



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION - THIRD MEETING

THURSDAY, 14TH FEBRUARY, 2019

SESSION – 2018/2019



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMETARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Thursday, 14th February, 2019.

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IV. MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION:

HON VERONICA KADIE SESAY, CHAIRPERSON, PARLIAMENTARY FEMALE CAUCUS

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE ADOPTS THE RESOLUTION: ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA, WHICH WAS LAID ON THE TABLE OF THIS HOUSE ON THURSDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY, 2019

V. GOVERNMENT MOTION

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENTS WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON THURSDAY 14TH FEBRUARY, 2019

[i] UTILITY GRID INFRASTRUCTURE AND ELECTRICITY SUPPLY AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE REPRESENTED BY ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION AND SUPPLY AUTHORITY AND MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND KARADENIZ POWERSHIP KAYA BEY COMPANY LIMITED, DATED 11TH JUNE 2018.

[ii] ADDENDUM AGREEMENT DATED 20TH DECEMBER, 2018 BY AND BETWEEN GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE REPRESENTED BY ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION AND SUPPLY AUTHORITY AND MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND KARADENIZ POWERSHIP KAYA BEY COMPANY LIMITED, RELATING TO THE UTILITY GRID INFRASTRUCTURE AND ELECTRICITY SUPPLY AGREEMENT DATED 11TH JUNE 2018.

VI. MOTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE

PROPOSER: HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA

SECONDER: HON. HASSAN A. SESAY

BE IT RESOLVED:

HAT THE TWENTY-EIGHT REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE BE ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE AND THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN BE APPROVED.



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Thursday, 14th February, 2019.

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Mrs Bintu Weston, Read the Prayers]

[The House met at 10:55 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]

[The Speaker, Hon. Dr Chernor Abass Bundu, in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

[Suspension of S. O 5[2]

COMMUNICATIN FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we have two preliminary issues here. The first issue is to congratulate the Parliamentary Football Team for their victory over the Executive at the last football match. In order to prove that that victory was not a fluke, I will urge that we organise a return match at an appointed time *[Applause]*. The second matter is to wish all of you a happy valentine. You are free to bring your Valentine to Parliament.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to amend the Order Paper. I proposed that item V on the Order Paper be inserted under item IV and item IV be inserted under item V. In order words, item IV is now item V and item V replaces item IV. The amendments will not affect item I, item II and item III. Item VI will now be Motion of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service. I hope the amendment is accepted by Honourable Members.

THE SPEAKER: Acting Leader of the Opposition, are you okay with the amendment?

HON. IBRAHIM. B. KARGBO: My side is okay, Mr Speaker.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, thank you for acknowledging the victory of this House over the Executive. I think the team captain is not around now, but I would like you to do same when he comes. The team captain is not around at the moment and he scored the penalty that started the victory. The game ended two nil in favour of Parliament. I thank you.

II. CORRECTION OF RECORD VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON THURSDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY, 2019

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for parliamentary sitting held on Thursday, 7th February, 2019. As usual, we will skip the first four pages. We start with Page 5? Honourable Members, is there any comments or observations you would like to make on Page 5? Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8?

Honourable Members, I hope Honourable Dr Kandeh K. Yumkella is in the House. Well, for the sake of completeness, I wanted to draw your attention under 'response from Mr Speaker.' I want to believe that response is incomplete. The Honourable Member, Dr Kandeh Yumkella, raised two important issues: one has to do with agriculture and the other is the Law School. I think I made an order on each of those issues and only one issue has been recorded here. For the issue relating to Agriculture, we said the matter should be dealt with urgently by the select Committee on Agriculture. The matter regarding law school is accurately recorded. So, I would like that amendment to be made on Page 8.

Having said that, Honourable Members, would somebody move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Thursday, 14th February, 2019 as amended?

HON. ALUSINE KANNEH: I move for the adoption of the votes and proceedings for Thursday 14th February, 2019.

HON. REV. ISHMAIL S. SANDY: I second the motion.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Thursday, 14th February, 2019 has been adopted as amended]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I do not know why the response from my left seems rather dull. Honourable Hassan A. Sesay, there is an old adage which says, 'obey and complain.' If you follow that adage, you would never go wrong. Anyway, the Acting Leader of Opposition is a man of great wisdom.

HON IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, I always assure you that we on this side are willing to cooperate in the deliberations of this noble House. I am going to repeat what the Duke of Kent said about our Parliament during the opening ceremony when Lightfoot Boston was the Speaker. He said, Mr Speaker, I hope this House would be used for the interest of the people of Sierra Leone and this is what we are doing, Mr Speaker.

III. PAPERS LAID

[A] HON. SEGEPOH SOLOMON THOMAS, CHAIRMAN, PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
CONDOLIDATED REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE ON THE REPORTS
OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON THE ACCOUNTS OF MINISTRIES, DEPARTMENTS,
AGENCIES AND LOCAL COUNCILS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR, 2016.

HON. SEGEPOH S. THAMAS [*Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, true to our responsibility as the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament, we have critically looked at the report of the Auditor-General of 2016 and have produced a report titled: "The Consolidated Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the reports of the Auditor-General on the accounts of Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Local Councils for the Financial Year, 2016. We have compiled serious recommendations in this report. Over the years, we have had, as a nation, several reports and recommendations contained in these reports, but nothing much has come out of those recommendations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our report is intended to be different. In that regard, I want to invite Honourable Members, MDAs and Local Councils to treat our recommendations very seriously. We are going to follow-up and we are going to ensure that there is full compliance with the recommendations contained therein. I hereby Table this report [*Applause*].

THE SPEAKER: The Honourable Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, I wonder what you would like to recommend to this House considering the fact that contemporaneously with the submission of this report to the House, there are three Commissions of Inquiry that are examining more or less similar reports, including the Auditor-General's Report. I do not know whether you would like to recommend, should this House receive a request from the Commissions, for your report to be submitted to them, whether you would be disposed towards doing so or as a Committee or through the Clerk of this House.

HON. SEGEPOH S. THOMAS: Mr Speaker, this report has been tabled in this House and whatever that is to be decided, it is the purview of this House. Interestingly, the Commissions of Inquiry is not the House of Parliament and in addition to that the Commissions of Inquiry are not courts of law. We are the representatives of the people and we would have to decide what to do.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I was asking whether we should accede to a request if we receive any from the Commissions of Inquiry.

HON. SEGEPOH S. THAMAS: Certainly, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much Sir.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: You raised the question as to the poor response of the Members of Parliament when the question was put. We on this side did not want to elaborate on anything and we continue to state that we are representing the people of Sierra Leone. Therefore, the interest of the people should always come first. However, Mr Speaker, I want to state here that even in corporate affairs and administrative affairs, you have what we call 'agreement.' If you have agreed that you are going to pay me this amount of money today, I would continue to work as long as you pay me this amount, but when you wait for another three months before you pay me, it means you have violated the terms of the agreement. We do not intend to make it appear to the public and indeed to this country as if we are here to represent our personal interest only. We must however be very frank in stating here that some of our Members of Parliament are in dire need of rescue [*Applause*]. We all have been Members of Parliament here for some time and we know that when the Government in its wisdom decided to give rent allowance to Members of Parliament, it was with the full understanding that majority of the Honourable Members come from the provinces and they do not own houses in Freetown. Therefore, the government decided to help them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the Government commits itself in that regard to help Members of Parliament to pay their rents in Freetown, we just simply thought that when you give us a date for that purpose, you adhere to that date. Unfortunately,

the administration of Parliament is never adhering to that date. I want to further state here that a good number of Members of Parliament have been embarrassed by their landlords. They have been asked several embarrassing questions why they have not paid their rents. It is not that we do not want to pay, but of course if I have my commitments to meet, I must meet them. I cannot however meet those commitments if the institution that is in charge of ensuring that I meet those commitments does not perform.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we merely want to ask the question when are we going to address the welfare of Members of Parliament? We know that you alone cannot solve the problem, but you are the Leader of this administration and we want to plead with you because it is a bi-partisan or multi-partisan approach to the issue. This means the same concerns we are expressing are also expressed by some of our friends in other political parties and we do not want to create a situation whereby one day we would have a stiff confrontation with the administration. The issue of the welfare of Members of Parliament is becoming more and more paramount and some of our Members of Parliament are losing their patience. I think we can find a way to quickly address this important human rights issue. I thank you, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for that brief statement. I am quite sure that what he has said speaks not only for the Members of the party he represents, but he also speaks eloquently for every Member of this House right across the isles. It is a very important matter that you have raised and I would like to crave the indulgence of all Members of Parliament to be bit patient. I know you do not like that word 'patient,' but there is always a limit to patience. I will crave your indulgence to deal with this particular issue at the end of our deliberations today. Maybe you would like to bring it up again under S.O 23, which I am quite prepared to entertain and I will give you the appropriate response.

Honourable Members, in pursuance of the request you have just made, I want to repeat what I have just said that it is not a one sided issue of all. I know very well the number of representations I have been receiving in my Chamber from Honourable Members

across the isles. So, I know the concerns you have echoed and I want us to re-echo those concerns at the end of our deliberations, so that when I go to make representations on your behalf, I would be going fully armed with what you have to tell me. I hope I speak for all of you when I say we shall deal with this matter at the end of our deliberation. Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo, is that acceptable? Thank you for your acceptance. Let us proceed with the Order Paper.

HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH: Mr Speaker, I rise on S.O 25. I want to start my submission by thanking Honourable Sengepoh S. Thomas for laying this consolidated report of the Public Accounts Committee [PAC] in this noble House. Mr Speaker, if my memory could serve me well, in one of our meetings at the Well of Parliament.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: We want the Honourable Member to tell us the precise sub-section of S.O. 25 for the edification of the public.

HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH: Honourable Member, S.O. 25[1].

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you very much.

HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH: Mr Speaker, as I started, if my memory could serve me well, in one of our sittings at Tower Hill, you did mention that audit reports are going to be debated and you even used the word 'retrospective.' Therefore, I rise to give 'a Notice of Motion' to debate this Report. I would submit in writing to the appropriate authority in Parliament. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I take due note of your Notice of Motion and I think you are quite right that at the appropriate time, the debates will take place on the report that has just been submitted by the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. There is no difficulty at all about that.

[B] THE MINISTER OF ENERGY

ALHAJI KANJA IBRAHIM SESAY [*Minister of Energy*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table of this Honourable House the following documents:

[i] Utility Grid Infrastructure and Electricity Supply Agreement by and between the Government of Sierra Leone, Represented by Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority and Ministry of Energy And Ministry of Finance and Karadeniz Powership Kaya Bay Company Limited, Dated 11th June 2018.

[ii] Addendum Agreement, Dated 20th December, 2018 by and between the Government of Sierra Leone, represented by Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority and Ministry of Energy and Ministry of Finance, and Karadeniz Powership, Kaya Bay Company Limited, relating to the Utility Grid Infrastructure and Electricity Supply Agreement, Dated 11th June, 2018. I thank you [*Applause*].

