

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

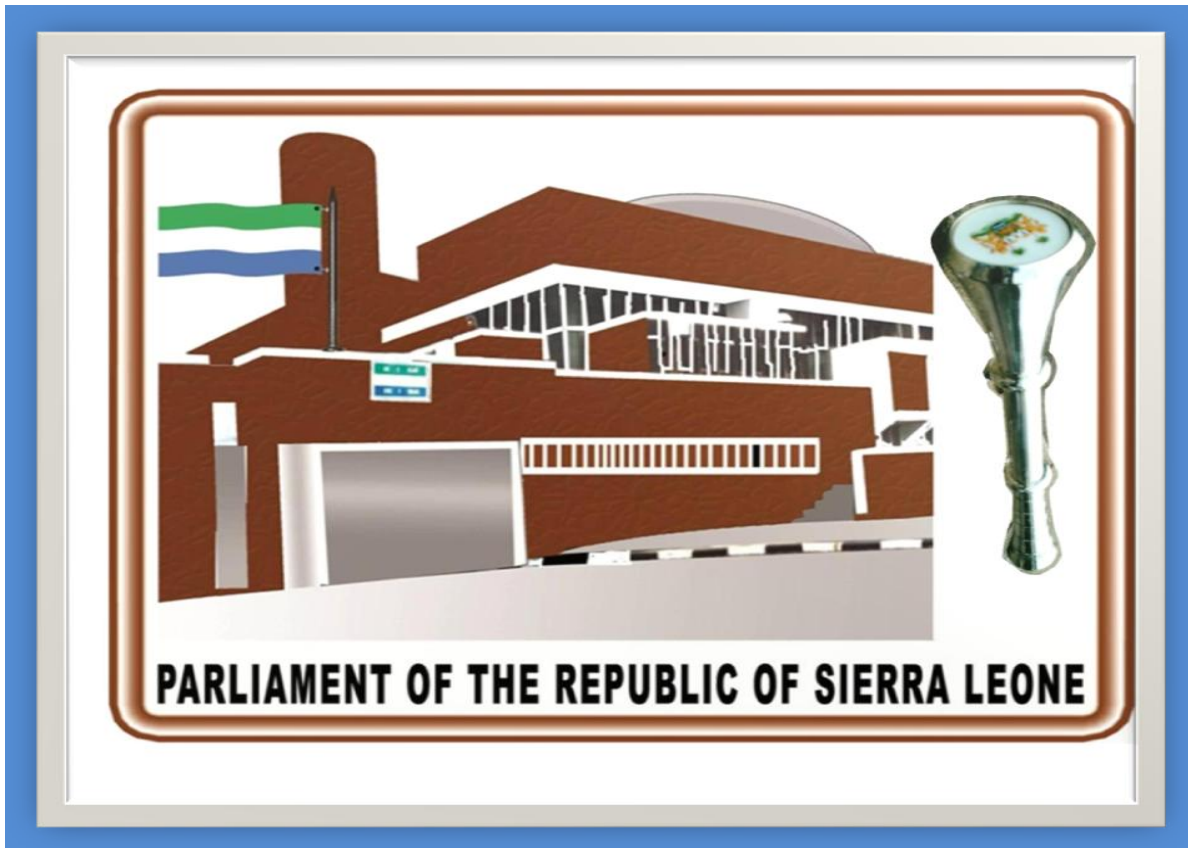
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION –FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 26TH MARCH, 2024

SESSION – 2023/2024



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

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First Meeting of the First Session of the Sixth Parliament
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
held Tuesday 26TH March, 2024

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BE IT RESOLVED

**THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE HEREBY RATIFIES THE FOLLOWING
AGREEMENTS WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON TUESDAY
12TH MARCH 2024:**

**(A) MILITARY FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
TURKEY.**

**(B) A MILITARY COOPERATION PROTOCOL BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF
DEFENCE OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT AND THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE**



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

FIRST SESSION – FIRST MEETING OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

TUESDAY, 26th MARCH, 2024.

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Mr Alimamy L. Bangura, read the Prayers]

[The House met at 10:00a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]

[The Acting Speaker, Hon. Veronica Kadie Sesay, presided in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

MRS FINDA FRASER: Honourable Members, I announce the unavoidable absent of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker pursuant to Section 88[c] of the Constitution of Sierra Leone Act No. 6 of 1991 and Standing Orders 10[1] the House may therefore elect from amongst its Members a person to preside over today's proceedings. I therefore call for nominations.

HON. BINTU F. BOCKARIE: I rise to nominate Honourable Veronica K. Sesay to preside on this proceeding of Parliament today.

MRS FINDA FRASER: Any Secunder?

HON. ALPHA BEN MANSARAY: I so second the Motion.

[Question Proposed Put & Agreed To]

MRS FINDA FRASER: The Motion has been carried, I call on the elected Honourable Member to go and robe and take the chair as Speaker *[Applause]*.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Madam Speaker, I move the Motion for the suspension of S.O. 5[2].

THE SPEAKER: Any Secunder to that Motion?

HON. HABIB K. FABBAH: I so second Madam Speaker.

[Question Proposed Put & Agreed To]

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Madam Speaker, we are happy to have you as the Acting Speaker but something very strange happened in the Chamber but I do not think whether my Colleagues are paying a very keen attention where today two women in this Chamber are acting in two capacities. The Acting Clerk of Parliament a woman, and today the Speaker of Parliament is a woman *[Applause]*. I hope that members of the fourth estate can realize that we have not been a selfish Parliament. We want to promote what we enacted as empowering women in all shades of affairs. We want to actualize the 30% quota for women. Honourable Leader of the Opposition, I think today we have more than 30% Members of female representation in Parliament; the Speaker is a woman, and the Acting Clerk is a woman. I want to say we are committed in

promoting gender equality and congratulations to both of you. Perhaps after today's sitting she will invite us for a sumptuous meal so that we can enjoy. I appreciate Members for accepting the nomination of Honourable Veronica K. Sesay, one of the longest serving Members of Parliament and also the Director General of Parliament who have been proactive, now she has been elevated as the Acting Clerk of Parliament. Thank you very much, congratulations once again.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Madam Speaker, I want to join the Leader of Government Business, this is a demonstration of the fact that there is some level of unanimity amongst the MPs because nobody stood up from our side and we all consciously supported the Motion for her to preside over today's sitting. This is a demonstration of collaborative effort and this is an attempt to show that what man can do woman can do it better *[Applause]*.

She is a champion of women affairs, she is the mother of the ECOWAS Parliament and she has been the mother of this House. So today we have a mother presiding over the House and you know the difference between when a father presides and when a mother presides *[Laughter]* so I want to congratulate you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

Record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday 12th March, 2024.

THE SPEAKER: As usual, we are going to skip pages 1 to 4 so let us start with page 5. Page 5? Page 6? Page 7?

HON. DR UNPHA S. G. KOROMA: Page 7 and it has been consistent, my name the Gbassay is not 'Gbe' but 'Gbassay' for the attention of the Clerks.

THE SPEAKER: Clerks please take note. Page 8? Page 9? Page 10? If there are no more corrections can someone please move for the adoption of the Votes and Proceedings?

HON. MASSAY NGAHINTEH ARUNA: I so move Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. FATMATA BINTU BOCKARIE: I so second Madam Speaker.

