



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

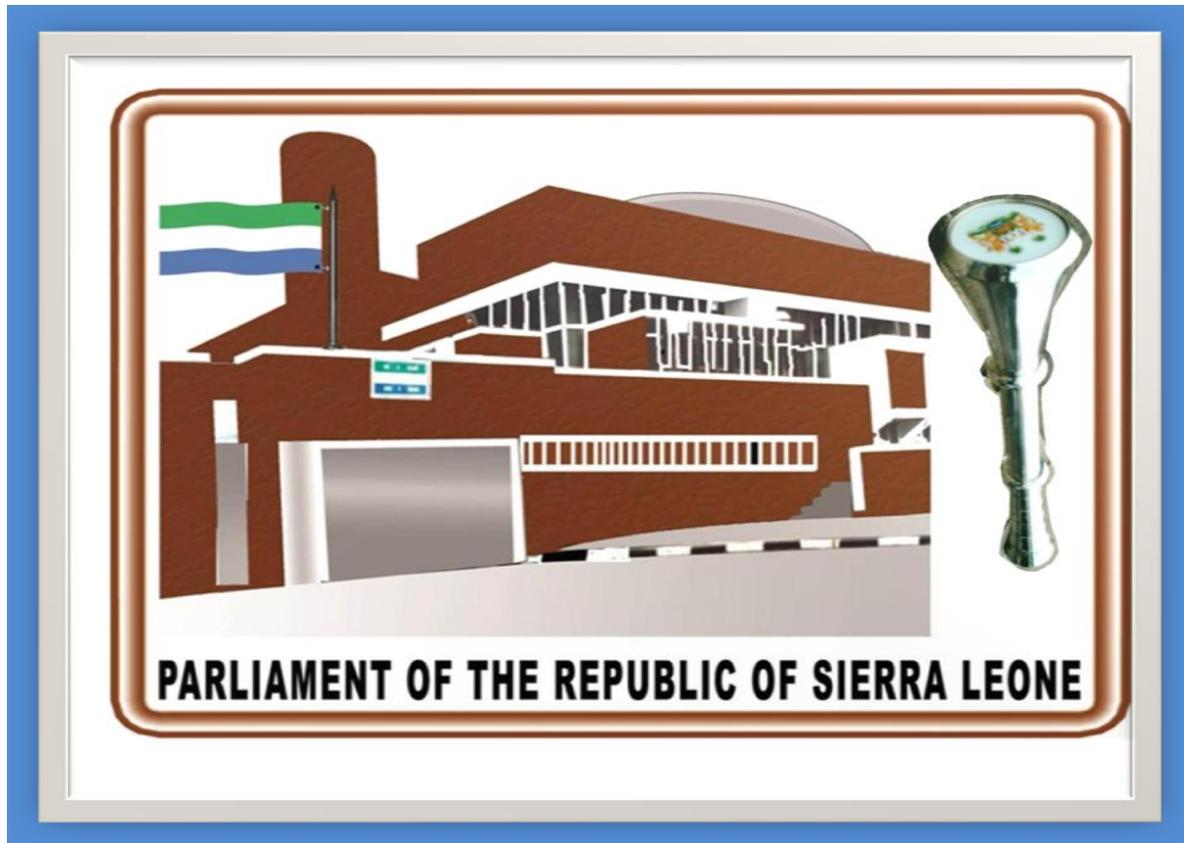
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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**FIRST SESSION - FOURTH MEETING**

**TUESDAY, 16<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2019**

*SESSION – 2018/2019*



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMANTARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

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**VOLUME: I**

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House  
Held Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2019

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[A] THE MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENTS WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON THURSDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2019

[i] AGREEMENT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA OF 10 DECEMBER 1982 RELATING TO THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF STRADDLING FISH STOCKS AND HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS

[ii] AGREEMENT TO PROMOTE COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES BY FISHING VESSELS ON THE HIGH SEAS [THE COMPLIANCE AGREEMENT]



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

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

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

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**Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2019.**

#### **I. PRAYERS**

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

*[The House met at 10:55 a.m. At the Sierra Leone Bank Complex, Kingtom]*

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

The House was called to Order

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

**II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD THURSDAY, 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2019**

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2019. As usual, we shall skip the first four pages bearing the names of Members of Parliament. We start with Page 5. Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? If there is no correction or amendment could somebody move for the adoption of the record of Votes for the parliamentary sitting, held on Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 as presented?

**HON. ALUSINE KANNEH:** Mr Speaker, I so move.

**HON. ALICE J. KUMABEU:** I so second.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]*

*[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the Parliamentary sitting held on Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 has been adopted as presented]*

**III. GOVERNMENT MOTION**

[A] MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES

**HON. EMMA J. KOWA** *[Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources]*: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2019:

[i] Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas of the 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1982, relating to the Conservation and Management of Stragglng Fish Stocks and High Migratory Fish Stocks; and

[ii] Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures, by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas [the Compliance Agreement].

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sierra Leone being a Coastal State, and a party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, it is incumbent on the Government to ratify International Instruments binding on all Coastal States with the view of conserving and sustainably managing the fish stocks in the ocean. The two proposals that I am tabling for your approval today include:

[1] The 1993 FAO Compliance Agreement that seeks to encourage countries to take effective action consistent with International Law and to deter the reflagging of vessels by their nations as a means of avoiding compliance with applicable conservation and management rules for fishing activities on the High Seas. On a whole, the Treaty will look at the framework to strengthen International Co-operation, ensuring compliance with Fishing Vessels on the High Seas with International measures for the conservation and management of the resources in the High Seas, on the rationale responsibility and sustainability use.

