should be made by the Minister through statutory instrument. The point now is that that has been taken care of by Sub-clause 2.

THE CHAIRMAN: That will be looked into, Honourable Member.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: 'without prejudice to the generality of sub-section 1, regulations made under this Act may provide for the following matters' and then the 'a,' 'b,' 'c,' etc.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Draughtsman is not here. Madam Minister, why did you come without the Law Officers? They should be here for this is their duty.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, I will call them later.

THE CHAIRMAN: In that case, we will look at Clause 2 again. I do not think whether we should put Clauses 1 and 2 together. It should read: **“Without prejudice to the generality of Sub-section 1, the Minister may, in consultation with the Board, make regulations...”** I think it will be better and Clause 1 should stay *[Applause]*. However, Clause 1 is broader, but we would look at it again. Mr Majority Leader, this is something we will properly look at, but we still need the experts for advice. Page 43?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Page 43. I wanted to clarify something that has to do with seeds. I have sensed that seeds like palm kernel and cashew are not covered; and as an experienced farmer, I know that some of those palm kernel seeds are being imported into this country. We used to buy them from a village called ‘Rolakoh’ between Makeni and Kabala. So, I do not know why they leave those two seeds out; i.e., cashew and palm kernel seeds.

THE CHAIRMAN: Madam Minister, please respond.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, I guess this is deliberate on the side of the Ministry and the Agency because we are already planning to put in place another Agency which will take care of cashew, palm kernel, cocoa and coffee. The Bill we are discussing now deals with cereals.

THE CHAIRMAN: Madam Minister, you are making things very difficult. I want to suggest that we add a Clause 5 to read, ‘any other seeds as may be prescribed by the Agency’ *[Applause]*. Madam, Minister, please move.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 11, 12, 13, 14, including the Schedule, Clauses 67 to 91 stand part of the Bill as amended.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Parts 11, 12, 13 and 14, including the Schedule, Clauses 67 to 91 form part of the Bill as amended]

[THE HOUSE RESUMES]

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I report that the Bill entitled, 'The Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency Act, 2017 having gone through the Committee of the Whole House with some amendments be read the third time and passed into law.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed]

[The Bill entitled, 'the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency Act, 2017 being an Act to provide for the establishment of the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency, responsible for the control and regulation of agricultural seeds with other related matters' has been read the third time and passed into law].

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, with your indulgence, I want us to do the First and Reading of the Fertilizer Regulatory Agency before I adjourn for short break.

BILL

THE NATIONAL FERTILIZER REGULATORY AGENCY ACT, 2017

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FOOD SECURITY

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, 'the National Fertilizer Regulatory Agency Act, 2017 be read the first time.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Bill entitled, 'the National Fertilizer Regulatory Agency Act, 2017 has been read the first time.]

[SECOND READING]

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Speaker, Members of Parliament, I move that the Bill entitled, 'The National Fertilizer Regulatory Agency Act' 2017 be read the second time. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Bill before us, The National Fertilizer Regulatory

Agency Act, 2017 is a Bill that is well supported to develop the competitive fertilizer and productivity, increase availability, affordable and accessible fertilizer in our country, especially by the farmers. We believe that in order to increase production, we have to make sure that fertilizer is available to the farmers, so that they would be able to increase production and productivity in this country. This move was taken in December, 2012 when the ECOWAS adopted a regulatory framework with a view to harmonising all fertilizer in the sub-region. There has been no regulation in Sierra Leone since the start of agricultural activities in terms of fertilizers in this country. This means that people have been importing fertilizers haphazardly into this country. In other words, people have been bringing fertilizers from everywhere into Sierra Leone. Therefore, we see the need to enhance quality control on fertilizers in all ECOWAS member states, including Sierra Leone.

