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FOURTH SESSION - FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 22 OCTOBER 2024



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - 29TH SITTING - 1ST MEETING

Tuesday, 22 October 2024

Parliament met at 10.00 a.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, I welcome you to this morning's meeting. As you are aware, last week, I communicated that we would be handling the Rationalisation of Agencies and Public Expenditure (RAPEX), this week, and we should be able to conclude. I thank you so much for your dedication towards work in this Parliament, and for your people.

Honourable members, our counterparts, the East African Legislative Assembly, will have a sitting here, as I communicated last week. They arrived on the 20th. We warmly welcome them to Uganda and wish them a fruitful deliberation. *(Applause)*

I urge you to accord them all the hospitality they need. Remember Uganda is the pearl of Africa, so, we would like them to get the best, and our cooperation matters a lot.

In the last few days, the media has reported issues regarding Uganda Police personnel. One police officer, Abdallah Tusiime, courageously executed his duties amidst a heavy downpour, while another, Charles Makawa, was allegedly assaulted in the line of duty.

We acknowledge the sacrifice that the police personnel are making, and we urge the public to treat them with respect, especially when they are executing their duty; and you slap a person who is on duty? A woman who is a mother slaps a son? I do not think that is good for us as women. That is an embarrassment to all the women in Uganda.

On that note, I apologise on behalf of all the women because not all of them do that. The women that we have in Uganda are mothers and they respect themselves. We cannot go on a rampage slapping our sons. It is a very bad attitude and it portrays a bad image of women. This person was especially innocent and doing his work. If you know that you have made a mistake, the word "sorry" does not cost you much.

Honourable members, we received a report from the Public Accounts Committee (Central Government) on the Consolidated Fund Account, and it was deferred for a final decision pending the response from the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. I am reliably informed that the minister is ready. The Government Chief Whip will let us know where the minister is. Therefore, we will vary the Order Paper for the minister to respond to Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi's report.

I will also vary the Order Paper to allow the Leader of the Opposition - he says he has one report that is ready. We asked him to bring reports on his visits. We will give him time to present his report.

I am also informed that the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs is not yet ready. They will be ready tomorrow, much as they are on the Order Paper. We can look at other entities, and then look at theirs tomorrow. Thank you so much.

Yes, *mukatuliki* - let me first have the lady.

10.06

MS GORRETH NAMUGGA: (NUP, Mawogoola County South, Ssembabule): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I represent the women in Uganda Women Parliamentary Association (UWOPA), Central Region, and on behalf of those women, we do apologise for whatever happened to the man in uniform. That is not how women behave.

However, we should observe human rights across the board. We have observed severally that so many people have been assaulted. Even in politics, women have always been assaulted. We should carry on the responsibility to respect everyone in different professions or categories, no matter their sex or gender.

As leaders, I request that we condemn the act done by a fellow woman but also encourage other leaders, Government inclusive, to respect everyone on duty no matter the political affiliation or gender. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

10.07

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thanks for your communication. Indeed, what you have said; the apology is acceptable.

However, there are so many people - and this goes to the Government Chief Whip - through you - we have a lot of indiscipline people among government officials, including some ministers; note the words "some ministers." There is a minister here, Madam Speaker, who is an *ex officio* member. The last time he came to Parliament, he was not wearing a tie, though

he walked out slowly. When he goes out - Hon. Sam Mayanja, always attacks Buganda institution and the King, and that is a sign of indiscipline.

He has missed sittings here about 200 times with no sufficient cause. The rules are very clear. I do not know why you have not written to the President. Hon. Sam Mayanja should be removed from the ministry. He is not useful to us. (*Applause*) Hon. Sam Mayanja abuses Buganda Kingdom. He is never in Parliament. How does he execute his work as a minister without coming to Parliament to tell us what is happening in the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Urban Development? This is very pathetic.

Lastly, on the issue of the police officers, I have requested several times - how can the Ministry of Internal Affairs fail to provide what is called a poncho? A police officer who does work as a traffic officer is showered by the rain. The Police and the Army know that police and army officers are given raincoats to save them from rain showers.

In addition, the police officers controlling traffic are not even given a bottle of water. They are the least paid. Madam Speaker, we need to see that the Government comes out to help us.

These police officers spend a whole day managing traffic because we do not have enough traffic lights in the country because our Government is poor. (*Laughter*) They work the whole day. It is not fair. Children are going to refuse to become police officers just like they run away from teaching, because of the conditions of the profession.

Madam Speaker, Hon. Sam Mayanja - that man -

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, concerning Hon. Mayanja, Rule 114 of the Rules of Procedure reads, "The Leader of Government Business shall ensure that subrule 1 is complied with..." In the absence of the Leader of Government Business, we have the Government Chief Whip.

10.10

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Denis Hamson Obua): Madam Speaker, we accept, as men of Uganda, the apology offered on behalf of the women, for the alleged assault of a police officer, duly executing his lawful duties. But also, this Parliament has facilitated the relevant State organs with the laws that are normally applied.

In the case of the lady who assaulted the traffic police officer; she was arrested, investigated, charged in court and remanded to prison. Therefore, the due process of the law is on course, as far as this is concerned.

Madam Speaker, on the application of the rule, you are the chief custodian of the Rules of Procedure and the rules will normally be interpreted as they are, not as they ought to be, or as we wish it to be. So, the rules, as stipulated, will definitely apply in this instant case you have quoted. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, let us follow our rules and handle that. I am happy that the person was taken to prison for the misconduct. I would like to thank you so much. Yes, Mitooma - honourable minister, the issue of the security personnel having raincoats? Internal Affairs -

MR OBUA: I believe that issue can be squarely responded to by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but we are all aware, Speaker, just like you have police guards and you know that most likely every year or after every two years, there are supplies made to these men and women in uniform.

Anyhow, I do not want to appear to be answering. We are guarded by police, and so, let that issue of the raincoats, including the other logistical arrangements, in terms of the dressing of our men and women, especially, during the rainy season, be answered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, that gentleman did his job and deserves to be brought to work here now so that he can rest.