[2] The 1995 Fish Stocks Agreement marked a major step forward in the development of the comprehensive legal regime for the long term conservation and sustainability use of the straggling and high migratory fish stocks; it is called for action by state operators in order to address inadequacies in fishing practice.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in July 2018, the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources passed a Motion in Cabinet which was endorsed that no Fishing Vessels flying Sierra Leonean flags or Fishing Cargos or related vessels would ply the high seas of international waters. The major reason for this was, as a country and as a nation, we have not got the capacity to monitor beyond our international waters. And as a Flag State, we know that we have an obligation and in order for us to be able to honour that, we passed the conclusion. There was a Cabinet conclusion to that effect.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, because the Migratory Fish such as, 'herring', 'Bonga', 'tuna,' 'Barakudas,' etc. have got no limit of where they are, they can move across from one Coast to another. It is vital for us, as part of a region, to sign these treaties and approve them because we can collaborate and work with our regional partners who have got similar species like us, so as to be able to monitor and make

sure that Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated [I.U.U] Fishing activities are curbed in our country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sierra Leone has currently got a ban and it has a Yellow Card for international fishing, for export to the European Union [EU] Market. These are some of the Agreements that we need to approve in order to show that Sierra Leone is ready to start exporting their produce to EU Market. As it is, the EU sees us as a non-compliance State that is doing nothing or little towards the curbing of I.U.U. Therefore, I present these two Agreements for your humble Ratification. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

*[Question Proposed]*

**HON. NENNEH LEBBIE:** Thank you very much, Mr speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start my intervention by thanking the Minister and her team for bringing such documents to this Well for ratification. We know that we have an obligation as Members of Parliament to make sure that we look into the Sustainable Development Goals programmes and fishing is one of them. If we look at the SDGs, it is important, as a Parliament, to take cognisance of SDGs 14 and make sure that this ratification does not become controversial. I know those who could have made it controversial are not here.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as a responsible government, we have already put people with the requisite capacity to man different offices. Of course, the Ministry of Fisheries is very important as I always say that this Ministry is one of the most important ministries that contribute to the bread basket of this country. Therefore, we must treat it with the required attention. We have two key words that will move a Member of Parliament to ratify these two documents very quickly; i.e., 'Management' and 'Conservation.' If you look at other areas, particularly the forestry area, you will find out that some species in our forests have reached extinction. Now that we have a Minister of Fisheries who does not want that to happen and that is why she wants to make sure that we comply with International Laws and Conventions. Sierra Leone as a responsible country, according to the Minister's statement, has endorsed series of

Conventions and we cannot just endorse some of these Conventions without ratifying these laws in our Parliament. We want to make sure we adhere to some of these laws or Conventions to show how responsible we are.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister has outlined the advantages and disadvantages of reflagging vessels. However, some of us know that there are always difficulties in monitoring because we do not have the capacity to effectively monitor our high seas. Nonetheless, with the effort she has made, we know that she will achieve some of these expectations. Like she mentioned, we have species in our seas that are close to extinction. We use to have enough 'Bonga' in our seas, but it is very difficult to see 'Bonga' these days. Bonga is very scarce in our markets and other species that she has mentioned. If we adhere to these laws or Conventions, we will definitely conserve some of these species and the country will enjoy the right type of fishes that we are expecting to see in our markets.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what has been bothering us as a Committee is the issue of Yellow Card. Indeed, over the years, before this Minister took over office, the fishing industry was not properly controlled. Therefore, we are not considered to be among the International Competitive Fishing States. We were given Yellow Card because there were no control measures. I am happy for the efforts the Ministry has made in terms of ensuring compliance with international best practice. I am happy that we are working with them closely to see how this Yellow Card can be resolved, so that we can be considered as part of the EU Markets.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Minister and her team for these Agreements. Indeed, they are not controversial. I ask this House to ratify these agreements. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for her contribution to the debate.

**HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President did the right thing by appointing a former Member of Parliament as Minister, who with her wisdom and team have put together reasonable

amount of resources for people of this country. It is no doubt that if these Agreements are ratified, we would be able to generate more revenue. I just have a reservation I want to bring to the attention of this House. We from this part of the Continent receive their products with open hands, like corn beef and other products from the EU Markets and they are easily consumed by Africans with no reservations, but today they are talking about Yellow Card and I am sure we will be able to meet that Yellow Card compliance. However, I am sure they will come with another excuse tomorrow. We are living in a global village and that is why international best practice is incredible. Nevertheless, they need to be very sincere with us and they need to support us. The support could not only mean providing us in emergency situation, but buying our products will help us greatly. We are not talking about artificially generated fish, but we are talking about natural fish from this part of the continent, which we are blessed with. Therefore, we could do everything humanly possible to preserve this great gift that is given to us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have confidence and I am sure this House has confidence in the fishery and marine resources team. Therefore, I want to join the Chairperson of the Committee on Fishery and Marine Resources to give them the platform to operate by approving these Agreements. These Agreements will generate more revenue for this country. On that note, I call on my colleagues to approve these Agreements. Thank you *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution.

**HON. CHRISTOPHER K. VANDY:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is high time we called things by their names. Mr Speaker, if the right people are put in positions of trust, we expect the right thing to happen. You and I know that over the years, our territorial waters have been ravaged. You have heard from the Chairperson of the Committee on Marine Resources. Of course, I am an associate Member to that Committee and very instrumental. I am abreast with whatever that is going on in that Ministry.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure when budgets are brought to this House for scrutiny, we usually focus on debating them without much emphasis on how government generate revenue. One of the major sources of revenue for Government is from this Ministry. However, this will only become a major source of revenue if it is properly protected. Over the years, we know how that Ministry has been run. Mr Speaker, our territorial waters have been ravaged and we do not have much Bonga in our markets. In fact, we do not also have enough 'herring.' I want to thank the Minister and team for bringing these Agreements for approval. Indeed, they want to take Sierra Leone to the international platform. Sierra Leone is a member of the United Nations and if we do not comply with United Nations Charter, it means we are making fool of ourselves. So, if we have our people in different positions who want this country to do what is supposed to be done, I think we must be abreast with what is happening in the United Nations for us to be a formidable Member of United Nations. I think we should be proud of what this Minister has brought for approval.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I read Management and this is an international marketing strategy. Of course, the Minister has started creating the platform, but we have to endorse these Agreements. The ratification of these Agreements will strengthen our position in the EU Markets. In other words, if Sierra Leone transacts with the UN or EU, it means we will be internationally recognised when it comes to marketing. Therefore, I want to thank the Minister and team for this initiative. I want to crave the indulgence of Honourable Members to speedily approve these Agreements because these Agreements will enable Sierra Leone to be part of the countries that have complied.

Again, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these Agreements will enable us to generate revenue and will reduce our dependence on donor funds. We should strengthen own source revenue and this House has a responsibility to ratify these Agreements, so that the Minister and her team will go ahead in the implementation process. We expect the Minister to come to this House and tell us that the Agreements we have ratified here

have helped the Ministry greatly in terms of revenue generation for the Republic of Sierra Leone.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you and to crave the indulgence of this Honourable House to ratify these Agreements [*Applause*].

