



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FOURTH SESSION - FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2024



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - SPECIAL SITTING - 1ST MEETING

Tuesday, 10 September 2024

Parliament met at 2.02 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker, Ms Anita Among, in the Chair.)

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, it is always a saddening moment to convene in the House, to bid farewell to a colleague who has been sitting on the Front Bench. It is not an easy thing.

Grief and sorrow have been evident since 7 September 2024, when tragedy struck of the demise of a beloved colleague, the Woman Representative of Kisoro District, and a state minister, at Mengo Hospital. This took place at around 9 o'clock in the morning.

Yesterday, during the memorial prayers, I recounted how I had to drive to Mengo Hospital, to see how we could salvage Hon. Sarah Nyirabashitsi's life. However, when it is your time, it is your time. God's timing is never ours.

I appreciate the unity of the Members of Parliament, the Executive and the Judiciary, displayed during this time.

It is a painful reality that has to be accepted. Death is so cruel. We are indeed living on

borrowed life. Today, I liked what the preacher said that all of us have a borrowed life. Anytime God can say, "Give it back to me."

Honourable members, this is the fifth time that the 11th Parliament convenes to pay tribute to a fallen Member. As you may recall, we lost the Speaker, then, Rt Hon. Jacob Oulanyah, in March 2022; Hon. Patrick Okabe, in December 2022; Hon. Charles Engola Macodwogo, in May 2023; Hon. Cecilia Ogwal in January 2024; and hardly eight months now, Hon. Nyirabashitsi is no more.

We need to pray for ourselves as an institution, and as a country, for protection and favour from God. The Lord leads us, and we need to seek his guidance, for us to be able to be here to serve humanity.

Honourable members, we are all imperfect mortal beings whose final destiny is always death. I, therefore, urge you to have love for each other. When you see what happened to Hon. Sarah Nyirabashitsi - the people who were with her a day before, you wonder why one would hold a grudge against anybody else. This is because you do not know when your time will come. Why should we be in wars over small things? Let us love each other. Let us be there for each other, and be each other's keeper, because when you look at what has happened, you realise that we need God's intervention more.

Without pre-empting the tributary motion and the debate, death has robbed Hon. Nyirabashitsi

from Parliament, the Nation, her family, and the people of Uganda. She was such a lovable lady, and down to earth. She was a minister that you would approach any time; you would not even imagine that she was a minister. She was always there for everybody. Her passion for children was great. I know that there are many people whom she asked to take children to the Metropolitan International University. She gave out scholarships for children to study at the Metropolitan International University. She promoted the university.

She has a very good legislative track record, and that can be traced from both the Ninth and 11th Parliament, where she effectively represented the people of Kisoro, and served with distinction on the East African Community Affairs Committee. Honourable members, as you may be aware, the effectiveness of a legislator can be significantly determined by their capacity to debate, lobby, and persuade Members. Based on those parameters, Hon. Sarah Nyirabashitsi excelled.

As a minister, her commitment to the plight of the children and the youth was evidenced in the passion with which she tabled the legislative business for the social development sector. In many ways, she became synonymous with the youth and the children. Her relocation to the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs was therefore no surprise. Given her excellent work in the youth and children docket, she had to be relocated to a tougher ministry. We thank President Museveni for entrusting Hon. Sarah Nyirabashitsi with such responsibility.

For the people of Kisoro, I am aware that Hon. Sarah Nyirabashitsi left three major projects, which were incomplete, notably the Kanyamateke Bridge in Bufumbira North, which connected Uganda to the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the rehabilitation of Buhozi Health Centre II. As the construction of this bridge took place, there was also a men's ward at Nyarusiza Health Centre III. This was budgeted for but then there was a budget shortfall and yet the projects were ongoing.

We budgeted for that money in the last financial

year to complete the projects that were started but unfortunately, the money was removed but the projects are still there. We want to request the Prime Minister to follow up on these projects that were left incomplete and see how we can have Sarah's legacy kept in the constituency.

Honourable members, death is inevitable and is a journey for all of us. The Bible, in 2 Samuel 14:14 states, "For we will surely die and like water spilled on the ground which cannot be gathered again". Indeed, Sarah has died, she can never come back to life again. Death is a bad reaper, always snatching the unripe fruits.

Hon. Sarah has died at a time we needed her most. She was a team worker, she was that uniting factor who would never want to see any problem anywhere and that is the Sarah that we are paying tribute to today.

I request Members of Parliament that as we pay tribute to our sister, let us pay tribute with dignity because she was a dignified person. Her body will be brought here and after that, we will do the usual ceremonies.

Hon. Sarah is survived by one son, Tugume Isaac, who is somewhere. I will be showing him to you later- That is the son to the late Sarah Mateke. As Parliament, all we have to tell you is that the God we serve is a God of orphans, He is a father of orphans, a mother of orphans and He will see you through. Keep your mother's name alive and be the person that your mother would always want you to be.

Honourable members, I thank all of you for coming. Lastly, I pass on our condolence from the Parliament of Uganda to the National Resistance Movement fraternity, to the President of the Republic of Uganda, to the Mateke family, to the people of Kisoro, and to the Defence ministry and the people of Uganda.

I thank you and say this, for God and my Country. *(Applause)*

On a special note, I also recognise the Members of the Ninth Parliament who are here. They

are former Members of Parliament who were together with Hon. Sarah. I have not seen one standing, next to me - thank you so much for coming. May Hon. Sarah's soul rest in perfect peace.

(Entrance of the Late Hon. Sarah Mateke)

The National Anthem

The East African Community Anthem

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, in the VIP Gallery this afternoon, we have the Rt Hon. Dr Margaret Zziwa, the former Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly. You are most welcome. *(Applause)* On the technical bench, we have immediate family members of the late Hon. Sarah Mateke. They include:

1. Mr Isaac Tugume, son.
2. Mr Isaac Mukiza, the adopted son and a son to her late brother.
3. Mr Jonah Munyambabazi, a brother.
4. Ms Ruth Nyiraneza, a sister.
5. Ms Patience Byiringiro, a sister.
6. Justice Gashirabake Christopher, is the old brother to the late Hon. Mateke.
7. Ms Grace Murengezi, the aunt and sister to Sarah's mother.

They are here to join us in paying tribute to the late Hon. Sarah. I will introduce them as they come.

In the public gallery this afternoon, we have extended family members, friends and well-wishers of the late Hon. Sarah. They are also here to witness the proceedings. You are Welcome. *(Applause)*

In the VIP Gallery, we have the European Union Ambassador to Uganda, H.E. Jan Sadek; you are most welcome. He is accompanied by Mr Emmanuel Gyezaho, the press advisor, and Arnoldi Toke, the political advisor. You are most welcome. They are here to witness the proceedings. We will be introducing them as they come.

Laying of wreaths

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Mwijukye, you have not joined the team. *(Laughter)* Thank you - when are you announcing Katonga or Najjanankumbi?

Laying of wreaths

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Akena is the party president, not a party whip. Hon. Amongi, can you escort the president. *(Laughter)*

Laying of wreaths

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. We have a condolence message from Her Excellency the Vice-President of the Republic of Uganda, Hon. Jessica Alupo Epel, with Shs 5 million to the family. Thank you so much. *(Applause)*

We have a condolence message from the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, with Shs 20 million to the family. *(Applause)*

We also have a condolence message from the Managing Director, National Water and Sewerage Corporation, Dr Silver Mugisha, with Shs 5 million. Thank you so much. *(Applause)*

We also have a condolence message from Dr Sylvia, the Assistant Managing Director, National Water and Sewerage Corporation, enclosed with Shs 3 million to the family. Thank you so much. *(Applause)*

We will continue announcing as they come.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF
PARLIAMENT TO PAY TRIBUTE TO
THE LATE HON. SARAH MATEKE
NYIRABASHITSI, THE FORMER
WOMAN REPRESENTATIVE, KISORO
DISTRICT, AND MINISTER OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS
(DEFENCE)

THE SPEAKER: Honorable members, as I said before, we are paying tribute to a colleague, friend, sister and mother, lying before us here.

The best way we can do it is to pay tribute in this august House, where she belonged. This was her second home, after Kisoro. To all of you, this is your second home. We will get the motion, moved by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda.

Prime Minister?

