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Issue No. 043-20

Tuesday August 18 - Monday August 24, 2020



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## Youth

# SIERRA LEONE: Youth Must Have Say in Governance - Hon. Abdul Kargbo

By Melvin Tejan-Mansaray

In observance of the year 2020 International Youth Day (IYD), Chairman Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Youth Affairs in the Fifth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone, Honorable Abdul Kargbo has said that the 'youth must have a say in governance whenever they are dissatisfied and the Government should listen to them.'

Since the year 1999, the United Nations designated August 12 for the world to celebrate International Youth Day (IYD) to raise awareness regarding the cultural, social and legal issues concerning youth.

"The IYD is celebrated to highlight the importance of young people in the nations," the UN said.

Although the COVID-19 has seriously affected the usual local, national and international events marking this day, the 2020 theme, "Youth Engagement for Global Action" aims to engage young minds while raising awareness regarding the cultural and legal issues affecting them.

The theme also seeks to highlight ways in which the engagement of young people at the local, national and global levels is enriching national and

**"Youth must have a say in governance, whenever they are dissatisfied, the Government should listen to them,"**



Since the year 1999, the United Nations designated August 12 for the world to celebrate International Youth Day (IYD) to raise awareness regarding the cultural, social and legal issues concerning youth

multilateral institutions and processes, as well as draw lessons on how their representation and engagement in formal institutional politics can be significantly enhanced, the UN reports.

Young people apart from the women make up the greatest part of the population demographics in Sierra Leone and with the country being a part of the global League of Nations, it is also observing this day in a rather low key due to the COVID-19. The issues affecting young people are boisterous and enormous from lack of inclusion to drug abuse, lawlessness and illiteracy, poverty and diseases, unemployment to entertainment, you name it, the youth are affected either as victims or as perpetrators.

It is against this backdrop, that Parliamentary News (PN) sought the views of Honorable Abdul Kargbo Chairman Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Youth Affairs in a special interview, to flesh out the issues from a Legislators' perspective, ascertaining the progress, challenges and way forward for young people in Sierra Leone.

Asked to put a local context to this year's global theme, Hon. Kargbo said: "Our youth cannot be prepared for global action when they are not engaged locally."

He said that there is a need for more young people engagement in the local and governmental interventions, adding that: "In recent times, we have seen the number of youth who partici-

pated in demonstrations and protests. This is to send a message that they are not engaged locally."

"Youth must have a say in governance, whenever they are dissatisfied, the Government should listen to them," Hon. Kargbo said.

He said that the country needs to pay more attention to global youth action, noting that the representation of youth in the composition of the current Executive is also not too encouraging.

"We encourage Government to appoint more youth into senior positions in the governance cadre," Hon. Kargbo said, echoing that, "youth are not too engaged locally."

Responding to questions on the successes and challenges affecting the youth in terms of engagement and his assessment of the strides made by the Government so far in terms of youth engagement and involvement, Hon Kargbo said:

"There are not much programmes that will keep the youth busy. I, therefore, call on nongovernmental organizations to fund programmes that are meant to make life better for our youth. Government should ensure that it prioritizes issues of youth. The Youth Basket Fund should be implemented."

The MP for Kaffu Bullom, Port Loko District Northern Sierra Leone, Hon. Kargbo encouraged the youth to prepare themselves

and grab whatever opportunity that is made available to them advising them to eschew drugs, crime and extreme dependence on the adults and especially politicians for their living or livelihoods. He said: "Youth believe in depending too much on politicians for their livelihoods."

Hon. Kargbo however said that a silver bullet remedy to the problems of the youth in Sierra Leone is the legislative review.

**"We encourage Government to appoint more youth into senior positions in the governance cadre,"**

"As we review the National Youth Policy, issues relating to capacitating the youth must be included," he said.

On his best wish for the young people of Sierra Leone, Hon. Abdul Kargbo said: "My best wish is for the Government to prioritize youth issues."

He however registered his worst fear if the situation remains the same by saying that: "My worst fear is that instead of engaging the youth, Government in most cases have proven very hard in handling youth issues."

## Youth

# GHANA: Political Institutions Urged To Champion Youth Inclusiveness

By: Emmanuella Dadugblor

Political institutions in the country are being called upon to include young people in their activities to foster national development. The call was made by the Member of Parliament for Ledzokuku, Hon Bernard Okoe Boye in a statement presented to the house to mark International Youth Day (IYD) on Tuesday, August 12, 2020.

According to him, this year's celebration on the theme "Youth Engagement for Global Action" seeks to highlight the contributions of the youth in various levels of the country is enriching the multinational institutions and processes.

He disclosed that the celebration is also expected to enable the



Member of Parliament for Ledzokuku,  
Hon Bernard Okoe Boye

youth to draw lessons on how their representation and engagement in formal institutional politics can be significantly enhanced.

He said the engagement of the youth in the political institutions will help in building their capacity so they will be able to contribute meaningfully to national discussions. "Political institutions are being called upon on such a day to ensure that youth occupy relevant positions in their organogram. This is to ensure inclusiveness and more importantly, build the capacity of the youth in readiness for leadership and stewardship now and in the future" he noted.

Dr. Oko Boye said the contributions of youthful leaders of the past, continue to shape national discussions even in the present day therefore there is the need to continue to encourage the youth to take up leadership roles to contribute their quota to national development.

Meanwhile the Second lady, Hajia Samira Bawumia has added her voice to the calls of youth empowerment and inclusive-

ness, stating that it is important that the world empowers the youth in responding to the pandemic since they are a critical and valuable force in development.

Speaking as the Guest Speaker at the commemorative durbar organized by the National Youth Authority, in collaboration with the United Nations and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Ghana, held a durbar at the Alisa Hotel in Accra, Mrs. Bawumia said the youth could respond to the coronavirus crisis through public health promotion, volunteerism, innovation and creativity. "Young people can play critical roles in disseminating accurate information on COVID-19. Tackling risk and stigma, policing fake news and supporting information sharing on risk education, national preparedness and response efforts," she said.

Mrs. Bawumia said young people should find new and innovative ways to communicate with their governments through channels such as radio and social media platforms to access medical and other essential services.

The second lady urged society to endeavour to include young people in planning activities towards making the world a better place for all.

Minister of Youth and Sports Isaac Kwame Asiamah, lauded the Ghanaian youth for proving to be key actors in finding solutions to global challenges. He said since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, some young Ghanaian innovators had developed disinfectant chambers to help sanitize one's whole body at a go.

"More encouraging is the fact that the youth in this pandemic are actively helping their communities as healthcare staff and social workers, finding in-

novative ways to teach or act as social change activists and taking care of patients and loved ones, among other things. We commend our youth for their high spirit of volunteerism, nationalism and patriotism," Mr. Asiamah said, Chief Executive Officer of the National Youth Authority (NYA) Sylvester Matthew Tetteh, also noted that the youth had been the hardest hit in the COVID-19 crisis particularly in education, hospitality and creative arts. He pledged the commitment of his outfit to tackling the challenges posed by the pandemic as well as the continuous execution of its mandate of promoting youth engagements.

Country Representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Niyi Ojuolape, expressed the commitment of the United Nations and its agencies in investing in the youth including listening to their voices and ensuring their meaningful participation in decision making. "We will go beyond that by investing in young people participation, organisation and initiatives, thereby, safeguarding their ability to lead in achieving the SDGs," he said.

August 12th is celebrated each year as International Youth Day to celebrate young people and renew commitment to support activities of the youth. In 1999, the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) endorsed the recommendation made by the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth (Lisbon, 8-12 August 1998) that 12 August be declared International Youth Day. The Assembly recommended that public information activities be organized to support the Day as a way to promote better awareness of the World Programme of Action for Youth, adopted by the General Assembly in 1995.

**"Political institutions are being called upon on such a day to ensure that youth occupy relevant positions in their organogram. This is to ensure inclusiveness and more importantly, build the capacity of the youth in readiness for leadership and stewardship now and in the future"**

# Local Government and Rural Development

## GHANA: AU Charter On Values And Principles Of Decentralisation, Local Governance And Local Development Ratified

By: Emmanuella Dadugblor

Parliament of Ghana has adopted the motion on the Report of the Committee on Local Government and Rural Development and ratified the African Union Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development.

The Charter seeks to promote, protect and act as a catalyst for decentralisation, local governance and local development in Africa and champion local governance and local democracy as one of the cornerstones of decentralisation in Africa.

It also seeks to promote resource mobilisation and local economic development with the view to eradicating poverty in Africa and promote a shared understanding and a common vision of Member States on the core values, principles and matters relating to decentralisation, local governance and local development.