[Question Proposed Put & Agreed To]

[Record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday 12th March, 2024 has been adopted]

ANNOUNCEMENT BY MADAM SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Today I am overwhelmed and I must say thanks to the Almighty God for making it possible today for me to sit on this wonderful seat. I will vividly remember on the 3rd of July 2018 [Applause] I seated here on that day and today history has repeated itself; so I must say thanks to the whole House especially the two Leaders and my nominator for nominating me and you people for accepting me; the respect that you have given me and the confidence that you have placed in me to be seated here today is not a magic; I must say thanks to you. It is with your cooperation and unity as you have heard from the Majority Leader and I want to say special thanks to the two Leaders in the House. I hope I will do my level best today with your cooperation. With your cooperation I am very much happy to preside on this particular Motion today because it is about security.

I want to say thank you and I appreciate all of you. My women are here today, I know you must be happy because they have given us the space that is why we are waiting patiently. So with that, I want to say thank you and I appreciate all of you. Thank you Mr Leader for thinking about women that we should be side by side because behind any successful Parliament there are women. Thank you Honourable Members *[Applause]*.

GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE

COL(RTD) MUANA BRIMA MASSAQUOI: Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 12th March, 2024.

A. Military Framework Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Government of the Republic of Turkey.

B. A Military Cooperation Protocol between the Ministry of Defence of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, kindly permit me to speak to both documents, about the purpose and description and also the benefit. The reason is that, both documents are similar in nature and they have the same characteristics. Military Cooperation is an essential element of defence diplomacy. In recent times, cooperation between Militaries do not only hold to strengthen strategic security relationships between States but also in particular, it is essential for the States with mutual physical boundaries. Although Sierra Leone and both Egypt and Turkey, do not share common and geographical spaces. The commitment of all parties to the twin desirables of peace and development through mutually beneficial engagement cannot be overstated. Recently, the Government of Sierra Leone and the Arab Republic of Egypt on the one hand, the Government of Sierra Leone and the Republic of Turkey signed mutually beneficial Military Cooperation Agreement, relating to the enhancement of military capabilities in several fields including; training, science and technology transfers, and communications among others. Now let me also go to the strategic relevance and expected benefits.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, the ability of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces to manifest combat readiness, is an effective deterrent to potential aggressors. Undoubtedly with appropriate training and capability, RSLAF will be in a better position to professionally execute the range of missions and taxes imposed upon it by the State. For the Ministry of Defence in particular, the Agreements will be of added value to existing efforts by Government to transform the RSLAF into a professional and well trained, equipped and motivated body of men and women to safe guard the nation's peace, stability and development. Therefore, these cooperation Agreements when fully executed will present great opportunities for Sierra Leone to transform its defence and security architecture in partnership with two of the strongest Militaries of the continent without recourse to huge budgetary commitments. Additionally, these Agreements when implemented will strengthen existing bilateral

relations between the Republic of Sierra Leone and both the Arab Republic of Egypt and Turkey in several areas of cooperation, in which both the Egyptian and Turkish Armed Forces have overwhelming comparative advantage over the house lab. With collective training, logistics and technology transfer, RSLAF will be better positioned to generate a troop for peace support operations in line with His Excellency strong commitment to participate in peace support operations within the shortest possible time.

Finally Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, I now respectfully canvass your unreserved support for the speedy ratification of the Military Cooperation Agreement that is here proposed. I thank you all for listening. Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 12th March, 2024.

A. Military Framework Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Government of the Republic of Turkey.

B. Military Cooperation Protocol between the Ministry of Defence of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

QUESTION PROPOSED

THE SPEAKER: Hold on before you start, we will not want to waste the time of the Military people who are here because they need to go and secure the places for us. So we are going to limit ourselves and I will take two from either sides of the House, the Paramount Chiefs and then the two Leaders will conclude. I thank you [*Applause*].

HON. ALEX MATTIA ROGERS: Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Committee on Defence I rise to make few contributions to this very important but historical Agreement with the advent of the Military Protocol and Cooperation between the Ministry of Defence of Arab Republic of Egypt and that of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Sierra Leone on one hand and on the other hand an Agreement also between the people of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the people of the Republic of Turkey. It can now be argued that indeed a kind of security diplomacy or defence diplomacy has given birth to the traditional diplomacy. It is in this vein that I may want to state here that a

milestone within the foreign policy posture of Sierra Leone is being made at least the mere fact that we have now defence diplomacy, that could be considered as a very strong milestone in the foreign policy posture of this country.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, you will agree with me that the Deputy Defence Minister has highlighted the benefits, some of the reasons for the two Agreements but I may also want to add as Chairman of Defence that the two Agreements of course are non controversial and they are based on mutual respect and non-interference in line with the United Nations Charter in accordance with the National Laws or Legislation and national policies of the two countries. So that one is much salient that we should take note of and also in the area of the fields, some of the fields that the Deputy Minister has highlighted because I am not going to waste time on that again to go through, I may only want to provoke your sensibility to join me so that we can look at some cutting cross issues in commonality in the two Agreements. For example like on the purposes, you will agree with me the purposes are being the same and they are moving towards promoting bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the area of Defence and Security and also in the area of settlement of disputes which is very much important and I do not want to waste your time to make reference to that but there are issues on dispute settlement; you see commonality in that area also.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, and also in the area of amendment for review the two Agreements probably create room for amendment and of course a revision; just in case of termination, we do not envisage that but if that arises then those ongoing projects within the specified field that you will find in the respective articles of each of the Agreements. It will not hinder so that one is very much good and that is the novelty about the two Agreements that I admire very much. And we are all talking about professionalism within this institution and with the implementation of the two Agreements we have no doubt that the Institution, the RSLAF will be well trained and that they will behave in the professional way in accordance with other Africa countries. So with that few remarks I should not waste much time on this and may I say that we speedily ratify the two Agreements being very useful based on the fields identified on

the Agreements which I do not want to dwell into it because the Deputy Minister had highlighted few of them for security reasons but they are strategic focused.

So with that few remarks Madam Speaker, may I now seek your indulgence to have a speedy ratification of these Agreements and may I also use this opportunity to commend the Deputy Minister and of course the Ambassador accredited to Egypt, Ambassador Sadique Sillah; he played pivotal role towards the realization towards these Agreements and along the line, I was some how involved particularly with the Egyptian Protocol. They are prepared to bring companies to intervene, companies in the mining areas, companies in agriculture sectors, companies in the fisheries and aquaculture. So this is a blessing in disguise for which may I grave your indulgence to have a speedy ratification. I thank you all *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you Mr Chairman for your salient contributions. Please resume your seat, let me recognize the presence of some important personalities at the Defence senate; Brigadier General P.C Lavahun, Chief of Defence Staff and M.B Daboh Director-General of the Ministry of Defence, Major General C.F Marrah, Chief of Staff Ministry of Defence, Colonel A. Taylor-Kamara, Director of Communication and Information System, James Jamiru Foday ESQ, Deputy Secretary and Brigadier General A.S Bockarie Assistant Chief of Defence Staff, Training and Defence, Desmond Banlior, Senior Assistant Scretary-General, Ministry of Defence and finally Ambrose Massaquoi, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Defence. You are all welcome to this House *[Applause]*.