IV. MOTION FOR THE ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION

HON VERONICA KADIE SESAY, CHAIRPERSON, PARLIAMENTARY FEMALE CAUCUS.

HON. VERONICA K. SESAY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House adopts the 'Resolution on Women, Peace and Security Agenda, which was laid on the Table of this House on Thursday, 7th February, 2019.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, considering the role of women in nation building and how women and girls are being treated, this was why our donor partners and parliamentary Female Caucus thought it fit to bring this 'Resolution' to this House through the UNDP's Global Project on the role of Parliament as partners in Women's Peace and Security. The UNDP is committed to working with four pilot legislatures; i.e., Jordan, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka. The programmes are self-identified priorities for supporting women, peace and security in their home countries. Please note that Sierra Leone is the only Parliament in Africa that has been included in this pilot project and we have progressed further by tabling this 'resolution' and committing ourselves to this agenda.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, people usually say Sierra Leone is a small country, but we are now part of those countries that have tabled this resolution. This has shown how important Sierra Leone is and how important the Parliament of Sierra Leone is.

This is because the men are more supportive in this Well than ever before [*Applause*]. I thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, members of the parliamentary Women's Caucus and other Members of Parliament know that Sierra Leone has already made many international and regional commitments to gender equality, including the sustainable Development Goals [SDGs] and Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, the UN Security Council 1325 on Women's Peace and Security, and later called Complementary Resolutions, the African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality and the African Union Protocol of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa Maputo Protocol.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we also note that Sierra Leone has produced numerous policies and plans to champion gender equality and women's peace and security over the years, including the National Policy of the Advancement of Women in 2000, National Agenda Mainstreaming Policy in 2000, National Gender Strategy Plan in 2009 to 2012, National Action Plan for the full implementation of the United Nations Security Council. Resolution 1325 in the year 2000 and 1820 referred to as SILNAP and that the draft of the second SILNAP is almost ready.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there has been some progress in implementing these plans and to protect women and girls from violence, such as substantial increase in women's representation in the security sectors, localisation of the women's peace and security agenda in cities and district councils, planning activities in line with the nationally developed guidelines for the alignment harmonisation of the SILNAP. With the local development planning process in the local councils, Local Councils seeking to protect women and girls from violence and establishment of Family Support Units [FSUs] by Sierra Leone Police. There are also concerns that women and girls across the country still suffer considerable sexual and gender based violence. Institutions of Government that are tasked with promoting gender equality and women peace and security remain severely under resourced.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we recognise the central role that Government has in implementing plans and programmes to support gender equality and women's peace and security, especially in view of the finalisation of the second SILNAP in the near future. Therefore, the elected Members of Parliament, with the blessings of our Speaker, the Right Honourable Dr Abass Chernor Bundu, we want to ask for your support to call on Sierra Leone Military Leadership and the Ministry of Defence to:

- increase the rate of recruitment and promotion of women in their institution;
- Strongly encourage the Government on the Women's Peace Security localisation process;
- call on the Attorney-General's Department and Ministry of Justice to expedite the laying of the revised Criminal Procedure Act before Parliament;
- increase the rate at which the bye-laws made by the Local Councils receive official approval in order to guarantee effective implementation;
- call on the Judicial Service Commission to ensure that there are sufficient Magistrates stationed around the country;
- call on the government to ensure that more funds are provided to ensure that:
 - [i] the Sierra Leone Police can effectively resource FSU's particularly taking in to account the special needs of officers stationed in remote areas; and
 - [ii] the FSUs have sufficient forensic capabilities, especially for the DNA analysis and logistical equipment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as Members of the Caucus, we will use parliamentary processes and advocacy to promote law reforms in supporting gender equality and women's peace and security. Specifically, we will:

1. push for amendment for Section 27[4][d] and [e] of the 1991 Constitution, which allows for discrimination against women;
2. fast-track the adoption of the amendment to the Child Rights Act, 2007, to make it consistent with the registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act, 2009;
3. debate and enact a Bill on affirmative action for Parliament;

4. enact a Bill on the localisation guidelines under the SILNAP to identify approaches for working in our constituencies with local level bodies and chiefdoms to discuss and address key issues around women's peace and security and activities in our homes and communities, so as to build the understanding of the value of women's peace, security and gender equality; and
5. use the powers of the Finance Committee, and relevant sectorial committees to closely examine the national budget in order to assess existing allocations to gender equality and specifically towards the implementation of the SILNAP.

With that brief explanation, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that this 'resolution' that was laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 7th February, 2019 be adopted. I thank you *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I want to thank the Honourable Member for that exposé. Any seconder of the motion?

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: I so second, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Veronica K, Sesay, you may not have noticed, but there were at least four Members of Parliament who rose at the same time to second your Motion.

HON. VERONICA K. SESAY: I want to thank them very much, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed]

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as the Chairman for the male champions, supporting the female caucus and at the same time the Deputy Publicity Secretary of the Female Caucus, this is one of the days we have been waiting for. Today is symbolic because as Members of the Female Caucus, our plans are not only to fostering and pushing for political recognition, but also ensuring that the protocols and charters the Government of Sierra Leone has entered into for and on behalf of the people of Sierra Leone, including but not limited to the African Union Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Right, are upheld. Women's roles are guaranteed in the UN Plan of Action on Environmental and Development in 1992,

the Human Rights in 1993 on Population and Development and in 1994 the Right to Social Development. On the 31st October, 2000 'Resolution 1325' was adopted by the United Nations, signalling the critical role that women should play in post conflict resolution.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I see discrimination, especially in Article 20 of the Africa Union Protocol to the Africa Charter on the rights of women in Africa, especially the Maputo Protocol, which talks about the widow's rights. Our women who have lost their husbands in the city and in most provincial areas are discriminated against, not only in terms of inheritance, but also their right to control and provide guidance for their children. I think it was an oversight by the signatories to the Maputo Protocol. As Members of the parliamentary Female Caucus, we want serious action to be taken in terms of implementing the Maputo Protocol. We also took cognisance of Article 21, which has to do with the right of inheritance. Some of us from the North have witnessed serious discriminations in terms of women's inheritance. For the northerners, women do not have right to own property. This is very discriminatory and as a signatory to that Protocol, Government should have also looked at that area. I want to however state here that Government has demonstrated the will to empower the women of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to Article 23 of the Maputo Protocol, which talks about 'special protection for women with disabilities.' We have many women on wheelchairs who are also on the streets of Freetown. Some can walk, but they are incapacitated to provide food for themselves. They have been reduced to beggars, but we have a duty to ensure that they are protected. We have to take some specific measures to meet their physical, economic and social needs. They should have access to employment or vocational training courses. I think the Government, especially the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs is not responsive at all. As members of the parliamentary Female Caucus, we want to see this provision in the Protocol. Sierra Leone is a signatory to that Protocol and it should be implemented.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, 'Resolution 1325 lays special emphasis on the role of women in peace building, but how do we play role in peace building when you can hardly find more than five female members of the Sierra Leone Police who are Assistant Inspector General of Police?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have never had a female Inspector General of Police. It is also difficult to find women who are senior officers in the Military. In other words, it is very difficult to see women as Captain, Lieutenant Colonels or Brigadiers, etc. I am sure you can count two or less women who have attained the rank of Brigadier. This is a very serious concern to us. If women are to play role, as provided for in 'Resolution 1325, we have to be well positioned. We have to be part of the decision making process, so as to enable us consolidate peace. This is because many women are the recipients of brutality during the civil war. Whenever a nation faces war, women suffer a great deal of its disastrous consequence. If we want to correct that situation, then the women need to be well placed. The women need to be better positioned, so that they can contribute meaningfully to peace building. Our women are part of the peace keeping missions in other countries, but they are always going as lower officers. They are not part of critical decision making process. So, women are asking for their consideration in decision making process. Women can provide the necessary leadership in any capacity, like Chief of Defence Staff.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our women in Parliament are struggling politically. We have only 18 female Members of Parliament. This number is discouraging, considering the role women play in politics. Women are the carrier of political messages, but they are still under represented. The parliamentary Female Caucus sees the PPRC as a strategic partner to ensuring that we increase the number of female participation and female positions in Parliament. If we are to succeed in having political positions or well represented and get the **30%** quota of women's representation, then the Political Party Registration Commission should urge major political parties to domesticate some of these provisions in their political parties' constitutions. This is very important because it will enable them to come to Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know that Civil Society Organisations have played critical role in this regard, but we want more Civil Society Organisations to join the women in terms of enabling them get to the top. The role of women is provided for in 'resolution 1325' and it is very critical. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. In case any Member is entertaining any suspicion about the Honourable Ibrahim T. Conteh, there has been no sex change. He was just speaking in a representative capacity and not in a personal capacity when he kept using 'we the women.'

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I felt compelled to contribute to this debate because since the last Parliament, we have been working on several issues relating to women's empowerment in several areas. In that regard, this is part of the process that has started long time ago. I am sure having more male Members of Parliament advocating for the empowerment of women is adding more pep to whatever we want to achieve in this direction.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are certain areas we have already started addressing. For example, there is a proposal for amendment of Section 27 [4d] and [e] of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone in order to make it consistent with the registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act, 2009.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that this particular amendment has been with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children Affairs for a very long time. I am however happy for these proposed amendments and for this opportunity given to us to add more voices. Mr Speaker, promoting women is a human right issue and we must treat it very seriously. We have had situations where the rights of under aged girls are not treated seriously because heads of communities usually consent to under aged girls to get marry. Such situation is a human right violation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we must work towards ensuring that the rights of a child in the village are the same rights enjoyed by a child in the city. We must try to create the synergy between customary law and a national law, so that a child at