Therefore, Uganda Police should transfer that police officer to Parliament. *(Applause)*

MR OBUA: Madam Speaker, I wish to thank you for the offer you have made. We undertake to communicate that offer to the Ministry of Internal Affairs to ensure that the traffic policeman who was assaulted, is transferred to work under the Parliamentary Police -

THE SPEAKER: Both of them.

MR OBUA: Honourable members, the Speaker has ruled. In the first case, it was one but now she has said that both. So, our duty is to extract and communicate the guidance, directive, and commitment of the Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, the honourable member for Mitooma.

MR OSHABE: Madam Speaker, the matter raised by Hon. Ssewungu concerning a minister who abuses the king is a very serious matter. This is about the leadership of a king in this country. A minister of Government goes to the public, and abuses the king today, tomorrow, the other day.

The matter was brought here, I expected the Government Chief Whip to at least promise either to take it to the Cabinet or anywhere. It cannot just be swept under the table like that. It looks like it is a Government policy -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have got the message. I will write to Hon. Mayanja to come to this Floor - you first, switch on.

MR ZAAKE: Madam Speaker, about the honourable minister, Mayanja, I am informing the House that I am coming up with a petition to censure the honourable minister for the utterances he made against our King and then also about not attending sittings of Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: You will not censure him for utterances but for missing the House.

MR ZAAKE: All right, for missing the House. Next week, I will come up with a petition.

THE SPEAKER: However, we will need to check our records if he has not been asking for permission not to be in the House. Yes, the honourable member for Mitooma, then Zombo and Hon. Rose.

10.16

MS JULIET BASHIISHA (NRM, Woman Representative, Mitooma): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for bringing up the issue of the assault of our officer. And for your information, the lady in question is a Member of our family. She is the wife to my brother and I am really very sorry that it happened.

The incident happened when I was in the constituency, but I had to travel back on Sunday night. Yesterday, I visited and I found her in court. When she saw me, obviously, she said she was very sorry, the family was very shocked because we did not expect that and especially that the family name was used.

She is very apologetic and when I talked to her, as a leader this time, she said it was a bad day for her. We are ready to cooperate with the law; we have no problem with whatever comes out, so long as it is a fair treatment. So, I also apologise on behalf of our family. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, let us not dwell much on that lady. I have already apologised – you know the matter is in the court.

10.18

MR LAWRENCE SONGA (NRM, Ora County, Zombo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am going to take you back to the two policemen; it is likely that all the policemen and women are going to start jumping in the rain because they are being appreciated.

THE SPEAKER: They should work.

MR SONGA: I totally appreciate the sacrifice the policeman made, but the right thing should be done. If they need protective gear, raincoats, and so on, let them be given. If they need water, let them be supported because we do not want to cause commotion where every policeman will come on the road.

On the one who was assaulted, the law must follow its course. That is my prayer. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

10.19

MS ROSE OBIGAH (NRM, Woman Representative, Terego): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On the same issue, I just want to say that the increment we put in for the police salary has not been done.

It is only the police personnel at the higher ranks, who are being given the money. I talked to the police themselves; they are really sad, especially those in the lower ranks.

Two, the accommodation for the police is not taken care of. Madam Speaker, it would be good if we had good accommodation for the police, other than only talking about the attire they put on during the rain; the raincoats.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Rose, do you mean the money that we increased is only given to higher-ranking officers?

MS OBIGA: Yes, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The money we gave was for the lower cadres! We gave money to the police, army, and prisons.

MS OBIGA: Thank you. Madam Speaker – you see – the lower cadres reach out to us individually. Even our police personnel here, in Parliament, are saying they have not got the increment. The lower cadres have not had their salary increased, but those in the higher ranks have had their salaries even tripled. They are paying themselves, but the lower-cadre personnel are not well paid. I beg that you get the minister responsible to help us with this particular issue. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Government?

10.21

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Obua Hamson): Madam Speaker, the spirit of the increment of salaries to the men and

women in uniform was meant to be a cross board. If there are disparities for the Uganda Police Force, as raised by Hon. Obiga, let the Minister of Internal Affairs come and brief Parliament, through your directive on that.

However, the spirit was clear: every Ugandan serving in one of the three of our national armed forces should have been a beneficiary. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. We need a report from the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Yes, Hon. Xavier Kyooma.

10.22

MR XAVIER KYOOMA (NRM, Ibanda County North, Ibanda): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I join the rest of my colleagues to accept the apology. In addition, I want to congratulate the traffic officer who was assaulted because, despite the high level of provocation, he exercised the highest level of professionalism.

Madam Speaker, yes, the law is taking its course, but for whoever watched that video, as I did, I want to believe that this lady could be having a mental problem - (*Interjection*) - yes. I mean, you have assaulted a police officer, you have gone ahead and taken away his phones, you have taken away the EPS gadget and you are shouting at the highest level of your voice! Our mental hospital is not very far, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable – my former lecturer, I am sorry to cut you short. We said we should not discuss that issue again since it is in court. However, we thank the policeman for being patient enough and respecting the lady as a mother, as a daughter, so, we can stop that discussion for now.

MR KYOOMA: Much obliged, Madam Speaker. I also want to congratulate the traffic police officer who did his work despite the heavy rains. As Hon. Rose has said, it is true that the salary enhancement did not trickle down to the lower cadres. Just on Sunday, I was upcountry and the policeman was saying:

“We thanked you when you considered us, but we have waited in vain...” –

THE SPEAKER: We are going to handle that.

MR KYOOMA: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Let us have Hon. Faith and, then, Hon. Gyavi.

10.24

MR JOHN FAITH MAGOLO (NRM, Bunghoko County North, Mbale): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I admit the fact that the matter is in court, but I want to urge that we strengthen, in this country, the institution of counselling and mental health, because there is a lot of stress and bitterness in the community.

That incident came to the limelight because there was a recording. However, there are many things taking place behind the scenes. Therefore, as the Government, or as a country, those institutions must be strengthened, so that people can seek refuge in moments like that before they come to the public. I beg to submit.