HON. DR UNPHA SORIE GBASSAY KOROMA: Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by saying both Agreements are not controversial because the military framework for these countries and their Agreements will stand to benefit Sierra Leone's Military. The Military of Egypt ranking 15 out of 145 countries and the Military of Turkey ranking 8 out of 145 countries and with Egypt being the number 1 Military in Africa, I think Sierra Leone's Military stand to benefit from these Agreements *[Applause]*.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk briefly on Article 2 and Article 4 of both Agreements. Article 2 of the Egypt and Article 4 of the Turkish Agreement and when you look at both Sections or both Articles pretty much they are saying the same thing but the one that draws my attention and I think Sierra Leone will benefit more from is the area of Military training and education and the area of Military Cooperation of the two Armed Forces. Luckily we are at depensation where we are at peace with our neighbours, but where we are at eminent threat from external forces it is important to train and develop a military group, a military personnel that will be professional and well trained and more importantly when they retire from the Military. As we note, we live in a country where a lot of people retired at a tender age of 60, I called that tender because across the world 65 or even 72 is now the retired age. So when they are retired and we say they are not tired, it is important that at the critical time Sierra Leone can use and benefit those personnel or those Sierra Leoneans when they leave the Military. So definitely if we are going to collaborate and if in the process of them serving in the Military, we can benefit from the training and exchange of experts and technicians as well as the Military benefitting from scientific and technological fields, electronic systems, information technology and communication as well as cooperation in military techniques, I think Sierra Leone will benefit immensely from these Agreements.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, one aspect of these Articles that I think is consistent, is when we talk about the logistics area that is the field logistic. Why I think is critical and pertinent at this point, the other day I saw something on social media and they were captives in Russia which I cannot justify it but I have to say it as a representative of the people; a person that was captured, the report claims that one of them is a Sierra Leonean. So in these Agreements it is stating that Sierra Leoneans should or could be used as field logistic; so field logistics means they could go to Egypt or go to Turkey as the case maybe and if there is something that emanates or there is a tension in that community or in that country, Sierra Leonean officers could be used as field officers. So as a people and as a country that stand to benefit us; we also have to look at the collateral expenditure that we may be given to these Agreements but in a

nutshell, it is a better Agreement for us, in a nutshell it is a good Agreement for the Sierra Leone Military but again we need to pay key attention to the logistical part of it but of course in life there should be a give and take because if we are receiving then we have to give in the process. We should be ready to give in the process as well and it is not new. We have several issues across the world even before we were born when Sierra Leone Military were engaged in battles or warfare when they were sent to other countries.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, so it is non-contentious, it is non-political and I think these are Agreements that Sierra Leone will stand to benefit from and I want to encourage every Member of Parliament in this Well to support these Agreements and to ratify them. I thank you Madam Speaker *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Member for your brilliant contribution. Okay let me hear from the Captain from Moyamba District *[Applause]*.

HON. RTD. CAPT SYLVESTER A.M. BOIMA: Thank you very much Madam Speaker. I am retired Captain Sylvester Boima from Moyamba District, I want to bring you greetings from Moyamba and the people of Moyamba to congratulate you on your Appointment as Acting Speaker *[Applause]*.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, what the Ministry of Defence is displaying today is as a result of Section 40 Sub-section 4 of the 1991 Constitution that says that "where ever you want to enter into Agreement, that Agreement must come into the Well of Parliament and should be debated. So I want to thank the Ministry of Defence personally the President, the Chief of Defence Staff Brigadier Lavahun for these important Agreements. I want this House to congratulate the Military for their gallantry performance on the November 26, 2023 incident devoid of the challenges they have *[Applause]*.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, Article 2 from the Cooperation Protocol for Egypt and Article 4 on the Turkish; all of those detailed activities, military training,

media training, journalistic training and all of the issues outlined are relevant for the Military and I think the professionalism we are talking about in these two Agreements when come into play, definitely the RSLAF will move to the height we are expecting.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to crave on the indulgence of Honourable Members in the House because I now see that these Agreements are positive Agreements because both sides are in supportive of these Agreements, security is very much paramount. For you to have a very good governance, you must have a bedrock of security and if for any reason we are here today, let us speedily ratify this Agreements so that the professionalism aspect of RSLAF will be kept in place. I want to thank you very much *[Applause]*.

HON. HINDOLO MOIWO GEVAO: Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate you on your election as Speaker pursuant to the Constitution of Sierra Leone, there is no doubt that our democracy and that the Drafters of the 1991 Constitution using the neutral rule did foresee that there will come a day when the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker will be absent and that one of our kind will be elected as Speaker. Perhaps it is time that we amend the Constitution so that we have Deputy Speaker One and Two so that when such situation arises, we would not have to elect, provision would have been made by amending our Standing Orders and the Constitution itself.

I also want to congratulate RSLAF for protecting us and for the gallantry effort that they put in during our last failed coup, we doff our hats to you and we want to say thanks to you for a brilliant national service; is not easy to be a military personnel, when one decides to join is nothing but national service.

Madam Speaker, I have chosen to talk on these Agreements today because they are very important to our lives. There is every need for our Military to be having cooperations with other countries in the bid to modernize our country. It is often said though I am not a Military man that it is during the time of peace that you prepare for war. No nation prays for war but when it does, you have to be ready to face the

challenges robustly and that brings me to the point of an issue we are facing as Sierra Leoneans. Madam Speaker, I am happy today the Deputy Minister of Defence and the head of the Military is here.

Madam Speaker, I hailed from the East particularly from Kailahun District and I was fortunate to have been brought up within the precincts where we have the Yenga issue, Koindu, Buedu, Kangama and the likes. Madam Speaker, three years ago when we had an incident of smuggling of items from Sierra Leone to Guinea, some of us Members of Parliament decided to actually visit the borders. I must say in 2019 when we visited the Yenga Border, there were no Guinean military forces stationed there; all we could see was the Moa River between Guinea and Liberia. On that particular occasion we met boys from Guinea trying to smuggle pegas pack to Guinea and we were able to stop them. Madam Speaker, it will surprise you to learn that the Guineans have erected permanent structures on the soils of what I referred to as Sierra Leone. In my little knowledge in geography, land marks as far as boundaries are concerned in West Africa are the river belt; so if that is one thing that we have to go by, the land mark between Guinea and Liberia is the Moa River. If you go to my Constituency particularly in a village called Yegema, you will stand in Yegema and somebody will come from Guinea and cross you over.

In my life time this is the only time that we are seeing Military Officers from another neighbouring country building permanent structures, residing permanently on what some of us considered to be the fence of Sierra Leone. Madam Speaker, one should not shy away from the fact when issues of border disputes arise we have two solutions; one is the diplomacy, second is war we do not have to shy away from that [*Undertone*]. The diplomacy almost all over the world is the first option, but when diplomacy fails then the second options normally is war, we are not praying for that [*Applause*].

Madam Speaker, today I want to be on record that I want to implore the Government of Sierra Leone to expedite the diplomatic process of solving the Yenga issue because for those of us that hails from Yenga, it breaks our hearts to see our people not being

permitted by these Guineans to farm on what they called their own land. They are going to keep acquiring those lands until they acquire Koindu Town because the distance between Yenga and Koindu is less than three miles. Madam Speaker, as a Member of Parliament I want to implore the Military and the Government that the attention we have been paying to the Yenga issue is not enough. Madam Speaker, you are in the ECOWAS Parliament and my Honourable Colleague from Kono tells me that you have been raising it in ECOWAS so that the Sub-regional bodies would realize that it is a very serious issue. We have been the people's representatives to call it as it is or to call the negative ramifications or the impact of what will happen if this situation continues to exist then we will be paying lip service to our people.

Madam Speaker, I crave your indulgence as you sit there to also work with your colleague Leaders in this House so that at every point in time we have the opportunity, let us say there is a problem between Sierra Leone and Guinea. It is high time that we have this matter settled in this Sixth Parliament because it started in the Fifth Parliament. I remember our brother that was here Honourable Sahr Juana went and erected solar panels in that part of his Constituency, the Guineans came and destroyed everything; he stood in this Parliament and complained it and nothing has not been done. So I am craving the indulgence of the Military to be using their own diplomatic ways and means on the Government to expedite this issue because it might as well come to a point where the locals might want to recover their own lands and if they do they have no option the Military will have to be dragged in and the duty of every Government as it has always been is to protect the land, lives and properties.