eighteen is a child wherever he or she lives. I am sure we are in support of this 'Resolution.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, some speakers mentioned issues relating to disabilities. The number of disabled people on the streets has grown and we must do something about it. We have abled people who are accompanying the disabled to beg for alms. In other words, we have able-bodied men and women who push those on wheelchairs, going from one place to the other to ask for alms. If we allow able-bodied men and women to push those on wheelchairs, we are also creating another class of people who have nothing else to do, but to beg. Those could have been part of the productive population of this country. If we can cater well for the disabled by providing for them, they will not go on the streets at all because they have something more productive to do. We should not encourage the creation of another class of beggars.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we domesticate some of these laws they will help to solve this predicament. Mr Speaker, if you go to Lumley, Congo Cross, Cotton Tree and other places in Freetown, you will see lots of able-bodied men and women pushing those on wheelchairs. Those disabled people will tease them and at the end of the day, the number of beggars continues to multiply not because they want to be part of it, but because they are not properly catered for. If we want to discourage that, we have to put in place laws that will properly cater for them. We must also strengthen the institutions that look after their welfare. The development partners must be involved to assist in that direction. Disability is not inability, because they could have something they can do if they are properly taken care of. I am sure if we adopt the provisions in this particular document, probably it will help to mitigate such menace. We should not allow the number of the disabled to multiply. Their increase will even add to the level of poverty in this country. If a disabled person has a child, there is likelihood that the child will not go to school because he or she has to help the parents to beg for their survival and the child will become a professional beggar. The child could have the chance to become a scientist, an engineer or a medical doctor.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have to end this particular malaise in this country by adopting this 'Resolution.' I will not repeat what my colleague on the other side has said, but I am sure this 'Resolution' will help to improve the lives of our women, children and disabled or vulnerable groups in our society. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Chief Whip of the Opposition for his contribution.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I think this 'resolution' is not controversial because all of us were born by women and we must support such a gesture. I am happy that is being debated on a Valentine Day. That is why I believe all the men are supporting this 'resolution.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start with the heading of this 'resolution,' 'peace and security of women.' Mr Speaker, peace starts from the mind, but my question is, do women have peace of mind in this country? If women see their fellow women on the streets or along the beaches begging, they will never have peace.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in as much as the men are supporting this 'resolution,' let me talk to the women who are in the Police force. Mr Speaker, I have been in some Police stations where policewomen were interviewing their colleague women, but the words that usually come out of these policewomen are not good to hear.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, few weeks ago, I was at a police station at Hill Station and a female police was telling her colleague S.O. 2 'do ar woman dem wonar excuse me if wonar nor dae go laydom for dem dem nor go fala wonar wae dem fala wonar dem get wonar bele now wonar wan watin sef'. Mr Speaker, let the women learn to respect themselves. It is disheartening for a woman to tell a colleague woman 'u nar raray girl,' S.O. 2. I am sure no woman would have a peace of mind if women are dying in labour. Let us treat this matter seriously. If our mothers did not give birth to us, we would not have been in this World at all. We men should respect women even

our very security depends on our women at our homes. A woman can finish a man within the twinkle of an eye. Let us learn to respect them and give them enough money to run the home. Where do we expect our women to get money to support the kids?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that majority of the women are struggling in their homes than men. What men usually do is to give money every morning before they leave their homes without paying attention to how the home is taken care of. When we come, we meet food on the table, the bed is well prepared and the entire home is well kept. Again, I want women to treat themselves with respect and candour. Again, I want the men to stop going out with little girls, girls below the age of eighteen. It is an insult to womanhood. I am not referring to Honourable Members because I know they cannot do that and I can 'bet my bottom Dollar.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us start treating women with every respect they deserve. Sometimes I shed tears when I see women lambasting their fellow women. I want to admonish female Members of Parliament that it is our responsibility to go to our constituencies and bring to book those Paramount Chiefs that give their kids to men in the form of marriage, especially children below the consent age of eighteen. It is happening in every village in this country. We sit in our constituencies or in our villages and allow the old men to give these girls to men. They are giving girls who are below the ages of fifteen, sixteen and seventeen to men. The uncles are also doing same, Mr Speaker. If you go to other countries, you will see young girls competing to go to school. What our girls are competing in this country few years is to give birth. S.O. [2], me kɔmpin dɔn bɔn mesɛf de kam bɔn. Sometimes when a man says he raped this girl because she did not dress properly, I feel like killing that man. Is that your business? If you cannot advise the girl, do not help to degrade the future of that child.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is one thing I want to bring to the attention of law makers and probably the Ministry of Education. We use to have Social Studies in our school system and I want some of these subjects to be re-introduced. This is because when we were growing up, there was unity of purpose and a child of one person, is a child of the community. Those were the days when you see your brother or

your sister's child misbehaving on the street, you can grab that child you slap him or her and take to his/her parents. They will also slap the child. We used to be afraid of our elders in those days. Nowadays, however, if you try to do that the parents will say S.O.[2], no beat me pikin, no to u de feed am.' To the extent that when you see your neighbour child's doing bad things, you will not talk at all, Mr Speaker. You meet them standing in a corner or secluded place, you will just pass by. You will not talk because the child will insult you. The parents will tell you it is not your business. Mr Speaker, in as much as we are going to pass this 'resolution,' I want the international community to support Members of Parliament to go to their various constituencies and villages to talk to the elders. We are talking about women's security and security starts in our homes. The way some fathers or mothers beat their girls is very unfortunate. I do not think if that is how they beat their male children. Those women need to be protected and we need to give them the maximum security they deserve. They are giving us protection and security.

The Speaker, Honourable Members, some men take advantage of women. Sometimes we tell our wives we are in our constituencies when you and I know that we are not. Let us make sure our kids on the streets are secured against violators. Let us make sure what we used to do ten, fifteen, and twenty years ago in the school system and communities are re-introduced. When you see your neighbour's girl child doing bad things, make sure you report that child to the parents. Every girl child in this country wants to become the Fatima Bio, Honourable Veronica K. Sesay and Elizabeth Turay in the Police force etc.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we fail to secure their future, then this country will not progress because when you develop a woman, you are developing a home and the country by extension. This is where I give kudos to His Excellency the President, Rtd Brigadier Julius Maada Bio for introducing the Free Quality Education. We have to however emphasize on the women's education. I think it will pay a lot of dividend if we do that. Mr Speaker, I want to recommend this 'resolution' to the House for approval. I thank you very much.

[Suspension of S.O. 5[2]]

THE SPEAKER: For the female Members of Parliament, I am tempted to recognise you less for this debate. I would rather prefer you to listen to what the men are saying.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker for recognising me. I stand here to lend my support to this 'resolution' before the House. There are two burning issues I want to bring to this House. On behalf of the Legislative Committee, I want to encourage the Female Caucus that whatever steps that need our assistance, we will give our full support. The first thing I want to talk about is the institution of Chieftaincy in this country. We have town chiefs, section chiefs, paramount chiefs, especially in the North and institution of Chieftaincy in the North, discrimination against women. As far as I am concerned, the people of Moyamba, Pujehun or Bonthe are Sierra Leoneans and we are the same people. I recognise the differences in customary laws, customary land laws and customary chieftaincy laws. I know there are various differences, but in this case, I think it is long overdue. There has to be exceptions, especially with our own active intervention.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will justify my point. In the early mid-80s, women were not allowed to pay local tax. In other words, women were exempted from paying local tax. In law, payment of local tax is part of our rights and duties. There is a duty to perform and then in recognition of that duty that you perform, there are rights attached to those duties. So, if you perform those duties, then automatically you are entitled to the rights attached to those duties and payment of local tax is one of those duties. If you fail to pay your local tax, that disqualifies you of your rights to become tribal authority; that is those who are qualified to vote during chieftaincy elections. If you do not pay your local tax, you are not qualified at all. If you fail to pay your local tax, that disqualifies you from even contesting paramount chieftaincy positions. In the 80s, if women were not allowed to pay tax, and which is a duty and then they are disqualified from running for chieftaincy offices, I think that is fair enough. The burden is not on you to pay tax; and as a result, you will not enjoy the right attached to payment of tax.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, tax payment is now everywhere, not only in the South/East, but also in the North and West. Women are supposed to pay tax. I have witnessed a situation wherein a checkpoint was set up in my Constituency and then a pregnant woman was detained at that checkpoint for failing to produce her local tax receipt. She was detained there for hours while I was campaigning. So, I had to rescue her and I paid for her. Mr Speaker that was the time she was released in my Constituency. This is happening, but when it comes to enjoying those rights, women are discriminated. I am personate about this and I am sure I am speaking the minds of the leadership and Members of the Legislative Committee. I think the parliamentary Female Caucus should propose amendment of the Chieftaincy Act. We have to insert certain provisions that will make it mandatory for female aspirants to be allowed throughout the country, as it is in the South/East. I think we will support it. In fact, I feel proud to announce to the public about a case study in Pujehun District. I do not have that power Madam Paramount Chief to say stand up for recognition. I cannot say that, but I want to inform the general public that as I speak, the present Parliament, under your purview, Mr Speaker there are two female Paramount Chiefs Members of Parliament from Moyamba and Pujehun Districts.

THE SPEAKER: I think they deserve a round of applause.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: What the Honourable Member is underscoring here, particularly for those of us from the Northern part of the country and Kono, whereas we give women the right to vote, there is a commonality of values between Kono District and the rest of the North. In those areas, women have the right to vote in chieftaincy elections, but do not have the right to be voted for. This is discriminatory.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: For the fact that they are mandated to pay tax, that should give them the right to contest. They have the right to vote, but they are denied the right to be voted for. I am referring to the town chiefs, section chiefs and paramount chiefs. There is no reason why the status quo should remain this way. If there is nothing in the Chieftaincy Act of 2009, then we must ensure that it happens. If

there is nothing that forbids them, we will help you to insert a provision through amendment of the Chieftaincy Act of 2009. We should insert a section that will give the mandate to all female aspirants in the North and Kono to be voted for. This is happening in the South/East. I will consider myself as a failure if this Parliament comes to an end and this issue is not looked into.

THE SPEAKER: The Honourable Paramount Chief for Tonkolili District, may I crave your indulgence to please take a seat. The point the Honourable Member is making is of great importance for the part of the country you represent in this Parliament. I will be delighted to hear his point of view. He wanted to take an exit. Thank you and please carry on.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much for that swift observation and I know your word is policy that before the end of this debate, one or two paramount chiefs Members of Parliament could be heard. That is very good and I believe it will assure the people of this country. As far as I am concerned, this issue looks like a human rights issue. What is the difference? In fact, women can even do better in that regard than men. Two years ago, we went to Tiama to formally open an APC Office and one of the dignitaries that was introduced to us was a female Paramount Chief and she was allowed to make a statement. I was so moved by what she said. The Qcell Company used to be Ambitel in the days of Gadhafi. In the days of Gadhafi, I prepared 85 lease agreements for that company. Before the female Paramount Chiefs could sign those documents, they rejected them for over five or six times, until the interest of their people was addressed. Unlike others, I will not call names, but some of them were interested in financial reward before they could sign.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the last burning issue I want to talk about is the right to own property, especially the women in the provinces. The issue of property right is really against the will and wish of the females of this country. In my district, there are areas where women are considered as property themselves. So, how can property own property? You are a property and therefore, you cannot own property. That is what is happening in my district. When you are a widow, you are a property and

that prevents you from owning or claiming property belonging to your husband. In fact, the widow is owned by the brothers of the late husband. That is what is happening and it is very unfair. So, as far as we are concerned, the 'Devolution of Estate Act of 2007 is in their favour, but what is needed to be done is to embark on massive sensitisation campaign in that regard. Let us sensitise the women who have the right to succession and succession right is **100%**. The men do not have better share than the women as long as you are all children of the late parents you have equal right. Therefore, this aspect protects the women, but what we lack is awareness by the women. I thank you very much and God bless you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his very constructive contribution to this debate. I am so heartened to have recognised the Honourable Paramount Chief of Tonkolili District to take the Floor. After the Paramount Chief of Tonkolili, I will recognise a Member of Parliament from Kono. My reason for being discriminatory at this point is because the North and Kono are the ones depriving women of certain important rights.