Again, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we realised that before this time, fertilizer dealers used to take one or two years before the fertilizer finally got to the people. Also, the Ministry realised that fertilizer dealers have been selling fertilizers at a very expensive rate; and as a result, our farmers did not have access to the fertilizer. This is why the Ministry has decided to champion this Bill to lighten the burdens of our local farmers. In that regard, we have to make sure that the dealers sell the fertilizer, but have to be checked by the government before the fertilizer is sold to ensure that we have minimum standard to support our crops and our environment. We need to look at the nutrient deficiency, short weight, misleading claims and other issues that are not addressed as a result of lack of response and little growth or low level of production and productivity.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the National Fertilizer Agency is meant to safeguard the interest of our farmers, as well as contribute to creating an enabling environment for private sector investment in the fertilizer industry, including facilitation of regional trade. This Bill will provide the legal framework for the implementation and enforcement of the Fertilizer Policy. This is geared towards addressing bottlenecks that have hindered the development of the fertilizer sector in the past. We believe that this

Bill will be independent and managed by a separate body, so that the farmers will benefit. However, the Agency will be under the supervision of the Crop Division in the Ministry of Agriculture. The Bill is divided into the following:

Part I – This is the preliminary aspect of the Bill and it contains the definitions and interpretations of the Bill;

Part II – looks at the establishment of the National Fertilizer Agency [NAFRA];

Part III – looks at the object, functions and powers of the Agency;

Part IV – looks at the administrative provisions;

Part V – looks at the fertilizer control and financial provisions; and

Part VII – looks at the miscellaneous provisions of the bill

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

[Question Proposed]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, you have to very brief in your contributions because we have a meeting with the Minister of Finance at 1:00 p.m.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I was contributing to the Sierra Leone Seed Certification, I did say that with viable seeds, you are assured of **40%** quality yield. In other words, for an agriculturist or a farmer to actually get what he or she expects from the farm, the **60%** is what is going to assure the sufficiency that this country needs. In that **60%** yield, the farmer's expectation can only be assured if the right fertilizer is being applied.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Bill before us is non-controversial because you cannot talk about seeds without saying something about fertilizers. We all know the efforts the Ministry is making to ensure increase in productivity. We used to have poor fertilizer in this country and that was why we used to have 0.7 tons per hectare. But with the increase in the supply of fertilizers, we are experiencing three to four tons per hectare. This tells you that if the right fertilizer is supplied to farmers and on time, we are very much hopeful and confident that our yields in terms of harvest will increase to even five or six tons.

As I have already stated, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Bill is non-controversial. We cannot have the Seed Bill without the Fertilizer Bill. On that note, I want to ask my colleagues to speedily ratify this Bill, so that we can assure the constituents of increase in their production and productivity. Thank you very much.

HON. MOHAMED K. THORLEY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in typical agriculture, you have to supply good seeds to farmers, knowing the condition under which these particular seeds grow. With the rapid deforestation we are experiencing in this country, we are equally facing erosion that takes away the most needed nutrients. The nutrients got depleted and the only thing we can do is to ensure that we back it up with man-made nutrients; i.e., fertilizer. Nowadays agricultural activities, we rely on fertilizer to increase productivity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, whenever you see the plant gets yellow, it tells you that nitrogen is needed and when you see some other colours, it tells you that phosphorus is needed. You will only do this when you get the right fertiliser with high quality potency to meet that demand. Any nation that is serious about agriculture, it has to ensure that quality seeds and fertilizer are available to the farmers. We must have good seeds and apply the right fertiliser to the plants in order to increase productivity. If properly implemented, we will get bumper harvest and we will put money in our pockets. Also, if productivity is increased, it will attract the attention of our youth to go back to the villages to engage in agricultural activities. Agriculture is going to be a business that everybody would want to engage in.