On that note, I want to say the Agreements are non-contentious one and the very object is to modernize our Military with other advanced Militaries in the bid to equip us so that when we are faced with anything we will be prepared. We are not complacent, we are up to it and I believe we are ready to protect our territory. Yenga is our territory and it must be protected by the Government of Sierra Leone. I thank you *[Applause]*.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Madam Speaker, I can understand the passion from his voice. I can understand the position he is coming from and his zest in which he has presented his story giving an explicit geographical description of his own District. I want to seize this opportunity Madam Speaker to say he has explained to us using diplomatic channels and going further, I do not want members of the fourth estate to misconstrue his presentation. We should not misconstrue his statement but to amplify the diplomatic side of it. He has called on the Military and diplomatic communities.

Madam Speaker, he has little or no alternative but to speak the language of his people but for us in Leadership and as Leader of Government Business, we would still use the position of diplomacy. We consolidate peace by negotiations and in fact we are craving your indulgence for those who are with us today will continue to exhaust the diplomatic channel and the Military will advise the Government where necessary. So the use of force is not in our dictionary but he is exemplifying the need and the way these people have been harassed. Most of us have not been to Yenga, he has been there on several occasions. So for the fourth estate please do not run the story that he is calling for war, he has not said that.

So we are still pleading with you Honourable Gevao and with all those who are coming from Kaliahun to allow diplomacy to prevail and allow the Military and the Government to engage a constructive peaceful dialogue in settling the Yenga issue. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much Mr Leader for that correction that shows the proactiveness of what we are here for and to the Members of the fourth estate; a word for the wise is quite sufficient and I believe the Leader of Government Business had made it very clear about the statement that was made by the Honourable Gevao. I want to say thank you Honourable Gevao for the passion you have for your people. I believe that the Minister himself has taken note to look into this territorial infringement of this country because we do not want war again. We have faced it, and we know what it means to be in war. So I hope you are taking note so that you can give us

hope. We rely on you because you are there to look over our lives and properties. Thank you very much.

HON. WUYATTA BERNADETTE SONGA: Thank you very much Madam Speaker. I just want to add my voice to what Honourable Gevao had said and we are here in our numbers because we know this was coming up today and it was really dear to us. We also aware that not all of us can get the Floor to speak, our brother has spoken for us and we just want to add our voices and say this has been an ongoing problem just the way you have said it and our Leader has said it and we are praying that very soon the Military will take it very importantly as they always have. I know that it is disturbing us as representatives because they keep calling us into meetings and we continuously have been craving the indulgence of the Government to act. I thank you [*Applause*].

HON. P. C. PRINCE LANSANA BIO: Thank you Madam Speaker. It is just because of this issue I am here, I have bereaved for the past two weeks. I am retired Captain Lansana Bio from Bonthe. Madam Speaker, I am so delighted to see this issue here today. I have been in the Military with the Deputy Minister of Defense. You have been my colleague as a junior officer; I was enlisted on the 15th March 1992 and started as last coporal and retired as Captain. I know the worth of this issue, it is good for the Military and for Sierra Leone in general. For a personnel to be out there for a peace mission is a plus to Sierra Leone. Please let us endeavour to approve these Agreements because it is a great opportunity for our country. Thank you Madam Speaker.

HON. EMELIA LOLLOH TONGI: Thank you Madam Speaker. I want to thank and even salute our Military people in this country. I was thinking they were going to react each time the Guineans come over to us but they were always there behaving very diplomatically and honestly I thank you for that and I would have loved the Egyptian representatives to be here; these are people that I appreciate personally and they have been very kind to us.

Madam Speaker, the Egyptians have given us scholarships and I will like to thank the Egyptian Government for helping our Military people. This is very important to this

country, it is going to add to their knowledge. They had a misfortune when their colleagues lost and because of their professionalism, they would have lost even more of what they lost and I want to sympathize with you and may the souls of your colleagues continue to rest in perfect peace.

Madam Speaker, my colleague Honourable Gevao has said it all. We are going through hell and I do not want to actually lament on it any more. He has sent the message and I am sure the Government is going to go an extra mile. I do not know what is their intention, probably they are not here to tell us but I am sure they are thinking about it and they are doing everything within their power to make it a successful ending. So on that note Madam Speaker, our representative who is there is just next to me would like to probably add to this and I thank you actually for giving me this opportunity to say something on that issue. Thank you very much.

HON. MOHAMED BANGURA: Madam Speaker, allow me to add my voice to this important debate. We are too small as a country but we are not too small to defend ourselves and that is a message we have to send loud and clear that we are small but we are not small to defend ourselves. The issue of Yenga has long been lingered from the days of President Kabbah, President Koroma to President Julius Madaa Bio and yet still we are talking about Yenga here.

Madam Speaker, I want the Deputy Minister of Defence really to come out with a plan as to how we are going to deal with Yenga. We encourage our Government to continue the diplomatic role but we must have a plan B so that the Guinean Government will know that Yenga belongs to Sierra Leone. I thank you *[Applause]*.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, my opinion to the debate is different and I believe my opinion is highly influenced because I was born and raised in the military barracks. My father is an ex-military personnel. Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, I have been at the military barracks in war and I have been at the military barracks in peace. I could remember years back when we were at war, we will just be at the barracks and we will receive signals from the war front about the passing off of a military personnel and the Commanding Officer will match to the

deceased family to inform them about the passing off of their relatives, those moments are so emotional. So if anybody has witnessed those solemn moments, you will never pray for war in this country.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, we believe that Yenga belongs to Sierra Leone and I want to join the Leader of Government Business for us to exhaust the diplomatic avenue *[Applause]*. All of us have seen what is happening in Gaza, innocent children who are not connected to the conflict are being killed even in the hospital. So we do not want that one to be replicated in Sierra Leone and to me I am of the opinion that if Egypt and Turkey are going into military agreements for us to fight Guinea for Yenga, they will not be convenient with these Agreements.

Madam Speaker, these Agreements primarily are to see how best we can capacitate the Military. I have said it times without number that Sierra Leone has produced over the years one of the best Infantries then it is highly unlikely for countries in the sub-region to compete with Sierra Leone. What is lacking is the military equipments and how they can take care of themselves.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, these two Agreements are blessings to the Military. In article one of the Agreement with Egypt, it clearly says that the intention is to encourage and enhance cooperation in the Military field. Several years ago, we used to send our Military officers to be trained in London and what is most important about these Agreements is that it even caters for logistical services. Let us use these Agreements to uplift the standard of the Military *[Applause]*.

Madam Speaker, my residence in Lungi is not too far from the Military Barracks and I see the conditions under which our Military Officers are defending us. So we can explore opportunities in these Agreements to call for support to help uplift or change the face of our barracks in Sierra Leone. When you go to the Lungi Military Barracks, there is hardly a functioning toilet because there is total scarcity of water and that is replicated to many other barracks in this country. We should use this opportunity to see how best we will be able to uplift the condition of the Military who are responsible to defend and protect lives and properties. What I like about these Agreements is the

working together of Sierra Leone and Turkey, Sierra Leone and Egypt because there are some level of autonomy and independence. It is clearly stated that our national sovereignty must be respected and our territorial integrity must be protected.

Madam Speaker, it does not necessarily mean that because we are going into an agreement with them, they will have the power to encroach or to do whatsoever they want in our country. When I heard about Egypt, I was so happy because Egypt fought at least five wars in 1948, 1956, 1957, 1967, 1870 and also in 1973, there was a war between Egypt and Isreal. So any Military who have been exposed to these numbers of wars must have learnt a lot and must have capacitated themselves in terms of Military.