The Charter will also be a guide for policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation at the continental, regional, state and sub-national levels to encourage effective coordination, harmonisation and knowledge sharing within the Member States and among regional economic communities.

The Deputy Minister of Local Gov-

**The Charter seeks to promote, protect and act as a catalyst for decentralisation, local governance and local development in Africa and champion local governance and local democracy as one of the cornerstones of decentralisation in Africa.**

ernment and Rural Development Hon. Osei Bonsu Amoah presented the Charter to Parliament on 11th June 2020 on behalf of the sector Minister, Hon. Hajia Alima Mahama, pursuant to Article 75(2) of the 1992 Constitution, which was referred to the Committee of Local Government and Rural Development for consideration and report.

Chairman of the Committee, Hon. Kennedy Ohene Agyapong, moving the motion for the adoption of the Report on Monday, August 10, 2020, noted the committee concluded that the house ratifies the charter since it is in line with the country's legal framework on local governance and decentralization and does not put any financial obligations on the country.

"considering the similarities between the AU charter and the values and principles of decentralization, local governance and local development of Ghana's legal framework on decentralization and the fact that there are no burdensome financial commitments on the part of Ghana in respect of assertion to the charter, the committee recommends to the house to ratify the charter in accordance with 75(2) of the 1992 Constitu-

tion" he noted.

He also explained that the Charter covers three thematic areas namely decentralisation, local governance and development and encapsulates principles of fundamental values of community participation and inclusivity, solidarity, civic responsibility, transparency and accountability.

He said the Charter is in line with the strategic goals and objectives of the country for the facilitation of social integration and inclusiveness, consistent with the provisions of the Constitution including the Directive Principles of State Policy and Decentralisation and Local Government, and will make the decentralisation process more vibrant to project Ghana as a champion of decentralisation and local governance in Africa.

The Report further observed that these institutions are already funded as part of the annual budget to implement activities on decentralised political and administrative planning, fiscal decentralisation, local economic development and popular participation which are similar to those in the African Charter and would therefore not require a separate budget to implement.

Seconding the motion or the adoption of the report a member of the committee, Hon Ackah Stephen Michael Essuah Kofi intimated that most of the issues raised in the charter are already being implemented in the country hence an endorsement of the charter will only be an addition to the steps being taken by the country in that regard.

"The committee further observed that Article 7, 14 and 16 of the charter are on resource mobilization and local economic development and transparency. As I said, these are already issues being handled by the local government authorities in the country. Mr. Speaker, it was also observed that the principle of representation was also something which is already being practiced in the country and for that matter, he was the need for government to ratify the Charter". He said

Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Hajia Alima Mahama, supporting the report, also said the key value of the char-

ter is to ensure that there is a common understanding and vision of what decentralization and local governance entails, particularly among member states. It will become a continental monitoring system that will ensure that nations live up to their local provisions on decentralization.

For his part, Deputy Ranking Member of the committee on Local Government and Rural Development, Hon. Benjamin Komla Kpodo despite the evidence that most of the issues raised in the charter are already being implemented in the country, not much has been seen in practice regarding the issue. He, therefore, called for a more robust arrangement which will enable authorities at the local levels to be fully involved in the implementation of local government policies to promote inclusiveness.

"In practice, are we really doing this? It appears that we are centralizing and pushing things still to Accra. We have not fully practiced what we are preaching. We find ourselves transferring assignments to the assemblies without the support to be able to implement the assignment. So I think that we should change gear and make sure that whenever assignment is given to the assemblies, we provide the necessary financial resources to be able to execute this. When we talk of this local employment this, payment is done in Accra. When we talk of school feeding programme, it is still centralized in Accra the local assemblies do not have much authority"

The Assembly of Heads of States and Governments at its Twenty-Third Ordinary Session held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea in 2014 adopted the Charter in line with the AU Executive Council's Decision in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on Developing an African Charter on the Value, Principles and Standards of Decentralisation of Local Governance on 28th January 2012.

The African Union Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development has been signed by most member states but has been ratified by very few governments. It tasks governments to democratize development and ensure that it does not only remain at the top but is extended to the grassroots.



Chairman of the Committee on Local Government and Rural Development, Hon. Kennedy Ohene Agyapong

## Water Resources, Works and Housing

# SIERRA LEONE: SLEWRC Director-General Implores Parliament

By Melvin Tejan-Mansaray

**M**r. Emmanuel Mannah, Director-General for Sierra Leone Electricity and Water Regulatory Commission (SLEWRC) has told the Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Water Resources that they need to come in and make sure that they work with Guma Valley Water Company, the state water utility company to design a policy and look out for money from the Government or whatever sources to make sure that it can supply water to the general public.

Mannah made this call during the first meeting of the Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Water Resources held on Wednesday, August 12th, 2020 at the Administrative Building of the Sierra Leone Parliament.

The public hearing by the Water Resources Committee examined the status of the institution and was also used as a familiarization for the new Sessional members to acquaint themselves with officials of the Commission.



Mr. Emmanuel Mannah, Director-General for Sierra Leone Electricity and Water Regulatory Commission (SLEWRC)

Speaking to Parliamentary Journalists just after the public hearing, Mannah said that their first meeting with the Committee in the third session went well and was very interesting expressing that they appreciate the concerns raised by Members of the Committee and their interest in making sure that utility is delivered in line with their mandate.

Members of the Committee however repeatedly stressed the point that water unavailability, poor quality and supply remains a challenge, adding that even the Parliament Building does not have water supply.

Mannah said over the years, “as a regulatory body our role is to monitor the quality of services.”

He said: “The challenge with the water sector is the unavailability of water. That responsibility lies in the utility responsible for the production of water, in this case, the Guma Valley Water Company and the Sierra Leone Water Company (SALWACO). These are the two large utilities that are responsible for the production of water for the consuming public of Sierra Leone.”

He said that their role has been working together with these utilities because their services must be of quality and whatever price that they charge is affordable to the consumers which he said is a challenge.

“We have collaborated with Guma Valley to understand their constraints, one of which is the unavailability of supply of water. They do not have it and also do not have storage. That being the case, what-

ever little water that they have, they should make sure we give the consumers at an affordable price and with quality. We make sure also that we monitor how they treat the water in treatment plants to make sure quality is provided,” Mannah said.

Members of the Committee said that there is a seeming lack of innovation on the part of successive leaders at the utility companies in addressing the age-old problems of water scarcity and quality in the country but Mannah said this reference was made for the utilities which he said since the 1960s, Guma is yet to expand the old and existing water dam, always complaining that the colonialists designed it for just three hundred people but the population has far surpassed this initial projection with over two million consumers now living in the capital.

He said that they are not responsible for the water production aspect but responsible for what goes to the consumers, “making sure that whatever little water that is produced, the consumers get the best out of it in terms of price and quality.”

Mannah said that they do not want polluted water to get to the consuming public, adding that for 2020, out of a hundred and sixty sachet water companies, only fifteen have been licensed to operate so far.

“What has been happening over the years, the aspect of water marketing has been highly polarized and diluted more so, and there are different players. People wake up creating overnight water companies, so, when I came onboard almost eighteen months ago, we have created a database. By so doing, we will be able to know whosoever that is in the sachet and water bottling market so as to be able to monitor them, telling them the dos and don’ts. Some marketers do not even know that they should license. They just wake in the morning and establish companies. It is from the database that we have been able to license fifteen companies,” Mannah said.

He added that those companies failing to license are closed down noting that it is not just about the issuing or withdrawal of licenses but for the companies to meet the set requirements of the license which do not have any deadline. He said that

they are holding engagements and discussions on the issue and after which they will publicly publish the names and addresses of the companies for the public to know the companies with water that is good and those that are not good for drinking.

It was also an issue that a one percent levy as per statutory agreement has for over five years not been paid by the utility companies.

Giving his impression about the hearing of the Water Resources Committee, Mannah said: “The Committee is very poised. They were very fair. I think they were very open. They are poised to make sure that institutions deliver as mandated by President Julius Maada Bio who said 2020 is a year of accelerated service delivery. What I appreciate more is the fact that we have started dialogue and understanding ourselves so that we will not misunderstand the roles.

Most of the time, people misunderstand the role of the regulator versus the producer. Guma and SALWACO are the institutions responsible for all the water issues. We are just around to make sure that whatever water they have is giving to the consumers at an affordable price and of quality. But if they do not have the water how can they provide it to the public. This is a very big challenge.”