10.26

MR GYAVIIRA SSEMWANGA (NRM, Buyamba County, Rakai): Thank you, Madam Speaker. This Parliament has been voting money to procure police uniforms and, as a member of the Budget Committee, we have been passing it.

Madam Speaker, in my understanding, a full police uniform includes a rain jacket. So, I would request – because that is not the only money we have been voting for, as Parliament. We also voted the money for building houses for the police.

Let the minister responsible for internal affairs give us a comprehensive report on the monies that we have been voting for and what they have done. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Procedure?

MR ODUR: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The procedural matter I would like to raise is about the issues that have been raised concerning the police welfare, and how the Ministry of Internal Affairs is handling the payments related to both the police and prisons –

THE SPEAKER: And the army.

MR ODUR: Yes, but, specifically, I want to talk about internal affairs because if a recruit goes to the training school, they are supposed to be paid. However, I can inform you that, for the last two or three years, the prison warders who have been training – for nine months – have never been paid, yet the money has been voted here. It is the same with the police.

So, the procedural matter I want to raise is whether it would not be proper to refer these issues to our committee of Parliament here, to invite the ministry and interrogate or examine the minister and the technocrats to give us evidence on these matters.

If the minister for finance has released the money to pay those trainees but for nine months, the money has not been paid, who is “eating” that money? It has to be examined. I would like to move.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Odur is saying that the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs should take up this issue and report back to the House – and, I think that is a better way. They should take up this issue and report back within two weeks. The chairperson is here. Hon. Mbabazi? That is for human rights? Let the committee take up this issue and report back to the House in two weeks.

MS NALUYIMA: Madam Speaker, it is great that you have ruled that the committee takes up this matter –

THE SPEAKER: We have ruled.

MS NALUYIMA: However, there is also a matter where the police need to be investigated, and this concerns how they are treating my Kasokoso people. At this hour -

THE SPEAKER: Maybe they are treating them like that because they do not have enough pay. *(Laughter)* Let us first sort out this, Hon. Ethel. Yes, Hon. Emmanuel.

10.29

MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I know you had said that we should not talk about this lady, but one aspect I want to bring up is –

THE SPEAKER: Why are people squeezed here? Extend! You are squeezing some people’s wives. *(Laughter)*

MR ONGIERTHO: Madam Speaker, I was saying that we also need to commend the mother of the lady, because it also came out clearly that the lady had expected the mother to bail her out but the mother refused. I thought that was good in as far as discipline is concerned.

Secondly, Madam Speaker, I know that in this House, we have ever talked about the Exodus SACCO, which is a savings and credit co-operative society for the Uganda Police Force. We know that Exodus has had a lot of problems and I want to believe up to now, the problem has not been solved yet these people could be bleeding internally because of that same problem.

You remember when the Indian was killed; we talked here in Parliament about making sure that the issue of the Exodus is corrected so that it functions well to support the police.

When we talk about their welfare, they have been saving in that society knowing that from those savings, they can borrow, pay fees and do a lot of things. But now, they are being frustrated.

Madam Speaker, I pray that something is done in definite terms for Exodus to function well to support the welfare of the police. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: We had asked for a report on Exodus. Was that report presented? I am told the report on Exodus was presented on the Floor - yes. Now, you do not ask me when. If it was presented, go back to the *Hansard* and check. Yes?

10.31

MR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanya-Kabonera Division, Masaka City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The police officer in the rain is a popular police officer who operates around Ntinda and Bukoto. We were surprised that the police officer does his work with diligence. He is a hardworking officer. He only got a chance that this time the nation saw him in the rain. But on a daily basis, that police officer's clothes are wet because of hard work, even on a normal day.

Our surprise, Madam Speaker, is that for a long time, this police officer has never been rewarded with a promotion. I appreciate your directive that he gets deployed at the Parliament. But I want to request that he should be considered for a promotion as well. He is a hardworking police officer and this has been for a long time; the people in that area know him very well.

THE SPEAKER: The ayes have it. (*Laughter*) Honourable members - yes, Hon. Naboth, Hon. Kivumbi, Hon. Acuti, and honourable minister, you will conclude.

10.33

MR NABOTH NAMANYA (FDC, Rubabo County, Rukungiri): Thank you, Madam Speaker -

THE SPEAKER: Can we move faster?

MR NAMANYA: I think, Madam Speaker, it is very important that all Members of this House and all members of Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF) respect the work of the Uganda Police Force. We recently had an incident where a traffic policeman in Kisaasi was shot at by a UPDF officer, by the name of Babangida Mango. That police officer called Robert Mukebezi, for purposes of specificity, had his leg amputated but that traffic policeman

called Robert Mukebezi, who was on duty, up to date, has not seen justice.

His children are at home and not at school. But there is no evidence that the UPDF officer called Babangida Mango was arraigned before the court for the police officer to get justice.

Madam Speaker, it is very important that even the UPDF officers, some of whom are here, should respect the policemen who are on the road doing their work.

One time, the policemen on the road were off and it took me seven hours to drive from Kampala to home. So, we must start respecting traffic policemen who are on the road. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I think we need to make a follow-up because the minister had said they are handling that issue of Mukebezi when Hon. Silwany raised it here. We should. The Honourable Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs should come and give us a response to that because that man's leg was amputated. He stopped working and the children were at home. Yes, Hon. Kivumbi?

10.35

MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI (NUP Butambala County, Butambala): Madam Speaker, thank you. Now that we are talking about matters of police, all police barracks, especially those around Kampala, are experiencing load-shedding.

For most barracks, power is switched off at 5.00 a.m. and then switched on at 7.00. p.m. But sometimes the nature of the police work - some work during the night. So, they must prepare to iron their uniform and be on duty, especially those who guard Very Important People (VIPs). They are supposed to be on duty by 6.00 a.m. but for the whole day, the power is off.

If the Government of Uganda cannot provide power 24/7 hours to the police barracks, whom will they give power to? You loadshed police barracks?