**THE SPEAKER:** Is this an afterthought? I can see six Members of Parliament wanted to take the Floor. Let me turn to my left.

**HON. ABDUL T. KAMARA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to inform my colleagues that there nothing much to look at as far as these Agreements are concerned. Since the assumption of power by the 'New Direction' administration, this Ministry is determined to pursue the goals and dreams of His Excellency the President [*Applause*]. I think the appointment of this Minister has been one of his best choices. She has been very good and she has contributed immensely to the bread basket of this country and that is why we should not 'give her the rope and hold the cow.' Let us give her 'the rope and the cow.' Whatever she asks must be given to her, so that at the end of the day, she will be able to perform exceptionally well. Therefore, I want to crave the indulgence of Honourable Members to ratify these Agreements. I am sure if we ratify these Agreements, the Minister will go and do something else. That is why I am craving the indulgence of this Honourable House to approve these Agreements. They are not contentious and non-controversial. I thank you very much [*Applause*].

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution.

**HON. EMILIA L. TONGI:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sierra Leone is rich we all know that in both land and sea. I think it is a shame for us to come and ratify these documents today. I am a little bit ashamed of Sierra Leone having sat down all these years and thinking about what is happening in the seas. The question is why now? We have a former Honourable Member as a Minister, doing a work that should have been done years back. I went to Senegal and when I saw their fisheries, I felt horrendous for my country. We are sharing the same Atlantic Ocean, for God's sake. Guinea is more

populated than Sierra Leone, but we are sometimes constrained for fish in this country because we do not have fish even in our local markets. We do not have fish and trolleys. Why are we lacking fish in this country? We have foreigners from Italy and China coming and fishing in our seas, but we sit here blaming others. We need to blame ourselves because these are things we are supposed to do long ago. The Fishery Industry is generating revenue for this country. We should have been generating more revenue than what we are generating now.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should have done better than what we are doing now. Sometime ago, I went to Lumley Beach in the evening hours and I saw cartons of fish from the sea to the shores. I asked my friend and she told me, [S.O. 2] 'na wan boat wae dae yander wae dae bring fish fo wi, den we kin buy goods dem for am lek drinks kerr am go.' I said what? Is this the way to help Sierra Leone? People leave their countries to come and enrich themselves here. Last week I was watching TV and I saw the British Marine Department looking at the boats in Sierra Leone when they came to fish in our seas and immediately Sierra Leone boats went there, they ran away because we did not have the technologies to monitor the Coast. However, these Agreements will help us to achieve certain developments.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it has been 58 years since we have had independence. We have Diamonds, Bauxites, Rutile, Iron Ore and other minerals in this country, but we cannot afford to provide equipment for the Fisheries Industry. We have a lot to talk about as far as the Fisheries Industry is concerned. I want to inform this Honourable House that what the Minister has started doing is amazing. You are one of the few women the 'New Direction' administration is looking for in order to move this country forward. It is high time we start developing this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to ask my colleagues to ratify these Agreements. I thank you very much [*Applause*].

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for her contribution.

**HON. SAHR JUANA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am gratified for this opportunity that has been given to me this morning after a long silence. Let me allay your fears about the rumours making rounds that this Honourable Member has not spoken for a very long time. In fact, people were misunderstanding me to be Honourable Momodu Eskimo Mansaray who has died. Mr Speaker, please give me the opportunity again to explain why I am in Parliament. My purpose here is to represent my people and to contribute to parliamentary debates. I felt I have been kept for so long and in silence for quite a while.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, I have been away for a while, do I take it that your silence was misinterpreted as if you suffered a demise?

**HON. SAHR JUANA:** Mr Speaker, there is one good thing about your presentations. Nobody will defeat you when it comes to grammar, but I believe I have been left out for quite a while. My presence has neither been noticed nor felt. However, I appreciate the fact that you have been out, but since you are here, let us move forward.

**THE SPEAKER:** Make your presence felt now, Honourable Member *[Applause]*.

**HON. SAHR JUANA:** Thank you very much, Mr speaker. Mr Speaker, the conception that the missing Honourable Member was Honourable Sahr E. Juana was just a misunderstanding. I am just from the ceremony of my predecessor, the late Honourable Musa Tamba Sam. I am not a Member of the Committee of Fisheries and Marine Resources, but I want to recognise the contribution made by this Minister. Of course, she was a Member of Parliament and she left an indelible mark in this Well. Therefore, I would not miss your name at all. You are Mrs Jalloh [nee] Kowa.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, frankly speaking, the Agreements before us will move this country forward if we ratify them. However, I want to inform the Minister that majority of Members of Parliament are malnourished because the distribution of fish is not equitably done *[Laughter]*. While we praise you for doing a very good job by bringing these Agreements to this House, we want to ensure that the distribution of fish that add value to the nutrition of Members of Parliament should be done on equal basis.

It should cut across, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*. I know I speak with sincerity and I am sure the Honourable Minister will be wondering whether I am a Member of Parliament. She does not even know me and I am not buying favour from her. If she had done something wrong, I would have said it here today. Nevertheless, I must confess that you are one of the few Ministers I have been observing from afar and I have been following her works very closely. I am sure other Members of Parliament will agree with me that this Minister has been very impressive *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the 'Yellow Card' is a signal or warning. For those of us who are football fans, we know that 'Yellow Card' is a warning. Madam Chairperson of the Committee on Fisheries, I want to state here that this should not be an EU warning for you, but an international warning that the distribution, at whatever level, should be equally distributed. Mr Speaker, I would like to remind the Minister that every Member of Parliament eats fish and we want fish *[Applause]*. Again, our constituents need fish. If you look at sea, you will see a lot of boats. We have suffered a lot because we produce a lot of fish, but we eat almost nothing. The life expectancy of Sierra Leoneans has reduced drastically because we lack the necessary nutrients. If this Minister has thought it fit to bring these Agreements for ratification, so as to alleviate the sufferings of the ordinary people and increase the life expectancy of Sierra Leoneans, I think it is a right step in the right direction.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure if these Agreements are ratified, the fishing communities in our constituencies will be proud of Honourable Emma Kowa. She is the right Minister in the right place and she has come to restore life and hope in the hopeless and dying populace. If these Agreements are ratified, the Minister should not only see not only see such exercise as mere ratification, but she should ensure that the provisions are implemented. We have had very good Agreements in this country, but the implementation process has been very weak. I am sure most of the provisions in the previous Agreements were not acted upon. Some Agreements were approved and agreed upon either because they had some donor attractions or they had some donor benefits. That was why the previous regime usually approved Agreements that had