Madam Speaker, the Military training and education is very important. In the days of the old we used to have Military Officers who did not go to school but in the last 15 to 20 years it is practically impossible for somebody who did not go to school to become a Military Officer. So for them to be exposed to training is one key important factor, and when our Military is fully capacitated, you do not need to ring the bell to any other country, they will advise themselves accordingly. The exchange of experts and professionals in different Military field; I could remember in the 90s, Sierra Leone Military could only boast of a single helicopter and there was just one person who can operate that helicopter and he has died. So if we are going into cooperation or we are going into an agreement, these are the things we should request for. Let our Military personnel in the air wing be trained as to how to fly an helicopter, our Military wing in the Navy let them be trained as to how to protect our waters and it is embedded in these Agreements. So these are the things you do to build the institution for generations yet unborn.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, in Article 2 of the Egypt Agreement, I see one of the intentions of the Agreement is to ensure that they enhance activities in sports, culture and social domains; they say all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. One of the most facilitating moment when we were in the barracks is when the Military have their sporting activities. Now, in this Agreement we will see our athletes in the Military

flying to Kenya, to Egypt or Turkey to participate in sporting activities, this is very important. Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, I want the Military to make good use of all the Agreements that we are passing here, this is not the first Agreement that we have passed here on behalf of the Military, there are several others that we have done in this Well. How is the Military benefiting from those Agreements or are we just coming here we pass Agreements without the Military benefiting from those Agreements?

Madam Speaker, we want to be invited as Parliament to see the implementation of some of what the Military may have benefitted from these Agreements *[Applause]*. We have passed several Agreements and what have we benefited? So we are just not doing it for Agreement sake but we are doing it because we want the status of the Military to be transformed.

Madam Speaker, I want to commend the head of the Military because recently Military Officers who are addicted to Kush were dismissed and one thing about Kush addiction, you will not deny because the signs are on your lips. They are clearly on your lips so if you want to make the Military very better for this nation, it will not be only for the benefit of Sierra Leoneans but it will be for the benefit of other nations that may want to take advantage of us Sierra Leoneans. In as much I have equivocally stated that I do not intend that we go into war with any nation.

Madam Speaker, so to me I wholeheartedly support these Agreements and I want to plead with Colleagues on this side and the other side to expeditiously pass these Agreements and I want to plead with the Military not only to go and fold these Agreements in the shelf but to ensure that every letters in these Agreements are implemented for the benefit of the Military. I thank you *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much the Opposition Leader for the passion you have for the Military and for your comprehensive contribution and over to you Leader of Government Business.

HON. MATHEW S NYUMA: Thank you very much Madam Speaker. Thank you Leader of the Opposition and Colleagues for the useful information and edification given to the House in line with the two Agreements. I start with my Colleague from the other side

that said Section 40 Sub-section 4 of the Constitution that we need to ratify whatever Agreement. You have signed the principle of domesticating the Law or the Agreement in line with national legislations. Madam Speaker, in the Agreement it is well stated that has to do with actions taken by receiving parties that you should obey the national legislations and most of those going on even when you go for training under the administrative structure of the Turkey Agreement, that has to do with the one for Turkey. In the Turkey Agreement is also clearly stated about national legislations.

Madam Speaker, the new legislature we have added our voices to make sure that we highlight the issues affecting the Military, issues affecting personal relationship with our surrounding with the Military that have to do with our sovereignty. Madam Speaker, these are very clear issues that is why we are ratifying it. These Agreements bring so many things on the table for our Military personnel. Madam Speaker, I want to be specific and give some edifications in reminding Mr Minister about what to take note of and what is our intent. Our intentions are very clear that is why we are ratifying these Agreements and I want to say kudos to you and your team Mr Minister and all of those who contributed to these Agreements.

Madam Speaker, as said by my Colleagues very clearly that because of these similarities in Article 2 of the Protocol and that of Article 4 of the Turkey Agreement the fundamental principle of going to this as stated making reference to the United Nations Charter, they are referring to training and education. This type of cooperation Madam Speaker, is very clear to us. There are so many trainings in the Military and in fact the Turkey Agreement is going further in this cooperation but what is very clear is that the secrecy and the protection of what you are going to share in terms of information is very sacrosanct even after these Agreements have been terminated is very clear in the Turkey Agreement and that of the Protocol.

Madam Speaker, with your leave for your edification and for the people to understand what we are about to ratify under the Military cooperation. Let me read Clause 1 of the Turkey Agreement that has the emphasis of training and also talking about the educational benefit that they will get. Madam Speaker, Clause 1; Military training and

education, these are similar both for the Protocol and the Agreement. Training, education and courses at Military schools and training and education centres or other educational institutions to be determined by the receiving parties. For example, if you are coming to Sierra Leone you have to determine that, and if you are going to Turkey you have to determine that also.

Madam Speaker, let me draw the attention of the Minister again on the Agreement on the job training at Military unit, headquarters and institution. We have ratified so many Agreements, and what is the benefit to us as a nation? We praise you but we focused on the strengthening the gains that you have made and also doing it within the ambit of the Legislation or within the ambit of what you have agreed. You should not take of somebody who is well trained to head the flight unit in the Military. I am not a Military man but I can vividly record where I am standing that my family fought for this nation, my Great Grandfather fought the first World War and my Grandfather fought the Second World War and my uncle fought the revolution war which we all know. You cannot forget in a hurry, I am now fighting the political war [Laughter] so we are related to this business of making the Military a very variable and a very professional wing.

Madam Speaker, I heard from my Colleagues saying what do we do in protecting our sovereignty? We would take diplomacy to consolidate peace and so we will continue to engage in diplomacy [Applause]. We can fight using diplomacy and as the Leader of the Opposition said our Military is one of the best in terms of Infantry in Africa so we would continue to ride on that. But what matters much in terms of implementation is a very interesting one. For the Protocol, you have to form a Committee and the Committee will give directives. I just want to emphasize on what the Leader of the Opposition said. Article 5 is talking about new implementation and how do you go about implementing some of these things.

Madam Speaker, let me again draw your attention to this very Article I have read dealing with the provision of the Protocol, that we need to understand in as much as both documents are talking about the principle of education and training. What is this

protocol about as we have already stated here? In Article 3 joint protocol team, in identifying our responsibilities and our aims in terms of financial and legal obligations. This is what we should look at, that is the principle of implementation. In fact in the Turkey Agreement, there are certain courses that will be free of charge that is in Article 5. It will be good for us to know that, there are charges we have to pay for some courses so let me draw your attention to that so that you can understand under Article 5 of the Turkey Agreement. Let me read quickly that: "The parties may conclude complimentary memorandum of understanding Protocols and Agreement for the implementation of these Agreements in accordance with the ratification of process of parties under national legislation and conformity of the provision of these Agreements".

Madam Speaker, Article 5 Clause 1[c] I read: "Organizing training education and course at a cost free of charge or at a reduced cost in Military unit headquarters or institutions". Madam Speaker, it is good for us to understand these Clauses that we are about to ratify and not because we want to make reference to impress the public but we want to draw your attention to certain issues Mr Minister for the execution of these Agreements. You have to understand certain provisions in these Agreements that you need to abide by and for the Protocol, these Agreements will last for only three years.

Madam Speaker, it should be our moral responsibility to do our oversight, to check between the first three years because the Protocol is for three years. For the Turkey Agreement it is five years but if there is no termination, there will be an extension for another year so we are working within a time frame after the ratification so you are not going to wait and that is why I drew your attention into the provisions where you can get free cost of charge, where you have reduced cost and where you will be talking about paying for students when necessary. In fact they are talking about personnel and guest students and it has given us a clear definition what do you refer to as personnel and what do you refer to as guest students but all working within the ambit of the Military structure.