There are also other issues to do with communication whereby some officers cannot receive their messages or orders. May we know and get a reason why police barracks, especially around Kampala and other upcountry barracks experience load-shedding and water - I am reminded of - water being supplied at intervals.

Otherwise, these police officers cannot speak for themselves because that will constitute a mutiny, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The Government?

3.37

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obuga): Madam Speaker, we have already agreed, in principle, that all related matters incidental to the Uganda Police Force be handled by the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs.

May I persuade the Member, raising through you, Madam Speaker, that this forms part of those issues to be interrogated by our committee that will report back. Why barracks of police in Uganda are always not having electricity 24/7 hours. That can be part of the issues to be interrogated.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, that is something that you can handle. It does not have to go to a committee if it is true. Ask.

MR OBUGA: Madam Speaker, we may not know what is contained therein, why these barracks are normally having blackouts. The reason could be budget-related. So, it would be important for our committee to interrogate that such that it forms part of the basis of their report.

THE SPEAKER: Okay. Hon. Acuti?

10.38

MR SAMUEL ACUTI (Independent, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Madam Speaker. As we talk about the police officer in the rain, we also have the police officer in an accident scene, where people have died in an accident, they are bleeding, but the police

officers do not have the personal protective equipment to even help themselves; not even the gloves. They are normally the first respondents to arrive at an accident scene before even the ambulance and medical intervention have come in. So, it is very important that the issue of personal protective equipment is addressed.

Secondly, even during their duties, we have seen cases of police officers knocked dead, or injured in accidents by vehicles yet the question of medical care for the policeman and the policewoman who has been affected in that accident is not very clear.

We have military hospitals, we have hospitals for the prisons, but for the police, there is still a very big gap. So, I ask that even as the committee looks at their welfare, let them also look at medical care as one of the areas in which they can be assisted. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. This should be looked at. In a few minutes, we will vary the Order Paper to get a report from the Leader of the Opposition.

STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

10.39

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. In a minute, I would like to join you and colleagues to first appreciate that police officer called Abdullah Tusiime. I have seen him on the Bukoto, Ntinda and Kisaasi roads for about four years now - very passionate about the work that he does.

I remember about two years ago, I stopped to say "thank you" to him and he was shocked. He told me, "You man, you belong to the opposition. How is it that you are appreciating a police officer?" I told him, "I like to give credit where it is due." He is a very passionate man; I am sure, like several other police officers. So, we salute him and his efforts.

Madam Speaker, without going into the merits of the matter of assault that is in court, I want

to briefly condemn violence generally, whether it happens in homes between spouses, whether it be violence against an officer on duty, as is the case as we saw the videos making rounds; it is wrong and improper, whether it is violence also by an officer on duty against a civilian when they are arresting them or conducting an arrest, as we have seen sometimes, they do it brutally and in a very violent manner. Violence should be condemned because it is wrong.

I am glad we are speaking out now because it is an officer on duty, what happened is barbaric and unacceptable. We will leave the courts to do their job. Likewise, we should also condemn whenever violence is meted out. Somebody is arresting a civilian; you already have them but you continue to beat them as you put them on your truck; it is wrong.

Madam Speaker, moving under rule 53, I would like to present this very short report. I would like to begin by tabling a copy thereof on an oversight visit that I had, together with some colleagues, to ROKO Construction Company.

Governments, the world over, have increasingly invested in private companies to stimulate economic growth, foster innovation and address strategic national interests. These investments can take various forms including equity shares, loans, grants and subsidies.

While Government investments can provide crucial support to private enterprises, they also raise important questions about the role of the State in the economy, potential risks to public finances and the effectiveness of such interventions.

In recent years, governments have invested heavily in private companies across various sectors, from technology and healthcare to infrastructure and energy. These investments aim to promote entrepreneurship, create jobs and drive economic development. However, they also involve significant risks, including the potential for inefficiency, corruption and misallocation of resources.

ROKO Construction Company Limited, established in 1969, is one of the players in

Uganda's construction industry. It has played a role in the development of major infrastructure projects, including Government buildings, roads and other key facilities. Despite its long history, ROKO has faced financial difficulties in recent years, prompting the Government of Uganda to intervene.

In July 2022, the Government of Uganda gave a financial bailout to ROKO Construction Company Limited to rescue it from financial collapse. This intervention entailed the Government acquiring shares in ROKO, as part of an equity investment to keep the company afloat. The Government said the decision to bail out ROKO was aimed at saving the jobs of thousands of employees and ensuring the continuation of critical Government infrastructure projects that were under construction by this company.

The proposal for the Government to acquire 150,000 preference shares in ROKO Construction was tabled here in Parliament on 7 July 2022 and was accompanied by a Letter of No Objection from the Attorney-General's Chambers. This proposal was referred to the Committee on Finance, Planning, and Economic Development and the committee reported back to the House on 20 July 2022, recommending approval.

Despite concerns raised by a number of us here in the House, Parliament insisted on approving this motion to procure the shares. The entire transaction was to cost the Government of Uganda Shs 207.13 billion, with an additional share premium of Shs 56.2 billion in the Financial Year 2024/2025, the total thereof being Shs 263.33 billion.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, some of the key aspects of this bailout are:

1. Government equity investment. The Government invested this money, which is approximately \$55 million, into ROKO Construction Company by buying a stake in the company. The majority shareholders include a couple of people, one called Mann Francey Koehler, 12,000 shares; Fried Helm, 1,500 shares and Kurt Walter,

- 1,500 shares. This move would ensure that the Government becomes a shareholder in this company, giving it leverage in decision-making;
2. The aspect of protection of jobs. ROKO says it employs 1,800 Ugandans directly and has indirect business relationships with thousands of others, including subcontractors, suppliers and others. The Government's bailout was intended to prevent massive layoffs and the potential for economic ripple effects;
 3. Completion of Government projects. ROKO was involved and continues to be involved in several strategic Government projects, including the completion of the Parliament Building, the Uganda Cancer Institute in Mulago, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development building, and several others. The Government's stake was meant to ensure that these projects continue without delay, as a collapse of ROKO would lead to delayed completion of these projects.