donor benefits and leave the people to suffer. If you do that, nature will indict you. Let us hope that the 'New Direction' [with this Minister in charge of the Ministry of Fisheries], will deliver this country from the wreckage of social disorder to a better society.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am just from India few months ago, seeking medical attention. One thing they noticed was that I lacked vitamins and proteins *[Laughter]*. I want to be very honest here that before I became a Member Parliament, I used to eat fish because I lived around the slums. I worked in Freetown with a Non-Governmental Organisation [NGO]. In fact, I used to eat the most expensive fish, but when I became a Member of Parliament, it has been very difficult for me to eat same because of my salary. I must be very sincere here that I have not been eating good fish for quite a while now *[Laughter]*. However, I am sure this Minister and the Chairperson of the Committee on Fisheries will ensure that Members of Parliament, including the Speaker will have something to eat. I am sure that will enable the Speaker to preside over the next Parliament with good health *[Laughter]*. Please Madam Minister, I am appealing to you to ensure that the Speaker gets five cartons a week and two cartons for each Member of Parliament *[Laughter]*. I am very sure these Agreements are awesome because they will enable us to be part of the EU or part of the International Community and that will make Sierra Leone a great Nation. Let us put all hands on deck and ratify these Agreements. In fact, we should also celebrate the Minister by taking her around Freetown today. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

**HON. SAHR CHARLES:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the two Agreements before this House for ratification are important because the Fishing Industry is one of the most productive industries if we manage it well. Other countries do not have this opportunity we have in Sierra Leone, but they are trying very hard to ensure that they put policies that are beneficial to their citizens. These Agreements are long overdue and Sierra Leone is coming very late to ratify them. However, it is better late than never because people sometimes say there are no laws to do certain things in this country. As the previous speakers said, our country is not in short of laws, but the implementation

of these laws has been our problem. I would like this House to speedily ratify these Agreements. This is one of the robust measures by this government to ensure that we benefit as a people. Mr Speaker, investigations have revealed that the Chinese are in good number, engaging in illegal fishing in our seas. This is a serious concern. There is a video going round Social Media and I believe the Minister deserves commendation because she was very proactive. When she received the information, she called the authority in charge and actions were taken. These are the steps we want other ministers to take. We do not want to see a situation when you heard about certain issues, but you decide to keep quiet. That is not good at all because whatever goes wrong, the Minister will be the first person to be held responsible. So, we want to advise that you continue to take proactive measures, so that the interest of this Nation is highly protected. There are lots of good things in these Agreements, which other countries have benefitted from. I believe we have what it takes to benefit from the resources of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to express concern about the Navy Patrol Team. They have a lot to do in this country. In most cases, it is only the local fishermen who are affected, but the big companies are not. Of course, it is no secret that Sierra Leone, irrespective of the fact that we have access to a wide range of coastal territories and we export fish to other countries, Sierra Leone is not benefitting from these natural resources. As you have heard from the Honourable Member from Kailahun, this is a common phenomenon. We would want Sierra Leoneans out there to benefit from these natural resources. That is what we are appealing for, Mr Speaker. Let us give priority to Sierra Leoneans. When it comes to the distribution of fish to other parts of the country, we have to give priority to Sierra Leoneans. We equally need fish because fish is part of the essential ingredients for healthy living.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the documents in front of us are non-controversial. We believe they will go a long way to help this country gets the best from our Marine Resources. I want the Minister to ensure that we go strictly by the provisions of these Agreements. We have to comply, so that Sierra Leone can match up

with international standards. On that note, I want to thank all of you and I ask that we speedily ratify these Agreements. I thank you [*Applause*].

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I will now give the Floor to three more speakers and they would be the last speakers. I did not see you making an attempt to catch my eye.

**HON. JOSEPHINE MAKIEU:** Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity. The Speaker would have frustrated me if he had failed to give me the Floor to say something about these Agreements which are important to me. I have seen many things that have happened for the first time in the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources. First of all, I want to thank the Minister and the parliamentary Committee on Fisheries for a work well done. I was co-opted as a Member of the Committee on Health in one of its meetings. Before the meeting, my head was empty, but after that meeting, I learnt a lot of new things. I learnt a lot of good things from that meeting. She has done very well for the Ministry and the country. When she entered the Ministry, many things were already falling apart, but she has tried her best to resolve those challenges. I saw many fishing companies and other sectors in that meeting. We also had the Ministry of Agriculture and other parliamentary Committees. What I am admiring about the Ministry is that it is a female friendly Ministry. This is because the Minister and her Deputy are females. Coincidentally, the Chairperson of the Committee on Fisheries is a woman. Mr Speaker, for the fact that a woman is directing or controlling the affairs of the Fishery Sector, you can see the dynamism and the progress made so far. I have no doubt in the Minister's ability to perform. When she told us they were going to put a hold on fishing activities, except for the artisanal fishing, some of us doubted that decision. We wanted to know how we would get fish. She however told us that she had put measures in place for the period the ban would last.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to state here that the supply of fish in our markets, as my colleagues were saying, is a bit appalling. I can assert here that fish going to Kenema District are better, but when you go to the markets in Freetown, the cost of fish is expensive. And the kind of fish we in the markets is not encouraging at

all. So, we want to see good fish in the markets and we want to make sure that the women who are mostly involved in such transaction get the fish, so that they can be able to manage their homes with whatever resources they get from the sales of fish. We request that you put such measure in place, Madam Minister.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other point I want to make is that the Chairperson of the Committee on Fisheries and Marine Resources is not bias and she always collaborates with Members of that Committee because she wants to know what is happening in the Committee. I can state here that she is transparent and hardworking. I want to thank her for what she is doing for us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in terms of revenue sources, I am sure this Ministry is one of the best ministries we have ever got in this country. In other words, this Ministry is serious in revenue generation. So, I do not see any controversy in these Agreements. Therefore, I would humbly ask my colleagues to support these Agreements by ratifying them without delays. These Agreements are non-controversial. That is my submission and I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for her contribution.