2.57

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Madam Speaker, I move, under Rule 56 of our Rules of Procedure, a motion for a Resolution of Parliament to pay tribute to the late Hon. Sarah Mateke Nyirabashitsi, the District Woman Representative, Kisoro, and the Minister of State for Defence and Veteran Affairs (Defence), for her dedicated service to the Republic of Uganda.

Madam Speaker,

“WHEREAS the Parliament of Uganda received, with deep sorrow, the sad news of the untimely death of Hon. Sarah Mateke Nyirabashitsi, the District Woman Representative, Kisoro, and the state minister for defence, which occurred on Saturday, 7 September 2024 in Kampala;

AWARE that Hon. Sarah Mateke Nyirabashitsi has had an illustrious and distinguished career, serving the people of Uganda in various capacities, including as –

- (a) The Minister of State for Defence and Veteran Affairs (Defence) until the time of her death;*
- (b) The state minister for youth and children affairs from 2021 to 2024;*
- (c) The District Woman Representative, Kisoro, in the Ninth Parliament and 11th Parliament;*
- (d) The chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Metropolitan International University and Makerere Metropolitan Management Institute, Kampala;*
- (e) The Assistant Town Clerk, Kisoro Town Council.*

APPRECIATING that the late Hon. Sarah Mateke Nyirabashitsi was a diligent and visionary leader who, during her time as state minister for youth and children affairs, advocated for the protection of the rights of children, encouraged youth empowerment and education, and established the Nyirabashitsi Foundation, through which she initiated education programmes for empowering girls and women;

FIRMLY CONVINCED that Hon. Sarah Mateke Nyirabashitsi exhibited unwavering commitment towards community development and greatly contributed to the mainstreaming and participation of women and youth in the development agenda of Uganda;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by this Parliament as follows:

- 1. That Parliament collectively conveys its deepest condolences to the bereaved family, relatives, friends, and the people of Kisoro and Uganda for the loss of a distinguished leader;*
- 2. That Parliament takes cognisance of the profound patriotic contribution that Hon. Sarah Mateke Nyirabashitsi has rendered to the people of Kisoro, the Parliament of Uganda and the Government of Uganda at large.”*

I beg to move. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded? It is seconded by the Leader of the Opposition, Shadow Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Shadow Attorney-General, the Vice President, the Prime Minister, and Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, Kigezi Members of Parliament, I can see Hon. Bahati, Hon. Henry, Hon. Namara, Hon. Catherine, and Hon. Kwizera, and the whole House. Thank you so much. Would you love to speak to your motion?

MS NABBANJA: Madam Speaker and Honourable Members, this is my justification for a resolution of Parliament to pay tribute

to the late Hon. Nyirabashitsi Sarah Mateke, the State Minister for Defence and Veterans Affairs (Defence), a politician, educationist, philanthropist, entrepreneur, and community leader.

Madam Speaker, Saturday, 7 September 2024 was a dark morning for the country, as we learnt of the sudden demise of the State Minister for Defence and Veterans Affairs (Defence), a politician, educationist, entrepreneur, and community leader.

Hon. Nyirabashitsi Sarah Mateke, succumbed to heart complications at Mengo Hospital, where she had gone for treatment.

The late Hon. Nyirabashitsi Sarah Mateke was born on 15 July 1974 and grew up in Bugahe village, Nyakabingo Parish, Chahi Subcounty in Kisoro District to a veteran politician, Hon. Dr Philemon Mateke and Joy Rwanfizi Mateke, a professional teacher.

She was married to the Late Nizey'Imana Alex and survived with one child.

Madam Speaker, the late Hon. Sarah Nyirabashitsi started her academic journey at Seseme Primary School where she completed her Primary Leaving Examinations before joining her secondary level of Education; she joined Mary Hill High School for her Uganda Certificate of Education, and completed in 1987; she studied and sat for her Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education at Kampala Comprehensive High School in 1991.

Hon. Sarah joined Bugema University for a degree programme graduating with a Bachelor of Business Administration in 1995. Hon. Sarah was admitted to Law Development Centre Kampala for an Administrative Law Course and graduated with an Administrative Law Certificate in 2000.

Determined to excel, Hon. Sarah enrolled at Uganda Christian University and graduated with a Post Graduate Diploma in Public Administration and Management in the year 2007. She furthered her academic achievements

and enrolled for a Master's degree at Bugema University and graduated with a Master's in Public Health in 2017.

Madam Speaker, Hon. Sarah was a bright and focused student who struggled to attain high goals. Her acumen for achievement has inspired many girls and is used today to further their education, to join politics, business and other gainful employment to cause developmental change for this country.

Hon. Nyirabashitsi Sarah Mateke has been a dedicated patriot in serving her country and the people of Kisoro in particular after living as a role model from her youthful days. She ran a family business dealing in timber production and transportation.

She served in various capacities in the political, corporate and public service arenas during her tour of service and life which included the following: Madam Speaker, allow me to thank;

- i) His Excellency the President for giving the late Hon. Sarah Mateke an opportunity to serve in the capacity of minister. H.E the President appointed Hon. Sarah Mateke as a Minister of State for Defence and Veterans Affairs (Defence) from March 2024 and has been involved in the formulation of better policies in the sector before her demise.
- ii) As a Member of the 11th Parliament, H.E the President appointed Hon. Sarah as State Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development (in charge of Youth and Children's Affairs) with her experience of championing the interests of the girl and boy children to accessing formal education in boarding schools through her Nyirabashitsi Foundation; organise and empower women into development programmes.
- iii) Hon. Sarah Mateke Nyirabashitsi has been the Woman Representative for Kisoro district in the 11th Parliament of Uganda from the year 2021 till her demise.
- iv) She was a Member of the Ninth Parliament and served diligently on various committees of Parliament between the years 2011 to 2016.

- v) Hon. Sarah served as chairperson, Board of Trustees, Makerere Metropolitan International University from 2014 till her last breath;
- vi) She has been serving as a Chairperson, Board of Directors, at Makerere Metropolitan Management Institute from 2014 to her time of death.

She has been a hard-working and committed civil servant, when she was served in Kisoro District Local Government as;

- i) Senior Assistant Town Clerk in the service of Kisoro Town Council between the year 2005 to 2011, and
- ii) Personnel Officer in the service of Kisoro Town Council between the years 2001 to 2005.

Madam Speaker, as we pay tribute to our fallen honourable colleague, allow me to state that non-communicable diseases are another threat to our society, robbing our country of game changers in the development of our country like Hon. Sarah Mateke. The Government of Uganda has developed strategies and taken steps in combating this vice.

Here below are some specific steps taken by the Government in addressing non-communicable diseases, not limited to:

- i) Policy and Planning. The Government of Uganda has developed a National Non-Communicable Disease Policy (2015) and a National Non-Communicable Diseases Control Programme and Integrated Non-Communicable Diseases into the Health Sector Development Plan (2015/2016 to 2019/2020) and allocates funds for it annually.
- ii) The Health Care Service Delivery. Government integrated non-communicable disease services into the primary health care services and has established non-communicable disease clinics and specialised treatment centres, continuing to train health care workers on non-communicable disease management.

iii) Public Awareness and Education. The Government of Uganda has and is continuing to conduct public awareness campaigns on Non-Communicable Diseases risk factors and prevention. So far, we have launched the “Healthy Heart Africa” initiative to promote cardiovascular health. The Government is in a partnership with civil society organisations to promote non-communicable diseases awareness.

iv) Surveillance and Research. On this, we have conducted a Non-Communicable Diseases Risk Factor Survey (2014) to gather data on Non-Communicable Diseases prevalence. The Government has established a National Non-Communicable Disease Surveillance System, supported research on Non-Communicable Diseases and their risk factors.

v) Partnership and Collaboration. The Government of Uganda is collaborating with international organisations, for example, World Health Organisation and UNICEF. We are partnering with NGOs such as Uganda Heart Association and Uganda Cancer Society. We are also engaging the private sector to promote healthy lifestyles and products.

Madam Speaker, we have other initiatives. Under this, we have:

- i) Launched the Uganda Physical Activity and Sports Policy, 2019, even at Parliament here;
- ii) Introduced the National Guidelines for Management of Non-Communicable Diseases (2018), and;
- iii) Established a National Non-Communicable Disease Co-ordinating Mechanism.

These steps and many other initiatives demonstrate the Government’s commitment to addressing Non-Communicable Diseases. However, concerted efforts are still needed to effectively combat the Non-Communicable Diseases in the country.