To me, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Bill is non-controversial and I want to say kudos to the Minister and team for bringing this Bill. This Bill meant well for this nation, and I am calling on all Members of Parliament to speedily pass this Bill into law. I thank you very much.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: We have just passed the Seed Certification Bill and the next thing that runs concurrently with it is the Fertilizer Bill. For a very long time in this country, the issues relating to fertilizer have not been very welcoming. This is a major step the Government is boldly taking to make sure that they vet fertilizer. We are

taking the bold step to create the Fertilizer Agency, so that we would inject some accountability into the sale of fertilizer, not only in monetary terms, but in dealing with the fertilizer itself. During the pre-legislative hearings, we were told that people importing fertilizer have, on several occasions, imported the wrong fertilizer and taking advantage of the poor farmers they have sold the fertilizer to. Therefore, rather than nourishing the crops, they will kill them. We are taking these corrective measures to ensure that the farmers get value for his money. Once the Agency comes into operation, I am sure the farmer would benefit for the money he pays. He will get the right fertilizer for his/her crops.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the only issue I raised yesterday was the representation on the Board. It is an important matter that the farmer needs to get the benefit that is intended for him/her. It is more important than even the Seed Certification Act because fertilizer is not getting to the farmers in the provinces.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to request that when we go to the Committee Stage, those issues are highlighted. I hope the Minister will listen to them. I want to request that Members of Parliament who are representing the farmers pay keen attention to the passage of this Bill and support it. I thank you.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank Honourable Members for their contributions to this Bill. I want to mention the Member of Parliament from Mile 91, who spoke about the increase in crop yield as a result of the fertilizers we have been applying for the past two years. That is very true and from 2016 to 2017, we have moved from 3.5 tons to 4.1 tons per hectare in terms of yield increase. I want to publicly say that we have moved forward in terms of rice productivity. With all the comments that have been highlighted, we will take them into consideration when we come back to power in 2018. We will work towards the issues you have highlighted. Thank you very much for your comments.

With that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled, the Fertilizer Regulatory Agency Act, 2017 be read the second time.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Bill entitled, the National Fertilizer Regulatory Agency Act, 2017, being an Act to provide for the establishment of a National Fertilizer Agency to provide for the regulation and management of large scale or commercial importation, manufacture and distribution of fertilizer in Sierra Leone and for other related matters has been read the second time]

[COMMITTEE STAGE]

[THE HOUSE RESOLVES INTO COMMITTEE]

Part 1, 2, 3 and 4, Clauses 1 to 19 Proposed

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4, Clauses 1 to 19 stand part of the Bill.

[Question Proposed]

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, Page1?

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Mr Chairman, the title says: “...being an Act to provide for the establishment of a National Fertilizer Regulatory Agency to provide for the regulation and management of large scale or...” I think we have to take out the words ‘large scale or’ because it is not defined in the interpretation column.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, you want the words ‘large scale or’ to be removed?

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Yes, Mr Chairman. A fertilizer is a fertilizer and ‘large scale’ is not defined in the interpretation section of this Bill.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, what is meant by ‘large scale’ is the quantum of fertilizer being imported in this country.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, ‘large scale’ is still commercial. That is what the Honourable Member is saying.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: It is the same, but we can omit it as suggested.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, is there any objection to that? Page 2?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Page 2, Clause 2[1]. The first words should be 'there is.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 3?

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Page 3, Clause 3[2][e]. There are many Directors in the Sierra Leone Import and Export Promotion Agency. So, it should be the Chief Executive Officer [CEO], who is the head of the Agency and not Director of Sierra Leone Import and Export Promotion Agency.

THE CHAIRMAN: What is his nomenclature? Is he called the CEO?

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: He is the CEO, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Clerk, make sure you verify that before you make any alteration. The Leader was talking about the Board.

HON. LEONARD FOFANAH: Mr Chairman, I want to look at Clause 3[1], which says: **"The Governing Body of the Agency shall be a Board"** and not a Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, you are looking forward to having a Board and not a Committee?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: In the first place, the appointment of the Chairman is done by the President on the recommendation of the Minister, subject to the approval of Parliament. The President cannot be reduced to appointing the Committee Chairmen. That function is only meant for the appointments of Board Membership and the Chairmanship of the Board.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, you are confirming what they are saying that they want a Board instead of a Committee. That is what they have been saying.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Okay.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Clerk, wherever the word 'Committee' appears, make sure you replace it with the word 'Board.' Honourable Members, what about the composition of the Board? Mr Majority Leader, you talked about the composition of the Board.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I wanted the composition to be as large as possible, so that it can be able to serve all our farmers in the country.

