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8<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY, 2022

**PRESS RELEASE**

**PARLIAMENT RATIFIES JOINT VENTURE AGREEMENT ON THE SIERRA LEONE STATE LOTTERY  
COMPANY LIMITED**

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has on Tuesday 8/2/2022 debated and ratified with unanimity, a joint venture agreement between the Sierra Leone State Lottery Company limited ("SLSLC"), the Government of Sierra Leone (represented by the National Commission of Privatization ("NCP") and Accord Logistics for the development of Sierra Leone.

The following agreement was approved by the Parliament of Sierra Leone:

1. Joint venture agreement between the Sierra Leone State Lottery Company Limited ("SLSLC"), the Government of Sierra Leone (represented by the National Commission of Privatization ("NCP") and Accord Logistics for the establishment of gaming and betting industry in Sierra Leone.

Presenting the motion, the Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr. Edward Hinga Sandy said the agreement was part of the overall vision of making the betting industry more attractive and lucrative for the citizens.

The Opposition Whip, Hon Hassan Sesay said for Sierra Leone State Lottery to be revived is a move that they should celebrate. He went on to say, anything that is related to development, they as opposition would support. He informed that the company is not only a state own, but an indigenous company with a tendency to create more employments, taxation and noted that the agreement was not controversial.

The Chief Whip, Hon. Dickson Rogers recalled that turning issues had been addressed in the agreement. The Whip used the opposition to expressed serious concerns over the defy of the Local Content Policy, where more foreigners are gaining jobs at the detriment of citizens. He advised the Minister to ensure that, the Local Content Policy is well applied, in light of employment.

Rounding up the debate, the Acting Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Ibrahim Ben Kargbo said the purpose of the company's establishment was to benefit the state. He made it very clear that they as opposition do not had any controversy about the agreement. He expressed hope that the revived company would benefit the people and also admonished the Minister for properly monitor in the implementation process.

The Leader of Government Business, Hon. Mathew Sahr Nyuma thanked all MPs for their various contributions. The Leader highlighted various issues raised, relative to local employment and made it abundantly clear that, the Local Content Policy was going to be considered. "The assets are going nowhere, before, during, and after the operation" he assured.

In his response, the Minister of Trade and Industry assured the Honourable House of the full implementation of the Local Content Policy and related labour laws

In another development, Parliament has on 8/2/2022 debated and passed into law the Bill entitled, "The Wildlife Conservation (AMENDMENT) Act 2022".

The Bill seeks to amend the Wildlife Conservation Act, 1972, and to provide for other related matters.

Presenting the Bill to Parliament, the Minister of Environment Prof. Foday Jaward, informed that, the document being reviewed is fifty years old and went on to tell Honorable Members about their intensive consultations and advocacies across the country. He spoke about the risk and threat on wildlife. Illegal mining, hunting and other activities he said are hazardous to wildlife.

The Minister spoke about international treaties that are there to protect wildlife. In light of the benefits including tourist attractions, the Minister spoke about fines and penalties in lieu of protection.

Speaking on the Bill, Hon Daniel Koroma said it was timely to speak for the voiceless adding the that, wildlife does not speak for itself. He expressed concerns that the Bill only addressed the administrative setup and went on to say the 1972 Act was inadequate to protect wildlife. He advised the Minister to go beyond the administrative procedures and address protection of wildlife.

The Chairman of Environment, Hon. Jusuf Mackery said wildlife conservation required protection and went to say, they have ratified several treaties in that regard, but the protection he said was not enough. He said the implementation of the document required budget, coordination and other related supports. While admonishing all, the Hon. Chairman said that, human activities including mining hinders wildlife conservation. He assured all that soon the Minister would bring the Parent's Act and other documents for review and proper protection of wildlife.

Hon. Catherine Zainab Tarawallie said they were expecting the amendment with protection of wildlife. Speaking about massive destruction of wildlife conservation, the Hon. Member told colleague MPs that the Tamba-krima Wildlife conservation has lost its past glory.

The Deputy Chief Whip, Hon Alusine Kanneh said he was a strong conservationist and recalled incidences about wildlife protection in the Gola Forest Conservation. He said animals deserve to live and therefore encouraged colleague MPs to pass the Bill and implement the document. He assured that his government is so serious about animals' protection and that the President has passion for animals' conservation.

The Opposition whip, Hon Hassan Sesay said they needed a complete overhaul of the Conversation Act. He expressed concern over personal benefits to destruction of conversation, referencing Kenya as the role model for conservation. He categorically stated that the country does not have exotic animals anymore. In light of their expectation, he said a holistic document, was required to improve on conservation to attract tourists and wildlife protection. According to the opposition Whip, strong collaboration and coordination were required to achieve tourism and conservation.

Hon. Mohamed Kanneh said a lot has been done by the Minister on the protection of the environment. He informed that exotic wildlife including elephants, leopards, and others are still in the Gola Forest and informed that, when it comes to the protection of the wildlife strong collaboration is required between those that protect the environment. "Environmental protection goes along with conservation" he stated.

The Acting Leader of Opposition, Hon Ibrahim Ben Kargbo said the country needed to do more to protect the wildlife, adding that, the authorities should make follow up in that regard. He noted that the country was losing a lot of wildlife and urgent action was required in that direction. He said as opposition, they would support conservation and they also needed the Parent's Act. He recalled his participation in animal conservation and assured all of their support. He said the environment cannot be protected in isolation, adding, that it required strong collaboration. "We need wildlife for our holistic support" he informed that some of the animals are no longer available. "Whenever the government comes with good legislation, we will support it" he ended.

The Acting Leader of Government Business, Hon. Dickson Rogers thanked his colleague MPs for their contributions and assured that, the Parent's Bill will come to Parliament. According to him, the administration must be completed before the actual bill comes to Parliament for ratification. He reassured that the government highly considered conversation. He informed that, with the Parent's Act, animal cruelty will stop immediately. He thanked the Minister of Environment for his contributions to national development.

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