As we mourn and celebrate the life of a distinguished person who devoted her life in serving her country, she has been widely appreciated as a passionate human rights crusader and for empowerment of girls, youth and women for social development as well as socio-political and economic justice.

I wish to extend Government's profound sympathies to the family, relatives, friends, colleagues, the Bafumbira Community and the people of Uganda. May the Almighty God grant her soul eternal rest. For God and my country. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister for moving the motion. Since Hon. Sarah was under the Ministry of Defence, we will have the Minister of Defence to second, then the Leader of the Opposition and Hon. Niwagaba as an Independent. We will then come to the gender ministry.

3.17

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS (Mr Jacob Oboth): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to second the motion to pay tribute to our own former Minister of State for Defence. I am using the word "former", having listened to the Clerk-at-Table referring to Hon. Sarah as a "former woman MP," and "former Minister". It brings the reality back home that what we are left with is just a ceremony. She is indeed gone.

On the 21st of March this very year, the President of the Republic of Uganda and the Commander-in-Chief made a reshuffle. In that reshuffle, some people were dropped, some retained and only two were elevated. I happen to have been one of those who were elevated to the Cabinet position. The position, which I was holding - of course, when I saw it in the media, I did not think it was true until the Speaker confirmed it was.

Hon. Sarah Mateke was designated and deployed to replace me in the Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs. Many of you only know about guns in the Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs. You do not know what

else is going on there. Nobody should blame you, neither was I better than you until I got there and learnt that there is a lot that is going on in this country that is managed through that ministry.

You get a civilian like Oboth or Hon. Sarah or Hon. Huda, to be the team leaders. The best ministry to work in is the Ministry of Defence because there is hierarchy and order - *(Applause)* - that is why anybody can come and work there if you are deployed. I am not anybody special. I know how to cock a gun but I am not a soldier.

When we were deployed there, Hon. Sarah Mateke came on a pre-visit before handover. She found me in the office she was taking because I had not taken over the other office. We looked at each other and she said, "Oboth, what do they do here? What am I supposed to do?" I said, "In this same place, I asked the same questions. What could a lawyer like me do in this defence ministry?"

Thanks to President Museveni for seeing what others may not see in some of us. Until now, nobody can tell why he put Hon. Sarah or Hon. Oboth there. It is only him who knows even why he appointed the Vice President and the Prime Minister - although everyone thinks that they can be a Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs and Vice President.

I found a very peculiar thing about Hon. Sarah; her calmness. Despite her size, she was a giant woman, not a small person - she was very consultative and so calm that even if you were a Japadhola who raises your voice, you would come down to her level and talk to her. *(Applause)*

Being appointed in the Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs, in its hierarchy - this is internal; she is the de facto number two person after me - *(Interjection)*- yes, she is the immediate person.

Madam Speaker, given the commitment to service by Hon. Sarah Mateke, within one week she would ask, "Hon. Oboth, you said there is

a lot of work here but at my desk, I come and read and there is nothing. Where is the work?" I said, "I asked the same question. First read some past files. I was given files to read by the late Col. Mac Odwogo to know what happens."

Within the following week, work started flowing. Of course, we used to have our jokes. We used to sit behind - myself, Hon. Anyakun, Hon. Diana, Gen. David Muhoozi and Hon. Kasolo here. It is not by choice but by appointment that Ministers of State in Cabinet sit behind - *(Interjection)* - We are not backbenchers - *(Laughter)*- we were in our comfort zone.

We could talk. She told me, "You must understand how to be a minister of state, now that you are a full minister. We hope that our relationship here will be very good." I committed to that. I can tell you, given her commitment to service, we had the best working team. She was a team player - *(Applause)*- very steadfast and loyal. In the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, there is a structure, command and control. There is a Commander-in-Chief. To all of you, if you do not know, the only ministry that has the Office of the President inside is the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs.

She never found any problem fitting in; she was focused from day one on the purpose, direction and destination of the ministry and Government as a whole. A little wonder, she had worked in Government in Kisoro as personal and assistant town clerk. Probably, she was able to understand how Government operates. She would not raise issues that should not be raised. Gen. Elwelu and senior officers here know that.

When we sat in the Top Management Committee (TMC) meeting, Hon. Sarah was very articulate. She would ask questions, give guidance and within a short time, by the 7th of this month when she died, she had been involved in several international military defence diplomacy engagements, including on the 7th when she was supposed to travel to

Seoul for the global defence event - the same day she died.

You can only do that by delegating somebody who you know is not only smart and loyal, but also able and capable of executing the assignment at an international level. That was Hon. Sarah Mateke. Her demeanour was real. What you see is what you get. You see a lady - if she was a gentleman, you would say a gentleman. Her demeanour was proper. How she dressed, you could not ignore her when she came to the office or - *(Laughter)*- whatever your mind is pushing you to think. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, it is free sitting. Please find where to sit.

MR OBOH: When she came in, from my little experience of being a minister of state in her position, I thought we needed to dedicate somebody to do the direct supervision of the construction of the Military Referral Hospital. I delegated that assignment to her fully through the TMC.

She made her last report last week; a report full of wisdom and way forward, as if she was going to die. She wrote what she wanted to be done. We never saw this coming. I looked forward to discussing her report with her and then with the TMC.

We segmented the ministry in a way that, for ease of supervision and shared responsibilities, I assigned her to monitor and supervise all Engineering Brigade Construction Projects from Masaka to Kisoro and Hon. Huda from Luwero to Arua. Of course, *omugabi teyesera* - I also took this other side of the East. *(Laughter)*

We were working as a team. This Government has lost a committed and selfless minister. In the six months or so, there was no single scandal that we could attach to her name. *(Applause)* Either defrauding fuel or doing what - in the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, it is obvious the consequences would be very dire. The person we are paying tribute to, if we gave her an opportunity to be here, would have loved to hear that she knew God in a personal way. *(Applause)*

She was a Christian and did not discriminate anybody. She was also very accommodative. One time I asked her, "Do you really come from Kigezi?" She said, "Yes, I am a proud woman from Kigezi" and then she asked me, "Why do you ask?" I said, "The answer is that obviously in Kigezi, some people use politics and religion in a not-so friendly way". She then told me that she was playing the middle role. How I wish that we could emulate her. *(Applause)*

I thank Hon. Sarah Mateke for her dedicated service to this nation. As a person who worked with the children and youth, when she came to the ministry, she paused the question, "Who is attending to the spouses and children of the soldiers? Can I get permission to engage?" The Top Management Committee of the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs agreed with her.

Unfortunately, before she could start that, she is gone. I had been in the ministry for about two and a half years but I never had that in mind. She knew all the people who are not providing for their children in this House - those who have children carelessly.

She was very passionate about every parent being responsible and I know nobody was her client in this House. So, we shall miss her intervention on the spouses and the children of the uniformed men and women. We do not know - because she was yet to start, after the events that we have this month. We shall miss her greatly and I do not know - at 50 years, she is gone. In that ministry, I was about two or three years older than her. She was the same age as the Chief of Defence Forces.

We were really basking on things - that we are witnessing a transition in our lifetime; transition in such a way that, how else would you term it or say that an Oboth from Tororo is a Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, another one from Kigezi and another one from West Nile? I do not know which other president would have made me a minister in Defence, when we know the critical role that the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs plays.

Hon. Sarah, you played your role; you smiled with all of us. The last time she came to my office was the other Tuesday, before we went to Gulu and she said she would not attend that sitting. She said, "I feel bad" - because I had delegated her to go to the East African Community event in Nairobi and then I had a thanksgiving, so we had a discussion.

She walked in and said, "What do we do?" Then I said, "No, we shall delegate Hon. Huda not to go anywhere but Gulu". She said, "I will come back on Friday, but I will come to the function in Tororo". Therefore, she came back on Friday and travelled to Tororo. During the last public event she attended in the east, her words were, "God is good all the time." I did not know Hon. Sarah meant that even today I should say, "God is good." Rest in peace. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Oboth. Senior ministers, when you work with female colleagues, you should always try to understand the problems of women so that you are able to help them. It is just a request.

Let us try to be brief so that we have a number of people speak. The Leader of the Opposition -

3.36

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to second the motion paying tribute to our colleague, Hon. Sarah Mateke Nyirabashitsi, Woman Representative for Kisoro District and Minister of State for Defence and Veteran Affairs.