THE CHAIRMAN: And even for the importation of fertilizer?

HON. LEONARD FOFANAH: Mr Chairman, if you are a farmer, you will know what I am talking about. The fertilizer issue, as I have said, is a very sensitive issue in this country and we want to ensure that fertilizer is made transparent and accountable.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, this time round it should not be for all the regions? We might look for a place to slot two members.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want the Board to stand as it is because I have realised that the fertilizer project has got an Agency that will be required to hire private sector for implementation. They are going to be part of the implementation body. So, when they are hired, they will make sure that they have their representation at all levels; i.e., at village, districts, regional and even national levels. We will have few of our staff to ensure that the Farmers' Federation is all over the country to be part of the whole process. I do not think we need to look at it at all.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, you want the Board to stay as it is? Honourable Members, this is the position of the Minister. Can we proceed? Page4?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, Page 4, Paragraph [f]. Let us look at the first word of the first line.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, that is a typographical error. They will correct it. Is there any more on Page 4? Page5?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Page 5, Sub-clause 5. I think it is normal for a quorum to be 6 out of 11.

THE CHAIRMAN: So what are you suggesting, Honourable Member.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: The quorum should be five.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Clerk, take note of that. Madam Minister, I hope you are okay with that? Is there any more on Page 5? Page 6? Page 7?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Page 7, Clause 11[1]. I want us to delete the phrase, 'from Sierra Leone.' Again, the last line reads, "...**unable to perform the function of his office for a continuous period of three months.**" I think we have to increase the period to six months for the sake of consistency with other Bills we have passed into laws.

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I think I will go by the since it is the concurrence of the House. I think six months is okay by me. I am not part of the Committee to look at it, but I also realised that the Chairman and other Members of the Board instead of Committee... - *[Interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Clerk, do not forget to remove the words 'from Sierra Leone.' If you are absent, it means you are absent. It does not matter where you are.

HON. LEONARD FOFANAH: Page 7? I want Mr Clerk to take special note of Clause 4. It states: "**A Committee shall submit a report of its proceedings to the Committee.**" The one is the Board and the other is the sub-committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: You will have to do it in tandem with what Honourable Daniel B. Koroma said. Page 8?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Page 8, Paragraph [b] states: "**In the case of a member, the Chairman shall arrange, subject to this Act to have another member appointed.**" Sub-clause 2 is talking about a member replacing another Board Member after the beginning of the term limit. Maybe, you just have six months and then a member dies or resigns and is replaced. It is saying that upon appointment, he can be reappointed only once. I do not think that is normal. If you replace a Board Member who has died, maybe six months before the end of his term, I do not think whether the new Board Member can be reappointment only once. To be reappointed only once implies that after you have served for one term, you could be reappointed. You are not replacing anybody.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, what are you suggesting, in essence?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I am suggesting that we delete the replacement clause or the phrase, 'eligible for reappointment.'

THE CHAIRMAN: In that case, you can be reappointed up to ten times.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: The term of office of membership will cover him because there is a clause that specifies terms of office of all Board Members. So, the person will come under that, but for you to serve half of the term and then you are eligible for reappointment only once is abnormal... - *[Interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: What is the phrase you are suggesting?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: As we proceed, I will look for the phrase that will cover the term of office of all the Board Members.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 8? Page 9?

HON DANIEL B. KOROMA: Page 9, Paragraph [b] states: "**Distributors of fertilizers comply with this Act.**" We should delete the definite article 'the' before 'this' in the sentence.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 9? Page 10?