However, to date, some of the infrastructure projects that were fronted as a reason for the approval of this investment have not been completed. A case in point is the Parliamentary Chambers and IGG House, among others.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, as you know, Parliament spends billions annually to rent office space for Members and staff at Kingdom Kampala and Queen's Chambers. We would not be spending this money if our Parliamentary Chambers were completed.

4. Financial restructuring. The bailout also involved a financial restructuring plan to help ROKO manage its debt. ROKO had accumulated a significant liability with commercial banks, contractors and suppliers which had led to liquidity challenges.

Let me briefly, as I begin to wrap up, talk about the oversight visit that we held to the office. In fulfilment of Section 6A and E of the Administration of Parliament (Amendment) Act, 2006, I led a delegation of some members

of the shadow cabinet to visit this company's head office, but we were denied access.

Aware that ROKO Construction had received a bailout from the Government of Uganda, the objective of the oversight visit was to ascertain whether the rationale for the bailout was achieved and to establish as well if the governance and management challenges of ROKO were being addressed.

However, it should be noted that this oversight visit did not come to fruition as I have mentioned because when we went to the ROKO Head Office located in Kawempe, Ttula - and that was meant to be on Monday, 14th October - we were denied entry to the premises to have an engagement with the management team, thus impeding this oversight engagement. In a letter, the Managing Director, Mark Koehler, said that the Board had rejected the planned engagement with Members of Parliament and the company's management.

Our areas of concern, Madam Speaker, are that Government construction projects have continued to stall despite this bailout and this raises a lot of questions. I have talked about the Parliamentary Chambers whose target of completion was July 2021 but that has not happened yet.

The current shareholding is unclear and the Government needs to clarify this, Madam Speaker. It is unknown whether amendments were made to include the Government of Uganda's investment and how much it owns in equity, what type of shares, and so on. The Government ought to explain this effect.

The Government ought to appraise Parliament on the latest financial standing of this company given that it approached Parliament with a bailout request. I think it is prudent that the House deserves to be given accountability for this bailout money.

The Government cannot just come to Parliament when it requires money and when we are asking questions, it is missing; it is important that this taxpayer's money is accounted for. We

asked, “Did the financial status of the company improve? What is the status of loan repayments and payment of suppliers? What is the status of ongoing projects by the company, especially the government projects?”

The staff of the company have regularly reached out to legislators complaining about not receiving salaries for close to four months. Is the Government aware of these concerns by employees? Is it keeping an eye on this company in which it injected taxpayers’ money? Are we not bothered by these concerns of Ugandans?

In conclusion, while the Government of Uganda’s financial intervention towards ROKO Construction Company Limited was aimed at preserving jobs, continuing important infrastructure projects and maintaining stability in the construction sector, the glaring concerns about project delays, financial transparency and governance reforms need to be urgently addressed.

For purposes of transparency, the Attorney-General should be required to lay before the House the share agreement with ROKO; the Parliament has a right to know.

As people’s representatives, we call for continued vigilance to ensure that public funds are used efficaciously and that the interests of Ugandan workers and taxpayers are protected. I beg to submit. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, the Leader of the Opposition (LoP). We need a report from finance and the Attorney-General in regard to this report.

10.52

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES)

(Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I commit that we shall bring a report about the issues that the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) has raised.

However, I have one clarification I seek from him. I have been here long enough to qualify as a senior Member of this House. I have done several oversights in this House as a backbencher. Did I hear properly from the LoP that he went to do oversight at ROKO’s head office? If that is the case, what kind of oversight do we do at the headquarters of some of the entities in which we have an interest?

Number two, what is the procedure of doing oversight? I am wondering how someone represents this Parliament - because Madam Speaker, we leave this building officially. How can someone be denied access when this person has been officially - *(Interjection)* - Therefore, I want to know what kind of oversight the LoP has to do at the ROKO head office.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, let us get a response.

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: He is going to bring a written response. I want a written response. He just wants a clarification -

MR SSENYONYI: That is okay.

THE SPEAKER: This is simple.

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I acknowledge the minister’s commitment to bring a response. Hopefully, it will come. Many times, the Government commits to bringing responses and they do not.

Honourable colleague, I encourage you to reread the Constitution, the Administration of Parliament Act and our Rules of Procedure, which provide for the functions of the Leader of the Opposition.

One is to keep the Government in check. Ours is an oversight role, and as I have emphasised, it is actually not just my role. It is the role of all of us as parliamentarians; we follow taxpayers’ money.

We have gone to several entities. Two weeks ago we were in Amuru at the Atiak Sugar Factory because the Government had injected Shs 553 billion. The management of Atiak received us and we held an engagement with them. We appreciated that and raised concerns. Madam Speaker, as you guided me, I will also be tabling that report.

We went to Dei Biopharma Uganda which is also a private company but the Government has injected Shs 723 billion. They received us and we had an engagement with them. We raised our concerns and they raised responses but we still have concerns.

We did the same thing; we wrote to ROKO and as always, we informed the Speaker of Parliament. In fact, when we were going to Lubowa - just to take you a bit away - we did all the writing.

The Minister of Health who also received our letter responded to my letter saying, "Leader of the Opposition, I have received your letter but unfortunately, I will not be able to join you" - because I had requested that she join us - but she signed off by saying, "I wish you well in this oversight visit." Of course, that smelled a rat. *(Laughter)* No wonder when we went, we met what we met because even the Minister of Health had previously been locked out at Lubowa Hospital.

Anyhow, to do with ROKO, the same thing we did write and when we got there, the gateman or whoever gave us a letter saying, the Managing Director has said that the Board of Directors (BoD) has denied you access.

We did not go because we wanted to pry into the personal enterprise of this company. We wrote to them saying, "We would like to have an engagement with you." When an entity does not have anything to hide, then you engage with the legislators. We ask you questions that we do have, you respond and then we bring a report. That is why we do this.