Her sudden demise is deeply saddening and on behalf of the Opposition in Parliament, and on my own behalf, I wish to extend our deepest condolences to the bereaved family and the people of Kisoro District, whom she served as leader.

It is unfortunate that she has died at her prime due to a non-communicable disease, as we have been told; her prime being 50 years.

Hon. Sarah was generally calm and reserved, not too outspoken like the quintessential politician. When she previously served as the Minister of State for Youth and Children Affairs, she exuded passion for her role.

Whenever we pressed her hard regarding issues of youth and children, including their welfare, Government programmes and promises to this peculiar part of the population, she always responded with a lot of composure. Even when you did not agree with Hon. Sarah Mateke, it was difficult to feud with her because of her calmness. *(Applause)* She was the kind of person who would disarm you with her gentility.

We have also learnt that she was undertaking certain projects in her community. We pray and hope that those projects will live on after her as part of her legacy.

Madam Speaker, my colleague, the honourable minister, has stated that of late, the vice of corruption has continued to eat up our country, being perpetrated by leaders and civil servants at different levels. I did not hear of Hon. Sarah Mateke's name embroiled in any corruption scandal during her service in the Government - *(Applause)* - and if there was one, then I probably missed it.

As we send her off, may we all, as leaders, reflect on the imperativeness of not getting involved in corruption, but also using our positions and platforms to fight corruption, which has become an impediment to Uganda's progress.

When Hon. Sarah was transferred to the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs as the minister of state, a couple of days into office, I saw an interview of her on television, expressing her desire to serve the defence ministry, the men and women in uniform and the country at large, with commitment in this new role that she was taking on. Unfortunately, again, as Hon. Oboth has mentioned, Hon. Sarah passed on just a short while after getting into this office, so she probably has not been able to achieve all that she set out to achieve.

As we mourn the passing on of the minister lying before us here, let us commit to improving the welfare of the men and women in uniform. *(Applause)* We must resolve the question of salary enhancement for the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF), which falls under the ministry she was serving, and by extension, police and prisons.

The living conditions of our men and women in uniform continue to be appalling. We must address this long overdue concern.

Madam Speaker, the commitment that Hon. Sarah Mateke exuded as she took over office would certainly involve ensuring discipline among our men and women in uniform, now that the minister in charge told us about the order therein.

I would like to use this opportunity to echo the need to call to order the few elements among our armed forces who paint a bad image of the rest by brutalising citizens at every opportunity. We continue to see stories of human rights violations by our uniformed personnel, something that should be in the past.

On Saturday, 14 August 2021, Gen. (Rtd) Yoweri Kaguta Museveni Tibuhabwe, in a televised address, warned security operatives against human rights violations and especially torture of suspects. That was an admission of this unacceptable behaviour among some within the forces.

Unfortunately, this warning was not followed up by stern action against perpetrators of the same. This criminal behaviour continues to happen to citizens and especially supporters of the opposition and leaders too.

Last week, my party leader, Hon. Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu, was hit with a projectile by police and the military, causing an injury to his leg, only for police to say that he slid and fell as he entered his car.

Stories upon stories of brutality have been told by suspects who get abducted in drones by

plain-clothed operatives, only for them to be produced in court with torture marks. In fact, some have been freed by courts because of that torture that was occasioned on them.

As we mourn the passing of Hon. Sarah Mateke, may we commit to not allowing illegalities within our forces because all of us are potential victims, regardless of our political shades, as we have seen in the recent past.

Finally, I would like to re-echo our call for the military courts to stop being used to persecute citizens with different political beliefs, as we have seen for young people like Olivia Lutaaya and others who have spent over three years in jail, with the court-martial denying them bail and yet no evidence has been produced in court for their trials to progress. It is coming to four years for some of them.

Madam Speaker, this should be condemned by all right-thinking Ugandans, regardless of our political beliefs. In fact, some of these people are constantly being coerced to plead guilty, with a promise to be freed since there is no evidence against them to date. Due to desperation and years of uncertainty behind bars, it is easy for someone in such a precarious situation to give in.

Also, there are families that, four years later, are still looking for their loved ones who were abducted to no avail. I would like to remind the Rt Hon. Prime Minister who told the nation that John Bosco Kibalama was arrested and was in the hands of the state that: “Madam Prime Minister, his family is still waiting on you to have him produced in court or freed to return to his loved ones.” I say all of this for God and my country. May Hon. Sarah Mateke rest in eternal peace. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I pray and wish that we leave Hon. Sarah to rest in peace. I am happy you said that she was a very good girl. There is somebody Hon. Sarah left behind, called Nyiraneza. What does it mean, Hon. John Kamara?

MR JOHN KAMARA: *Nyiraneza* is a *Rufumbira* word, meaning someone who does good things for other people. That is what we call *ineza* - doing good.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. So, we have another *ineza* Ruth seated behind here. Thank you, the Leader of the Opposition (LOP). Independents –

3.45

MR WILFRED NIWAGABA (Independent, Ndoorwa County East, Kabale): I rise to second the motion for a resolution of this House to pay tribute to the late Hon. Sarah Mateke Nyirabashitsi. I came to know the late Hon. Sarah in the 9th Parliament and by the grace of God, I was still in NRM when she was assigned to the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, which I have been a member for some time.

At that time, we had a leader who was as kind and generous as Hon. Sarah Mateke called Hon. Stephen Tashobya. He made sure that all committee members behaved as brothers and sisters. From that time, the late Hon. Sarah became my sister; we were so close.

There are three attributes I know and I would like to elucidate about the late Hon. Sarah. The first one was her generosity. One of her friends told me - of course she was born into a politician's family and at the time, in the 1980s, goods were very scarce like sugar and the like. However, she would sneak out loads of sugar, soap and the like to the neighbours without the knowledge of her parents.

A few months ago, I bumped into a graduation party in Nakaseke, the cattle corridor. With due respect, most of those people in that area rarely take their children to school. That graduation party was for a student whom the late Hon. Sarah had given a scholarship, yet they had no relationship and I think he had obtained a diploma but it was a real party. I stormed it.

They were supposed to give me a cow to give to the late Hon. Sarah. Unfortunately, when I tried to call her, her number was off and she

missed the cow. The people were appreciative. So, her impact was not only in Kigezi but also in central Uganda.

We last met when we had an ordination for Catholic priests in Kabale. Immediately after the ordination, that was I think on 10-16 August, I requested her to join us at the Bishop's residence for lunch but she said she was rushing but promised to meet us again.

However, she took three of her friends to a shop - this is a story from one of her friends. She told one to pick a dress and another a suit. Now, the one who was offered a dress said, "You will buy me a dress when I come to Kampala." She was asked, "How sure are you that you will find her alive? Better take it now, if not -" So, she was forced to take something and the Personal Assistant (PA), a man, went away with the suit. There is a way God does His things. When she was narrating that story to me, I said, "Oh my God!"

The late Hon. Sarah was extremely humble; you would never hear of any pomposity. Most of us in leadership and especially those on the Front Bench, want to lead a pompous life. She was extremely humble, social and down-to-earth. *(Applause)* You would wonder – some of the places where she and I used to meet for "one, one", goat ribs and the like were not these classy places. They were very humble places. Hon. Kasolo, you may know some of them, but I hope you are not pompous. So, Hon. Sarah was very humble and sociable.

Yes, the Leader of the Opposition has talked about her integrity, and it relates back to when she was a district employee in Kisoro. Up to now, you cannot hear about any scandal of a financial matter or otherwise connected to Hon. Sarah.

Lastly, it is about her loyalty to the people and her constituents. Hon. Sarah was in the constituency almost every weekend whenever she would not be outside the country. At least, personally, whenever I would be in Kisoro - I occasionally go to Kisoro for some business – I would meet Hon. Sarah. If I did not meet her

in Kisoro, I would meet her in Kabale District, literally every weekend. I think it could be part of the reasons why she has gone very fast. She loved her people and worked for them.

Madam Speaker, you mentioned the pending projects: there are projects which had been begun across the country – roads, bridges, schools and health centres. These projects were partly – actually, contracts had been signed, works had started, but all of a sudden they stopped because of the changes we made in the budget.

Madam Speaker, I would implore you to talk to the Executive. Let us look at those projects in the entire country, especially for us who come from these areas that are prone to landslides. Honestly, for the bridges, roads and schools that had begun to be constructed, if we do not complete them, we are going to see deaths.