**HON. SHEKU M. TURAY:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to contribute on these Agreements. I will be very brief in my submission. I will be asking questions at the same time. Indeed, we have accepted that the content of the Agreements is good, but I will not predict an evaluation result of the implementation of these Agreements. It depends on the design of the project, which may have some links with the laws and policies we implement in that Ministry. I would like the Minister to critically look at these Agreements and find out if there are issues that will bring difficulty in the implementation of our laws. Please align these Agreements with the programmes and strategies that will address issues in the implementation process, so that we can facilitate and resolve capacity problems or resolve risk factors. I have not fully read the contents of these Agreements, but I am sure they are awesome. I would however like the Minister to offer alternatives in the implementation of some of the

policies. This will even require a review of these policies to enable the Ministry to implement the Agreements effectively.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a critical aspect I like in these Agreements is the monitoring mechanism within the framework of the law. I want to ask the Minister a question, Mr Speaker. Do we have a strategy that ensures that we retain part of the amount charged per boat? If we have to implement this, it will enable us to monitor the number of fishes we have in the water and what will be our projection. For instance, if you are to pay **Le 2000** or **Le 3000** per boat, we have to multiply that amount by the number of boats we have, so that we will be able to know the number of fishes we get that year. I think this will help us to project the revenue. I need clarification, Madam Minister.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we also have other areas like Pujehun District. I think you have to extend the implementation of these Agreements to the people of Pujehun. Again, if these Agreements are ratified, Parliament is going to play a key role in the implementation process. Therefore, Constituency Members will help to implement these Agreements in their constituencies where there are fishing activities. The engagement will also help the Ministry to address issues that will pose difficulties in the implementation of these Agreements. Because they will be able to interface with the people, analyse capacity problems and understand the context within which these Agreements will help you to deliver the deliverables. The area we may find difficulties is the delivery of the Agreements, perhaps the oversight Committee and some other constituency Members of Parliament will help you to deliver these properly.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we said that the Agreements are good, but I am not here to evaluate the outcome of these Agreements except if the strategic review focuses on yearly programmes alongside with our laws and the current policies under which the Fishery Industry operates.

With these few words, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you and to also ask my colleagues to ratify these Agreements.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I call on the last speaker on my list, Honourable Peter M. Moigua.

**HON. PETER M. MOIGUA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am not going to be controversial like the Kailahun Member of Parliament. Mr Speaker, one thing I like about this Minister is that she is consistent with the SLPP's Manifesto. Again, the Presidential Address, the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs] and our National Development Plan are very clear. You will find out that this Government is serious in improving the lives of Sierra Leoneans because they are in line with what the Honourable Minister has just done. When you look at the Agreements, what interests me is the area of statistics. I am somebody who does not always admire the statistics of this country. If you look at the statistics of fishing boats and fishing companies in this country, they are impressive. I am a Member of that Committee and if you look at Annex 1, Articles 2 and 3, you will find out that the Minister is doing the right thing because throughout the monitoring exercise we have been doing, you will find out that even the companies that are operating in this country do not have correct statistics of exports they are making. I believe with the ratification of these Agreements, we will move forward in terms of widening the revenue base.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources is contributing to the bread basket of this nation, but I also believe that with my financial management background, we are just guessing the figures in terms of revenue they are generating because we do not know our revenue strength or the statistics of the companies in this country. I want to prove to you the things we discovered during our monitoring exercise. When you go to certain companies and ask them the number of containers they have exported from this period to that period, they always say they do not know. Mr Speaker, because they do not know, we cannot tell exactly the strength of resource mobilisation of this Ministry and how much the Ministry contributes to the national budget. However, with the ratification of these Agreements, we would know the statistics of fishing activities in our seas; and if we know the statistics of containers we export in this country, we will have very huge amount of money.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister was talking about the 'Yellow Card.' I am not a footballer, but a 'Yellow Card' is a warning. I want to believe this warning is as a result of the grant. When I was working in the Private Sector, there was a grant for state and non-state actors in 2013 or 2014. The EU provided grants to this particular Ministry for the management of our water resources. I want to believe it is because certain factors were not met that is why the 'Yellow Card' was introduced. Nevertheless, with the intervention of this Minister, a Minister who knows the problems of this country; a Minister who knows the problems of 'paopa' and a Minister who feels the pains of being in Opposition, I think she will work harder to ensure that this Government achieves its goals.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to share this experience with my colleagues. We went to Uganda in a Conference and the discussions centred on curbing Illicit Financial Flows [IFFs] and managing our resources. Mr Speaker, one of the main ways we encouraged IFFs is in the Marine Sector. There are people out there who usually invest a lot of funds in the Marine Sector, but we do not know where these moneys are coming from. Mr Speaker, from the Public Accounts Committee [PAC] background, one of the issues of corruption is IFFs and they are coming mostly in the Marine Sector. Thus, I want the Minister to take note of the fact that when people want to invest into your Ministry, let them disclose their bank accounts to the Ministry. They should not just be sending moneys. This is because people usually send money when they do not even have the capacity to manage such funds. When I went to Ghana, I learnt about a situation where an investor came into this country and invested **\$250,000** in a mining company. The money was never given back to him and no diamond was sent to that company. I heard that and I am investigating the issue.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the marine and mining sectors are vulnerable areas for IFFs to thrive. The Minister needs to be very careful when people express interests to invest in that sector. You have to make a thorough background check of their companies and make sure that you implement the Local Content Policy to the latter. You cannot just come and invest into this country if you do not have a Sierra Leonean

attached to that company. I think implementing the Local Content Policy will be fine for us as a nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as a member of the PAC, we have been engaging these companies and when you look at the books, you will find out that there are lots of leakages. Although I got these documents this morning, but I have however managed to read them and there are lots of issues. I do not want to talk much, but to ask this Honourable House to ratify these Agreements. I thank you *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution.

*Suspension of S.O 5[2]*

**THE SPEAKER:** Madam Minister, at the end of this debate, I will call on you to respond to the issues Honourable Members would have raised. I would like to take this opportunity to make two observations for your consideration. The first is of a general nature and it derives from my experience with the Law of the Sea before returning home and entering politics in 1982. I worked for many years for the Commonwealth Secretariat in London as an International Lawyer of no mean repute and I represented the interest of the Secretariat and its Member countries throughout the Law of the Sea in 1982. Let me draw the attention of Honourable Members to the fact that the umbrella Convention or the overarching Convention dealing with the Law of the Sea was adopted in 1982 by all the Member States of the United Nations. It dealt with many issues and you will notice from the document before us that one area that was articulated and elaborated from the Law of the Sea Convention is what is addressed by the UN Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks. That Convention was adopted by the UN in 1995. This is the point that I really want to draw the attention of this House that from 1995, when this Convention was adopted, it is only today that this Parliament is been requested to ratify the Convention. This means twenty years have elapsed since its adoption in 1995.