We do not go to entirely private entities but those where the taxpayer has injected billions

of shillings. So, please encourage ROKO. If they have nothing to hide, they should be open to scrutiny. That is all that we had gone to do. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, much as the Speaker is a custodian of the law in the House, she or he is also a custodian of the privileges of the Members of Parliament. When you go out there, I request both the Leader of the Opposition and the committees that you give us ample time, always, when you want to visit an institution.

For example, when you were going to Atiak, I even had to make sure that the road was clear for you - *(Laughter)* - because they block the road. I kept in touch with the Leader of the Opposition.

When he was going to Dei BioPharma; he actually wrote to my office asking if it was proper. I said it is very proper for a Leader of the Opposition to come and visit you.

However, all said, honourable minister, we have our money with ROKO. We need to know how the money is being used. *(Applause)* Most importantly, the Members are asking about this building here; it is our building. You need to have an interface with ROKO and give a report to this House.

MR MUSASIZI: Much obliged, Madam Speaker. However, Madam Speaker, a meeting of such a nature, if you wanted to meet the board of ROKO you would have invited them to Parliament. Site visit; you see the site –

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter.

MS ABABIKU: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity.

My procedural matter is in line with what the LOP presented. I have an interest in knowing the criteria normally used for the selection of companies to be bailed out. Therefore, I am seeking your indulgence whether it would not be prudent for the minister to include that in his response. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Jonathan –

MREBWALU: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. We have the National Housing and Construction Company Limited here in Uganda. Why wouldn't the Government empower the National Housing and Construction Company Limited other than giving money to ROKO, a Swiss company?

We saw a number of our companies here in Uganda die. One; Zimmwe, died and the Sembuule empire also died.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, there is no problem with giving ROKO money, but we want to see the value for the money that has been given to them. I have already ruled on that. Next item.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER ON
THE COMMEMORATION OF THE UN
INTERNATIONAL WHITE CANE DAY

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, as you are aware, the world celebrates the White Cane Awareness Day every year on 15 October. A long white cane is a mobility aid, which most people who are blind or have low vision, choose to use. As it is widely used, the white cane has become an internationally recognised symbol for the blind and the low vision.

Pursuant to rule 52, the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development will present the statement. Please honourable minister -

11.02

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (DISABILITY AFFAIRS) (Ms Hellen Asamo): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving us the opportunity to present this paper on behalf of the blind people.

It is the first time that I present a paper on behalf of the blind, and I would like to sincerely thank you for being very accommodating to all members of our society.

Madam Speaker, in 1964, the UN Assembly declared the 15th of October every year, as an International White Cane Day. In Uganda, this year, the event will be celebrated on the 17th of November.

The UN global theme for this year is: "Promoting inclusion, celebrating abilities and advocating for access for people with blindness or visual impairment."

As a country, we have domesticated the theme and our national theme for this year is; "The White Cane for every blind/visually impaired person."

Madam Speaker has already described the white cane. Some people call it a stick; the one we usually see blind people use.

The theme highlights the need for commitment to create a safer and inclusive environment for every Ugandan, including persons with visual impairment. The theme also calls upon Ugandans to prioritise meaningful inclusion of the community of persons with visual impairment in the social, economic, political and other aspects of development through all forms of accessibility, but with a special emphasis on accessibility using a white cane.

Madam Speaker, the key highlight of this year's event is a marathon code-named; "Run for the Blind." The commemoration is aimed at raising awareness on the rights and mobility needs of persons with visual impairment so as to break the accessibility barriers. This year's event is a special one, in that, we request people of goodwill to support mobility in form of a fundraising drive to raise about 10,000 white canes for persons with blindness.

Many persons with blindness/visual impairment are not able to access services such as education, health, banks, recreation centres, courts, transport systems, and economic empowerment services, among others due to physical accessibility and mobility challenges.

Globally, white canes are well-known devices for empowering people with blindness/visual

impairment, to access different services and service delivery points.

Apart from a guide to a person with blindness - a guide is the one who moves with them - white canes are the sure way towards independent living of a person with blindness. A white cane is a form of mobility aid that enables a person with blindness to go about their daily business, especially in unfamiliar environments without a guide.

The major types of canes differentiated according to utilisation include; the long cane, symbol cane, guide cane, and one with red stripes. Of course, we need to recognise that in developed countries, they have guide dogs.

The long cane is the standard long white cane, which folds with four or more sections. It is for a set of lengths for the user, and it requires some basic training for effective utilisation.

A symbol cane is one on the other hand short and not designed to touch the ground. Its function is to illustrate somebody's sight loss. It shows that you are blind. These are commonly used in busy areas or at road closing points to indicate sight loss.

Guide cane is in between the two above in terms of length. It is majorly used to detect obstacles when in an unfamiliar environment.

A white cane with red strips; this type of cane in most cases has two red stripes. It is designed to indicate a dual disability. For example, hearing loss in addition to sight loss.

Madam Speaker, according to the World Health Organisation, at least 2.2 million people across the world have a near or a distance visual impairment.

In Africa, approximately 26.3 million people have some form of visual impairment. Of course, Madam Speaker, in this room, some people put on specs - but I am not saying that the Rt Hon. Speaker is - *(Laughter)* - just for fun.

Of these, 20.4 million people have low vision, and 5.9 people are blind.

In Uganda, the UBOS report of 2014 indicated that out of 6.4 million persons with disabilities, 2.1 million are persons with visual impairment, constituting 32.2 per cent of the disability community.

Given the above huge population of persons with visual impairment in need of meaningful inclusion amidst limited access to white canes, ensuring access to socioeconomic services for persons with visual impairment by enhancing mobility, is essential and an obligation to all of us.

There are national and international instruments such as the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, the African Union Protocol, and the Marrakesh Treaty, to which Uganda is a signatory. This makes it mandatory for the Government and partners to ensure that we work towards fulfilling these obligations.