So, talk to the Executive. The Prime Minister is here, the finance minister is here – there are a few ministries: works, health and education. Sit with them and look at those particular ones countrywide and let us have them completed, in memory of Hon. Sarah.

May my late sister's soul rest in eternal peace. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. All these projects were planned for in good faith, and for the communities.

Vice-President -

3.53

THE VICE-PRESIDENT (Maj. (Rtd) Jessica Alupo): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I rise to support the motion moved by the Rt Hon. Prime Minister. I would also like to use this opportunity to extend my sincere condolences to the bereaved family of the late Hon. Sarah Mateke as well as the people of Kisoro, Kigezi and Uganda.

Madam Speaker, I will be referring to her as "Hon. Sarah Mateke". The other name may be difficult for me to pronounce. *(Laughter)*

Whenever I would chat with her, I would tell her that, that name of hers was very romantic – (*Laughter*)- but difficult to pronounce.

It is very difficult to speak because of the person of Hon. Sarah Mateke. She would always cultivate her characteristics and personality on anyone whom she felt was her friend.

Madam Speaker, I met Hon. Sarah Mateke in the Ninth Parliament and I found her very easy to work with, both within and outside the confines of Parliament as well as in the social circles.

Hon. Sarah Mateke was the first person in Kigezi region to take me to Kisoro District. When she came to invite me to go to Kisoro District – as it was her habit of wearing a warm smile – I had a series of activities around that time, being the Minister of Education and Sports and having many official activities over the weekend. She managed to persuade me to shift the activities to the ministers of state and, then, I confirmed that I would go with her to Kisoro.

What moved me, Madam Speaker, was that while in Kisoro, she whispered to me that she wanted to speak to me aside. She told me that Kisoro was riddled with many faces of security – insecurity – with different groups of people. She told me that: “You might be a retired major of the army, but I would like to persuade you not to delve into issues of security during this ceremony.” She told me that I should restrict myself to issues of International Women’s Day, which had taken us there.

She asserted that, that would be for the good of all the groups in Kisoro and that it would go in tandem with all the interests of the people of Kisoro, including the neighbouring countries.

I felt that, that was extra care, because she did not want me to speak something that was maybe accurate, but that could not go well with the members of the community. So, Hon. Sarah acted as a true sister.

When we finished the International Women’s Day celebrations, Hon. Kamara came to Hon. Sarah Mateke, requesting that he wanted the Minister of Education and Sports to visit the Kisoro teacher training institution – because he was passionate about teachers.

It was a bit late. Hon. Sarah Mateke looked at my face, I looked at hers, and we smiled at each other. Then, Hon. Sarah Mateke said: “Let us also honour the boy-child. Let us go as per his wish.” So, we went to the Kisoro teacher training institution. Hon. Sarah Mateke was working very well with all the leaders in Kisoro. (*Applause*) That was just one manifestation.

Since then – I think she had her constant character because, recently, when I went to represent His Excellency the President during the enthronement and consecration of the Bishop of Kisoro, Hon. Sarah, again, spoke to me about the needs of all the leaders and the people of Kisoro. The few leaders who spoke appreciated her and her family, especially on uniting the politicians of Kisoro.

I would like to thank her for the endeavours that she put in order to have unity in Kisoro. The bishop made a comment about her in line with uniting the people whom she was leading in the district, while working very smoothly with all the leaders at different levels in Kisoro. So, that was Hon. Sarah, the unifier and caring sister.

Madam Speaker, in Cabinet, all ministers speak wisdom and a lot of sense, in light of their sectors. I thank Hon. Sarah for the special way in which she always conducted herself in Cabinet. Hon. Sarah was always disciplined. She was the kind of minister who would send you a text when she was bound to be late, even for a few minutes. She was a minister who would always speak when the occasion demanded. She was a minister who always shared with the female ministers very freely. I thank her for giving us her time as a female minister. She would always pick something that she wanted to correct, but in a very sensible way that would not offend the person that she was correcting.

She was very passionate about education, especially about skilling children and the youth. It is not only when she was the minister for youth and children that she developed that attitude.

Madam Speaker, I am here to bear testimony that while I was a Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Sarah visited me in office, expressing concern about how the Department of Technical Education had delayed giving her and her team an interim letter of authority to begin, at that time, a technical institution, which she had desired to grow into a university.

I recall having a very intelligent commissioner at that time, called Madam Namuli, who I invited when Hon. Sarah was still in the office, and who demonstrated the fact that she was willing to continue delaying the establishment of the institute. I asked the commissioner whether she knew that maybe some development partners wanted to support the institute, but they wanted evidence that the Government believed the institute was in line with the policy.

I told the commissioner to stop delaying the establishment of the institute just because she failed to append her tiny signature. When I said the word, “tiny” the commissioner laughed, and she said, the following day, she would sign the letter of interim authority for her to start. From that time, Madam Speaker, Hon. Sarah, with her team, started their technical institution, which has now grown into the Metropolitan International University.

Madam Speaker, when we sit in these offices that we have been given authority to handle - in light of that example - try not to delay the work of either private or government establishments. *(Applause)* Even if you are to use undesirable words like a “tiny signature”, I do not think that is an abuse.

Hon. Sarah did not forget about me. Like she did to many of you, she offered half scholarships to children who were exceptionally gifted academically, but socially disadvantaged. She gave me 20 half bursaries. However, I called her and said that she knew the constituency which

I came from, and asked her to give me 10 full scholarships instead of 20 half scholarships. Madam Speaker, she obliged. She gave me 10 full scholarships. *(Applause)* I know you also give me scholarships. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: I was wondering whether she was not appreciating me when I am still alive. *(Laughter)*

MAJ. (RTD) ALUPO: Madam Speaker gives me scholarships every year, for children who go to senior one and five. *(Laughter)* That is the kind of sharing that we should continue holding in very high regard, in the few days that God has given us in this world.

I call upon the managers of Metropolitan International University to ensure that they keep that university strong and that they have our support. I call upon all of us to support them in whichever way they need it. I know that Hon. Sarah was pursuing the charter for the university. That is an area where I call upon the Ministry of Education and Sports to expeditiously handle, so that her legacy lives forever.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I know many people have not spoken. Hon. Sarah was very interested in the welfare of the people. She knew that in Kisoro, many people grow Irish potatoes. She had always requested the Government to establish an Irish potato factory to add value to Irish potatoes from Kisoro. The Irish potato factory, according to the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Hon. Matia Kasaija, and the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives has taken some trends in terms of resource mobilisation and research.

I call upon the ministers for trade, finance, and investment, Hon. Anite, to fast-track the issue of that Irish potato factory for Kisoro, to add value to the Irish potatoes so that her legacy lives forever.

Madam Speaker, we are visionaries and our visionary association is business. Apart from

being Members of Parliament, we also do some business. Some people grow oranges, some people keep fish, and Hon. Okupa does sweet potatoes. *(Laughter)* We had an association where Hon. Sarah was one of the founders - very strong. The association is now growing from strength to strength. I invite all of us to join the association.

Hon. Sarah has left a son, who is now our son. We shall all undertake to continue to take care of you; do not worry. The association accommodates the siblings and children of the members. We will discuss with the family and see how Hon. Sarah will continue to be a member of our visionary association.

May the soul of Hon. Sarah rest in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much, Vice President, for that assurance and encouragement. Therefore, in addition to the amendment of the motion, one is urging the Government to have value addition on the Irish potatoes. This is from the Vice President. I put the question to this.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE SPEAKER: There is the other one on the completion of projects that Hon. Mateke had started - Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the completion of the three projects that had started and were ongoing in memory of Hon. Sarah, is an addition to your motion. We are urging you to follow up and ensure those projects are completed. House, is that okay?

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I want you to bear with me. The team from Kisoro wants to go to Kisoro now – Kigezi - there is a vehicle waiting for them out to go to the ground. We will start with Hon. Kamara. Honourable minister, I will give you space later. I have a reason why I want Kamara to go first. Members, two minutes.

4.11

MR JOHN KAMARA NIZEYIMANA (NRM, Bufumbira County North, Kisoro):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Kisoro is shocked and paralysed because of the loss of our sister; a sudden death we did not expect at this time.