HON. P.C. BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me the Floor. I come from the central District of Sierra Leone. I have listened keenly to my learned Lawyer and he spoke about things that will end discrimination against women in this country. Mr Speaker, let us not only look at the chieftaincy, but the composition of Parliament. The learned Lawyer mentioned specifically about tax payment system in Sierra Leone. If you allow me, I will tell you those who have right to be a paramount chief, regardless of gender. I will support any gender that is qualified in terms of inheritance to be a Paramount Chief in any part of Sierra Leone, irrespective of gender.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I was elected as Paramount Chief in 1988, there were no Tribal Authorities [TAs] in my Chieftom under the leaderships of my father and grandfather, who were Chieftom Councillors. Today, I challenge anybody here to look at my gazette you will find out that more than **45%** of the gazetted people are women. In Konikay Chieftom, more than **45%** of the current gazettes of

Konikay Sanda Chieftaindom are women and there are Section Chiefs as well. When you go to Masingbi and call a meeting, more than **50%** of those who will attend meetings are women. When my father, grandfather and great grandfather were Paramount Chiefs, it never happened. When I started doing that even my mother opposed me and told me that I have appointed women as Town Chiefs. They said female hens do not crow, but coming back to our national politics, women are not doing their homework. If you make me your consultant, I will tell you why you are very few in Parliament. If you go to Rwanda, you will find **60%** of the Members of Parliament are women since 2008.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I hope you will not be biased against Chieftaincy in terms of having more men than women. Discrimination against women at Constituency level is clear and alarming and the two major political parties, the APC and SLPP are victims. From the Constituency level, women are discriminated. In every constituency, we have Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Secretary, Organising Secretary and Youth Leader, but it is only the position of Chair Lady that is made available to the women. So, the women are not even contesting to be chairpersons, secretaries or organising secretaries. Therefore, out of ten positions, only one is given to women. This means they do not compete anywhere. They are just waiting to be chairladies of their constituencies. Where is the discrimination? That is why when nine or ten people are considered for the symbol, the nine men will gang against the one woman to give the symbol to the man. This is happening in the APC and SLPP and these two political parties are victims. Why are we not giving such positions as secretary, chairperson and organising secretary to the women? Mr Speaker, we know how Chieftaincy came into existence.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Paramount Chief, I deliberately called you to take the Floor because I recognised that anything you have to say on this particular matter considering your status will be extremely important and valuable. You need a guide to the Government, but I want us to bear in mind that there are many other things to talk about today.

HON. P.C. BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Mr Speaker, I will endorse and accept because I have children who are women and they are doing better in school than the men. I have lawyers and doctors. So, if they want to be Paramount Chief when am dead, they will fight for it. So, let us have a constitutional amendment in that regard. There should be no discrimination in Sierra Leone. As Members of Parliament, we should make it possible for women to be paramount chiefs. We should look at this issue in its entirety. In other words, we should not only look at certain areas like Tonkolili or Northern Province and Kono District, but enacting a law that will give the opportunity to women to become paramount chiefs in all districts and chiefdoms in Sierra Leone. I will endorse it because by the time it happens in my Chiefdom, I will be a dead man. If they pay their taxes, it will be nice for me. There was a paramount chief to be elected somewhere and she was going to win the majority, but when the United Nations wanted to take her there with the helicopter, we called the Poro Society and they came out, the women ran away. So the male Paramount Chief was elected.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will support female paramount chiefs in every part of this country and that was why I started looking at it from a national point of view. Women should have more positions in our political system, not only as chairladies, but as ministers.

With these few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank you very much. I like this debate. As Paramount Chief of Tonkolili District, I support every woman who wants to be paramount chief. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I want to thank the Honourable Paramount Chief for the public support that he has expressed for women to become paramount chiefs in his part of the country. It shows how liberal minded the Paramount Chief is and we would love to see that translated into action. I want to recognise the Deputy Leader of the Women's Caucus to take the Floor.

HON: ROSEMARIE BANGURA: Thank you, Mr Speaker for recognising me in this important debate. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very happy to have heard male Members of Parliament supporting parliamentary Female Caucus. Today is a not

only a wonderful day, but a remarkable day for the women in Sierra Leone. It is a historic day and I want to thank God for this day.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say this 'resolution' calls for action because over the years, previous Governments have come and gone. They have done their own bits in terms of empowering and protecting women and children of this nation. However, we are about to move one more step expressed by the previous speakers. This 'resolution' is a step in the right direction because women business is everybody's business. We all have mothers, sisters, daughters, wives and aunts and we want to see them very happy. Therefore, I call on male Members of Parliament to support this 'resolution.' This is not a controversial document and that is why we should support it. This is going to protect and empower our women folks in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like what the mother of the House has said, Members of the Female Caucus speak with one voice and we are together, whether you are APC, SLPP, C4C, Independent Candidates, NGC or paramount chief. Although the United Nations Peace and Security Resolution Agenda 1325 represented a global commitment, but action has not been taken at national levels by individual member states to ensure appropriate responses. Member states are encouraged to adopt the UNCR Agenda 1325 national action plans that will set out each country's priorities taking into account the most crucial needs as understood in the national context.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the National Action Plans would guide national efforts and would also serve as a monitoring tool to hold them accountable for their women peace and security commitments, including Parliament. The UN Resolution 1325 global study found out that national implementation has remained slow and patchy. A lot has not been done towards the national implementation of this 'resolution.' It has been patchy and analysis has shown that while the seventy three [73] UN member states have signed the Action Plan, only seventeen [17] of them have allocated budgets for implementation. This is because without adequate budget, you cannot implement such plans. If you look at the National Action Plan implementation approaches for the majority of countries, developing and developed countries, peaceful and conflict

countries, parliaments play weak role. This means something has to be done to address such gaps. Studies have shown that few countries report to Parliament on the national action plans implementation. Countries like Norway, Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom are reporting to their national legislatures.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sierra Leone is working towards developing the Sierra Leone National Action Plan [SLNAP] and the Female Caucus is determined to ensure that this Parliament is part of the SLNAP. Therefore, this 'resolution' gives more importance and relevance to the Female Caucus. I thank all the previous speakers who have spoken supported this 'resolution.'

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member who also doubles as the Deputy Leader of the parliamentary Female Caucus. I will now end this debate by calling on another Paramount Chief Member, Honourable Paramount Chief M'briwa from Kono District.

HON. P.C.SAHR YOUNGAI KONTANDAY MBRIWA II: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the issue before us is very sensitive and topical, but it is not controversial at all. What the women are asking for is peace and better security. I think the request is in place and every reasonable Sierra Leonean will give support to this request. This is because we are aware of the situation of women in this country. Kono and Tonkolili Districts have been used as examples in today's debate. We agree to some extent because Kono District has never had a female Paramount Chief, but what I want this House to know is the system of paramount chieftaincy. The issue of women not becoming Paramount Chiefs in certain districts has to do with the system. Mr Speaker, if you go through the history of paramount chieftaincy in this country, we have two main categories of chieftaincies. These are: the circular paramount chieftaincy and the ceremonial system, which prevails mainly in the Northern Province. But again, we also have systemic issue because we have laws in this country that govern the election of chiefs from town chiefs to the Paramount Chiefs and there is no law in this country that actually prevents women from becoming Paramount Chiefs. We have the Paramount Chieftaincy Act in this country and it is very clear. If you read and understand that Act,

you will find out that the people in the North and Kono Districts have not broken any law in terms of electing women into positions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what the law says is that you elect your chiefs, especially Paramount Chiefs according to your customs and your traditions. That is what the law says and we have only one law in this country. The Northern Province does not have separate laws and Kono District does not have separate laws. We have one law that govern the entire country. The law gives every district the leeway to elect its chiefs according to their customs and traditions. If the Koinadugu District or the people of the Northern Province decide to elect their own chiefs according to their customs and traditions, they have not gone against any law in this country. Similarly, Kono District has not gone against any law in this country. This also has to do with systemic issue, systemic in the sense that if you go from one district to another, you will discover differences in the way we conduct our elections. For instance, political leadership or positions in Kono District is open to women and that is why we have our female parliamentarian who is Honourable Yei Rebecca. Besides her, I have conducted three elections for women in my Chieftom. The women contested with men and they won and they are there as chiefs. I have lost one recently. We have not had a female Paramount Chief yet, but we recognise the position of women in our society. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Paramount Chief for his contribution. I will now call on the proposer of this Motion to respond as brief as possible.

HON. VERONICA K. SESAY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today is a great day for me and my colleagues female Members of Parliament. First of all I want to thank the Speaker and the leadership for this epoch making debate. At least we have been able to draft a 'resolution' to bring to this House under my leadership. This shows that there is light at the tunnel.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank those who contributed and those who did not have the opportunity to contribute. I am sure when the question is put, your voices will be heard in support of this 'resolution.' Mr Speaker, somebody said this

is the first time to have more male supports from both sides of the aisles. That shows the leadership of the Female Caucus cuts across. We lobbied effectively and I think that is one of the reasons. To me, Parliament is a place of lobby; and if you want anything in this House to be done speedily and unanimously, you have to lobby. This is why we got the support of every male Member of Parliament who stood up and spoke. Many men were ready to talk in favour of this 'resolution.' We have been telling them to examine the importance of women in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with all due respect to the Honourable Paramount Chief from the North, if we talk about discrimination against women, I think the women in the North face more discrimination. For instance, if there is no man in a particular clan, it means the chieftaincy will go to another clan. So, that is discrimination to the highest degree for women. I am a woman and I do not want to go into details, but that is why they have speakers in the villages. If a woman becomes a chief, then you give a speaker and that is what we do in the Moyamba District. There are other secret societies that are very paramount in the Moyamba District, such as the Poro and Wonde secret societies. If we have a man as chief, then a woman should be the speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, somebody spoke about paying of taxes. Women pay tax than men. The Honourable Member from Koinadugu said that a pregnant woman was interrogated because of local tax. That shows the amount of violence women come across on a daily basis. I am sure this 'resolution' will help to promote issues relating to women's peace and security. We are not saying we want to challenge the men, but we want you to realise that we are partners in development. We should be seen walking side by side. As the saying goes, behind any successful Government, there must be strong women; behind any successful man, there is a woman; and behind any successful Speaker, there are women.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for far too long, women have been struggling and that is why we are asking for our peace and security. You have heard various testimonies from the Honourable Members on how women treat their colleagues in terms of security. I am sending this message to the female police officers to respect

one another. They should treat their fellow women, especially those in prisons with respect. Therefore, if we are talking about security, you should treat them as women, so that men can do same. If the men are seeing you insulting one another, they will do same, but if they see you respecting yourselves, they will follow suit. I want those in the security sector to change their attitude. You have to be self-disciplined before you discipline others.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want the women out there to respect themselves. For instance, if you see your sister or a girl going the wrong way, just tell her that 'you are going the wrong way.' This is because if something happens to that woman or girl, the effect will spread over. As the saying goes, S.O [2], 'one bonga dae spoil the lot.' So we have to change our attitude if we want this 'resolution' to be implemented.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank all the contributors for their support and to also state here that women are partners in development. We are pushers, makers, developers and multipliers. In fact, we are the best security in the whole world we have never heard of 'war lady,' but we have 'warlords.' You know that women are special medicine for men. Therefore, make sure you work with us, so that we can cure whatever sickness you have.