Madam Speaker, you know the Military we believe that there is a high level of secrecy, we are talking about classified information. In fact most of our plan when I made

reference to having a three years for the protocol and five years plus additional if there is no termination, there is protection which is sacrosanct in both documents and there are similarities in terms of protecting what you have agreed in terms of secrecy and confidentiality which also speaks about the Intellectual Property Right that was signed in Stockholm on 4th July 1967 that is Article 2. You can look at the World Intellectual Property Organizations it can tell you about that one, protection, secrecy, and now that the Agreement has been terminated it is in the Turkey Agreement well stated and classified that information should be protected. For the protection of the national security which is the protection of everybody; the Chairman of the Defence Committee said even when the Agreement beyond the time given has expired, you would continue doing the project until it comes to completion and that one is also clear in these Agreements but there are positive steps especially talking about the joint committee of implementation that we should look at very well. In respect to territorial integrity that we have to obey the Laws as I mentioned inter-alia that in as much as we are going for the training and education. I am specifically going to make reference to Article 7 which I will take my time Madam Speaker with your leave to read some provisions because we do not want people to be biased. We want Sierra Leoneans in the Military to benefit from these Agreements but let me again remind you about certain provision especially the Turkey Agreement that has to do with administrative structures [Interruption].

HON. CHARLES O. ABDULAI: Madam Speaker please...

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Point of Order, when I am speaking and you want to obstruct me you use Point of Order before you call the Speaker.

HON. CHARLES O. ABDULIA: I want to raise the Point of Order for the timing Mr Leader, sorry about that. I move the Motion for the suspension of S.O 5[2].

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. EMELIA LOLLOH TONGI: I so second Madam Speaker.

[Question Proposed Put & Agreed to]

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Madam Speaker, I drew the attention of the Minister to classified information even within the Agreement It is very clear to us and which we need to abide by. Madam Speaker, if you want to divulge or give information to third party, it has to do with the consent of the other party as written in Article 5, and Article 8 in the Turkey Agreement; all of them are making emphasis on that. The reason why I am drawing your attention is for the credibility of the State and the integrity of our nation. There are similarities under the United Nations the aims and objectives that are very similar which we would always talk about.

Madam Speaker, let me draw your attention to Article 7 of the Turkey Agreement which has to do with the training and the course of personnel. I will draw your attention because there is a limitation time for you to send a student and there is time that your receiving State may reject. There is a memorandum of understanding that is clearly stated in Article 7 that if you want to send a student or someone to train for the Military the sending party shall inform the receiving party of a final decision. Madam Speaker, Article 7[5] which states that to enable the receiving party to make necessary arrangement, the sending party shall inform the receiving party of a final decision on the participation in training of the number of guest personnel to be sent for the training or course, flight data and data information at least forty-five days before the beginning of the training. Under the same rubric, Clause 2; that a training request by the sending party shall be made through an official letter to the receiving party at least latest in March of the year before the beginning of training in accordance with this Agreement. Upon receipt of the request, the receiving party shall receive it and inform the sending party of it, and reply not later than in July. So there is a complete time frame that is why I have just said let me draw your attention to this provision but Madam Speaker, there is something very clear under this provision, if you are sending someone that is not qualified under the same course, the receiving party will reject the candidate that you have sent. The receiving party; if they found out that this one is not qualified and he or she is not fit for purpose of the course, they will just return that particular individual, so take note of that.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, let me talk about the benefit why we should have appropriate students or personnel. Under the same rubric we have Clause 8 page 5; guest personnel, guest students shall be selected by the sending party accordance to the criteria determined by the competent authority of the receiving party, guest personnel and guest students who do not satisfy the criteria determined by the receiving party shall not be accepted for the training and education so you should send people who are competent and who you think they can deliver. Clause 10 states that, guest personnel and guest students who are sent to attend training of courses have fully completed the specified training of courses or programs and succeeded in the examinations organized according to training or course condition. They shall be awarded certificates indicating that they have completed the appropriate specialization or training. The equivalence of the diploma document certificate is subject to the approval of the higher institution of the sending party under national legislation. I want you to take note of these Clauses, these Agreements will not last beyond five years but the spirit of these Agreements are to ensure that we empower our Military personnel and that is what the Agreement is all about.

Madam Speaker, I will go on and on to make sure we appreciate our Military personnel and even those associated with the Military. Madam Speaker, with all what I have highlighted there are so many things I can talk about and those I have just picked out. There are similarities which I have highlighted in terms of implementation, annual planning, and to make sure these plans are working. My Colleagues on the other side said our oversight responsibility is very important.

Madam Speaker, let me end with the note of responsibility given to all of us. We believe that we achieve the enviable result to make sure that we combat Kush and other drugs that young people are taking that is causing a lot of health hazard to our young generation. Madam Speaker, these Agreements are good as said by my Colleagues but we need to look at the implementation process.

So I thank you very much for your wonderful contributions and Mr Minister I want to thank you for putting all of these thoughts together so that we can have an Agreement or Protocol that can benefit our status as a country. It is a mutual understanding as enshrined in the Agreement. It is a mutual professional skills that we are going to share as someone said we have the best Infantry in the sub region. Thank you very much Madam Speaker for giving me the Floor *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much Leader of Government Business from Bokakajama for your comprehensive contribution. Over to you Mr Minister, maybe you might want to respond to some of the issues that were raised by the Honourable Members, you might want to give us hope, thank you very much.

COL(RTD)MR MUANA BRIMA MASSAQUOI: Thank you very much Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, I think the document in front of you today has been well digested by all of the speakers so I want to take this opportunity on behalf of the senior management of the Ministry of Defence to thank you very much for your recommendations.

As far as I am concerned, the Chairman for Parliamentary Defence Committee, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of Government Business and all other speakers have actually commended this document. So I just want to assure this House that we will go all out to ensure we do our best because the most important aspect of this document is the implementation and also the benefits so I would like to speak on those two issues and maybe speak to the Yenga issue also.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to assure this House that we were just waiting for the Egypt Agreement, we were just from Egypt together with the Minister of Fisheries and Marine resources. The Committees have been formed on both sides, the Egyptian side and the Sierra Leonean side. We have had series of engagements and visits. The Egyptians have visited us once, and we have done two visits to them. We have even come to an agreement that the Sierra Leone Government is going to benefit

and not only the Military. If you look at the Egyptian Agreement under the fields of cooperation, I just want to draw your attention to bullet 12 that is; other fields of cooperation to be agreed upon within the framework of implementing this protocol and other fields of cooperation, we have started with the Ministry of Fisheries. And the other benefits that we have been enjoying from Egypt; let me draw your attention to 1972 and 1978, we sent two set of Cadet Officers to train in Egypt in those days and we are still benefitting from training and education from them. So I just want to assure this House that, we will go all out to ensure that we implement this document.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, let me also speak to the issue of Yenga. I want to throw light on the Opposition Leader and also the Leader of Government Business that diplomatic options are far ahead. We are very much aware of the issue as I am speaking because two weeks ago the Chief of Defence Staff sent a delegation to Yenga on a fact finding mission and that report has been compiled and we are going to produce that report to the Office of the National Security. So the Yenga issue is under review and we are exploring the diplomatic option.

In all of these, we are talking about professionalism and for a Military to be professional, training and education come first. You cannot make your military professional without engaging them in training and what we want to do also is to modernize our Military. Gone are those days when you need too many foot soldiers, modernization in the Military is very key. For example, what is happening at our borders, we have our foot soldiers at the borders but they are not adequate enough. So if we modernize and if we digitalize, we will be able to overcome those problems and the only way we can do it is to have a cooperation with large Militaries and Militaries that are modernized so that is the reason why we are engaging those countries and their Militaries.