Honourable Members, I am sure many countries around the world, particularly in West Africa, may have proceeded long time ago to ratify this Convention. So, I want the Minister to draw your attention to the fact that there may be other areas covered by the

Law of the Sea Convention that may have also been articulated and elaborated in similar Conventions that are yet to be brought to this House for ratification. Therefore, within the context of your responsibilities, we would implore you to examine and investigate whether there are any such Conventions gathering dust in your Ministry that are yet to see the light of day in this Parliament by way of ratification. Twenty-four years is far too long a time for this country to wait before ratifying such an important Agreement.

Honourable Members, the second observation I wish to draw your attention is contained in Article 3 of the Agreement, which you have described as the 'Compliance Agreement' that is also before the House for ratification. I would like to read what Article 3[1a] says and it is most pertinent to the discussion that we have had this morning. It talks about the Flags State responsibility. I read: **"Each party shall take such measures as may be necessary to ensure that Fishing Vessels entitled to fly its Flag do not engage in any activity that undermines the effectiveness of International Conservation and Management Measures."** We hope Madam Minister before too long, you will come to us with measures that you would propose for this country to take in order to ensure that the strictest compliance with that particular obligation on the part of our State. Those are the two observations I would like to leave as food for thought for your Ministry, Madam Minister.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA [Acting Leader of Government Business]:** Thank you, Mr Speaker for elucidating on some of the points already enshrined in the Agreements. I have already noted some of them which I will not waste any time to discuss them. I will start with the Agreement on promoting Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas [Compliance Agreement]. Mr Speaker, where Sierra Leone is a Flag State Member as you have said in your observation, we are obliged to comply with regional and international laws of the seas. This will enable us to manage our marine resources very well. Some of these laws need to be respected and that is exactly what we are talking about. If you look at this Agreement under discussion, we need to also know the

meaning of what we are entering into. With your leave, Mr Speaker, I will read Article [1] It says: **“International Conservation and Management measure means, measures to conserve or manage one or more species of living Marine Resources that are adopted and applied in accordance with the relevant rules and of International Laws and reflected in the 1982 United Nation Convention. on the Law of the Sea, such measures may be adopted either by global, regional or sub-regional fisheries organisations.”** So, what I am trying to highlight here is that you asked the Minister to come up with regulations that would help to manage some of these organisations, so that they operate within the ambit of the law.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the regulations are good for us because they will serve as mechanisms to monitor what is happening in the seas. In Sierra Leone, we do not have the technologies and that is why we are now looking for regional collaboration, so that we can merge our laws with neighbouring countries. However that will also have to do with our internal structures. The Law is the only platform that can bring us together. We should obey the laws and regulations because they are important. Therefore, the Speaker was on the right track when he spoke about regulations and the twenty-four years time lapse. It is only by regulations you will bring conformity with what has happened over twenty years. That is what we are looking for.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to remind the Minister that the management of our Marine Resources is important to us. You are trying your best, but you cannot have all the answers. You will need experts who can be supported by the law and even if you are not around, the laws and the regulations you put in place, will provide the necessary administration.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you talked about Flag Ship responsibility and there are many crimes being committed in the High Seas. If you have the Flag Ship responsibility, you have to carry the country’s flag. You have to be responsible for what you do. Article 3[1] states that no party should interfere with the activities of a member state, like to double the Flag or use another Flag to go and do something else. The

Speaker read Article 3[1] and I will read Article 5[a]. It says: **“No party shall authorise any Fishing Vessel previously registered in the territory of another party that has undermined the effectiveness of the International Conservation and Management Measures to be used for Fishing on the High Seas, unless it is satisfied that A, B and C.”**

[i] Any period of suspension by another party of an authorization for such fishing vessels to be used for the fishing on the high seas has expired; and

[ii] No authorization for such fishing vessel to be used for fishing on the high seas has been withdrawn by another party within the last three years.

You are required to enforce what the Speaker said. They want to discourage those who are using wrong methods in other country which is not good for us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if these Agreements are ratified, the Ministry has a responsibility to ensure that some of these conditions are met. I want to remind the Minister that we have failed to ratify these Agreements for a very long time and that was why we did not have reason to hold our neighbouring states responsible for what is happening because it is only by means of the law you can work effectively. So, Article 3 is really enforcing the Flag Ship responsibilities. If a State fails to ratify these Agreements, there is no way you can talk about settling disputes. Madam Minister, International Law of the Sea is a crucial aspect of the Agreements. We know there will be crimes because we are dealing with neighbouring countries. There must be synergy in terms of compliance and performance.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Article 9 makes provisions for disputes resolution, but there is timeline as well. If you look at Article 9 of the same document, it says: **“Any party may seek consultations with any other party or parties on any dispute with regard to the interpretation or application of the provision of this Agreement with a view to reaching a mutually satisfactory solution as soon as possible.”** This means you do not just take an interpretation for yourself. We have people who will just sit and interpret the regulations using their opinions.

According to the Agreement, you can do it either by negotiations, enquiries, mediations, conciliations or judicial settlement. These are the different ways you could use. This is meant to discourage those who would want to sit in their corners to do certain things. There are procedures we should follow, Mr Speaker. Therefore, these Agreements make provision for disputes resolution. If you are dissatisfied with an issue, you can seek redress in court for settlement. You can also mediate by asking member states to resolve any disputes through diplomatic means. As a country, we have been facing disturbing issues because we failed to ratify these Agreements. After the ratification of these Agreements, we would have the power to negotiate and see how best we can hold members responsible if they want to duplicate functions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is what is known as Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing operations within the sub-region. This aspect is important in these Agreements which seek to maintain and monitor the activities of fishing vessels. It is a very interesting business, but if you know that they are involved in criminal activities, like a cartel or organised crime, they will come at night because we do not have the technology. They will come to our territorial waters to fish. We have lots of species within the sub-region. My colleagues were talking about 'bonga' fish. They said 'bonga' fish is diminishing in our waters. I think this is why we must put the legal framework in place, so that those who are responsible for the depletion of our fish are brought to book. If we do not have these in place, especially monitoring mechanisms, our people will not benefit at all. Therefore, we have to ratify these Agreements to enable us fight issues relating to I.U.U. This is why the fishing industries we have in Sierra Leone are using these loopholes to enrich themselves. It will be rewarding to put legal framework in place and the ratification of these Agreements is a step in the right direction.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the United Nations Conventions are important and they have helped Sierra Leone to participate in sharing information. I listened to the Honourable Member who spoke about sharing information. Mr Speaker, the Minister and her team have a very good vision for this Ministry. Let us look at Article 14 and find out if this Agreement covers that area. The caption for Article 14 is 'Collection and