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: Mr Chairman, Page 10, Paragraph 15, under 'Appointment of Executive Director.' It says: "**He has to be appointed by the Committee and that should be done by the President...**" - *[Interruption]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is the Board and not the President.

HON. ALHASSAN KAMARA: In that case, we have to change the nomenclature to Chief Executive Director because 'the Committee' has been changed to 'Board.'

THE CHAIRMAN: No, Honourable Member. You have Executive Directors. Is there any more on page 10? Page 11?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Page 11, the last paragraph. The word 'of' has been misplaced. It should be 'secondment of Public Officers' instead of 'of secondment Public officers of.' Then the second line of Clause 18 should be 'seconded or.'

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 12?

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Part 1, 2, 3 and 4 Clauses 1 to 19 stand part of the Bill as amended.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Part 1, 2, 3 and 4 Clauses 1 to 19 form Part of the Bill as amended]

Part 5, 6 and 7, Clauses 20 to 28 stand Proposed

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 5, 6 and 7, Clauses 20 to 28 stand part of the Bill.

[Question Proposed]

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 12? Mr Majority Leader, what are you saying?

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH: Paragraph 20 says: **"No person shall import, manufacture or distribute fertilizer in large scale or commercial quantities unless that person holds a license, issued by the Agency for that purpose."**

THE CHAIRMAN: In that case, we have to delete the words 'large scale or.' Madam Minister, I hope you are following up. Page 12, Clause 20 has been amended accordingly and I hope you are taking notes. Page 12? Page 13? Page 14? Page 15?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I want to make a general observation for the attention of the Minister. In this Bill, I see no room for offences; for instance, the paragraph that the Majority Leader referred to the importation as illegal, in the event somebody imports illegally, what will happen? We see no room for offences.

THE CHAIRMAN: Madam Minister, he is saying that you go under 21[1] and ensure that when you make your regulations, you come up with penalties. Please take note of that Is there any more on Page 16?

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, before I move, I want to agree with the Chairman of the Legislative Committee that it is good to have penalties. It was an oversight, which will be included because we realised that they are important. Having said that, Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that Parts 5, 6, and 7, Clauses 20 to 28 stand part of the Bill as amended.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Parts 5, 6, and 7, Clauses 20 to 28 form part of the Bill as amended]

[THE HOUSE RESUMES]

MRS MARIE JALLOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I report that the Bill entitled, 'The National Fertiliser Regulatory Agency Act, 2017 having gone through the Committee of the whole House with some amendments be read the third time and passed into law.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Bill entitled the National Fertiliser Regulatory Agency Act, being an Act to provide for the establishment of a National Fertiliser Regulatory Agency to provide for the regulation and management of commercial importation, manufacture and distribution of fertilisers in Sierra Leone and for other related matters has been read the third time and passed into law].

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Madam Minister. You are released.

V. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY

AMB. HENRY O. MACAULEY [Minister of Energy]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 28th November, 2017:

Implementation Agreement relating to the Bumbuna II Project between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and SALIA Hydro Power Limited as the Company and Ju Bumbuna Holdings Limited and Energy Services Company Limited as

the shareholders, dated 4th August, 2017, accompanied by the power purchase agreement and the liability against the government of Sierra Leone for ratification.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as we all aware, our country has been making huge efforts to improve on energy access across the nation. We are also aware that we have been enjoying the Bumbuna Phase I Hydro Power, which has been providing us 50 megawatts of constant power supply during the raining season. Unfortunately, because of seasonality during the dry season, the power supply dwindles and this always gives us significant headache and power outages. The Bumbuna Phase II project is designed to correct that problem by building a larger dam and providing for a reservoir that will regulate the water flow and provide better power supply throughout the year. This project will provide an additional 143 megawatts and will provide firm power for about 80 megawatts, which definitely will contribute to this country's development by providing more jobs during construction. After construction, we are expecting constant power supply for businesses to grow and providing power supply for hospitals or health centres and safe drinking water and providing for growth in our Gross Domestic Products [GDP].