Madam Speaker, I would call Sarah on the telephone at times, and say, “Hon. Sarah, now this is a matter that requires a Cabinet decision, yet I do not sit in Cabinet. What do we do on this one?” She would tell me, “I will go and represent you in the Cabinet since this is a serious matter.” I think I will be running to my brother *Obothmana*, Oboth Oboth – *(Laughter)* - this is a serious matter - for example, one time I asked her that now we have a problem with our neighbours -

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Nizeyimana - *(Laughter)* -

MR KAMARA NIZEYIMANA: I told her, this time we have a problem with our neighbours. For us who do cross-border trade, now how shall we go to Congo? She said -

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Karoro Okurut, before you leave, I would love to - just a minute, Hon. Nizeyimana. I want to introduce:

- i. Hon. Akol Rose Okullu;
- ii. Hon. Karoro Okurut;
- iii. Hon. Musamali Paul (EALA);
- iv. Hon. Kadogo Veronica;
- v. H.E Kaahwa Tophace, the Uganda Ambassador to Japan.
- vi. Hajjat Faridah Kimboa, the National Chairperson for Women’s Council;
- vii. Hon. Stephen Tashobya, a Commissioner at the Electoral Commission;
- viii. Hon. Anthony Okello, a Commissioner at the Electoral Commission;
- ix. Hon. Dr Sylvia Tumuhairwe, Deputy ED, National Water;
- x. Hon. Grace Tubwita, Member of the Public Service Commission;
- xi. Hon. Fred Omach;
- xii. Hon. John Emily Otekat;
- xiii. Hon. Princess Kabakumba Matsiko;

- xiv. Hon. Acayo Christine Cwinya;
- xv. Hon. Christine Amongin Aporu;
- xvi. Hon. Benard Atiku;
- xvii. Hon. Sarah Kataike;
- xviii. Hon. Agnes Nabirye;
- xix. Hon. Caroline Amali Okao;
- xx. Hon. Obua Ogwal;
- xxi. Hon. Tete Chelengat;
- xxii. Hon. Sarah Lanyero;
- xxiii. Hon. Nakato Kyabangu; and
- xxiv. Hon. Ocao Caroline. You are welcome.

That is the solidarity of the 9th Parliament - (*Applause*) - how I wish the 11th Parliament could have that solidarity - I am proud of the Ninth Parliament.

We also have the following:

- xxv. Hon. Rosemary Seninde, you are most welcome. Thank you. Whoever I have not mentioned, I will be receiving - yes, there are more here to be recognised:
- xxvi. Hon. Harriet Ntabazi;
- xxvii. Hon. Grace Kwiyucwiny,
- xxviii. Hon. Nalubega;
- xxix. Hon. Grace Kirumira;
- xxx. Hon. Namara;
- xxxi. Hon. Jacqueline Amongin; and
- xxxii. Hon. Jacqueline Atuhaire. We will be recognising more as they come. Please, can you conclude, honourable?

MR KAMARA NIZEYIMANA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. When I consulted her, I said, “How do we access our market, since we now have problems with Congo?” The only answer she gave me - she said: “This is an international matter. We shall see how to handle it because the people of Kisoro are suffering because of the market”.

Her contributions to the people of Kisoro are very many, but without going into details, I have been arguing and about to fight with my sister, Hon. Nabbanja, the Prime Minister, because at one time we fought in Kisoro, during my brother’s by-election; Hon. Kwizera, when she brought her chopper and said, “I am going to fly you away to Kampala” and I said, “I will not go.”

My sister Sarah’s passing has brought a lot of confusion. My brothers and sisters who have never seen a by-election, you are just lucky. This is a situation where people can go to a standstill, with no more development, and this is the problem of the whole district. This time, not a constituency, where the district can go into confusion for two to three months. *Manya*, after - (*Laughter*) - excuse me, after that a by-election -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, listen to Hon. Nizeyimana.

MR KAMARA-NIZEYIMANA: Madam Speaker, I thank you for the protection. Then a by-election, primaries, and general elections, which is very dangerous. Someone called me, and I started thinking about the confusion that is about to be in Kisoro now. I picked up my phone and called my colleague’s leaders, and I said, “Can Kisoro now be peaceful?” A person speaking here is the Chairman of Members of Parliament in Kisoro District, the Chairman of Kisoro District Leaders Forum, the Patron of the Uganda National Teachers Union (NATU), the Patron of Kisoro District Council, the Patron of Urban Leaders, the Patron of the *Boda Boda* Association, the Patron of the Taxi Operators Association, and the Patron of the Local Leaders – chairpersons of LC III. (*Laughter*)

I consulted all of them and we said Kisoro is for Banyakisoro and Banyakisoro with Kisoro at heart. We must go, sit down, and find a person who must replace Hon. Sarah without causing confusion again in Kisoro District. (*Applause*) I am not the only leader in Kisoro. Tomorrow, the district council with all leaders - elders like people from Northern Uganda do, must sit, and we look for a person without causing tension in the development of Kisoro District.

Honourable members, I am saying this, having consulted; we shall at least find a way of how we should continue with the projects.

Madam Speaker, I would like to request the Prime Minister - the bridge that is being mentioned is in my constituency. Busonge

Health Centre III is in my constituency of Bufumbira County North, where I have spent my money to make a diversion to another small road that is not even helping us. I request that you look for emergency money and see how to help these people, especially mothers who crossover to deliver.

Imagine a Health Centre III that cannot do any referral to major hospitals like Mutolere and Kisoro hospitals; this is an emergency. So, when I come to your office, just keep all doors open so that we can conclude these projects.

I do not have much to say beyond these but I request the people of Kisoro who are watching us on television to please allow us so that Kisoro does not go into another confusion. Let us see how we can protect Kisoro and move into development. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kwizera - I am going to allow you; they want to go away. Yes, Hon. Eddie Kwizera but two minutes.

4.23

MR EDDIE KWIZERA (NRM, Bukimbiri County, Kisoro): Madam Speaker, I thank you, for everything you did for the people of Kisoro when we lost our daughter.

Honourable members, politics is about perception and recruitment of support. In our politics, a Member of Parliament is elected for five years. However, it is unfortunate that when someone dies, you do not hand over the constituency. This is the feeling of the *Bafumbira* and the Kisoro community, that this flag should not leave the Mateke family – (*Applause*)- and one lady who has been living in the United Kingdom, has been convinced to be there for this year. let those who want to contest come in 2016 to avoid the confusion that Hon. Kamara Nizeyimana was talking about because this gives confidence and stability in the district.

I know that Hon. Sarah was a stabiliser and a unifier but in the event that in every activity, honourable members, you should be the

winner or learner, this one should teach us how Members of Parliament, how the communities should be - Madam Speaker, I thank you very much and we appreciate the support of all the Members. May God rest her in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, I request that we be brief. The President wants to pay his last respects at 5.00 p.m. So, let us spend at least a minute. Let us now hear from Henry, Bahati, the Minister of Labour, Gender and Social Development, the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development. Naome and the gang, I am coming to you shortly.

4.24

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On behalf of the people of Rubanda and the people of Kigezi –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, please, when you leave here after the body has left - we shall get the address from the President under the tent. Hon. Christine, please sit.

MR MUSASIZI: Madam Speaker, on behalf of the people of Rubanda, where I come from, on behalf of the people of Kigezi, and on behalf of Hon. Matia Kasaija, my senior minister, I extend my sincere condolences to the Mateke family, to you, and the entire people of Uganda, including His Excellency, the President, for the loss of our sister, Hon. Sarah Mateke.

I and Hon. Sarah met in the Ninth Parliament. Later, I got the opportunity, in 2013, to train with Hon. Sarah on the leadership course in China for 26 days, together with the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, Robinah Nabbanja, who was Hon. Sarah's roommate in China.

Madam Speaker, I discovered good attributes about Hon. Sarah in the 26 days we spent together, namely; she was a unifier and would easily let go. She would concede on behalf of some of the difficult people like us to win; she

would concede for the sake of unity for all the people around her.

On Saturday last week, I travelled from Mombasa through Kigali to Kisoro. Hon. Sarah called me while I was on my way. She said, "I am waiting for you in Kisoro." We were going to attend a party for the Chief Administrative Officer of Rubanda. I found Hon. Sarah waiting to receive me.

It was the first time I went to Kisoro and I was received by a line of people led by a minister. Hon. Sarah sat with us at the party, through to the after-party until late. We had a good time. She told me that next time I go there, she would arrange to take me to her home "because I do not want something to happen, and then you come asking; where is Hon. Sarah's home?"