The Government of Uganda has taken bold steps in disability inclusion, has also ratified and put in place policy frameworks and programs. These include:

- i) Strong legal framework: Uganda was among the first countries to ratify the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as well as amend and review the Persons with Disabilities Act and the National Policy, among other frameworks, to align them with the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities;
- ii) This year, Uganda was recognised by the African Union Secretariat as one of the first 15 countries in Africa to ratify the African Union Protocol on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- iii) In the area of education, though there are some areas for improvement especially on performance, the country has established 37 special primary schools

- and 20 secondary schools for children with visual impairments;
- iv) According to the Ministry of Education and Sports, Education Management Information Systems (EMIS); as at the end of 2013, we had 6,249 children with visual impairments enrolled in pre-primary school, 36,792 in primary school and 3,709 at secondary school. Efforts are underway to make more schools disability inclusive for full accessibility by learners with disabilities, including those with visual impairments;
- v) Government has instituted special quarters for the admission of students with disabilities (including persons with visual impairments) in public universities. Under this program, many students with disabilities are admitted to various courses annually;
- vi) Besides the 64 students under direct affirmative action, we have many through the Master Card Foundation, with others estimated at 110 per year. Through Uganda's global disability commitment by the end of 2024. It was agreed that 320 students with disabilities will be admitted to universities, we already have the 110, so work is still in progress;
- vii) Uganda has promoted non-discrimination of persons with disabilities in employment and I am proud to report that for the first time, we now have a magistrate with visual impairment in addition to a number of other officers in the ministries, departments and agencies, including Parliament;
- viii) Our country has also deliberately put in place affirmative action programs, including the Parish Development Model, *Emyooga*, and National Disability Grant to promote the inclusion of special interest groups, including persons with visual impairment.
- ix) Many Government agencies are Brailleing their documents to make them accessible to persons with visual impairments.
- These include the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda as amended, the Persons with Disabilities Act 2020, the National Policy on Persons with Disabilities 2024, among others.
- The Evidence Act was amended to allow people with visual impairment to use smell, touch and voice as evidence in court, as complainants and witnesses; and
- x) To protect the rights of persons with visual impairments; under the property rights laws in terms of waivers to braille, different publications by different authors, Uganda Registration Services Bureau has been involving the persons with visual impairments in the property rights legal reforms.
- I would like to take this opportunity, therefore, to invite all Ugandans to this year's event marking the White Cane Day, which will include a run code named: #Run for the Blind#. This run or marathon is being spearheaded by the Uganda National Association of the Blind (UNAB), an umbrella organisation that takes care of all persons with visual impairment across the country under the guidance of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.
- Rt Hon. Speaker and the honourable members, for registration and participation in this mobile cause, we should use MTN MoMo Code 710075(Dial *165*3# or Airtel pay code 4370414(Dial *185*9# and then follow

the prompts to buy a running kit at only Shs 25,000.

The kits can also be collected or purchased from Uganda National Association of the Blind (UNAB) - Kireka, Forest Mall, Kati Kati Grounds and Garden City Mall.

For donations through the bank, please use United Bank of Africa (UBA) bank A/C 0103017389 in the name of Uganda National Association of the Blind.

The Rt Hon. Speaker, the lover of sports, is expected to be the chief runner with the blind people and all of us in this Parliament to launch the marathon on the 17th of November 2024 at Kati Kati Grounds, Lugogo, starting at 6.00 am and, I invite everybody to come and run with the Speaker.

Since we shall have a break for discussions and speeches, and the Rt Hon. Prime Minister will also come in to close the celebration later on the same day.

Before I conclude, the blind people told me to thank you for accepting to be their chief runner, and they told me that they love you, so much and thank you for loving them.

As I conclude I want to appreciate the honourable members for always supporting programs for persons with disabilities, especially the commitment to the budget and legislative process.

My humble appeal is that we support these people with blindness, visual impairment by purchasing as many kits as possible to enable UNAB to procure and distribute the 10,000 white canes targeting children, youth, women and men with visual impairment across the country. Together, we can fundraise for a white cane for every blind person.

In conclusion, I take this singular honour to invite you to participate in this noble cause by your physical presence in Kati Kati on 17th November 2024. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister; the statement is self-explanatory. I take this opportunity to invite all members of Parliament to join us in the run to promote and fundraise for the white cane, for the blind people. On the 17th, you have got the account number and all that is required and this is not for debate. We have too much on the Order Paper.

Honourable members - my shadow minister, you will come on the 17th and I will give you a slot to speak to the blind people. Who is the shadow minister? The Youth?

In the public gallery this morning, we have students and teachers from Tickles Junior School in Gayaza, Kyadondo East constituency. They are represented by Hon. Muwada and Hon. Naluyima Ethel. Please stand up. You are welcome. Your Member of Parliament is here.

11.18

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On behalf of the people of Gayaza and Wakiso and together with you, we take this opportunity to welcome our children. Thank you, wonderful children, for studying. Please know that we are here handling your issues –*(Laughter)* - and we are so much interested in matters of education, as the Parliament of Uganda. Welcome to parliament.

Members of Parliament and the Speaker love you very much. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: I had given the shadow minister a minute.

11.19

THE SHADOW MINISTER OF GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (Ms Fortunate Nantongo): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the space. I would like to thank the minister for the statement, as we celebrate the UN International White Cane Day.

According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics results for 3 October 2024, disability prevalence

was indicated to have declined from 12.4 to 5.7 per cent since 2014. We believe that these results are not accurate because the report did not indicate which disabilities were considered.

The Persons with Disabilities Act, 2020 indicates the disabilities that are provided for. Madam Speaker, we are running a risk of under-budgeting for the persons with disabilities, where the blind are a part. The Government needs to come up and explain these results, first of all, so that we do not run a risk of under-budgeting for the PwDs.

Lastly, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: Before you go to “lastly,” the matter you have raised was raised by Hon. Alex Ndeezi and the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was supposed to come with a statement on the census.

MS NANTONGO: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am actually just emphasising, as we celebrate the day for the blind persons, because they are also affected by these inaccurate results.

Lastly, the Government needs to cater for visually impaired persons in our schools. Most of our pupils and students attend Government-aided schools. However, there are no teachers to facilitate them in their education. The space for education is taken to be equal for all persons – for those with disabilities and those without. Therefore, the Government needs to ensure that they recruit teachers who will facilitate these pupils because most of them do not attend –

THE SPEAKER: The special needs pupils.