Provision of Information and Cooperation in Specific Research.’ That gives you lots of data on what we are discussing. Sometimes it is difficult to have accurate data, but you can improve on any available data. Mr Speaker, Article 14 [1a] reads: **“Collect and exchange scientific, technical and statistical data with respect to fisheries, for straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks.”**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is very important for us, though sometimes seasonal. If you go to South Africa, especially Cape Town, there is a boundary between the salt and fresh water. You will realise that there is so much migratory fish species coming to Sierra Leone, but do we have data on that. So, there are trans-oceanic species that will move from the India Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean. Sometimes they are affected by the temperature or scientific methods. Perhaps we do not have that type of technology and that is why they have to move. If the temperature in the Atlantic Ocean is different from the Indian Ocean, there will be movement, but do we have the scientific data to prove it. Therefore, these Agreements seek to address some of these issues. If we ratify these Agreements, we will be able to share this information. I still go by what the Speaker said. I do not want to say they were not responsible, but they were not seeking the interest of this industry. If this Ministry fails to function properly, it is because of the absence of robust policies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am not surprised to hear Members praising the Minister because she has brought these Agreements. I can say that these Agreements seek to take care of the seeming challenges inherent in this sector. I want to state here that scientific data is important for us. You have looked at it from the point of transparency and it is very important in the Fishing Industry.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Peter M. Moigua from Kenema District raised questions about the kind of investors who are coming to Sierra Leone to invest. What do you do as a Ministry? Are you transparent? You are bringing this Agreement for ratification, is the process going to be transparent? What is the level of transparency in these Agreements? Well, these Agreements seek to address the issue of transparency. In this regard, I refer the House to Article XII of item Roman [i] on the

Order Paper. The caption is 'Transparency in Activities of Sub-regional and Regional Fisheries Management Organisations and Arrangements.' Article XII [1] reads: **"States shall provide for transparency in the decision-making process and other activities of sub-regional and regional Fisheries Management Organisations and arrangements."** This is what we need and you cannot do everything and that is why the organisations at management level should be involved.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are a lots of OPEC organisations within the Fishery Industry that you may not know about. You cannot do it alone and that is why these Agreements are apt and they will help to identify them. We have these Agreements in front of us for ratification and I believe if we ratify these Agreements, most of the challenges and other concerns you have raised yesterday will be taken care of. You are not the only person to have been in that Ministry, but maybe it is because you have been a Member of Parliament that is why you know these issues. You were very articulate when you were in Parliament. Therefore, we want you to use that experience to stop some of these illegal activities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister spoke about the issue of 'Yellow Card.' The 'Yellow Card' is also a sign of warning, which you have been working towards because I have been following what was going on in that industry. These Agreements are timely and they are good for this country. I want to thank my colleagues for their contributions and I believe if we continue to drive in this direction, we will be doing well in the Fishery Industry. The people who are working in the Informal Sector, their illiterate level in this industry is high. For instance, if you go to places like Tombo and Goderich, you will meet them there. They are not educated at all and fishing is the only skill they have learnt. These are people who can tell you, by just looking at the back of a fish, the type of fish and where it comes from. Therefore, we need to protect them and we need to be with them. What do we do with these Agreements? The Agreements are generic and we need to be specific in terms of regulation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister has done well and I think this is not a mistake to have her as a Minister in that Ministry. However, she has to live up to our

expectations. You cannot do it all alone, but with your team. I thank your team for working together. They are specialists and they have been there for a very long time. Thank you very much because these Agreements have been there for so many years without considering them. Some of your team members have been in that Ministry and they have been advising former Ministers or directors to bring these Agreements, but failed to listen.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one of the things I admire about Mr Speaker is that you are widely read. I do not know maybe it is because you went to Cambridge University, but you are widely read and you have a broader knowledge in many areas. This is why I think you are able to articulate issues faster and bring us to speed. Thank you very much for what you did for us and I believe Honourable Members we will work as a team to ensure that we enhance the Fishery Industry. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Madam Minister, you now have the Floor. You may wish to respond to some of the issues raised in the course of the debate.

**HON. EMMA J. KOWA *[Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources]*:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by thanking the Speaker for the salient advice and the direction he has pointed me to. I want to assure this House that my team and I will continue to work assiduously to make sure we bring sanity and prosperity to the Fisheries Industry in Sierra Leone *[Applause]*. The Law of the Sea and Convention on the Flagship States was taken at Committee level and Cabinet level, and the conclusion was given that we must ratify these Agreements for us to be part of it. It has to come to the Legislative House of Parliament. Looking at some of the feedbacks, I want to first of all thank all those who have contributed to this debate, especially those who have provided pieces of advice.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Agreements are non-controversial as it would cover a lot of things that have been said by the Acting Leader of Government Business and many of you here. There was a concern raised about investors to declare their bank accounts. I want to notify this House that all of the Fishing Vessels that we have

in this country are not owned by Sierra Leoneans and they never operate on their own. They have called Sierra Leonean partners and Agents and they work directly with our Sierra Leonean brothers and sisters. These are the people we deal with directly at the Ministry. When investors come to this country, we usually crosscheck to make sure that all necessary arrangements are done. We do not want a situation where Fisheries Sector is used for money laundering or is used for other dubious activities. So, we are doing our best, in as much we are not accountants and supervisors but we check in our different capacities, to put things in place.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are planning to engage the Committee and probably Members of Parliament on the coastal areas for the rest of the two weeks for the close season to disseminate information about these Agreements. We are saying the coastal areas because these are the riverine areas, the focal areas where fishing activities take place every day. They must be notified and knowledgeable about it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, looking at the Agreements to see if issues would arise, it is an implementation issue. God willing, as you have said all the positive notes here, I believe you will hopefully ratify it and the Ministry will have a duty to make sure that these laws are implemented for the benefit of Sierra Leoneans. Of course, we have a vibrant team that is ready to make sure that things happen. Hence, we have brought these Agreements here for ratification and we will definitely make sure that no issues arise thereafter.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a Member of Parliament talked about fishing fees. For the Pujehun axis, we charge the license fees purely per Vessel and the Gross Rate Tonnage [GRT] of the Vessel. Presently, we do not charge per quota. When we would have strengthened our data system and collection of our data, we would be able to think about allocation of quota system.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, talking about the Strategic Plan, we have developed a Strategic Plan for five years, which deals with the Monitoring and Evaluation system aspect. Of course, we do not have lots of Vessels, we have one big Vessel [SIK] that monitors the High Seas, but we have got smaller Vessels in each of these house