With these few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to move that this Honourable House adopt the 'resolution' on Women's Peace and Security Agenda, which was laid on the Table of this Honourable House on Thursday, 7th February, 2019
[Applause].

THE SPEAKER: I thank the mover of this Motion. The Motion could not have come at a better time on Valentine's Day. I extend to all the male and female Members of Parliament a happy valentine *[Applause].*

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Motion for the Adoption of Resolution on Peace and Security Agenda has been carried]

HON. VERONICA K. SESAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with that we have our National Anthem for all women. We will entertain you for the Valentine's Day with

the first stanza [*Applause*]. If you have respect for women, you have wife, sisters and brothers please rise and sing with us [*All stood up*].

GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY

ALHAJI KANJA SESAY [*The Minister of Energy*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this House ratify the following agreements which were laid on the Table of this House on Thursday, 14th February, 2019:

1. Utility grade Infrastructure and Electricity Supply Agreement by and between the government of Sierra Leone represented by Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority and Ministry of Energy and Ministry of Finance and Karadeniz Powership Kara Bay Company Limited, dated 11th June, 2018, and
2. Addendum Agreement, dated 20th December, 2018 by and between Government of Sierra Leone represented by Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority and Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Finance, and Karadeniz power ship Kara Bay Company Limited relating to the Utility Grading Infrastructure and Electricity Supply Agreement, dated 11th June 2018.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Government of Sierra Leone, represented by the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Finance, and the Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority [EDSA] have signed a two year Utility Grading Infrastructure and Electricity Supply Agreement with the Karadeniz Powership KaYa BEY Company Limited for the generation of electricity from its marine vessel ducked in Freetown. In a bid to alleviate the immediate power challenges and to ensuring more sustainable and affordable power supply for the next twenty four months, the Ministry of Finance the Ministry of Energy in collaboration with the Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority, and the Electricity Generation and Transmission Company [EGTC] constituted a committee to renegotiate the terms of the contract with Car Powership.

In 2017 the previous Government entered into an Agreement with Car Power International to supply thirty megawatts for a period of five years at a cost of 19.59 cents. This in excess of the average tariff paid by EDSA customers at 18.76 cents would

have resulted in high deficit for the authority, a situation that has made EDSA heavily reliant on Government subsidies for the cost of daily operations. In general subsidies negatively affect Government spending on the required social service sector particularly in Education and Health.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are pleased to inform you that the committee has successfully renegotiated the Agreement and made the following substantial gains:

- reduce the tariff to 16.4 cents from the original tariff of 19.59 cents negotiated by the previous government. This represents an annual savings of approximately nine million dollars per year and it is competitive in comparison to similar car power projects in Ghana and the Gambia, which have either longer durations and or larger contracted capacity.
- we have reduced the contracted available capacity for which EDSA is obligated to pay whether or not the power is distributed, particularly for the raining season when Bumbuma Hydro the least cost option is at full capacity of fifty megawatt. This has the effect of reducing the cash flow burning of EDSA.
- By reducing the duration of the contract from five to two years in line with the medium term strategy of the energy sector and to minimise Government exposure in the event of early termination of the contract.
- we have limited the tax and duty exemptions to heavy fuel [HFO] only and withholding tax. Unlike the original contract negotiated by the former Government which granted car power international and its affiliate's blanket exemptions on all taxes and duties under the renegotiated contract car power will pay duties and taxes on most of its activities including payee and GST.
- we have reduced the foreign currency United States [US] dollar requirement from **100%** for fuel and all other payment to **100%** for fuel only and a ratio of 70% to **30%** for Sierra Leone and other payments.

Finally, Mr Speaker Honourable Members, we have ensured uninterrupted power supply to the point that today what is abnormal is black out. In adherence to the energy sector policy between Government and the development partners, Government consulted the

World Bank group on the renegotiated terms and conditions of the contract. On 25th May, 2018 the World Bank issued its no objection to Government to conclude power purchase Agreement with Car Power International. The Bank also recognised and commended the efforts of government in reducing tariff and making significant savings estimated at **\$ 18,000,000** over the contract period of two years. For the purpose of transparency in handling public resources, the time sheet below provides a comparison between the original contracts negotiated by the Government and the terms of the current agreement. Medium and long term intervention, while Government is remedying the immediate power supply crisis, it is also pursuing medium and long term arrangement, including the CLSLG that is the Cote de Voire , Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea transmission line project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have the Western Area Power Generation Project, the Bumbuna [2] Hydro Project and the six megawatt sola project which is supported by the World Bank. On the 20th December, 2018 an addendum to the original Agreement was signed between the Ministry of Energy the Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority and the Car Powership. This provides for a second ship to be brought to Freetown to remedy the lack of power to commercial customers, primarily in the east end.

Mr Speaker Honourable Members, this will also address the network challenges between Kingdom and Black Hall Road. In light of the fact that there are many identified customers currently not been served by EDSA due to the limitations of its current supply capacities an additional power injection point has been evaluated.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, what we've just witnessed confirms the very opposite observation you made that indeed what is abnormal is a blackout.

ALHAJI KANJA SESAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members I maintain the point that what is abnormal is outage and blackout. Before now, occurrences like this were very normal and they will last for a whole day. In light of the fact that there are many identified commercial customers currently not been served by EDSA due to the limitations of its current supply capacity an additional power injection point has been

identified. Serving this need customers as well as domestic customers will generate significant additional revenues for EDSA and increase access to electricity. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the parties to the agreement agree and undertake that if the agreement is extended to the third year then the prices applicable to the existing capacity shall also be amended and reduced to the prices that shall be applicable to the additional capacity. Engineering work to receive and connect the second ship has commenced.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the Agreements as stated above, which were laid on the Table of this Honourable House on Thursday, 14th February, 2019.

[Question Proposed]

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, this is just a matter of practice and we thought, from this side, that this matter should be raised. We have been part of this process for a very long time and you are an expert in parliamentary procedures. The laying of papers is not a strange practice, which explains why when the Minister came this morning to lay his paper. We applauded him because electricity is very important in this country. However, it was the brevity of the whole process that is worrisome, not because of lack of capacity to debate, but because some of them simply believe that the time is too short for them to properly understand the content of this Paper. This Agreement has financial obligation and implications. We have made some consultations and we do not want to disrupt this process. We have promised to cooperate with the government as much as it is necessary and we have always said that we cannot be seen to be any set of people who will undermine the development of this country. However if an error has occurred that is not consistent with parliamentary practice and procedure, it should be accepted we are gentlemen. I want the Clerk to note that we are not very happy with the practice this morning. I am pleading with my colleagues for us to go ahead with the debates, but next time we are not going to accept it. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I want to thank the Acting Leader of the Opposition for his observation. I am particularly heartened by his last statement that he has given a warning and hope that we will comply with parliamentary procedures. Of course it is not for me to remind all of us that this is not the first time we have laid and ratified documents at the same time. There are many instances I cannot mention now.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, I want to remind the Honourable Member that there are certain Agreements we ratify the same day they are laid. I have not seen any Agreement we have thrown out except the Agreement he brought here when he was a Minister. It was because he wanted to amend the Agreement and these are things we do for our people. Some Agreements cannot be amended. According to the Minister, there is nothing much we can change. I want to allay your fears that under the Leadership of the Speaker, a man who led the Ugandan people to democracy, I will assure you that we will not allow its passage if it is controversial. Again, this is not a controversial Agreement. This Agreement is going to benefit the people of this country. You have more of your people in the Eastern part of Freetown and we are providing electricity for them.

THE SPEAKER: I am sure this matter is not a controversial matter and I will not entertain any dissenting views. I have taken note of what you said, Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo. I have not recognised you, although somebody peremptorily went for the microphone.

HON. HASSAN A. SESEY: Mr Speaker, it was given to me.

THE SPEAKER: The Chief Whip is forcing me to recognise him.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, let me observe. It is not the practise of Honourable Member on the other side to speak after his Leader would have spoken.

THE SPEAKER: I am not oblivious of the conduct of the Honourable Member and that is why I am not even countenancing him.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: I was going to say we are going to withdraw our support from Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo for being the Leader of the APC.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I am going to shorten this debate to two minutes per speaker.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am not contributing to this debate because I am an Honourable Member of Parliament, but because I am an expert in electronic engineering [*Applause*]. I have just glanced through this document, but unable to peruse all the details in this document. However, as Honourable Members of Parliament, these Agreements may not be controversial because they have important elements we must effectively and efficiently look at. This is because when once these documents come to Parliament and are ratified, there is the proclivity that Parliament will be held responsible if a problem is detected in future. Therefore, in as much as we should expeditiously ensure that laws are made to benefit the people of this country, we should also be meticulous about these laws. One way of doing this is by ensuring that these laws are properly vetted by professionals. In essence, if the Ministry piloting the enactment of a particular law failed to detect an anomaly or a problem, Parliament will be able to highlight some of the potential problems that this country may face if the law or Agreement is approved.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was going to suggest for us to critically look at Section 10, which talks about damages. Who is going to monitor the system? In other words, who is going to ensure that a proper monitoring report is submitted to Government? According to these Agreements, the Powership is going to provide monitors and they have said when there is problem or if the problem is caused by the Ministry of Energy, how would you report that the problem which is caused by the Ministry of Energy when it is solely monitored by the Powership? What is going to happen when they have problem? They will charge the Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Energy will be left with no alternative, but to pay the charges as provided in this document. That is why we are saying this is not a partisan thing, but a matter of parliamentary procedure. We should have ample opportunity to watch at it for the good of our country and not for party politics.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we need electricity as a nation. If there is no electricity, you and I will be constrained. I want to thank the Minister because he has been doing well. According to the Minister, we have been getting uninterrupted electricity except for today *[Laughter]*. Mr Speaker, we should have ample opportunity to peruse this document properly. It would be a slap on the face of Parliament to just approve documents without looking at them. It is dangerous to ratify documents without scrutinising the pros and cons of those documents. Government will have to spend more money to solve the problem. So, as a professional Engineer who went through the crucibles of academia in Fourah Bay College, I want to suggest that we are given ample time to read this document, so that we could help the Government. I thank you, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has made a very good point. The Honourable Member has drawn our attention to Clause 10, which is a valid point. Mercifully, I noticed at the tail end of Clause 10 [1], there is provision for insurance. I hope the Minister, in his reply, will enlighten the House about possible damage, having been taken care of the insurance policy that has been concluded. I want to recognise the Chairman of the select Committee on Energy.