Mannah added that: “I told the Committee that they need to come in and make sure that they work with Guma to design a policy and maybe look out for money from the Government or whatever sources that they have to make sure that Guma can supply water to the public.”

Emanuel Mannah nonetheless called on the general public to be patient with the utility companies as they as a regulatory body and now armed with five enacted water regulatory instruments which are the weapons and the bullets that they have to make sure that they monitor and regulate the utilities so that they would provide quality of service to the consumers.

“That being said, there is also the responsibility of the consumers to pay their bills for the water that is supplied to them. Stop tampering with Guma pipes; it is creating difficulties for the whole water chain. In as much as we want water, let us make sure that we pay for the water that we would be getting. The regulatory body is there to make sure that we get the quality of water at whatever price,” Mannah said.

**The public hearing by the Water Resources Committee examined the status of the institution and was also used as a familiarization for the new Sessional members to acquaint themselves with officials of the Commission.**

## Transparency and Parliamentary Openness

# SIERRA LEONE: The Accountability Space In Sierra Leone Is A Very Narrow One - Hon. Tawa

By: Melvin Tejan Mansaray,  
SIERRA LEONE

**H**onorable Ibrahim Conteh Member of Parliament representing Constituency 132, Western Area Urban, Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP), and newly appointed Sessional Chairman Parliamentary Transparency and Accountability Committee (TAC) has said that his appointment 'comes with additional responsibility because if you look at the accountability space in Sierra Leone, it is one that is very narrow in a sense that not too many things happen in a transparent way'.

The Government bencher, Hon. Tawa said in an exclusive interview with *Parliamentary*

*News.*

"Not so many people want to be accountable for what they do on a daily basis and the notion of people wanting to be protected by politics and political parties especially when we come to governance, we shy away from taking on difficult issues and one of the most difficult issues are transparency and accountability."

He further explained that: "It is a completely different feeling being appointed as the Chairman of the TAC. It is more difficult and I still find it challenging because it is something that comes with expectation, unlike my election to represent the people of Constituency 132 in the Parliament of Sierra Leone which came from the fact that people saw my enthusiasm and dedication.

In this instance, people have seen that I have stood severally in the Chamber and on different fora calling for accountability and asking for transparency to be engendered in the running of the state and in the dispensation of governance activities, so more or less, being appointed as the Chairman of the TAC comes with loads of expectations and high hopes from within and outside the precinct of Parliament. It comes with

additional responsibility because if you look at the accountability space in Sierra Leone, it is one that is very narrow in the sense that not too many things happen in a transparent way.

Not so many people want to be accountable for what they do on a daily basis and the notion of people wanting to be protected by politics and political parties especially when we come to governance, we shy away from taking on difficult issues and one of the most difficult issues is transparency and accountability."

He further said that President Julius Maada Bio is on record to have expressed commitment in fighting the wars of corruption, indiscipline and poverty which are interchangeable wordings, but him, they mean the same thing and have the same effects.

"If there is no corruption, there will be a little need for having poor people. There is high level of discipline because if people have what they eat or what is actually meant for them, they can go out and benefit from what comes from the corridors of power, then it means there is hardly any need for them going to joining a ghetto group or clique to go and wreak havoc or mayhem. For me, putting action to the intent and pronouncement of the President in fighting the three wars is embedded in my appointment as Chairman of the TAC," Hon. Tawa said.

Hon. Tawa has been perceived as a whistleblower that blew the whistle in an incident between the Clerk of Parliament and accountability of finances for parliamentary oversight. This matter was however being probed into by the country's anti-graft agency.

Hon. Tawa said he has seen support from the leadership adding that it can be a ham-

pering factor in the fight or efficiency of the Committee if this is lacking adding that if there is muzzling, hoodwinking and strings-pulling from behind; it will affect the effectiveness of the Committee.

"On my part, is a test of my integrity, character and my resolve," the governing SLPP Western Area Caucus Leader, Hon. Tawa said.

He said investigating issues worth millions of dollars or billions of Leones and ensuring that if the processes were not done transparently or failure on accountability by those that are supposed to account in line with the laws will be pursued.

He said: "What I know is that integrity is earned and not measured, as at now people assume that I have integrity. People still assume that I am one of those people in this Parliament that believes in accountability and transparency and hence, the reason I have to ensure that I lead the others in the Committee with that degree and sense of responsibility and purpose that there is an expectation already on us."

"The Parliament of Sierra Leone is at its lowest ebb in terms of public confidence and I think this is the moment to turn it around. Being giving this Committee is not only a test of my integrity and the position that I have taken but it is a test of what Parliament can actually do," Hon. Tawa said.

Asked if his Committee is going to be influenced by the scapegoat and sacred cow notions in its quest for public accountability and transparency, Hon. Tawa said he does not want to see anybody or institution as a scapegoat or a sacred cow.

He said: "I don't want to exempt any institution, just that I will like to say for the volume of

**"Not so many people want to be accountable for what they do on a daily basis and the notion of people wanting to be protected by politics and political parties especially when we come to governance, we shy away from taking on difficult issues and one of the most difficult issues is transparency and accountability."**



Honorable Ibrahim Conteh is the newly appointed Sessional Chairman Parliamentary Transparency and Accountability Committee

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## Roads and Highways

# GHANA: Fourteen Pedestrian Bridges To Be Constructed

### As Parliament Approves €28.5M Facility

By Emmanuella Dadugblor

Some 14 pedestrian bridges will soon be constructed in selected locations in the Greater Accra, Ashanti and Central regions to aid the easy movement of persons within these areas. Parliament has approved a €28.5 million contract agreement between the government and Jason Bridging International BV of the Netherlands for the construction at hazardous locations in three regions.

The project is expected to be fully functional within 36 months and will be located close to critical fa-

cilities such as schools, hospitals and other public places, to enhance the safety of all road users, especially the vulnerable.

This is in line with government's year of roads declaration as well as its efforts to ease inconveniences of vehicular traffic which leaves pedestrians in very uncomfortable situations on arterial road networks.

The agreement was presented to Parliament by the Majority Leader and Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Hon Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, and it was referred to the Committee on Roads and Transport for consideration and report.

Presenting the report on Monday, August 10, 2020, Chairman of the Roads Committee, Hon. Samuel Ayeh-Paye said the scope of works will include engineering design, manufacturing, supply and installation of the bridge superstructure, ramps and civil works as well as solar lighting facilities. It will also include concrete pavement and landscaping, relocation of utility lines, training, capacity building and supply of bridge accessories.

According to the report the locations identified and proposed for the installation of the pedestrian bridges are the N1, near pedestrian traffic lights at Abeka Lapaz, Tetegu Junction traffic light and Weija Junction as well as Kanda highway, near the mosque. Others are The Greater Accra Regional Hospital, Ridge, N4 at Okponglo/Shiashie extension and N4, near the Presbyterian Senior High School (PRESEC) traffic light, Legon, all in the Greater Accra Region.

In the Central Region, the bridges will be constructed at N1, University of Cape Coast (Eastern gate, southern/central gate), and N8 Lorry station/Catholic Hospital in Assin Fosu.

The rest of the bridges will be located near the Opoku Ware SHS, N6 Sofohline Bus Terminal and the SDA Hospital along the Sunyani road as well as the SDA School on the western bypass, all in Kumasi in the Ashanti Region.

According to the report, the government, through the Ministry of Roads and Highways (MRH) has constructed several arterial roads in some of the capital cities in the recent past which had consequently improved mobility and shortened travel time on these roads. It said the arterial roads constructed had however compromised the safety of vulnerable groups, pedestrian and non-motorised transport users within the selected cities.

A considerable number of lives were lost needlessly through road accidents on our highways, especially when they traversed urban areas or densely populated communities.

In November 2018, residents of Adenta held a demonstration on the back of rising road crashes on the Adenta Highway sparking chaos and roadblocks by the residents. Twenty-four people have been killed on the road with 164 others sustaining injuries.

To address these challenges, the report said the sector ministry had identified several crossing points within the cities, which needed appropriate pedestrian facilities to ensure Safety.

In a related development, parliament has approved a 65 million Euro loan facility for the construction and rehabilitation of three bridges.

These are the Ankobra Bridge over the Ankobra River, Iture Bridge which connects Cape Coast and Elmina and the Dikpe Bridge on the Black Volta between Lawra and Dikpe.