Madam Speaker, I have spoken about the benefits because the Egyptian Agreement is not only gearing towards the Military, is speaking to mining, fisheries and other cooperation. So they have a commercial arm that is the National Service Project

Organization; they have seventy companies operating under them and these companies are there to ensure that they provide the services for their people, they will stabilize the prices and also they make sure that in terms of food self-sufficiency they are on top of situation. So we have met with those organizations and that organization will be the lead to interface between the Ministry of Defence and other line Ministries. Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, I think these are the specific areas that we can benefit as a country.

Madam Speaker, let me talk about training and education like the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said. We have specific areas where we target specialist training for example; he made mention of Pilot, Medical Doctors, and Engineers. There are provisions in these Agreements that we will be sending them out there so that they can capacitate themselves. Definitely when you train your personnel, you are capacitating them even when they shall have left the Military, they will still be useful in the society; so that is the essence.

Madam Speaker, classified information, we are very mindful about that. Of course, the Military we are very secret. We have classified information that we can not divulge to people so easily; so that is part of us. Time frame, I think the Leader of Government Business talked about it. We have committees that are working ahead so once this document is being ratified today, we will definitely kick off and we will encourage also this Honourable House to actually monitor our activities because that will give us some amount of hope and also our strength to ensure that we implement this document effectively.

On that note Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday 12th March 2024:

(A) Military Framework Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Government of the Republic of Turkey.

(B) A Military Cooperation Protocol between the Ministry of Defence of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Sierra Leone. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you Mr Minister. Before I put the question, I want to call on the attention of the Committee on Defence, I think you have heard from the Minister about monitoring them; now they have invited you. Please make sure you always go there because we are not here just to be ratifying Agreements but we want to see the challenge and the success stories because we have heard about training and the Minister has confirmed that. So thank you very much and I want to make sure you follow that call.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Madam Speaker, I just want to join you quickly on drawing the attention of the committee that the Minister said they have formed. It is against the intent that you have formed the Joint Committee which you mentioned for the edification of this House; you should not have done that, you have waited before the ratification. So the Joint Committee that you have setup, the implementation in the protocol it is the Joint Committee that is really going to follow up with what is going to happen. I want to join hands to say let us use this area of information of the Joint Committee to see how best you can bring onboard the Defence Committee in Parliament. So Madam Speaker, I just want to join you to make a plead to see how best they can get the Legislative aspect of it. I thank you.

COL(RTD) MUANA BRIMA MASSAQUOI: Thank you very much Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, the committee I am talking about was as a result of our first visit to Egypt and it was a working committee, and work is still in progress. It is not a final committee and we are just using it to start implementing the document. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, the question is be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday 12th March 2024.

(A) Military Framework Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Government of the Republic of Turkey.

(B) A Military Cooperation Protocol between the Ministry of Defence of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

[Question Proposed Put & Agreed to]

The Government Motion by the Minister of Defence has been ratified

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, thank you very much for spending your time with us this afternoon, I hope you will live to our expectations; thank you very much. Any announcement?

HON. SAA EMERSON LAMINA: Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on S.O 23 to say Sierra Leone is a sovereign State and had no interest in a subject called monopoly. I will refer the House to Section 73[3] and [3] together with Section 105 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone [Act No 6 of 1991 Constitution] which made the Parliament of Sierra Leone as the supreme legislative authority in the making of all Laws.

I will further refer the House to Section 93[3] and [6] which talked about the powers of a Committee of Parliament to investigate an issue from MDAs within the purview and that Committee of Parliament and shall have such rights, powers and privileges as are vested in the High Court. I will refer the House about intriguing from the two days oversight that took place and gave room for exploitation.

I will give give a case study of Jmil Sahid who monopolized the Fisheries, Cement Factory and also Lowcost Housing in this country.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a wakeup call to members of the Sixth Parliament against monopoly that is to take over our nation. It will also surprise you that it will give room for exploitation of our country. A case study of Jamrie Sahid who monopolized the fishery and cement factory of this nation and should be a wake up call to Members of Parliament in this Sixth Parliament.

Madam Speaker, in the Australia stock exchange market a certain CEO has vowed to even take over Sierra Rutile the CEO Pregdin by name to take over Sierra Rutile whiles we urge Sierra Rutile to take up in terms of taxation so that the nation shall benefit. We cry stinking fish, we oppose and we are against monopoly to take over this nation. I thank you very much Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I think I will just make one or two comments on that. Talking about monopoly, it is not good for a nation. We should have open and free market for a nation if we want the economy of a country to grow. We should leave it open so that we can have competition but if you just limit it to individuals, I do not think that will be fine. So with that, you are the Committee Chairman on Mines and Mineral Resources, you have to move a Motion or you wait for the time for the questioning of the Minister so we can engage him on that.

HON. AARON ARUNA KOROMA: Thank you very much Madam Speaker and I want to congratulate you for being the first female Speaker in the Sixth Parliament. The issue of monopoly like the Honourable Member said is very important that is what we called an unfair trade practices. As a way of example Madam Speaker, like the case of Leo Rock or Kingho as we called them and that of Sierra Rutile. Because of the competition that is in place, whiles Sierra Rutile is paying almost nine times higher than Leo Rock even when Leo Rock claims to be the biggest mining company, they are negotiating to pay a Hundred thousand Dollars [\$100,000] as annual surface rent whiles Sierra Rutile is paying Nine Hundred Thousand Dollars. So if you have a monopoly, it means one player to determine the price, so there will not be any benefit for Sierra Leoneans. So I think that you must do everything possible to discourage monopoly in our mining sector

because we all see what is happening now in Kono. The mining practices in Kono is not good, from the news people are saying that Kono is a time bomb, in otherwords, the mining practices in Kono is not fair. They are now leaving in a time bomb so if we leave the market open we will have players that will come with better mining practices that will create innovation, we need someone to advert the looming crisis that the Kono people are now leaving under.

On that note Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for taking this matter very seriously; indeed we must not encourgafe monopoly, it is not good for the nation.

THE SPEAKER: So as I have said we should wait for the Minister for Question Time so you can engage the Clerks on the questions.

HON. BINTU FATMATA BOCKARIE: Thank you very much Madam Speaker. I rise on S.O 23 to draw the attention of this noble House concerning the behaviour of Marampa Mining Company. I believe oversight is one of our primary functions in Parliament, the letter was written to them, we summorned them, we went there and Marampa Mining Company refused to attend the meeting. So on that note that is a great disrespect to us as the sitting Honourable Member of Parlaiment and the Committee and this is the company that wants to buy Sierra Rutile, with this kind of behaviour.

So I want to draw the attention of this Parliament to call on Marampa Mining; that is a great disrespect to us as the sitting Honourable Member of Parlaiment and the Committee as a whole. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much and I know the Committee on Mines, you have to take note of that and when you invited them and they failed to come, I think that one is contempt. So you have to rewrite, inviting them with a very strong invitation, so you have to do that; thank you very much.

HON. FATMATA SARAH SOUKENAH: Madam Speaker can I bite please from this noble cake?

THE SPEAKER: Okay hold on please.

HON. TAMBA KILLIE: Madam Speaker, most of the people speaking are on the Mines Committee, can they give us chance to talk please because they know of the issues which we do not know.

THE SPEAKER: I have not given you the Floor please.