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I must recognise this House's total support on energy projects because. I believe that this House has proven time after time that they are developmentally oriented and considers energy as a driver of the economy. Therefore, this is a project I believe would stand as a bastion of our joint efforts towards that objective. This is another phase in our approach to ensure that we provide affordable and reliable electricity in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would not bore you with technical details because everybody knows how hydro power stations are being operated. However, I want to remind this House that this is a project that has taken a long time to get to this stage, but with your approval, we will see light at the end of the tunnel.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreement, which was laid on the Table of the House on Wednesday, 28th November, 2017. Thank you.

[Question Proposed]

HON. KELFALA S. CONTEH: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. It is actually difficult to make few minutes contribution for an Agreement that is geared towards benefiting over Seven Million Sierra Leoneans.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, this is not a political agreement.

HON. KELFALA S. CONTEH: It is not a political agreement, but we can convert it into a political tune. I would highlight just three points. In the first point, His Excellency the President promised this country complete diversification of the energy sector. The Minister said that if this Agreement is approved, the people of this country are going to benefit constant supply of electricity. This project is meant to design, finance, construct, and rehabilitate the existing structures. One big advantage for Sierra Leoneans is that there is a huge transfer of expertise, particularly in the aspect of hydro system. This is one of biggest projects this country can boast of and it is about 143 megawatts. This means that if we are sure of having 80 megawatts, it is going to show that this country will have to see electricity throughout the year. This hydro will not differentiate whether this is a dry or wet season because at the end of the day, we will be having electricity throughout the year. It is because this project is going to benefit the people of this country, it is therefore a very good Agreement. I support it, Mr Speaker.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very personate when it comes to energy. The question here is that Bumbuna Phase [I] has only provided us with 50 megawatts capacity. Bumbuna Phase [II] is going to produce 85 megawatts and this means that there is going to be 24 hours electricity. It also means that there is going to be electricity supply throughout the year. This is why I am in support of this Bill. The present Bumbuna Phase [I] can only supply 50 megawatts of electricity during the raining season. However, if this dam is constructed, it means that during the raining season, it has the capacity to keep enough water and when the water table shall have gone down, the water in the reservoir will continue to flow throughout the dry season.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to inform Members of Parliament that the Bumbuna II in Tonkolili could be extended to Yiffin, Koinadugu District. I am giving you reasons why I am supporting this Agreement. In the Koinadugu District, you have the 24 hours capacity now to generate 85 megawatts. This means whether it rains or shines, it is not going to cease supplying electricity. With the present increase in the demand for electricity and with the emergence of the Bumbuna Phase [II], we would meet the 2000 megawatts difference that is generated now.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when we introduced the thermal and the HFO, we spent a lot of money on fuel and oil. With this Agreement, there will be reduction in the cost of production. As an Economist, I have always concerned about the cost of generation; but with the introduction of the Bumbuna Phase II Project, the cost of production is going to be reduced. Therefore, every other Sierra Leonean will afford to pay for electricity. That is the uniqueness of this Agreement. This Agreement is going to create over 2,500 jobs and we will have 400 to 1,000 local contractors under the Local Content Policy.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a very good Bill and it is not controversial. We should not attempt to introduce controversies into the debate, otherwise Members on this side will say something else. This is a fine Bill and it is good for all of us.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us pass this Bill into law. I thank you.

HON. ROSALYN J. SMITH: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to add my voice to this Agreement that is before us. We cannot over emphasise the importance of this Agreement and the need to generate more electricity for the people of this country. Again, we cannot over emphasise the need to create jobs and encourage investors to come and invest in Sierra Leone. Naturally, where there is adequate electricity, there will be room for more investment in Sierra Leone, which will ultimately provide jobs for our youth who are badly in need of jobs. I know my colleague on the other side was saying that we should not politicise

this Agreement, but one promise His Excellency the President made was that when he came into office, he would make sure that we have adequate supply of electricity and that is what this Agreement is seeking to fulfil.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please advise yourself on S.O 32[10].