Chairman of the Finance Com-



Chairman of the Roads Committee of Parliament, Hon. Samuel Ayeh-Paye

mittee, Dr. Assibey-Yeboah, presenting the committee's report on the floor of the house said the existing Iture bridge is in a deplorable state due to the proximity of the bridge to the sea, exposing it to severe weather conditions. "Constant splashing of the seawater on the bridge element causes the aggregate of the concrete to undergo chemical reaction, leading to damage to both concrete and steel bindings. The bridge has severe deterioration of the superstructure resulting in the loss of its load-carrying capacity" he told parliament.

The Ankobra Bridge, he indicated suffers a similar fate which has resulted in it the loss of the load-bearing capacity of the bridge.

For the Dikpe Bridge, he noted the Ministry of Roads and Highways, through the Ghana Highway Authority, seeks to construct a 25-kilometer span bridge over the Black Volta on the Lawra-Duikpe road. This is because the available canoe services on the river do not meet the transportation demands of the people who use the river. Travelers are also exposed to the dangers of canoe travel.

The facility has a seven-year repayment agreement with a grace period of 2 years.

**The scope of works will include engineering design, manufacturing, supply and installation of the bridge superstructure, ramps and civil works as well as solar lighting facilities. It will also include concrete pavement and landscaping, relocation of utility lines, training, capacity building and supply of bridge accessories.**

## General News

# SIERRA LEONE: Doubt Looms over Impact of the 2020 Census on the Legislature

By Melvin Tejan-Mansaray

Samuel Ansumana Director Communications and Public Relations Statistics Sierra Leone has retorted on the possibility of having new wards, constituencies and districts after the December 4th, 2020, Population and Housing Census, saying that he cannot tell whether more seats are going to be added or cut from the country's legislature.

Answering to questions from **Parliamentary News**, Ansumana said the census is

not geared towards reducing or adding more seats to the already 146 seats in the current legislature, Fifth Parliament (Third Session) of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

He said: "That is not something which the census is geared towards and I cannot speak to that. What I know is, we had issues with the 2015 census and that is the reason why we proposed for us to have a mid-term census."

He said that there were issues as a result of the fact of that type-three localities could not tell the specifics of the popu-



Prof Osman Sankoh, Statistician General of Statistics Sierra Leone (Stats SL)

lation for the villages and for that they needed to go back to the field to count to be able to get the population figures of the specific villages, "so that is the reason why we are having this census and not to add to constituencies or reconstitute new constituencies, and things like that."

Asked about any possibility of having new wards, constituencies and districts which will have a multiplier or diminishing effect after the census, Ansumana said: "That is something which I cannot tell at this juncture."

"What we are to do is to bring a very viable and trustworthy population figure for the people of Sierra Leone and we will put them out there at the end of the day for everybody to know, after which maybe, other things will come into play but that is not really the purpose here," He said.

He however stated that the

2015 census was credible in terms of data and figures but had few data coding issues but they had the population right.

He said: "When you want to disaggregate the figures like if you want to put it into components, detaching a certain population to a certain village or town that is where the problem was. But the totality of the figure was actually credible."

Politically, some political parties have already registered reservations about the upcoming census citing fears of an unfair play. Ansumana said there is no political hidden agenda for the upcoming census adding that:

"As far as we are concerned, we have promised this; by the way, our Statistician General Professor Osman Sankoh is from the North. There is no political reason behind this. This was done purely out of a technical need and that is what we are doing."

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## Political and Presidential Affairs

# SIERRA LEONE: Hon. Emerson Lamina Dissociates From Court Action

By Melvin Tejan-Mansaray

**H**onorable Saa Emerson Lamina Parliamentary Leader Coalition for Change (C4C) political party has refuted claims by conspiracy theorists that he is behind the ongoing court action that has slammed an injunction on the activities of the party in the last few days.

He made this disclaimer in a telephone interview with Parliamentary News while reacting to social media and other rumors that although his name is not included among the plaintiffs in the ongoing High Court matter, he is masterminding and pulling the strings on this matter financially and otherwise.

Hon. Emerson said: "I am presently in Kenema for the past three days and it is a big no to the question or rumors that I am among or behind the plaintiffs that prayed for the injunction which has been slammed on the party. I am very innocent of all that is ongoing."

He said that those parroting such misinformation or disinformation should take another look at the Court's papers to see if his name is included among the plaintiffs



Honorable Saa Emerson Lamina Parliamentary Leader Coalition for Change (C4C) political party

or defendants in the matter.

It could be recalled that the High Court of Sierra Leone (General Civil Division), in a matter of the Political Parties Act No.3 of 2002 in the matter of the Constitution of the Coalition For Change (C4C) 2017 in the matter of the interim Executives of the Coalition for Change (C4C) between Plaintiffs/Applicants Sahr Nyama, Dr. Alieu M. Iscandri and nine others and Defendant/Respondents Tamba R. Sandi, David Bai Conteh and seven others before the Honorable Mr. Justice S.O. Taylor J. dated the 12th Day of August 2020, " HAVING HEARD J.J Campbell Esq. of Counsel for the Plaintiff/Applicants on the said Application, and the Court been satisfied that the urgency of this matter warrant it to grant the 1st and 2nd Order prayed for."

"This Honorable Court hereby grants an interim injunction on the Defendants whether by themselves, their agents, privies, servants or however called from conducting any further party activities until the hearing and determination of this Application," the Court orders among other things, signed by the Master and Registrar.

According to Hon. Emerson, he can never wish for such happenings within the party he single-handedly created while in the USA/UK after he was removed as Mayor of Kono District Council by his former party, the All Peoples Congress (APC).

He said: "My dream has ever been peace within and without for all party members. I am a poor man to be sponsoring such a matter." Hon. Lamina however established that he cannot be scared of his shadow by being cowardice, underscoring that: "The Kono Community knows that I am a fearless fighter. At the fullness of time during my tenure as the then Mayor, I filed a litigation against a multinational mining company (Ocea) for failure to pay taxes to my Council; when Chief Sam Sumana was unconstitutionally sacked, no Kono descendant in authority was that bold like myself to stand by him in the Supreme Court by carrying his file in my

capacity as Mayor. Amidst APC intimidation in Kono, I never backed off. I am a free-born. I do not hide behind fingers."

Hon. Lamina stressed the point that it is not him that neither filed nor backs the plaintiffs noting that, "it was the founders of the party who travelled from London a week ago to file that injunction and not us."

All hell broke loose after the decision of the C4C party to remove Hon. Lamina as the current Parliamentary Leadership was thwarted by a ruling of the Speaker of Parliament Hon. Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu that he discounted such a prayer by the party's Secretary-General saying it lacked any Constitutional or Standing Orders basis thus, he will continue to recognize Hon. Lamina as the party's Parliamentary Leader.

Hon. Emerson however said that attempts to smear him will end futile because he aims to make the C4C stronger ahead of the 2023 general elections adding that the present political wrangling within the party is not unique only to the C4C citing the cases of Kapindi Jamiru vs. Dr. J.K Smart - UNPP, Dr. B. Lahai vs. SLPP, which were all precedents on which he banked on following the decision of the House Speaker to maintain him as the party's parliamentary leader.

Hon. Lamina said because of his fearlessness in taking the Ocea Mining Company to Court, Kono District is now enjoying two hundred and thirty thousand dollars yearly as Community Development Fund since 2016 to date to two chiefdoms in the Kono Districts.

"People must know that I am not a coward. I am boldface enough to challenge whatever issue. I single-handedly led the campaign for the election of all C4C MPs in Kono including the election of thirty-nine councilors," he emphasized. He however said that holding the party's convention will have to see some people putting pride aside and work collaboratively with all sides of the in-

traparty divide since the mandate of the current executive expired two years ago.

"The Executive of the party must remove the log from their own eyes before attempting to remove me as the parliamentary leader of the party," he said.

Allegations abound that the Executive of the C4C is also grappling with another matter of misappropriation of funds at the Anti Corruption Commission over the alleged misuse of over two hundred million Leones as contributions from MPs which some of the party's diaspora members are seeking accountability for. It is also alleged that during the 2018 elections run-off, the former President Dr. EBK bankrolled the C4C party huge amounts for which transaction records abound at the country's Commercial Bank.

Insiders believe that the issue in the C4C party is a proxy battle between the APC and SLPP with the sacked Vice President Alhaji Chief Sidiki Sam Sumana feeling threatened by his political rivals in the District.

Hon. David Bai Conteh, Leader C4C party said that he could not speak to this press for now but will do so when the time is ripe.