HON. CHRISTOPHA K. VANDY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to crave the indulgence of Members of the Committee on Energy that when the Chairman is talking, they know what to do *[Laughter]*. Today is a very important day. We can attest to the fact that without electricity, you will not boast of a modern country or city. Of course, what the Minister has brought before this House is just an addendum. There was an Agreement except in the situation where you do not want this country to forge head or save money. For instance, the initial Agreement with the former regime was above **\$19mln**. If possible, you can challenge it, but the present Minister and his team negotiated that price and reduce it to **\$16.4mln** *[Applause]*. I know that my colleague is looking for seeking job, but I will talk to the Minister or the EDSA team to hire your services.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the present regime is saving **\$9mIn** every year. If we are sincere to this country, we must be proud of the saving. Of course, we agree that the initial contract period was five years, but it has now been reduced to two years because of one or two reasons. For these two years, we are going to save **\$18mIn**.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have been talking about our welfare and if we have more money in the coffers, I think our welfare is going to be taken care of. In other words, we will be saving **\$18MIn** in two years. I want to assure you that we have reduced the contract period from five years to two years because if we come across any flaws or bottlenecks, we can easily amend it after two years. The Minister and his team or this Government is doing this to solve the power supply in Freetown. I want to assure the Honourable Abdul Kargbo that the Ministry of Energy is working assiduously to make sure that Lungi is also provided with electricity. I think that was his main concern.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, another important thing in this Agreement is that the period Bumbuna will be operating is not included in this Agreement. This has been a lacuna in the previous five years contract of the former regime. In other words, if Bumbuna is operating, there is no need for the Government to pay Powership Company to supply 30 megawatts. During the rains, Bumbuna is fully functional. This new contract is saying that the Company is supplying electricity in the dry season, but during the rainy season, Bumbuna is taking full charge. We do not have to pay excess to Car Powership. So, that is another very important thing this Government has done. We want to abreast with countries like Ghana and The Gambia. If you go to the Ghana and The Gambia, you will find out what is the cost of 1Kilowatt with their Car Powership. It is in line with what we have negotiated in Sierra Leone. I want to remind Honourable Members that the contract has been renegotiated from **\$19mIn** to **\$16mIn**.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my senior colleague on the other side mentioned procedures, but of course we all know man is not made for laws, but laws are made for man. We were not made for the laws, but the laws were made for us. So, that means we control the laws and in Parliament, as long as we unanimously agree, it is binding to

all and sundry. This is the only institution that can undo things of that nature. Whatever decision we take here, no other institution has that mandate to undo it except Parliament. This means once we resolve here amicably, nobody on planet earth will reverse that decision except this House. In this vein, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement is very good for this country. If we want to be sincere with this country, I think we just have to say thank you, Mr Minister for this Agreement. We should also thank the SLPP led Government for this Agreement. I know there are Honourable Members on the other side who would want to support this Agreement, but because they thought they could be queried by their leadership if say so, they decided to keep quiet.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to assure this House that this Ministry is one of the Ministries that has never operated in isolation. The parliamentary Committee on Energy is supervising the Energy Sector in this country. In fact Members on the other side can attest to the fact that this Ministry is thoroughly supervised. Mr Speaker, anytime the Ministry undertakes major activity in the country, our Committee is usually involved. Therefore, I want to thank the President for appointing Alhaji Kanja Sesay in that position. Except otherwise, but Alhaji Kanja Sesay is a result oriented person *[Applause]*. I also want to thank his Deputy Minister who is almost always working with his Boss very closely. I want to also thank the EDSA team and the EGTC team. The parliamentary Committee on Energy is aware of their operation, any Honourable Member who denies that he is not fully aware about what is going on the Energy Sector. The Honourable John Charles can attest to what I have just said.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to crave the indulgence of Honourable Members to speedily ratify this Agreement. I am sure what the Government is going to save will help to solve other issues. Thus, I thank the Speaker and Members of the Committee, the Minister and his team for bringing this Agreement here. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I will take just four more contributors, two on either side of the aisle. Let me recognise the Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. When we talk about governance issues, they are issues affecting the lives of the ordinary people in Sierra Leone. As Members of Parliament, we should try as best as possible to eradicate the concept of politics into modern development projects. This Agreement is one which we should watch carefully and look at its content, devoid of politics. We are here to represent those who cannot contribute in Parliament. What they sometimes do is to distract the attention of very good speakers.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Point of Order. The Honourable Member does not have the authority to tell Honourable Members that they cannot speak very well. It is not proper and we call ourselves Honourable Members. It is not proper for this House. I want to ask him to withdraw that statement. The Honourable Member should withdraw that statement.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: I have not said anything to anybody at any point. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, the Energy Sector in Sierra Leone has gone through series of revolution, ranging from the time we ushered in democracy to date, we have gone through so many experiences. We used to talk about the 'Kabba Tiger.'

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Acting Leader of Government Business, can you please refer to the S.O. I am sure S.O. 32[9] says, 'no Member shall impute improper motives to any other Member.' You have not been specific at all.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, with your leave, I want to talk to you in private.

THE SPEAKER: It is okay, Honourable Member. Please sit down. I will listen to the Leader because his special position.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, both of us should talk to you.

THE SPEAKER: Okay, come up.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Yes sir.

THE SPEAKER: I know you are an Honourable man. I am referring you to S.O. 32[9] to do the Honourable thing.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, I withdraw the statement, but I do not meant to harm anybody.

THE SPEAKER: I will give you two minutes.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Thank you very much. The Energy Sector in Sierra Leone has gone through several revolutions and what we are doing today is not an exception. We have gone through the days of the 'Kabba Tiger' to the dark days in Sierra Leone. We are now busy transforming this country to a modern industrial country. Mr Speaker, just like the Qcell Agreement, we are saying when such Agreement is brought to this House, we should not just look at its merits at all. As a Government and as a Parliament, we should give kudos to those who brought this idea. If you are saying the Agreement was expensive, but you met an Agreement. In 2007, we inherited no Agreement whatsoever. In as much as we are supporting the approval of this Agreement, we should not forget to give kudos to the past regime.

THE SPEAKER: Go ahead and give as many kudos as you wish, but you have one more minute.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: I was squeezed to withdraw and I was also expecting same when my colleague said we are being controlled by our leadership. Well, the APC is a disciplined party.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, Point of Order. I am not sure if the Honourable Member was squeezed to withdraw. I think you read the relevant Section which in the S.Os.

THE SPEAKER: I have not squeezed anybody, Honourable Member.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Please, you have one minute.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: The APC party is a disciplined party with a disciplined leadership. Our Leaders usually provide guidance in terms of what we say here. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I will compensate the Honourable Member who regularly seconds the Motions.

HON. REV. ISHMAIL S. SANDY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the beauty and the essentiality of this particular Agreement needs not to be over emphasised. I want to tie this Agreement to a realisation we are making, which has to do not only National profiling, but even meeting International Standards. Mr Speaker, Goal 7 of the SDGs, especially target 1 & 2 is really nearly fetched in Sierra Leone with this Agreement. I want to tell you that I am an expert in the SDGs and I want to assure this Nation that Alhaji Kanja Sesay is a man with good track records. I want to assure this nation that this man is going to do something extra ordinary in realising this goal in the next couple of years *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague said we did not know where the ship came from. Mr Speaker, whether the ship came from Tinaphor or Manso-Yillah, it is here. Before this time, there was a bad Agreement which was not favourable to the people of Sierra Leone because it was very exploitative. We have redesigned the Agreement for the benefit of Sierra Leone. You should be giving kudos to the leadership of the Ministry of Energy *[Applause]*. I do not need to say much, but I want to assure my colleagues that within the next five years, even your village in Tonko Limba will benefit from Energy. I thank you.

HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH: I thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, you cannot construct a house without a strong foundation and you cannot construct a house in the air. Therefore, the current Minister inherited a solid foundation and now it is on that note he is building on that foundation. Let me refer this House to Page 22, Clause 15[2] which talks about change of laws. Mr Speaker, please use your office to protect us.

When Honourable Members on the other side are contributing, you always protect them. If any additional cost arises, it is mutually agreed by the parties.

THE SPEAKER: Hold on Honourable Member. I will take a very dim view of the behaviour just expatiated and I hope it would not be repeated. I will not hesitate to ask Honourable Members out of this House if that behaviour is repeated again.

HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I said Page 22, Clause 15[2] on the principal Agreement. I said if any additional cost arises, it has to be mutually agreed by the parties and the contract shall be amended to take into account this additional cost. This will not affect KPS' right to collect the monthly fee. If such amendment is not executed within ten [10] days period after the change in law, KPS shall have the right to claim all its cost and loses arising directly or indirectly from such change in the law or terminate the contract for the life of the contract. This is very serious, Mr Speaker. We want clear understanding of this Clause. Mr Speaker, in as much as we are contributing to national development of this nature, we are going to follow the commitment being laid by our Leader; and because we respect our Leader, that is why we are now a joinder to this debate. We would not have continued with this debate until the needful things are been done.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to ask the Minister, since he is here, we were having other sources that feed Bumbuna, like the Sunbird of ADDAX. The question is what is the current status of Sunbird with regard the contract Agreement with the Government of Sierra Leone? Mr Speaker, there are serious problems in terms of getting meters today. If you want to buy a meter, it takes you months before you will be able to purchase one. Sometimes it takes a year before you will be able to get a meter. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I want to however advise that if you read Clause 15[1&2], it is not untypical of such Agreements as international best practice.