Madam Speaker, little did I know that Hon. Sarah was saying farewell to me and the people I had that evening.

Anyway, first of all, we thank God, for the gift of life He gave to Hon. Sarah, and we thank Hon. Sarah for the good she was able to do while on earth.

Madam Speaker, today at All Saints Cathedral Church, His Grace, the Rt Rev. Dr Stephen Kazimba said that we live a borrowed life. I was the one who informed Hon. Diana Mutasingwa that I had received the sad news of Hon. Sarah's passing; Hon. Diana Mutasingwa informed Hon. Esther Anyakun, who then called you.

I was still guessing but after 20 minutes this person sent another message and said, "Do not bother checking anywhere; it is true. Count your friend dead."

It was really shocking and what came to my mind - for the information of our colleagues here, Hon. Sarah Mateke and I were on that road every weekend. Madam Speaker, you are my friend and you know it.

I always met Hon. Sarah Mateke on the road and what came to my mind was that maybe if

she had not sacrificed a lot for the people of Kisoro, she would have managed the situation. She died on duty and she committed all her life to serve the people of Kisoro and Kigezi.

We shall deeply miss her but life will go on. I pray that the people of Kisoro find wisdom to maintain the stability of the politics of Kisoro. In that way, they will have protected and defended the legacy of Hon. Sarah Mateke. May her soul rest in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. David Bahati, Hon. Amongi and Hon. Ruth Nankabirwa.

4.32

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati): To *Omutwale* Philemon Mateke who is watching us on television, Justice Garabushi, sisters and brothers of Hon. Sarah Mateke, accept my condolences and those of the people of Ndoorwa County West, Kabale District and Kigezi at large.

Madam Speaker, before I comment on the death of our sister, I just want to say that we are very grateful for what you did on Saturday. I saw you in Mengo Hospital and Nsangi. (*Applause*) We are truly grateful for the contribution and comfort you gave us.

Hon. Sarah Mateke now belongs to ages but we, the living, shall miss her greatly in many ways. We gather here to celebrate an extraordinary woman, a patriot who embodied so much that our country needs; unity, humanity and hard work.

Hon. Sarah Mateke was born - as you have been told - from a privileged - you could say, home of *Mzee* Mateke, but she could have decided to be a proud girl; she chose to be humble and lived a humble life. (*Applause*) She followed the footsteps of her father to promote the unity of the people of Kisoro and that of the country.

She worked long hours and hard for the development of our country and at heart,

she was very much interested in the tourism roads of the Kigezi Region. I am sure that this Government, as the Vice-President and the Prime Minister have committed, will continue to work on them and see that they get - *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR BAHATI: Madam Speaker, we can honour Hon. Sarah Mateke by recognising those things that she thought were bigger than the party, ambition, money, and fame. Principles of truth, love, and humanity; at best, Hon. Sarah Mateke shared what this means to us. We shall deeply remain in her debt. Bye bye, Sarah.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Amongi - honourable members, you will kindly bear with me; the President's vehicles are parked outside. Yes, a minute.

4.33

THE MINISTER OF GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (Ms Betty Amongi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I, Hon. Sarah Mateke, and five other ministers were appointed - *(Hon. Ssekikubo rose)*

THE SPEAKER: Hon. *Sseki*, you want to stand up even when we are paying tribute; first hold on.

MS AMONGI: In June 2021, we were appointed six ministers in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development where Hon. Sarah Mateke was appointed as the Minister of State for Gender, Labour and Social Development (Youth and Children Affairs).

When we took over office the following week, she received a huge number of people who had come to see the Minister in the docket of Youth and Children Affairs. At that time, the former Minister had a session where she would see people every Tuesday and Thursday. Hon. Sarah Mateke came to me and said, "I am only one minister. If I start seeing these people as a minister, how will people from the West Nile, Kisoro and Kapchorwa access me as a minister?"

She then brought up a proposal and said that, instead, she was going to tour all the remand and children's homes, meet with all the probation officers and decentralise their work.

Indeed, Hon. Sarah Mateke toured almost all the remand and children's homes. Every weekend she would either be in Kisoro or touring. She preferred to build the institution than to do work as a minister at the centre.

About the street children, she struggled to feed them and got a budget from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Unfortunately, the budget was not released.

She worked so hard during COVID-19 to ensure that most of the issues around teenage pregnancies were brought to the Cabinet and indeed when they were taken to the Cabinet, a policy was adopted that all pregnant girls should be allowed to sit their examinations. *(Applause)* Many of them excelled and they are now studying.

Madam Speaker, I cannot speak much but Hon. Sarah Mateke was a team player and did everything. She was in charge of our Commonwealth and many other programs in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.

She worked with the Youth Council but she did not only work as a minister in charge of the youth and children; many times, when I was not there - you can attest - she would be the one answering questions on labour issues when the late died. She would also be the one answering questions of women.

I appeal to Hon. Sarah Mateke, my sister - because she usually told me that we are sisters and reminded me that she carried the name "Mateke" with dignity and that it is closely associated with me and she called me "my sister". My sister, may your soul rest in peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

4.38

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (Ms Ruth Nankabirwa): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I associate myself with the people who have talked about our sister. I stand to represent her because she cannot speak at this time.

On the 6th of September, Hon. Sarah Mateke wrote a letter, which she signed herself - because I know her passion, I request that I read it to the House at this moment.

The letter is written on the letterhead of Nyakabingo Church of Uganda, Muhabura Diocese, Gisorora Archdeaconry. It is an invitation to a fundraising dinner. It reads:

“Greetings from Nyakabingo Church of Uganda, Muhabura Diocese. We are delighted to inform you that the construction of the Nyakabingo Church of Uganda, which will accommodate 2500 Christians is in advanced stages with only flooring and little finishes and furnishing remaining.

And to complete this noble project, we need approximately Shs 600 million. To that effect, an organising committee coordinated by the Hon. Sarah Mateke and Dr Engineer Mutikanga Harrison have been established to drive this fundraising.

Accordingly, you are invited for a fundraising, which will take place on Friday, 27th September, 2024, at 4.30 p.m. at Protea Hotel Kampala. And each dinner ticket costs Shs 300,000. The programme for that day will, among others, include an auction. You are therefore, invited to bring as many friends as possible to come and do God’s work.

The Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, Hon. Dr. Canon Ruth Nankabirwa Sentamu, will be the chief guest at the event.” And she included details of the bank accounts.

Madam Speaker, since we are mourning the late Hon. Sarah and many people have talked about her passion for serving God, I beg to

move that you take on and preside over this function on the 27 September; I will be there. So many of us should go there and see to it that we complete this church because she died after signing this letter on the 6th of this very month. May her soul rest in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, so much. The friends of the late Hon. Sarah, please join in the construction the Lord’s house on that day; I will do that too. Hon. Robina, Hon. Naome, the bedmate –

4.42

MS ROBINA RWAKOOJO (NRM, Gomba West County, Gomba): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On behalf of the people of Gomba West and on my own behalf, allow me to support -

THE SPEAKER: UPC, I will give you - I know Mateke is from UPC.

MS RWAKOOJO: Allow me to support the motion moved by the Rt. Hon Prime Minister for us to pay tribute to the late Hon. Sarah Mateke Nyirabashitsi, Minister of State for Defense and Veteran Affairs.

Madam Speaker, first, permit me to thank you, for coming up to assist members of Parliament in times of need, even when they no longer can talk. Thank you, for going to Mengo, Mulago, and later on to the Ministry of Defence, where I joined you together with Hon. Oboth and the staff of the Ministry of Defence to come up with the programme and other things regarding Hon. Sarah’s burial; I saw the emotions that you went through.

I sympathise deeply with the President of the Republic of Uganda, the NRM party, the people of Kisoro, but most of all, her family, and in particular her, dear son Isaac and *Mzee* Philemon Mateke; we say, “Sorry!”

The late Hon. Sarah helped us, the people of Gomba West by giving us those bursaries and many of my people are in that university for which they have asked me to say a thank you to her. And I cannot forget this. May God rest her soul in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

4.44

MS NAOME KABASHARIRA (NRM, Rushenyi County, Ntungamo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On behalf of Rushenyi Constituency, my family and on my own behalf, I wish to extend my sincere condolences to the Mateke bigger family for the loss of this dear sister of mine.