**"I am presently in Kenema for the past three days and it is a big no to the question or rumors that I am among or behind the plaintiffs that prayed for the injunction which has been slammed on the party. I am very innocent of all that is ongoing."**

## Transparency and Parliamentary Openness

# SIERRA LEONE: The Accountability Space In Sierra Leone Is A Very Narrow One – Hon. Tawa

*Continued From Page 6*

work that is available, we are going to examine every government agency," adding that among the list of agencies to be probed is that of the National Revenue Authority on legal provisions of money paid into transits accounts and the remitting of that money the same day into the consolidated fund, for which they will want to see if this is happening or if not, why that money continue to seat in those accounts or what and for what returns.

He said that he had wished that his mandate would have been tagged for a period of three to five years but it is a sessional responsibility that he cannot predetermine his retention but that of the prerogative of the Committee on Selection noting that he hopes doing the right thing should please the Leadership of Parliament and the Selection Committee as he is prepared to do the right thing and not ready to treat anybody as a sacred cow or scapegoat.

"I am ready to treat the merit of the issues, looking at them fairly and squarely and from the standpoint of the law and if they don't meet the law. Before my coming in as Chairman, I understand that there is memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Anti Corruption Commission (ACC)." Hon. Tawa said, adding that he will also want to have MoU with the National Public Procurement Authority (NPPA) for them to tell the Committee the master procurement plan for Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) looking thoroughly at their report for those institutions that have refused to follow the provisions because there is a law stating processes for sole sourcing, request for quotations, restrictive bidding or international competitive bidding which must be followed.

He said other agencies like the Ministry of Transport and Aviation are going to be examined on the processes followed for the purchase of the fifty buses, the emergency purchase of SUVs for COVID-19 administrators to ensure that the laws were followed and if not, provide reprimands or

recommendations to ensure discontinuation of such misnomer.

He said that the running of the TAC will be no business as usual as they have taken their time first to have a familiarization meeting before which the Clerk and himself have designed an activity plan which was beefed up by the membership on their first meeting with new inclusions and modifications of the wordings and targets which the Committee adopted with amendments carried in form of a motion.

"We are going to try as best as possible to exhaustively use the membership in terms of engagement because in probing into issues of transparency, we cannot look into one agency today and after two weeks we call another agency, no. We want to ensure that if we are going to look at an agency, we exhaustively look at everything that we want under that agency – procurement activities, list of suppliers, amount attached to suppliers, their contracts, the process they followed in terms of observing the Public Procurement Regulations of 2002 and the Public Procurement Act, 2016 and the Public Financial Management Act, 2016 and 2017/18 to ensure that people observe the law, because if you don't observe the law then whatever you have spent you have spent illegally and we must ensure that we recover such money and correct such processes.

We have listed a programme and we are not going to do a fire-fighting approach. We want to do a structured work, ensuring that whatever we do is planned and we produce a report."

Hon. Tawa said that he has introduced new reforms in the form of instead of probing for a full session; they will be segmenting their activities as per quarter, "so we have taken the date of the announcement of the Committee in August as the start of the first quarter – August to October."

"We are going to adopt an activity plan and that activity plan will exhaustively request for information in the coming weeks and once re-

ceived, the information will be shared among members and ensure that in a week time members go through them exhaustively and we begin to bring in the witnesses. At the end of the quarter, we want to produce a report and discuss the merit of the report and maybe move a motion so that that report can be debated in the Chamber and that will see effectiveness in enhancing transparency and accountability," Hon. Tawa said.

Giving an assessment on his impression on the work of his predecessors at the TAC, Hon. Tawa said, "For the Fifth Parliament, I am sure I was brought into the Committee because the leadership believed that the TAC has been viable but not very effective, maybe what they were expecting from the Committee they were not getting it because part of the measurement of the work of parliament depends on the Committees of Finance, Public Accounts and Transparency. Whatever happens in governance has to do with money and the use of those funds by MDAs largely depends on how these Committees ensure a probe into the proper and procedural use of funds."

Weak parliamentary oversight has been a bane in the Sierra Leone Parliament, thus the issue of budget allocation to Parliamentary Oversight Committees (POCs) such as the TAC was posed to Hon. Tawa for his comment.

"From what we were told from the first briefing of Committees in the Committee Seminar held by the Clerk of Parliament, is that thirteen or more parliamentary committees will be going on oversight this year and the oversight purse has been increased from twenty to sixty million Leones and that is because of severally other activities have been taken into consideration but that is for oversight.

So, for other activities, we have not been given money and we want to ensure that our work attracts donor funds to support us in doing what we want to do. We want to ensure that we get transparency at the highest, and all of the things the TAC will be doing apart of quarterly targets and report is the fact that we are going to be paying attention to

the recommendations of the PAC. That is not to say if those recommendations are weak or go in line with the audited report, we are barred from taking some of the audit exceptions and look at it in line with the recommendations, but we are going to pay attention to the PAC recommendations so as to ensure that the PAC's work is effective."

He said the PAC hardly debated report should be debated for actions to be taken on them, noting that the TAC is an organ that he sees in collaboration with the PAC in terms of implementing the Auditor General's (AGs) recommendations which must be cleared with what actions on recuperation and action taken, "so at the time the AG's report comes out, those exceptions and recommendations cleared by the PAC and TAC collaboratively will be taken off the books of the AG."

Corruption perception surveys largely show that corruption still abounds in Sierra Leone and the general public holds this as a great mistrust for governments.

Hon. Tawa said that the public should expect sincerity, honesty, dedication and drive.

"I want to lay a very good marker for the TAC like I have done for the Committee on Environment which was a new committee set up by the current Parliament after the President created the Ministry of Environment in 2019. I have put together a Committee that is viable with a term of reference (ToR), a very good relationship with the Ministry, helping as a consultant in terms of the review of the legislation.

This is the same thing that I want to do with the TAC. I want to lay a marker wherein anybody that comes in after me as TAC Chairman knows exactly what to do, know where to probe, and ensure that those probings yield dividend because, at the end of the day, every other Committee has probed other agencies but what is the outcome, that outcome is what makes the difference and I would ensure that there is a difference in the outcome that comes out of the TAC," Hon. Tawa concludes.

## Defense and Interior

# GHANA: Parliament Approves Over \$ 166 Million Loan For Purchase Of Armoured Vehicles For GAF

By: Emmanuella Dadugblor

Parliament has approved an Eighty-Six million dollar (\$86, 000,000) loan facility from Israel for the purchase of armoured vehicles for the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF). About \$80 million of the amount will be paid to Elbit Systems Land Limited of Israel for the supply of the vehicles whilst the rest will go to firms arranging the facility and other associated costs. This forms part of three loan agreements totaling One Hundred and Sixty-Six Million, One Hundred and Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$ 166,120,000) approved by the house for the purchase of armoured vehicles from Israel for the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF).

The armoured vehicles to be supplied under the contract agreements include Ten Units 8x8 Armoured Vehicles, Ten Units 6x6 Armoured Vehicles and 5000-30MM Ammunitions for building and maintaining adequate military capabilities and high combat readiness to enable the Ghana Armed Forces to continue to be central to achieving defence and security goals.

The first facility was between the government of Ghana (represented by the Ministry of Finance) and Israel Discount Bank Limited for an amount of Seventy-Four Million, One Hundred and Twenty Thousand United States Dollars (\$74,120,000) to finance the supply of Armoured Vehicles to Government of Ghana.

The House also approved the Government's request for a Commercial Loan Agreement between the Government of Ghana and the same bank for an amount of Twelve Million (\$12,000,000) for the supply of Armoured Vehicles.

The final facility approved is a contract Agreement between the Government of Ghana and Elbit Systems Land Limited of Israel for an amount of Eighty Million Dollars (\$ 80,000,000) for the supply of Armoured Vehicles.

The loan agreements were separately laid by the Minister for Monitoring and Evaluation Hon. Anthony Akoto-Osei and the Minister of Defence Hon. Dominic Nitiwul on Monday, August 3 and referred to the Joint Committee for Defence and Interior and the Finance Committee by the Speaker, Rt. Hon. Professor Mike Aaron Oquaye for consideration and report.

Chairman of the Finance Committee Hon Dr. Mark Assibey-Yeboah presenting the Memorandum accompanying the loan facility before approval on Thursday 13th August 2020 indicated that the current threat of vigilantism and other border threats from the neighbouring countries especially the Sahel Region, Nigeria's Boko Haram and Ghana's western boundary dispute between Ghana and Ivory Coast indicate that the Ghana Armed Forces needs to prepare.

He said most of the equipment of the GAF are obsolete and need replacement adding that over the years, the country has been keen on equipping the military with modern equipment to ensure that the military is adequately resourced to work effectively and efficiently particularly in the newly established 154 Armoured Regiment Unit in Sunyani. "The government is therefore keen on equipping the military with modern equipment in the desired quantities to ensure that the military is adequately resourced to work effectively," he said.