HON. DAVID A. S. KASSEGBAMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe this is an opportunity for a new change in this nation because I am assured that this Government values Energy Power System. This is because the development of a country depends on reliable Energy supply. I am sure this particular contract will not disappoint the people of this country. I am here talking on behalf of the nation and not as a party or Chairman on the Committee on Energy. I am talking to make sure that each and everyone will know that we are working directly with the Ministry. Whatever project they undertake, the Committee is adequately informed, so that we can monitor. Our role is to make sure that things work the way they should work.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to remind this House that Government is continuity and for it to continue, I believe we need to support them in whatever capacity. If they achieve what all of us are praying or desiring for in this nation, there will be a big relief. So, I want to encourage this House to speedily ratify this particular Agreement. I am sure things will work correctly. We are also in need of Energy in the provinces. If the city has enough electricity, I know the provinces will be considered. I want to thank you very much and to encourage our brothers to support this particular Agreement. God bless us all.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I think I have given ample opportunity to the two main political parties. I was looking for others, but they do not seem wanting to take the Floor. Therefore, I call on the Acting Leader of the Opposition to take the Floor.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we on this side observed from the commencement of this proceeding today that the Agreement that we are now discussing is none-controversial at all. It is none-controversial because it seeks to address some of the fundamental needs of the state. Whether we like it or not, in a modern state as Sierra Leone gravitate towards that status, electricity is a very important aspect of national development. Apart from us recognising that fact, without us attempting to be sycophantic to what is quite clearly a national effort, we are aware

of the fact that this Project is going to go into the hands of a gentleman we all have great respect for. We do not passive Alhaji Kanja Sesay as APC or whatever, he is a hard working Sierra Leonean and we on this side, like we keep telling our young men and young women, must pay tribute where tribute is due. He has served this nation well and he is undertaking this other enterprise of attempting to improve on the electricity of this country. We are not going to further state the role which our own party played in providing electricity in this country because everybody knows about it. However, what we want to state is the distribution of electricity in this country and it must be made very clear.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we do not have any reason to disbelieve that the President had good intentions when he appointed Alhaji Kanja Sesay, but we also want to be very certain that whatever effort we take, should be seen in the national interest. Somebody insinuated that the leadership of this party is threatening Honourable Members on this side on what to say here. We do not do that at all. We are a democratic party which allows our membership to speak out freely. This also explains why when they stand up to speak, they speak with candour; and where they make errors, we correct them. That is what we should be doing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have no reason to disbelieve or to think that anybody will want to cheat us. However, we want to make it very clear that processes and systems should be adhered to. I have been in Parliament long enough to know that we have procedures. In fact, Mr Speaker has been here long enough to know that we have procedures and we cannot change them overnight just because we want to change them. I am saying this because I have already given notice that the next time we try to do things in haste just because we want to approve it, this side may have good reason not to participate in the discussion. However, we are going ahead with this Agreement, Sierra Leone must be modernised. We really do not care who is undertaking the modernisation of Sierra Leone, but what is important is that Sierra Leone must be modernised. We are a country that is in competition with other

countries. When you travel to other countries and see the level of development of those countries, you will begin to ask yourself why we have not achieved such.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what we are beginning to see is a clear indication that we have realised the fact that we should develop this country. I travelled out of this country with a friend to one of the countries in the Middle East. We discovered that that country was highly developed that we started asking ourselves where were we? So, we are aware of the fact that electricity is a very important component in our national development. We are also aware that it is a national policy which we must support and we have no reason to undermine it. This is because some of us are frank enough to stand up and criticise when necessary and to talk about the development of this country. Mr Speaker, electricity is something we need, whether we like it or not. Questions are being asked about what happened in the past. Well, what happened in the past happened in the past and results were achieved. We should look at the present in terms of what we are doing to make sure that we achieve more results in the interest of the people of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that whether we support the project or not, we know most of us are going to be beneficiaries. I am sure my constituents are going to benefit from it. Therefore, I cannot be seen to be opposing it just because it has to be opposed. My colleague on the other side said we unnecessarily criticise, but we criticise constructively. I also want to state here that when errors are made, they are corrected.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us look at this country as a country of one united people. It is this unity that will bring development whether we have one thousand hectare miles of electricity or not, it really does not matter if we do not work together as one united people. We may not even achieve or benefit from such electricity in a divided nation. I want to say that we are satisfied that the Minister is undertaking programmes which we think are in the national interest. We will continue to support where it is necessary. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his very constructive contribution. One or two sentences before I ask the Minister to respond.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker and thank you Honourable Members for your various contributions. All the contributions are not negative, but positive contributions. Critics are always part of the development agenda and it is from critics that we learn certain things. Critics will always tell you to develop or improve this area and that is very good for nation building. I think that is what we have been doing. Again, I want to thank the Honourable Ibrahim B. Kargbo for his contribution. He has been very supportive and some of us know that you have been in governance for a very long time. We are not doing anything to disadvantage you on the other side because the Executive and the Legislative Branches are working together. They are working as a team and we work towards developing Sierra Leone. We will take note of that and we on this other side will take note of the distribution of documents on time. We want Honourable Members to read documents ahead of time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, 'right to electricity is right to life.' This is why the Minister is here today. He did not abrogate the Agreement. What he did was to sanitise the Agreement in the form of amendment. My colleague on the other side referred to Section 15[2]. Mr Speaker, Clause 15[1] gives you a clear explanation about that. It is a supportive statement. For the good of this House, Clause 15[1] must be read in tandem with Clause 15[2]. He also spoke about the meters. If you go to the document on Page 9, Clause 'M,' it is clear. Therefore, that takes care of that issue so that you have value for money.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement makes provision to take care of delays. In other words, if there is a delay in operation, the KPS will take full charge and this is found on Page 5, Clause 42. As a Government, we are very careful because we want to ensure that we just do not go into an Agreement because we want to benefit the people of Sierra Leone, but we also thought about cost effectiveness and value for money.

With these few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank Honourable Members for their various contributions. I want to assure you that providing electricity is priority for this Government and this Agreement is not different from that goal. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

ALHAJI KANJA SESAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank you very much for what I considered as a very lively debate on a very important national project. I have noted all the concerns you have raised here and we will look into them. However, I want to state here that this Agreement went through EDSA, the Ministry of Justice, the Electricity Generation and Transmission Company, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Energy. I realised that all of these MDAs are from the Executive Arm of Government; therefore, the Legislature should also look at it and provide its own advice. I want to assure you that everything is negotiated in the best interest of this nation and in line with international best practice. International best practice dictates that as a nation, we have a duty to protect the investment of investors in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Member mentioned Clause 15[1&2]. I think the Honourable Member should take note of the operative statement which says, 'if mutually agreed by the parties.' As a Government, we are a major part of the parties. We have to mutually agree on any changes. I want to assure you that we will do everything humanly possible to protect this country. We have to protect the national interest.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Member asked about Sunbird. We have not had very good experience with Sunbird and we are now in the process of renegotiating our Agreement with them because of the source of power, which is biomass. We have issue with the tariff and we cannot justify having different tariffs from different Energy sources. That is the issue we are facing with Sunbird. Today, we are paying 16.4 cents to Car Powership while Sunbird was asking for 20 cents. That has been very difficult for us as a Ministry to justify why we should continue with that contract. However, we are in negotiation with them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the issue of prepaid metres was also raised. I have noted it very seriously. I agree that there have been some difficulties in the provision of prepaid meters, and this is because there has been some shortages during the time the order to purchase more meters was placed. I want to state that every country has specifications in terms of meters. It is not like you go and take the meters right away. The meters are ordered and they are made according to the country's specification. And sometimes the production of meters to the volume that we want as a country takes some months. However, I want to assure you that the process has gone far ahead and very soon the meters will be here.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to also note the observation or request that energy generation should be a national issue. I want to assure the Honourable Ibrahim B. Kargbo that the Ministry of Energy is taking its current electricity Generation Transmission and Distribution efforts in all the planned projects. Today, I can assure you that Makeni enjoys more power than many parts of the South-East. We are having a new project, i.e., Cote D'voire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea [CLSG], which comes from Ivory Coast through Liberia to Sierra Leone. That project will pass through many areas in the Northern Province, including your town, Karene, Kamalo, Magburaka, etc. In fact, I am working on something for Magburaka and you can discuss it with your colleagues. So, when it comes to Energy transmission and distribution, we do not deal with party colours. This is not about APC benefiting from electricity, but a national development.

With these few clarifications, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of this House on Thursday, 14th February, 2019:

3. Utility grade Infrastructure and Electricity Supply Agreement by and between the government of Sierra Leone represented by Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority and Ministry of Energy and Ministry of Finance and Karadeniz Powership Kara Bay Company Limited, dated 11th June, 2018, and

4. Addendum Agreement, dated 20th December, 2018 by and between Government of Sierra Leone represented by Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority and Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Finance, and Karadeniz power ship Kara Bay Company Limited relating to the Utility Grading Infrastructure and Electricity Supply Agreement, dated 11th June 2018.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Minister.

[Question Put Proposed and Agreed to]

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

VI. MOTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE

PROPOSER: HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:

SECONDER: HON. HASSAN A. SESAY

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I present to you the Twenty-Eight Report of the First Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service:

1. Introduction

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service that is charged with the responsibility of vetting presidential nominees and selecting the most fitted and qualified persons to serve in public offices in the Republic of Sierra Leone, met on Tuesday, 11th February, 2019 and interviewed six presidential nominees for the following appointments:

[i] Director of Public Prosecution DPP;

[ii] Three Members, Statistics Sierra Leone Council; and

[iii] Two Members, Board of Trustees, National Social Security & Insurance Trust [NASSIT].

2. Procedure

The Committee relied on specified documents provided by the nominees and other information obtained from the general public to conduct the hearings. The Committee ensured that the nominees first and foremost cleared of any criminal records by CID and that they have the relevant qualifications and necessary backup experience to Mann such important offices of state. Inquiring questions put to the nominees covered wide ranging issues pertaining to their track records in other pertinent work situations, their declared assets and liabilities, fulfilment of their tax obligations and their visions for a successful and nationally productive tenure for the socio-economic development of Sierra Leone. Issues of unsuitability or otherwise were closely looked into by the Committee.

3. Thirty-Second Sitting of the Committee on Tuesday, 11th February, 2019

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the following nominees were interviewed on oath:

[i] Mr Easmon Nathaniel Belden Ngakui, proposed Director of Public Prosecution [DPP].

Mr Easmon Ngakui is a private legal practitioner of eminence. He is the founder Head of the Law Firm, 'Ngakui and Partners.' Responding to the Committee inquiries, Mr Easmon Ngakui said: **"essentially I know that taking up the job of Director of Public Prosecutions will only mean giving up my private practice because it will be a conflict of interest if I continue in private practice."**

Commenting on dispensing justice and equity in his duties, Mr Easmon Ngakui said: **"As the Director of Public Prosecutions, my role is to ensure that justice is given out to every Sierra Leonean and this is where I will need your support to draw my attention to issues of concern that I may not see. So, if the public have problems or queries with any of those state Councils or prosecution issues, let me know. I will intervene to ensure that the right thing is done."**

Addressing further concerns, Mr Ngakui said: **"If funds are available, we want to ensure that a sitting judge is stationed in every district of this country, but**

that goes with cost. The Judges will need to be taken care of in the provinces and provided with housing and vehicles. That will be the challenge.”

[ii] Nazir Ahmed Ali Kamanda Bongay, Proposed Member Board of Trustees, National Social Security and Insurance Trust [NASSIT]

Mr Ahmed Kamanda Bongay is the Chief Fire Officer of the National Fire Force. He has served a term on the NASSIT Board and is going for a second term. Mr Nazir Ahmed Ali Kamanda Bongay was commended by the Committee as a very humble Civil Servant.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, if his nomination is an institutional representation, let us skip him.

