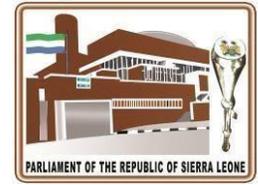




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PRESS RELEASE

PARLIAMENT RATIFIES AIR SERVICE AGREEMENTS

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has on Thursday, 24/03/2022 ratified agreements and memoranda between Sierra Leone and others for the economic growth and development for the people.

The following agreements and memoranda were approved by Parliament:

1. Bilateral Air Services Agreement Between Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Government of the Federal Republic of Germany
2. Bilateral Air Services Agreement Between Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe
3. Memorandum of Understanding Between the Republic of Zimbabwe and the Republic Sierra Leone
4. Bilateral Air Service agreement between Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Government of the Sultanate of Oman
5. Memorandum of Understanding Agreement Between Government of Sierra Leone and Government of the Sultanate of Oman and
6. Air Services Agreement Between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco.

Presenting the ratifications, the Deputy Minister of Transport and Aviation, Rex Bhonapha recalled the formation of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and a treaty as well as freedom surrounding air services. He informed that the national government should continue to support bilateral agreements and spoke about the importance of the agreements. According to the Deputy the Minister, the agreements have no financial implications on the government, but rather enhance air services.

He said the following provisions that are contained in the agreements includes; traffic rights, capacity, designation, ownership and control, operational flexibility, cooperative arrangement, and competition rules.

Contributing to the debate, the Parliamentary Chairman of Transport and Aviation Committee in Parliament, Hon. Maada Lebbay said the agreements are among other series of agreements that have had passages in the House. He informed that the agreements would not cost the state and informed that, it would help the country to comply with international aviation and organization practices. He said approving these agreements, it would benefit Sierra Leone immensely, relative to job creation, tourism, and another private sector. "We are encouraging the private sector to come and invest" he stated and encouraged his colleague MPs to speedily ratify the agreements.

Hon Catherine Zainab Tarawallie said Sierra Leone is a serious nation in light of ratifying these agreements and went on to say, other countries had long ago ratified them and are now enjoying the implementation. She emphasized job creation for the citizens "We are ratifying these agreements that would bring jobs for our students from universities" she stated and informed that, "let us try to hastily ratify thing that would bring development to Sierra Leone".

Hon.Sahr Charles raised a few concerns about the agreements related to the improvement of aviation and consultation as well as review between parties. He also spoke about capacity building in that regard and called for immediate ratification.

Hon. Joseph William-Lamin said in light of the agreements, he would like young Sierra Leoneans to fly aircraft. He went on to say, he wanted to see a situation where compatriots working in the aviation sector may represent the state honestly and sincerely. He spoke about the protection of air services space, integrity, and Infrastructure safety.

Hon. Dr. Mark-Mahmoud Kalokoh thanked the Deputy Minister for his services to the nation. He informed that the air services connote liberalization and made some comparative analysis relating to benefits of air services already enjoyed by other countries.

In rounding up the debate, Acting Leader of Opposition, Hon. Hassan Sesay said the agreements is a welcome situation and admonished the ministry not to delay such an agreements in the future relative to the importance of it nature.

The Acting Leader spoke about job creation from the agreements for the people of Sierra Leone, adding that government alone cannot provide jobs for the people, but with support from the private sector it is possible. He emphasized the training of host communities and further impact on the economy through livelihood support to their extended family. He cautioned the minister to ensure that the air services comply with quality assurance. "The flight that does come here should be of higher quality" he stated and went on to say, let that be part of the agreements as well as affordability. "Let us try to make the ticket affordable" he informed.

He noted that the agreements were not controversial.

Concluding the debate, the Acting Leader of Government Business, Hon. Dickson Rogers said the agreements were not controversial. He emphasized safety and made a comparative analysis of flights in Europe and Africa. He said if the literature in the agreements are followed or properly implemented Sierra Leone would be the best place for air services. He raised concerns over the provisions of air hostess not in the agreements and said that it was time to start training young women for such careers. He spoke about other related opportunities relating to air services, especially for free visa countries.

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