According to him, the use of these vehicles will not be limited to the peace-keeping operations of the military but will also be used for ensuring internal security as well. He noted that the contemporary threats of the time definitely require modern weapons and equipment with highly trained personnel to achieve the desired goals and that Government, therefore, has, as part of its priority, the need to adequately equip the military with equipment which guarantees protection and mobility as well as efficient firepower to carry out its mandate.

"In support of the goal to achieve



Minister of Defence Hon. Dominic Nitiwul

a more robust combat-ready military, Government is committed to ensuring the development of military power through enhanced realistic combat training, featuring multi-service exercises and mobility operations", Hon Assibey-Yeboah stated.

Dr. Assibey-Yeboah said given the sensitive nature of the activities of the military, agreements and procurements made for the military worldwide are discussed in camera. He however said the government in a bid to promote accountability and transparency has decided to make the agreement public.

Backing the arrangement for the house to alter processes to allow the approval to be executed in-camera, Minority Chief Whip Muntaka Mubarak said the minority had concerns about the purchase. According to him, the delicate nature of their concerns with regards to the security framework called for a closed-door sitting as earlier agreed with the Defence Minister. "I know a number of issues that will be raised by some members and in my view; those issues do not be in the public domain because they are accountability issues. Yesterday, some of them were raised with the Defence Minister and Foreign Minister and they all agreed that we should do this in a closed sitting. It's best to do this in closed sitting so that we can freely raise the issues. These are accouterment of our military and it is not best we discuss it in

open chamber" he intimated.

But Majority Leader Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu insisted that leaders of both sides of the house agreed in an earlier backroom discussion in which it was agreed that the discussion is done in public, adding that MPs will be measured in their comments. "We said to ourselves that we will manage the discourse... This is the arrangement that we had and I believe the members who are here will respect the format that we agreed on," the Suame MP said.

Speaker Prof. Mike Oquaye said the debate will go on in public, but he will stop MPs if they go overboard. "I just want u to note; in all democracies, matters relating to foreign relations, national security, defence, are regulated in a way. In this connection, I, as the referee here will ensure that if any person decides to go overboard, I keep the discussion on track. Because matters regarding military power, military issues cannot be toyed with, it's not done anywhere" he cautioned.

Defence Minister Dominic Nitiwul also assured there will be value for money in the purchase.

"Public procurement will do value for money audit, Parliament will also do theirs, and the Ministry for Finance before the contracts are finally executed and completed," he said while expressing appreciation for the support received from both sides of the House.

## Food and Agriculture

# GHANA: COCOBOD Gets \$1billion For 2020/2021 Crop Season

By Emmanuella Dadugblor

Parliament has approved some One Billion, three hundred million dollars (\$ 1,300, 000,000.00) loan facility from a consortium of banks and financial institutions to finance the purchase of cocoa beans for the 2020/21 crop season by the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD).

The House also approved a waiver of Stamp Duty worth Six Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$ 6,500,000.00) on the

**The cocoa industry according to the report, remains a major source of the country's foreign exchange earnings and contributes significantly to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).**

receivables-backed trade facility between the COCOBOD and the consortium of the financial institutions with the Government of Ghana as guarantor.

The Facility Agreement to be drawn down in two installments based on the operational needs of COCOBOD and the Stamp Duty waiver request were presented to the House on Friday 7th August by the Finance Minister Ken Ofori-Atta in accordance with Article 181 of the 1992 Constitution and subsequently referred by the Rt. Hon. Speaker Professor Aaron Mike Oquaye to the Finance Committee for consideration and report.

Presenting the Committee's report on the loan for approval on Wednesday 12th August 2020,

the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Hon. Dr. Mark Assibey-Yeboah said the loan will facilitate the purchase of 900,000 metric tonnes of cocoa beans from farmers through the Licensed Buying Companies (LBCs) and to also finance other operations of the Board for the cocoa season. It will also facilitate the operations of COCOBOD for the 2020/2021 cocoa season.

He said COCOBOD is however required by the Stamp Duty Act, 2005 (Act 689) to pay zero-point-five (0.5) of the amount as Stamp Duty which is why parliamentary approval was being sought for the waiver which has been assessed by the Ghana Revenue Authority on the Syndicated Facility amount of USD 1,300,000,000.00 to be USD 6,500,000.00.

The New Juben South Constituency legislator also disclosed that the committee's discussions with officials of COCOBOD reveal that the determination of the producer price is within the mandate of the Producer Price Review Committee (PPRC) hence COCOBOD will not hesitate to implement a price review whenever the PPRC does same.

He said the Committee recommends approval of the facility based on the relevance of the cocoa industry to the economy as a sector that employs an estimated two million people along the supply chain. The industry according to the report, remains a major source of the country's foreign exchange earnings and contributes significantly to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The cocoa industry, the Chairman added, has been the backbone of Ghana's economic development over the years supporting infrastructural developments in education, road and highways among others while importantly; most of the foreign exchange earnings from cocoa are retained in the country thereby boosting foreign exchange reserves in support of the local currency.

Accordingly, he said, the Committee given the immense contribution and importance of the sector to the economy respectfully recommended to the House to adopt and approve by resolution the USD 1,300, 000,000.00 loan facility and USD 6,500,000.00 Stamp Duty waiver request.

Per the terms of the agreement, repayment of the principal is to be effected by seven (7) equal installments beginning February 2021 and ending August 2021. The terms of the financing include a Facility Amount US\$1,300,000,000.00, interest rate One Month LIBOR + 1.75% p.a., Commitment Fee 0.62% p.a. and an upfront Fees 1.25% flat. Seconding the motion moved by Dr. Assibey-Yeboah, MP for Adaklu, Governs Kwame Agbodza, expressed worry over the delay in the release of the report on an audit of the cocoa roads project which was suspended in 2017. He said it is unsettling to approve another loan for COCOBOD when it is yet to submit the audit report on the cocoa roads. He also bemoaned the decline in the production levels of cocoa in the country, questioning the government's preparedness to repay the loan considering the low production level.

Responding to the question on cocoa roads, the chairman of the Finance Committee indicated that the committee cannot make a pronouncement on that matter since it is not part of the agenda before the house.

The cocoa industry has been the backbone of Ghana's economic development before the discovery of oil in commercial quantities in recent times. The industry has over the years employed millions of Ghanaians and serves as a major source of foreign exchange earner for the country.

Member of Parliament for Ho Central, Benjamin Komla Kpodo who also contributed to the motion questioned why there were no provisions for export duties on cocoa in the 2020 budget ap-



Chairman of the Finance committee, Dr. Mark Assibey-Yeboah

proved by the house last year. He observed that report allocated a zero budget for the export duties which should be paid by COCOBOD, an action that should be a preserve of parliament and the Ghana Revenue Authority. He describes the situation as an act that undermines the authority of parliament and must be addressed. He also called for prompt legal actions against the perpetrators.

Hon Kpodo also bemoaned the high cost of financing the loans given to COCOBOD each year. "In the same presentation, one billion, nine million two hundred and forty thousand, nine hundred and forty-one Ghana Cedis and eighteen pesewas (Ghc1,900, 240,941.18) is allocated to finance the cost of borrowing. And it is the second-highest on the expenditure on re-user price of cocoa. so my point is that we are borrowing money to do very good things but a big chunk of it is just going to be used to service what we are borrowing" he lamented.

Since the 1999/2000 crop season, Cocoa production in Ghana has increased significantly reaching over one million metric tonnes in the 2010/2011 crop season.

It has become an annual ritual for the government to approve loans for COCOBOD for the purchase of cocoa beans, a situation some members of parliament describe as worrying.

Aside from the financial implications on the national purse, the trend does not reflect on their production level as it continues to decline.

## Parliamentary Practice & Procedures

# Last Week in Ghana's Parliament

By: Benjamin Opoku Aryeh

After fifty-four (54) sittings of representing their constituents, ensuring oversight, and making laws, the Parliament of Ghana has adjourned sine die on Friday, 14 August 2020 marking the end of the Second Meeting of the Fourth Session of the Seventh Parliament. This Meeting goes down as the longest Meeting in the life this parliament in the Fourth Republic. The House during the meeting approved the sum of GH¢11,896,477,566.00 as Supplementary Estimate for the 2020 Financial Year.