stations that go on community surveillance. With the help of the navy and others, we will be able to monitor, but sooner or later we will be coming with more programmes where we might have Air Craft surveillance, which will also help to curb out IUU.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, talking about concerns to put robust measures in place for Sierra Leoneans to benefit from the Fishing Industry, this is one of them and in fact the key one is the implementation of the 'closed season.' As Honourable Josephine Makieu said, many people wanted to know if we will be able to implement the one month 'closed season.' It is never going to be **100%** perfect because there will be complaints here and there, but we have started getting from our Fishing Officers and even the artisanal fishermen. This is only two weeks gone and we have two weeks left and the benefit of it you can see from outside. Most of the Fishing Vessels are packed and are they are not moving anywhere. They will be there till the end of the month. We are not doing it because we do not need revenue in Sierra Leone, but because we want to preserve and put proper management measures in the Fishing Industry, so that our people would continue to benefit from it. Therefore, it is only the local artisanal people who are catching fish. They are free to do so and it is like a birthday for them there are no trolleys disturbing them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, even if there is no fish in the 'Cold Room' I can state here that no matter the prices, the fish in Sierra Leone is the cheapest in the entire sub-region. So, it is good for us to ratify these Agreements because they will put us at advantage position with our regional partners. We will now be able to monitor, together with them. We had a programme called PASCOW, which is sponsored by the EU and it is done every quarter. We usually participate with them in terms of Community and Regional Surveillance; and through these surveillances, we are able to see illegal activities. Therefore, we will constantly call on your support, as the Legislative Arm of government and we would want you to help us in order to be able to regulate and monitor our industries to the best of our ability.

With that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House Ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2019:

[i] Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Migratory Fish Stocks; and

[ii] Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas [the Compliance Agreement]. I thank you [*Applause*].

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]*

*[Government Motion by the Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources has been ratified]*

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, we are now close to the end of the today's proceedings. I want to take this opportunity to remind Honourable Members that we refrain from using S.O 23 as the omnibus provision under which we try to encapsulate everything. There are times when it is necessary for specific questions to be addressed to ministers and this is why I have reactivated or revived 'Question Time' in this House. I hope, before the close of this Session, we shall have at least our first 'Question Time' Session. I look forward to receiving, through the Office of the Clerk, relevant questions from Members of Parliament. Through 'Question Time,' you can achieve a lot more than using S.O. 23. I would invite Honourable Members to read the relevant Standing Orders dealing with 'Question Time.'

Honourable Members, what S. O. are you standing on? I am trying to dissuade you from using S. O. 23, unless it is absolutely necessary. Before I call on you, I have one or two things to say. First, I want to recognise the presence, in our midst, of Honourable Rosaline Smith former Member of Parliament [*Applause*]. The second point I wish to draw your attention to is that as you all know we have lost one of our very dedicated Member of Parliament, who was the representative of Constituency 043, Honourable Momodu Eskimo Mansaray. In my absence, I recognised that you have

already paid homage to the demised Honourable Member. It is proposed to lay him in State Hall on the 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2019. It is also with a heavy heart that I wish to announce the demise of another former Member of Parliament in the person of Major General Sheku Tarawally, former Force Commander of the Republic of Sierra Leone Arm Forces. Again, his body will be laid in State Hall on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April. May I invite all of us present now to please rise and observe a minute of silence in honour of the Honourable Major General Sheku Tarawally? May his soul rest in perfect peace [*A minute of silence was observed*].

Honourable Members, in consequence of the announcement I have just made, that is to say the demise of the Honourable Member of Parliament for Constituency o43, Falaba District, the Honourable Momodu Eskimo Mansaray, there is a vacancy in that Constituency. We need to make that formal declaration for the necessary action to be taken by the National Electoral Commission to begin the process of filling the vacancy that has occurred.

**HON. QUINTIN S. KONNEH** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take this opportunity to inform Members present that armed rubbers attacked the Community Bank in my Constituency and subsequently killed the security personnel. This is just to inform Members present that as a Community, we have taken proactive steps to institute civil security activities alongside the Police. I thank you.

**HON. REBECCA Y. KAMARA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on S. O. 19. What I am about to say here concerns each and every Sierra Leonean. I believe in one thing; i.e., there is no development without peace and security. Two weeks ago, three of us represented this country in Washington D.C to attend training on security and role of parliamentarians in national security.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, you said you stood on S.O. 19?

**HON. REBECCA Y. KAMARA:** Yes, Mr Speaker. I want to bring it to the attention of the Minister of defence about what is happening along our border with Guinea through the relevant Committee, which is the Committee on Defence.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, if you want to bring that matter to the attention of the Minister, then do it the proper way. You have to address your question through the Minister and submit that question to the Clerk.

**HON. REBECCA Y. KAMARA:** I will do that, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much.

**HON. JOSEPHINE MAKIEU:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, we the people of Malegohun Chiefdom are really discouraged. It is rather unfortunate that over billions of Leones was allocated for the construction of our bridge and the road leading from Bendu Junction to Malegohun and Lower Bambara Chiefdom. Unfortunately, the work started and the President went there to Commission the projects, but the work was not properly done.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, I will ask you to kindly take your sit. This brings me back to the issue I have just raised. If I allow you under S.O. 23, I am sure you want action not just to come and report what is happening in your Constituency. The guidance I will like to give you is that it will be best done by way of a 'question' addressed to the relevant Minister. Therefore, you will get the Minister to come and respond to your question, but merely by raising it here, I am sorry to say, it will not take you anywhere. I think the matter you want to raise is better brought in a form of a 'question' for the Minister rather than S.O. 23.

**HON. JOSEPHINE MAKIEU:** Thank you Mr Speaker

### ***ADJOURNMENT***

*[The House rose at 12:55 p.m. and was adjourned to Thursday, 25 April, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.]*