HON. ROSALYN J. SMITH: Noted, Mr Speaker. What we are doing is to improve the lives of people in this country by providing adequate electricity supply. In that regard, we want to thank the Minister for this non-controversial Bill. I therefore call on my colleagues to speedily ratify this Agreement. I thank you very much.

HON. UMARU PARAN TARAWALLY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one thing that convinces me is the fact that this particular Agreement is geared towards public private partnership. If you look at the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs], they have to do with partnership between the public and private enterprises. If an Agreement is brought before us today, it goes as far as working towards bringing a relationship between government and the private sector in terms of strengthening electricity supply. This is very pivotal in the lives of the people of Sierra Leone. There is no need wasting the time of this Parliament on such an Agreement. We have always been critical in the way we look at things, but when things are critically done, we assess and accept them critically.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement is acceptable to me and I will crave the indulgence of Members of Parliament to ratify this Agreement. I thank you.

HON. ROSE MARIE BANGURA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to lend my voice to this Bill before us. As a Member of Parliament representing Bumbuna, we are the direct beneficiaries of this Agreement. I want to thank the Minister and His Excellency the President because in 2012, he promised us that he would do more in terms of electricity, infrastructure, health and education in this country. Today, the Agreement before us is a manifestation to show that our President is fulfilling what he has promised to the people of Sierra Leone. We want to thank His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, for doing more for us,

especially for the people of Bumbuna. The Bill before us is going to bring more jobs for the youth of Bumbuna and more economic activities in Bumbuna.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I ask that we speedily ratify this Agreement. I thank you very much.

HON. ANSUMANA JAIA KAIKAI [*Acting Minority Leader of the House*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement is almost a perfect Agreement. This is the type of Agreement we want to see or associate ourselves with in this country because it is non-partisan. The people of this country welcome this Agreement, but I want to remind all of us that most of the Members of Parliament in this Chamber represent areas that may not benefit from this Agreement. Therefore, we are asking the Minister to make sure that the energy that is derived from this source is properly distributed in this country, so that areas far more than what we envisaged will benefit.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to remind the Minister that they have promised to visit Pujehun, but have not done so. I want to inform this House that the electricity I brought to Pujehun in 2004, with the street lights, went off in November, 2007 and they have not been lit up since then. I want to inform the Minister that thieves have disconnected and taken away most of the cables because there is no electricity for a very long time. I am therefore calling on the Minister, who is also my brother, to make sure that electricity is supplied before the elections, otherwise we are going to do that in March, 2018 when we shall have won the elections in this country. I thank you.

HON. LEONARD S. FOFANAH [*Majority Leader of the House and Leader of Government Business*]: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one wishes the Acting Minority Leader had ended with the note on which he started, rather than on the note he ended. However, I think that is his style and his style belong to him. You do not frighten when you are begging. Mr Minister, you have a right not to take note of that. In fact, lawyers in the court plead, but we do not. We have had a very good day, especially the ongoing debate on Agreement that is before us for ratification, which has been enthusiastically acclaimed by everybody to be a good

Agreement. Again, having maintained that momentum, I want to appreciate and thank all those who have adequately contributed to that debate and given their accent in ratifying this Agreement. These are the little token we are doing for the people of Sierra Leone for which they will appreciate the APC.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, electricity generated is going to come to Freetown and other parts of this country, so that we will benefit from it. I want to thank the Minister for his initiative and to also thank the partners of this Agreement. We hope that it will yield fruitful results for this country. Thank you very much.

AMB. HENRY O. MACAULEY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 28th November, 2017:

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[Question Proposed, Put and Agree to]

[Government Motion by the Minister of Energy has been ratified]

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at 3:40 p.m. and was adjourned to Friday, 1st December, 2017 at 10 a.m.]