### Bills

These bills were passed during the period: Registration of Births and Deaths Bill, 2020; Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development Bill, 2020; Development Finance Institutions Bill, 2020; Revenue Administration (Amendment) Bill, 2020; Registration of Birth and Deaths Bill, 2020 the Real Estate Authority Bill, 2020 was read a second time after the Committee on Works and Housing submitted its report on the bill.

### Papers

The following papers were laid on the floor of the House.

Hon. Samuel Atta Akyea, Minister responsible for Works and Housing, laid the Engineering Council Regulations, 2020 which was referred to the subsidiary legislation committee. The Hon. Member for Okaikwei Central, Mr. Patrick Yaw Boamah laid a report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs on the Host Country Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana and the African Union for the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area Secretariat.

(i) Terms of a Receivables-backed Trade Finance Facility between Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) and a Consortium of Banks and Financial Institutions, with the Government of the Republic of Ghana as Guarantor, for an amount of up to One Billion, Three Hundred Million United

States Dollars (US\$1,300,000,000) to finance the purchase of cocoa for the 2020/2021 Crop Season by the Ghana Cocoa Board; and (ii) Request for waiver of stamp duty amounting to up to the Ghana Cedi equivalent of Six Million, Five Hundred Thousand United States Dollars (US\$6,500,000) on the Receivables backed Trade Finance Facility between Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) and a Consortium of Banks and Financial Institutions, with the Government of the Republic of Ghana as Guarantor, for an amount of up to One Billion, Three Hundred Million United States Dollars (US\$1,300,000,000) to finance the purchase of cocoa for the 2020/2021 Crop Season by the Ghana Cocoa Board.

The Rt. Hon. Speaker referred the Facility and Requests to the Finance Committee for consideration and report.

The Minister for Defence, Mr. Dominic Bingab Aduna Nitiwul laid these papers on behalf of the Minister responsible for Finance.

(i). Ghana's Subscription to 3,883 additional pro-rated shares allocated under the Share Transfer Rules (STRs) of the Sixth General Capital Increase (GCI-VI) of the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) at a cost of Thirty-Eight Million, Eight Hundred and Thirty Thousand Units of Account (UA38,830,000 [equivalent to US\$54,362,000]);

(ii). Ghana's Subscription to 182,414 new shares allocated under the Seventh General Capital Increase (GCI-VII) of the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) at a cost of One Billion, Eight Hundred and Twenty-Four Million, One Hundred and Forty Thousand Units of Account (UA1,824,140,000);

(iii). Financing Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana (represented by the Ministry of Finance) and the International Development Association (IDA) for an amount of Two Hundred Million United States Dollars (US\$200,000,000.00) to finance the Ghana Jobs and Skills Project (GJSP);

(iv). Financing Agreement between the Government of the Republic

of Ghana (represented by the Ministry of Finance) and the International Development Association (IDA) for an amount of One Hundred and Fifteen Million United States Dollars (US\$115,000,000.00) as additional financing for the e-Transform Ghana Project;

(v). Term Loan Facility Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana (represented by the Ministry of Finance) and Standard Chartered Bank, London for an amount of Ninety-One Million, Three Hundred and Seventy-Five Thousand, Three Hundred and Seven Euros and One Cent (€91,375,307.01) (backed by Ekspport Kredit Fonden [EKD] guarantee) to finance the design and construction of drainage and ancillary sewage system in Accra (Nima drain from Kaokudi to the Odaw River Basin);

(vi). Tied Term Loan Facility Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana (represented by the Ministry of Finance) and Standard Chartered Bank, London for an amount of Ten Million, Three Hundred and Eighty-Four Thousand, Six Hundred and Ninety-Five Euros (€10,384,695.00) to finance the design and construction of drainage and ancillary sewage system in Accra (Nima drain from Kaokudi to the Odaw River Basin);

(vii). Term Loan Facility Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana (represented by the Ministry of Finance) and Deutsche Bank AG, Frankfurt Branch (as Arranger and Original Lender) and TMF Global Services

(UK) Limited (as Facility Agent) for an amount of One Hundred and Forty-Seven Million, Five Hundred and Five Thousand, Seven Hundred and Thirty-Four Euros (€147,505,734.00) for the reconstruction of the Bechem – Techimantia – Akumadan (40.4km) and the Tarkwa – Agona Nkwanta Road Projects; and

(viii). Facility Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana (represented by the Ministry of Finance) and Standard Chartered Bank, London (as Agent, Arranger and Structuring Bank) [with UK Export Finance as Guarantor] for an amount of Forty-One Million, Eight Hundred and Twenty-Eight Thousand, Seven Hundred and Ninety-Three Great Britain Pounds and Seventy-Seven Pence (GBP£41,828,793.77) to finance the Design and Delivery of Prefabricated Bridges for deployment throughout Ghana.

The Rt. Hon. Speaker referred all the Subscriptions and Agreements to the Finance Committee for consideration and report.

Also, the Hon. Deputy Minister for Works & Housing, Mrs. Barbara Asher Ayisi laid the Design-Build Contract Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana (represented by the Ministry of Works and Housing) and Messrs QGMI Construcciones Infraestructuras Globales of Madrid, Spain for an amount of Ninety Million Euros (€90,000,000.00) for the design and construction of drainage and ancillary sewage system in Accra (Rehabilitation of

*Continued on Page 15*



Ghana Parliament House

## Parliamentary Practice & Procedures

# SIERRA LEONE PARLIAMENT IN RETROSPECT, AUGUST 2020

By Melvin Tejan-Mansaray

A summation of some major activities, events and meetings of the Fifth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone in the first and second weeks of August, 2020 will without doubt capture the following:

In the first week of August, the House:

On August 3rd, 2020, with support from the European Union 'Support to the Governance Sector in Sierra Leone Programme,' the House held a five day training for Staff of the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO), wherein Mr. Speaker Hon. Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu disclosed that it is the House's ultimate goal to have its own or an autonomous budget outside that of the Executive but Mr. Speaker was quick to register caution that he does not see this happening this year nor next year but with continuous similar kinds of training he is hopeful.

On 4th August, 2020, the House held pre legislative public hearing on the bills, the Consumer Protection and Cybercrimes bills, 2020 respectively, at Committee Room No. 1 during which MPs fine tuned both bills but especially the Consumer Protection Bill which was eventually enacted.

On Wednesday 5th August, 2020, the Parliament of Sierra Leone conducted training for Chairpersons, Deputies and Committee Clerks on the need for effective and efficient parliamentary oversight for the development of the country.

On August 6th 2020, Parliament held its twelfth plenary sitting in the third session and first in the month of August 2020 during which Dr. Patricia N. Laverley Deputy Finance Minister laid the agreement, 'Project implementation amongst the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Bank and the African Development Fund (As Administrators of the transition support facility) (support to investment promotion agencies in transition countries pilot project),

dated 30th January, 2020.'

Friday 7th, August 2020, was the thirteenth and last plenary sitting during which the House was sent on a recess for the third session.

The House however ratified the project agreement tabled by the Deputy Minister of Finance as already stated above. The said agreement was spoken about highly by the Deputy Minister but an opposition Member of Parliament, Hon. Aaron A. Koroma expressed dismay over the lack of local content in the hiring of international consultant for a work that locals can do. His sentiment was also shared by the House Speaker who

**Another issue of significance was that the month of August 2020 ushered in that of Mr. Speaker's discountenancing of the Coalition for Change (C4C) party Secretariat's decision to change its Parliamentary Caucus Leadership seeking to oust Hon. Saa Emerson Lamina as the party's Leader in Parliament.**

called for more space for local consultants in such undertakings.

The Speaker also at last announced the establishment of an Independent Parliamentary Investigating Committee to examine the issues that triggered the incident of July 17th and 18th that claimed six lives, injured many and left scores in detention in the northern City of Makeni, an opposition APC party stronghold.

The Hon. Paramount Member of Parliament K. Brewa, Kono District is charged with the duty of heading this Committee which the Speaker warned was not established to serve any party interest.

When contacted with a few enquires for comments, he said he was to first meet with the Speaker for the Committees terms of reference to be designated before embarking on the assignment.

Before the composition of the Committee, the main opposition APC whose MPs from the Bombali District, Makeni City had times without number urged the House to intervene but with no action from the House, the situation degenerated wherein the House witnessed a modest protest from the APC and NGC Legislators in the Well of Parliament. This is the first of such protest in the third session although during the opening of the second session of parliament, APC Legislators walked out of President Julius Maada Bio as he was about to deliver the SONA.

The opposition MPs peacefully held placards, putting on a t-shirt with the inscription, 'Makeni Lives Matter.' Many people believe that this act of protest prompted the House's Leadership to constitute the Makeni skirmishes investigating Committee.