The late Hon. Sarah Mateke became a friend and later on, turned out to be a sister because of *Mzee* Mateke Philemon. He used to take me as a child of his because of my late father, whom they worked closely with under the UPC Government. I always call him my president just because back home our people used to.

So, when Sarah came to the 9th Parliament, she became my real sister. We shared a lot. I think when we lost after the 9th Parliament we sat together one day and decided that we would go back as Independents.

However, after some time, the Dr Rugunda group came and said, "Why don't you leave? NRM has got many rooms, you will get where to go." So, the late Hon. Sarah called me and said, "There is a group that has come here." And I asked, "What do we do?" We said, "If they have been sent by His Excellency, if we continue, we might have problems." So, we took the decision but we were promised - *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Esther.

MS KABASHARIRA: Madam Speaker -

THE SPEAKER: You have not finished?

MS KABASHARIRA: Madam, give me a few minutes.

THE SPEAKER: Okay.

MS KABASHARIRA: I Just want to describe the late Hon. Sarah as a good entrepreneur, a visionary leader, and simple but assertive in character. Sarah and I sat and said that we must

remain together as 9th Parliament, especially women, and we sold it to the others. That is why you see the 9th Parliament is still strong, we work together and help each other.

The late Hon. Sarah was passionate about children and she had a budget of Shs 20 million for the children. She wanted the Government to add to the budget so that street children could be taken back.

May we also think about that to remember her, by increasing this budget to at least settle these children as it was in her dream. You called her my bedmate, yes, true. We went together to China for those days with Hon. Musasizi and - *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, UPC just a minute.

4.48

MR JAMES AKENA (UPC, Lira East Division, Lira): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On behalf of the Uganda People's Congress and on my own behalf, I would like to convey sincere condolences to the family of Mr Philemon Mateke. And I to say that the late Hon. Sarah embodied her heritage well.

She carried herself well and took the integrity and the dignity of the political heritage from Philemon Mateke, and also the commitment to education from her mother. And both of those, she excelled and carried it out perfectly to the point that there is nothing much more anyone can say about the way she lived her life.

I convey my sincere condolences; it is unfortunate that we have lost a dear sister, far too soon. Sarah, rest in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Esther. Honourable members, kindly bear with me.

4.49

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS) (Ms Esther Anyakun): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for

giving me the opportunity. I would like to second the motion that was moved by the Prime Minister and supported by all my colleagues here.

Hon. Sarah used to tell me – of late – that: “I am going to surprise you,” and indeed, on Saturday morning, she surprised me. Hon. Diana called while I was in Kidepo – we had a cultural function in Karamoja - screaming. I asked: “What is the problem, Hon. Diana?” She said: “Have you heard?”

Hon. Musasizi told me - and, once a minister tells a fellow minister something, there is no way you can doubt it. I called the bodyguard – *(Interruption)*- “... she was still in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU); not yet confirmed.”

Fortunately, Madam Speaker – I would like to thank you. I called you. You were still in bed – and I thank you for taking up my phone calls at any time; I call you when there is an important issue. You jumped out of your bed – the whole Speaker of Parliament! - at that time and drove to Mengo Hospital. Some other people would, first, want security to be around the hospital. However, you did it because you love us. *(Applause)* You confirmed to me that she was no more.

Hon. Sarah - Madam Speaker, we are here paying tribute to her. I kept asking myself and my friends from the day she passed on: does she know that she is dead? I do not know whether she does.

Hon. Sarah was a lady of integrity, dignity and class. She was God-fearing and very respectful. Hon. Sarah kept thinking and telling me about her father. “I fear this because of my father. I must do this to keep the legacy of my father. I have to be this person because of my father”. *(Applause)*

I carefully choose friends in my life because one must have the qualities that I want – and Hon. Sarah was one of them. Imagine a person from Karamoja having someone from Kisoro as a friend! It means I picked her because of certain qualities.

Every time Hon. Sarah would see something, she would ask me: “Hon. Esther, are we in the same Government?” Whether it was about corruption – some people had “eaten” some money – she and I would break away and she would be like: “Are we in the same place?”

The people of Kisoro, I am sure are watching - Hon. Sarah was very dedicated to you. One time I was very concerned when we were in Kyankwanzi. I told her: “Hon. Sarah, your legs are swollen.” She told me: “Hon. Esther, I am over-travelling.” She said: “I have tested failure as a Member of Parliament – you have not tested it – and I do not want to fail again. I will make sure that I am there every weekend to serve the people of Kisoro.”

Hon. Sarah used to go on a flight, every Saturday morning, to Kisoro and come back on Monday morning, and join the Cabinet meetings. That means she had to wake up early in the morning from Kisoro to come and join the Cabinet. She was very committed. Nobody in this Parliament does that –

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS ANYAKUN: You get your own money and pay for a flight every weekend to go to see your people!

Madam Speaker, I just want to say one thing. When I was in the ministry for disaster preparedness, I visited her constituency on two main occasions. One, on issues of disasters and, two, on issues of refugees.

Hon. Sarah was happy with the following people: Hon. Nankabirwa. She told me: “Can you imagine I called her and she told me “Yes, I will come for your function”! Just like that! She was happy with you. *(Applause)*

She was happy with His Excellency, the President, for having appointed her. She was happy with you, Hon. Jacob Oboth. You made her happy and she loved working with you. She respected you, because of the respect you showed her. *(Applause)* She loved everyone in this Parliament. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Diana, do you want to speak? You have one minute. Then, we will have Hon. Jim. To the rest of the Members, tomorrow we have a session in the constituency in the morning. We will speak from there.

We have a contribution from Parliamentary SACCO of Shs 1 million. I have received the letter.

Yes, Hon. Diana.

4.55

THE MINISTER OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT (Ms Diana Mutasingwa): Madam Speaker, you cannot speak after Hon. Esther has spoken. It was really emotional. However, I would like to thank you for having been with us. I actually asked Hon. Esther how we were going to manage it. So, I thank you for being very selfless. You stood with us and we are going to be able to send off Hon. Sarah.

I stand here to honour the life of Hon. Sarah. Her passing was unexpected, untimely and amidst grief, but we want to celebrate the remarkable life she lived – *(Break in recording)*-

THE SPEAKER: Switch it on.

MS MUTASINGWA: Hon. Sarah lived a life of leadership truly chosen by God. She led her constituency with unwavering dignity and commitment. I do not want to waste your time, but I knew Hon. Sarah when we once met in Kyankwanzi in 2021 and I kept teasing her about how everyone admired her father, Mr Philemon Mateke.

We had two things in common: Hon. Sarah shared her father's last name and I also shared my father's name – even though we are married. I always told her that we had to make our parents proud –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, allow me to cut you short. Sorry about that. You close. *Mzee* has come.

MS MUTWASINGWA: Due to lack of time, I would like to thank Parliament and everyone for loving Hon. Sarah. Rest in peace, Hon. Sarah.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Honourable members - Uncle Jim, do you want to say something – just to greet the people?

I also would like to recognise Hon. Dombo, Hon. Siranda, Hon. Samuel Semwanga, Hon. Sarah Mwebesa as well as Hajjat Madina, Jacqueline and Hon. Jane Alisemera from the National Resistance Movement (NRM) Secretariat.

4.57

THE MINISTER, OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT (SECURITY (Maj. Gen. (Rtd) Jim Muhwezi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I apologise. I was in another function for the late Gen. Aronda.

I come from Kigezi, as Members may know, and Kisoro is part of it. I want to talk about one thing concerning the late Hon. Sarah Mateke. She was a unifier and Kigezi, as you know, sometimes suffers from the politics of identity. She was not part of it. So, we are going to miss her.

I bring condolences from Rujumbura in Rukungiri District to Hon. Dr Mateke, her father, whom she emulated, to you, and His Excellency, the President. May her soul rest in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I now put the question that Parliament adopts the motion to pay a glowing tribute to the late Hon. Sarah Mateke, former District Woman Member of Parliament of Kisoro, and the Minister of State for Defence and Veteran Affairs, with amendments on the prayers.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Motion, adopted.

The East African Community Anthem.

The National Anthem.

*(Exit of the late Hon. Sarah Mateke
Nyirabashitsi.)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members,
thank you so much for coming to see off our
sister. We will now join His Excellency in the
tent.

I adjourn the House to 17 September 2024.

*(The House rose at 5.05 p.m. and adjourned
until Tuesday, 17 September 2024 at 2.00
p.m.)*