HON. ALPHA BEN MANSARAY: Thank you Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker I stand on S.O 23. First of all, I enjoyed the boat ride to Shenge, I enjoyed the boat ride to Bumpeh and Ribbi, for you to be the Acting Speaker today, congratulations to you. Madam Speaker, I want to draw the attention of this House with regards the International Trade Policy of which we are part of the World Trade Organization. Under the Sierra Leone Trade Policy, Madam Speaker with your leave, I want to reference pages 39 and 51 of the Sierra Leone Trade Policy which is in conformity with the International Trade Policy; Page 39 of the Mineral aspect of the Trade Policies says:

1. Is to attract investors to large scale mining
2. To attract fair benefits to investors, labours and the community in the mining sector to ensure competitiveness.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, I want this House to pay keen attention of the constant decline on the export of goods in this country because if we have a low export in the mining sector, that means it will affect totally our micro economic gains and again there is a constant decline in the Labour job market because companies have been stifled to operate and the youths would lack the job opportunity and we have our President who is well determined to employ a lot of youths. So therefore I want to join with the attention of this House that if we are going to make gains to avoid vain, let us encourage competition so that we move this nation forward.

I want to thank the Chairman on Committee on Mines and Mineral Resources that with his pragmatic leadership, I know he can do more to save this nation most of the problems we are already in; thank you Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. The Honourable Member from Freetown, one minutes please.

HON. FATMATA SARAH SOUKENAH: Madam Speaker, I want to stand on S.O 23, talking about our tour to all of these mineral companies around Sierra Leone. What we saw in those places Madam Speaker is really bad, it has a lot to do with our economy and by so doing our economy will not grow. Monopolization has been the order of the day in all of these companies. One company wants to take over Sierra Leone mineral and another will be suffering in the corner crying out for help and that is why I want to thank my Chairman who brought the issue up in Parliament so that we can deliberate on it and have a headway forward so that the country Sierra Leone will benefit from its minerals and no monopoly. I thank you.

HON. MUSA FOFANAH: Thank you very much Madam Speaker. I want to stand on S.O 23, in relation with the mining sector. As the Leader from the Minority Party said there is a very serious problem in Kono and I want to focus on the area of the NMA.

Madam Speaker, is really not just for the country to have mining companies who have taken license to mine and they do not register with NMA. The Mining Lease Agreement is an Agreement that is binding the community, the Government and mining companies. Madam Speaker, we have multi-million dollar mining companies in this country mining with large scale mining license; they do not have the NMA and if we are talking about creating of five hundred thousand jobs for five years Madam Speaker, the mining sector stands the test of time to help us achieve this. If you come to Port Loko District for example; the CTC has taken over seven months without export; is a remedy for collapse because the Pepel Port has been monopolized but despite that, I want to assure this House that CTC has also reached out to stakeholders that we want to create

our own road. We want to create our own Port, is still difficult for stateholders to help them for them to spend their money. They want to spend close to Twelve Million Dollars [\$12,000,000] to fix their port and fix their own road to transport their Bauxtile.

And the other critical problem around, the Port Loko Bauxtile has lost its value for over Sixty-eight years. Sixty-eight years of our country's history, Port Loko has discovered their Bauxtile, they have never benefitted from that Bauxtile for one full year and this is a risk to the Five Big Changer Agenda of the President.

Madam Speaker, this is not only for Question Time, let have NMA and the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources at the emergency meeting in this House is very critical for us. If you listen to the radio this morning, there is a huge problem in Kono and all mining companies. You cannot pay in Tonkolili close to a Million Dollar for surface rent and you pay in Kono Three Hundred Thousand for an acreage that is in fact more than the one you have in Tonkolili; is disadvantage to kono people, is disadvantage to even revenue for this country.

Madam Speaker, the issue around mining, we want to take it very seriously and let us bring NMA and the Ministry here let them answer to our questions; this is an emergency issue. Thank you very much Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I think you have to engage the Committee Chairman, please take note and make sure you invite them wherein you will inform the Leadership so that we will be part of that meeting.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Madam Speaker, let me join others in congratulating you on your election as Speaker this morning. Madam Speaker, what we need to do and quite clearly you have set out the appropriate approach is to call the relevant stakeholders but I do not think it does us any good because these mining companies, they operate on the bases of contractual relationships between them and the Government of Sierra Leone. I think our first point of call is the contract to see what is contained in it otherwise we will be arguing on issues unnecessarily. It is in place to have the mining

companies here to come and explain themselves. It is an agreement between those companies and the Government and so we need to call them, look at their contract and see what is containing in the contract otherwise we are just talking and we cannot get to the bottom of the issues so that is the appeal I am making to the Chairman of the Mining Committee.

HON. SAA EMERSON LAMINIA: Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, it will also surprise you to learn that most of these mining companies talking about do not even have NMA, so you cannot talk of contract where an NMA does not exist. I think all the mining companies we visited do not but one case study CTC does not have NMA, Maghi Mining does not have one neither Ceral Mining Company. So the MPs are not just talking, we are waiting for the comprehensive report in two weeks time to be laid possibly somebody will raise a Motion for a debate and the necessary recommendations from that report, the MDA which is the Mines and Mineral Resources will definitely implement those resources so you have to be very guided for subsequent times. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Yes Honourable Member round up please.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Madam Speaker, I was on my leg when he interrupted but that is fine.

THE SPEAKER: He is a Leader that is why I gave him the Floor.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Madam Speaker, I was not trying to be pejorative with reference to those that have spoken but all I was saying, you have made the point very clear. You said they do not have Mining Lease Agreement and that may well be a breach of their contractual arrangement with the Government of Sierra Leone. So when you lay your report, we will have to look at it and then that will be the starting point of a fruitful debate on this issue. When I spoke about innuendos, innuendos in the sense that we do not know what is happening so is a kind of observation but when you bring the factual parameters before us, we would be in a position to make fruitful

contribution. So I do not mean to be dismissive of the effort you guys have made; so I just want to make this clarification clear *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I think we have to draw the curtain on this mining issue. Are you on this mining issue?

HON. MOHAMED BANGURA: No, I am not.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, let me allay your fears, that is why we have asked the Chairperson for the Mineral Resources to invite them and when you are writing the letter you make sure you mention what some of these Honourable Members have measured.

HON. MOHAMED BANGURA: Madam Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of this House an issue which is very important that is the recent demolition taking place at the Lumely Beach. Madam Speaker, this issue now is a national issue; I do not know if the Chairman of Tourism is here but I want Madam Speaker for the Chairman of Tourism to call or summon the Minister and his officials to come in this Parliament to answer to us the modalities which they applied in that demolition exercise *[Applause]*. Madam Speaker, citizens have been crying of injustice according to them about the demolition exercise that has been carried; that is why I am now asking this House through the Chairman of Tourism and Cultural Affairs to summon the officials of Tourism to come to this Parliament for them to explain to the Members of Parliament the criteria which they used to demolish some of those places, otherwise it is becoming a national crisis.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Members, the Clerks if the Chairperson on Tourism is not here, you please make sure you inform him about the demolition going on in the Beach because I have also heard about it and citizens are crying about it in the country. We need to know maybe it might be a comprehensive one or maybe it might be for the benefit of the nation or the country so we would like to know so please

inform the Committee Chairperson to invite the Minister as stated. Any more announcement?

MR ALIMAMY L BANGURA: Honourable Members are kindly requested to collect copies of the Bill entitled The Industrial Relations Trade Union Act 2024 at the Dispatch Section. The above Bill will be introduced by the Minister of Labour this week.

Honourable Members of both the Committees on Social Welfare and Health are kindly invited to a meeting immediately after sittings at Committee Room 1.

ADJOURNMENT

MR SPEAKER ADJOURNED THE HOUSE TO WEDNESDAY 27TH MARCH, 2024

AT 10:00 AM

THE HOUSE ROSE AT 12:50 PM

1: 31.10.0

18:14.5