Another issue of significance was that the month of August 2020 ushered in that of Mr. Speaker's discountenancing of the Coalition

for Change (C4C) party Secretariat's decision to change its Parliamentary Caucus Leadership seeking to oust Hon. Saa Emerson Lamina as the party's Leader in Parliament. Mr. Speaker argued that he found no provisions in the National Constitution and the Parliamentary Standing Orders to effect such an action. Ever since this decision was rejected, the party has been in a political and legal turmoil.

In the second week of August, 2020, the Parliamentary Public Accounts (PAC) Committee on 12th August, 2020 held probings on officials of the Immigration Departments, Ministry of Environment and the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) separately at Committee Room No.1 with regards to the findings of the Auditor General's 2017 report.

The Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Water Resources also on this same date held a public hearing at the Administrative Building of Parliament with officials of the Electricity and Water Regulatory Commission. During this probe, it was unearthed that out of over a hundred and sixty Sachet and Bottling Water Companies in the country, only fifteen have operational licenses and certified to operate so far.

Members of this Committee be-moaned the state of scared water supply in the capital and urged for innovation but the Director General of this Commission, Emanuel Mannah used the occasion to lure Parliament to see reason in sourcing out funds for the capacitating of the Guma Valley Water Company, the state water utility company that provides water for the country's capital city, Freetown.



Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone

## Parliamentary Practice & Procedures

# Last Week in Ghana's Parliament

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the Nima Drain from Kaokudi to the Odaw River Basin) followed by the Speaker's referral to the Committee on Works & Housing for consideration and report.

The Hon. Minister responsible for Aviation, Mr. Joseph Kofi Adda on behalf of the Minister responsible for Roads & Highways laid the (i). Design-Build Contract Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana (represented by the Ministry of Roads and Highways [represented by the Ghana Highway Authority]) and Messrs Gabriel Couto-Rango Consortium for an amount of Fifty Million Euros (€50,000,000.00) for implementation of the reconstruction of the Bechem – Techimantia – Akumadan (40.4km) Road Project; (ii). Design-Build Contract Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana (represented by the Ministry of Roads and Highways [represented by the Ghana Highway Authority]) and Messrs Gabriel Couto-Rango Consortium for an amount of Ninety-Five Million Euros (€95,000,000.00) for implementation of the reconstruction of the Tarkwa – Agona Nkwanta (66.0km) Road Project; and (iii). Contract Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana (represented by the Ministry of Roads and Highways) and Mabey Bridge (registered as Acrow Global Ltd. of the United Kingdom) for an amount of Forty-Three Million Great Britain Pounds (GBP£43,000,000.00) for the Design and Delivery of Prefabricated Bridges for deployment throughout Ghana. The Rt. Hon. Speaker referred the Agreements to the Committee on Roads & Transport for consideration and report.

A request for waiver of Import Duties, Import VAT, NHIL, GETFund Levy, EXIM Levy and Special Import Levy amounting to the Ghana Cedi equivalent of Eight Hundred and Thirty-Five Thousand, and Seventy-Nine United States Dollars (US\$835,079.00 on materials, equipment, and vehicles required for the execution of the Greater Accra Sustainable Sanitation and Livelihoods Improvement Project (GASSLIP) was laid by the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Mr. Osei Kyei- Mensah-Bonsu on behalf of the Minister responsible

for Finance.

The Rt. Hon. Speaker referred the Request to the Finance Committee for consideration and report.

Further to the above, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Dr. Mark Assibey-Yeboah laid the following.

(i) Report of the Finance Committee on the Request for waiver of Import Duties, Import VAT, NHIL, GETFund Levy, EXIM Levy and Special Import Levy amounting to the Ghana Cedi equivalent of Nine Million, and One Thousand, Three Hundred and Ninety-Six Euros (€9,001,396.00) on project materials and equipment to be imported for the execution of the Development of Kumasi Airport (Phase III) by Messrs. Contracta Construction UK Limited.

(ii) Report of the Finance Committee on the Request for waiver of Import Duties, Import VAT, NHIL, GETFund Levy, EXIM Levy and Special Import Levy amounting to the Ghana Cedi equivalent of Two Million, Eight Hundred and Forty-Nine Thousand, One Hundred and Sixty-Seven Euros (€2,849,167.00) on project materials and equipment to be imported for the implementation of the Rehabilitation and Auxiliary Infrastructure of Kumasi Inner Ring Road and Adjacent Streets Project (100km) – Phase 1 by Messrs. Contracta Construction UK Limited.

(iii) Report of the Finance Committee on the Request for waiver of Import Duties, Import VAT, NHIL, GETFund Levy, EXIM Levy, Special Import Levy and Domestic VAT amounting to the Ghana Cedi equivalent of Fifteen Million, Five Hundred and Twenty-Six Thousand, Two Hundred and Eleven Euros and Twenty-Three Cents (€15,526,211.23 [made up of €420,943.23 on local purchases and €15,105,268.00 on imports] on project materials, equipment and vehicles to be procured for the Design, Fabrication, Supply and Installation of 50 Composite Bridges and Related Civil Works by Messrs. Knights A.S. in association with MCE Slany S.r.o. of the Czech Republic.

(iv) Report of the Finance Committee on the Request for waiver of Import Duties, Import VAT,

NHIL, GETFund Levy, EXIM Levy and Special Import Levy amounting to the Ghana Cedi equivalent of Two Million, Eight Hundred and Ten Thousand, and Ninety-Two United States Dollars (US\$2,810,092.00) on materials and equipment to be procured for the construction of additional facilities, supply and installation of medical equipment to the adjunct Clinical Block at the Bolgatanga Regional Hospital in the Upper East Region.

### Committees

The Committee on Mines and Energy met and considered the Petroleum Hub Development Corporation Bill, 2020.

The Committee on Health met with officials of the Ministry of Health and some of its Agencies and discussed among others, the Annual Statement by the Audit Committee of the Centre for Plant Medicine Research for the Year 2019.

The Committee on Food, Agriculture and Cocoa Affairs met and discussed the ECOWAS Veterinary Pharmaceutical Protocol Committee met and held discussions with officials of the Ghana Tuna Association.

The Committee on Subsidiary Legislation met and considered the Draft Public Financial Management (Public Investment Management) Regulations, 2020.

### Questions

The following Urgent Questions were asked of and answered by the Hon. Deputy Minister for Education, Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum on behalf of the Minister responsible for Education.

(a) Mr. Rockson-Nelson Kwami Etse Dafeamakpor (South Dayi) on behalf of Dr. Zanetor Agye-man-Rawlins (Klottey-Korle):

To ask the Minister for Education what measures have been put in place to ensure that the staff, pupils and students are protected from COVID-19 as schools re-open.

(b) Mr. Samuel Nartey George (Ningo-Prampram) on behalf of Ms. Betty Nana Efua Krosbi Mensah (Afram Plains North): To ask the Minister for Education what steps are being taken to ensure that students in rural communities

with no electricity and internet connectivity have the full benefits of the e-learning programme of the Ghana Education Service.

\*761 Mr. Frank Annoh-Domprenh (Nsawam-Adoagyiri)

\*762 Dr. Robert Baba Kuganab-Lem (Binduri) on behalf of Mr. Yusif Sulemana (Bole/Bamboi)

\*763 Mrs. Della Sowah (Kpando) on behalf of Mr. Kobena

Mensah Woyome (South Tongu)

The following Question was asked of and answered by the Hon.

Minister responsible for Sanitation & Water Resources, Mrs.

Cecilia Abena Dapaah:

\*754 Mr. Kobena Mensah Woyome (South Tongu)

### Statement

The Hon. Member for Ledzokuku and Deputy Minister for Health, Dr. Bernard Okoe Boye made a statement to commemorate International Youth Day which falls on 12th August each year. The Hon. Minister responsible for Education, Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh also made a Statement in which he apprised the House on Government's achievements in the education sector, particularly on access, equity, quality and teacher education reforms.

**The Committee on Mines and Energy met and considered the Petroleum Hub Development Corporation Bill, 2020. The Committee on Health met with officials of the Ministry of Health and some of its Agencies and discussed among others, the Annual Statement by the Audit Committee of the Centre for Plant Medicine Research for the Year 2019.**



2020  
INTERNATIONAL YEAR  
OF THE NURSE AND  
THE MIDWIFE

#SupportNursesAndMidwives

#COVID19

# The world needs **millions more midwives and nurses**



Add your voice to those calling for  
**MORE INVESTMENT**  
in nurses and midwives