[iii] Mr Daniel Ernest Kaindaneh, proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council

Mr Kaindaneh is a Development Consultant with decades of work experience in Community Development that focuses on deepening understanding of poverty, develop programme responses that reflect the three dimensions of deprivation, exclusion and vulnerability, data generation, etc. He has served as Technical Adviser to several local and international NGOs and Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

Reacting to probing questions on the value he will add to Statistics Council Sierra Leone, Mr Daniel Kaindaneh said: **“The value addition regarding this particular assignment for me is to give technical support in area of data generation and quality analysis and to scale up service delivery to make the institution a bit more comparable to other statistics institutions in the world. For example, a lot of institutions are now moving away from print to mobile data collection analysis which is not currently employed by Statistics Sierra Leone.”**

Mr Daniel Kaindaneh promised to give of his best for the success of Statistics Sierra Leone.

[iv] Mr Prince Bernard Comateh Cotay, proposed member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council.

Mr Cotay is a retired community relations and development executive with over 30 years' experience in Leadership, Coordination and development activities. Mr Cotay has proven successes in managing post-war recovery and development programme as 'CAUSE Canada Sierra Leone's Country Director 2000 – 2007.

Reacting to the Committee's inquiries, Mr Prince Cotay said: **"Statistics Sierra Leone is charged with the responsibility of collection, compilation, and analysing of statistical data. It also disseminates all statistical information to help the Government and other partners to help them make informed judgment and decisions in the development of the country in the areas of health, development, agriculture."**

Answering to further questions, the nominee said: "I do have some ideas as to what we are supposed to do as council members. According to the Statistics Sierra Leone Council Act of 2002, the Council is responsible for making policies, supervising the activities of the institution and recommends to the Minister on issues pertaining to the smooth running of the Institution."

[v] Mr Camillo Abdoul Kamara, proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council

Mr Camillo Kamara is a professional teacher at the Saint Francis Senior Secondary School Makeni from 2006 to date. Between 2013 and 2015, Mr Kamara was combined teaching with community development, work as programme manager, 'Community Animation and Development Organisation' [CADO] in Makeni.

Reacting to further questions, Mr Camillo Kamara said: **"I heartily accept this appointment because I want to contribute to the development of my country. Statistics Sierra Leone is responsible for the production of credible and reliable data for use by the Government and development partners in planning for the general development of the country."**

Mr Camillo Kamara promised to put Sierra Leone above all other consideration and to work to the best of his ability for the development of Sierra Leone.

4. Recommendation[s]

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Committee adjudged the following Presidential nominees to be fit and qualified for their proposed appointments and they are recommended to the House for approval:

[i] Mr Easmon Nathaniel B. Ngakui, proposed Director of Public Prosecution [DPP]'

[ii] Mr Albert O.U. Collier, proposed Member, Board of Trustees, National Social Security and Insurance Trust [NASSIT]'

[iii] Mr Nazir Ahmed Ali Kamanda Bongay, proposed Member, Board of Trustees, National Social Security and Insurance Trust [NASSIT];

[iv] Mr Daniel E. Kaindaneh, proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council;

[v] Mr Prince B. C. Cotay, proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council; and

[vi] Mr Camillo A. Kamara, proposed Member, Statistics Sierra Leone Council.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Twenty-eighth Report is the unanimous decision of the Committee. I therefore move that the Twenty-eighth Report of the First Session of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service be adopted by the House and that the recommendations contained therein be approved.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

[Question Proposed]

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: I so second, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have in front of us eminent Sierra Leoneans we have known for quite a while, like Mr Easmon Ngakui *[Applause]*. He has been proposed to occupy the position as Director of Public Prosecution [DPP]. I was part of the Committee that screened him and I can say without any iota of doubt that he answered the questions very well. I was impressed with his answers and I will not have much to say about him. He has been a very good lawyer for over a decade now. I believe he knows what justice is all about. He is also aware of the importance of justice and how justice could ensure a peaceful society. So, I doff my hat to Mr Easmon Ngakui. I want to congratulate him in advance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, majority of the other nominees are institutional representatives who are going to represent the interest of people they are working for

or to make sure that they safeguard the interest of workers in their various institutions. Mr Albert O.U. Collier and Mr Nazir Ahmed Ali Kamanda Bongay are going as institutional representatives and we cannot say much about them. However, Mr Albert O.U. Collier has worked at Sierra Leone Brewery [SLB] for over 20 years and proved to be a very good person. I am sure going to NASSIT as member of Board of Trustees will help his workers he will be representing. Therefore, I am sure Mr Albert O.U. Collier will discharge his duties with integrity. He is a person with integrity in the institution that he has worked.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Camillo A. Kamara was my junior in school. I have known him for over two decades. In that regard, I have no reason to doubt his capability to perform. Of course, Mr Daniel E. Kaindaneh is retired, but we have no reason to doubt what he is capable of doing. I am sure all the nominees will work for the people of Sierra Leone. I thank you very much.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is going to be very difficult for me to talk about one of the nominees in two minutes. Mr Easmon Nathaniel B. Ngakui is a very fine young man. I would like to thank the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service for a wonderful job done. I also want to thank His Excellency the President for nominating this young man. Mr Speaker, when you put a young man in a position of trust, especially a young man with vision and zest to perform, he/she will go all out to do what is expected of him/her. This gentleman has been a very fine lawyer in this country and he has lots of respect amongst his colleagues. He has earned that respect for himself. I know you are a very fine lawyer, but you are going to serve the people of this country. I believe is a task you can perform and you are going to that office at a time when this country is at crossroads. I know you have never disappointed anybody and you should not disappoint the people of this country at this time. You should not disappoint His Excellency the President and the 'New Direction.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure the rest of the nominees are going to perform. Unfortunately however, there is no female amongst the nominees. I am sure

they are all capable gentlemen and we are not expecting them to put up any arbitrary behaviour that will contradict their integrity.

With these few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to crave your indulgence to approve those fine nominees. I am sure they are going to work for the people of this country. I thank you very much.

HON. IBRAHIM BEN KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I suspect that time is not on your side. This explains why it is necessary for some of us to be very brief. Mr Speaker, for those of us who see Sierra Leone as one united country and who grew up as Sierra Leoneans and not Temnes or Mendes. Our friendship spectrum runs right across the country from the North to the South and this explains why when I see somebody like Easmon Ngakui, I can easily say I do not care where he comes from. I simply believe that he is a perfect Sierra Leonean who should always be given an opportunity to perform. I have known him for quite a number of years now and we used to sit and share lunch together in Freetown. He has proved to be a very intelligent man, but sometimes very political. I want to use this opportunity to congratulate him. I was part of the Committee that screened him and I have no reason not to believe that he will perform well when he goes to the Public Prosecution Office.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I do not know whether Mr Daniel E. Kaindaneh who appeared before us was the same Kaindaneh I taught at Saint Andrews in Bo, but I knew a Kaindaneh in Bo I taught in school. I was almost going to say that is the same Kaindaneh, but when you said you are retired and I taught that Kaindaneh in Form I and Form II, I started wondering is the same Kaindaneh I taught in school. Mr Speaker, from the CV he presented to us, it will appear that he knows what he is supposed to do and it will appear that it was a good choice. I want to congratulate him in advance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all other nominees, including Mr Prince B. C. Cotay, Mr Camillo A. Kamara and Mr Nazir Ahmed Kamanda Bongay performed remarkably well during the interview process. I want to use this opportunity, on behalf of this side of the House to congratulate them and to simply continue to state that they are going to public offices and not your personal offices. I do not want you to forget that this

House approved your nominations and when you come across a parliamentarian after you would have occupied your offices, do not forget that this is one of the people who made you what you are. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I thank you very much Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo for your contribution. We are not putting square pegs in round holes. We are just doing what we feel is right. We need to serve our people in the right way. We want to congratulate them in advance. These are very good nominees that will help this country. We have gone through their resumes and it is clear that they are qualified for the various positions. I am very sure that they will perform very well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Ngakui has served distinctly and has offered free services to people. I am sure if he is approved, he will not compromise standards, but he will discharge his duties as a responsible Sierra Leonean. I believe he will serve Sierra Leone and not individual interest. Mr Speaker, without much ado, I believe all the other nominees will follow suit and they will perform as expected. I know they will do their best in their various capacities and work within the confines of the law. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

[Question put, proposed and agreed to]

[Motion of the Committee on Appointments and the Public Service has been approved.]

THE SPEAKER: I have to lend my own voice to the congratulatory messages you have expressed to the new nominees who have appeared before you for approval. I have no doubt in my mind because I know some of them. I think I can say without any shadow of a doubt in my mind that these appointees would live up to the expectations of His Excellency the Presidency and certainly to the expectations of all of us in this House. They are very eminent individuals in their own professional fields. I want to however state here the same dexterity and diligence that they had applied and shown in the Private Sector is expected to take along to the Public Sector. Good luck and wish you all well.

HON. IBRAHIM BEN KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I raised a concern I do not want to repeat this morning. However, I can still refer the House to S.O. 26

[1], which has to do with Privilege Motion, so that you can guide us as to what we should do next.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I take note of the fact that the Acting Leader of the Opposition drew the attention of the House to a very pressing matter that concerns the welfare of all Members of Parliament. I want to say here and now that I do share that concern, coupled with S.O.26 to which he has also drawn our attention to. I proposed in the next few minutes to undertake a representation on behalf of all of you with the highest Executive Authority of the land to bring this matter to his attention *[Applause]*. I will be going to State House in keeping with an appointment that I have already secured. I want you to be rest assured that I will make that representation as clearly and forcefully as I possibly can *[Applause]*. And in that context, I would advise myself to draw your attention to the fact that we noticed a disparity between certain promise that was made and what has actually been received. I hope that gap would be bridged *[Applause]*.

Honourable Members, I want you to repose confidence in me that I will do the best I can on behalf of all of you. With that, let me invite all of us to rise and observe a minute silence in memory of a colleague, a former colleague who has departed from us in the person of Honourable Jonathan Sama, who was a Member of Parliament from 2002 to 2006. Honourable Jonathan Sama hailed from Bonthe and he passed away on the 13th February, 2019 at Connaught Hospital. May his soul rest in perfect peace *[A minute of silence was observed]*.

Honourable members, I will not be in the position to entertain any S.O. 23 today. I know that over a period of time, we have adopted the procedure of encouraging all of you to utilise S.O.23 in the Well of this House, but there are other ways you can also utilise S.O.23 by way of 'Question Time'. I have reactivated the provisions relating to 'Question Time' some time ago, we are yet to receive a single question from any Member of Parliament. I want to urge you to please look at the provisions relating to question time and take advantage of those provisions. There are many things that you

bring under S.O.23 that should be addressed to specific MDAs and specific Ministers. I would encourage you to follow that path.

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at 3:00 p.m. and was adjourned to Thursday, 21st February 2019 at 10:00 a.m.]