MS NANTONGO: Yes! Most of them do not attend those special schools. They attend schools that are at the sub county level. However, they are underprivileged in that sector. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, in the public gallery this morning, we have students and teachers from Kagadi Parents School from

Kagadi District. They are represented by Hon. Janepher Mbabazi and Hon. Eric Musana. Stand up and I see you. You are very smart. *(Applause)* Hon. Mbabazi, first greet our children.

11.22

MS JANEPHER MBABAZI (NRM, Woman Representative, Kagadi): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for bringing Parliament closer to the people and always allowing our students to come and witness the proceedings. I welcome my students from Kagadi Parents School. You are most welcome. This is your Parliament. *(Applause)*

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER IN
RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
(CENTRAL GOVERNMENT) ON THE
REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL
ON TREASURY OPERATIONS AND
THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT
OF UGANDA FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30
JUNE 2023

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, while you were away, the chairperson of the Committee on Public Accounts (Central Government) presented a response to the Auditor-General’s report from the committee, regarding the Consolidated Fund account. We did not debate that report. We were waiting for you because, first, we needed a response. You can go ahead – where is Hon. Kivumbi?

11.24

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was away, but closely monitoring. I would like to thank the committee chairperson and the committee members for the good report and the analysis they did on treasury management.

Madam Speaker, the report brings out various issues. However, for emphasis, I would like to respond to four main items now. For the rest, we can come in as the debate progresses.

The issue, which came out strongly, was on budget or funding performance, on page 5 of the report. I would wish to respond to it as follows.

In principle, supplementary budgets are issued when there are in-year emerging needs for the Vote. Additional resources may be realised from external disbursements, non-tax revenue and local revenue collections, not earlier projected, which have to be appropriated. However, not all emerging needs are financed through additional resources, but rather through reprioritisation of the available resources.

Madam Speaker, during the year, some Votes may not fully absorb the allocated funds on account of delayed procurement, acquisition - *(Interruption)*

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter.

MR ODUR: Thank you, Madam Speaker. When the Auditor-General produces a report and it is referred to our committee to process, the report from the committee comes on specific audit queries that were raised by the Auditor-General.

When our committee reports to this House – it is provided for in our rules. When you read the interpretation clause – Section 3 – of the Public Finance Management Act, together with Rule 221 of the Rules of Parliament of Uganda, the only expected response from the Government, and the minister, is through a Treasury Memorandum. A Treasury Memoranda is defined as “a report by the Government in answering the resolutions or the recommendations of Parliament on the report of the Auditor-General”.

The procedural matter I am raising is whether the minister is at liberty to come and cherry pick the issues raised in the report without the Treasury Memorandum. When that memorandum comes to this House, Madam Speaker, you are obliged by the rules to send it to audit and then they report back to this House.

The issue I have with this kind of approach is that it will make Parliament look – for lack of any other word – very unserious – that a minister can casually decide that “I am going to respond to this and not to that”. Even this response will never negate what has been produced in the report.

What is it that the minister is hurrying about so much that he cannot wait for Parliament to take a decision and, therefore, respond to the resolutions? Suppose Parliament amends the recommendation in the report, what would you have responded to? You are responding in anticipation when Parliament has not yet taken a decision on a particular recommendation. If we do away with that recommendation, what are you going to respond to?

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Odur, when that report was presented, it seemed complex, and honourable members requested the minister to explain issues that were raised in the report. The report was not debated upon, it was only presented and forwarded for the minister to be available in the House and make responses before the main report was adopted.

That is why the minister is responding to what was raised as we are waiting for the Treasury Memoranda. However, if you still need the Treasury Memoranda, it is fine because it is still within six months; the minister can go back and bring a Treasury Memoranda to that effect. Honourable chairperson?

11.30

MR MUHAMMAD KIVUMBI MUWANGA (NUP, Butambala County, Butambala):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The challenge I have with his response is that it is not even uploaded. It is very difficult for all intents and purposes with the nature of the report we gave for the minister to come with talking notes and attempt to respond to a report that was -

THE SPEAKER: Let us wait for the Treasury Memoranda.

MR MUWANGA: Madam Speaker, the Treasury Memoranda issue will only come

when Parliament has debated and adopted the report. We can only proceed if you, Madam Speaker, call for the debate of the report, and once it is adopted, then the minister can submit. For him to submit in this manner with a talking point, to a formal report, how do honourable members follow? Am I supposed to be noting every point he makes? It is very difficult.

He should have formally written a statement, responded to it, uploaded it, and compared notes so that Members can formally debate.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

MR MUSASIZI: Madam Speaker, we are all on the same page about this. Normally what happens when Parliament has adopted the recommendations of the committee, we respond to them through a Treasury Memoranda, which comes back to this House and is audited.

However, before we get there, I believe the spirit under which the House asked me to be in the House and make some comments, is to inform debate so that we can arrive at informed conclusions. This is the purpose for which we are here. For the first time, Hon. Namugga agrees with me. Thank you very much. *(Laughter)*

Therefore, Madam Speaker, if it is in the wisdom of the House that I do not respond now and wait for the time for the Treasury Memoranda, I have no problem. If the House feels I should give information that will facilitate debate, I can also give it.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, there is a report that the honourable minister has given us, it looks at specifics; item by item. Maybe we could have this uploaded, you go through it, and then we have the report debated upon based on this, and then we adopt the report.

11.33

MR DENIS OGUZU (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha): I would have preferred a situation where a debate is opened and the minister submits as part of the debate. If there

is a document meant for Parliament, this document must be introduced formally so that we know it is a document for Parliament, and is on record and very accessible to everybody.

THE SPEAKER: He is going to lay the document on the Table, we upload it, you study it and look at the report so that you come up with what you are going to debate on in the House. Unless you want to debate now?

MR ODUR: Madam Speaker, dealing with audit issues is very different, they are specific. The reason why the rules provide that when the Government responds, it must be through a report which will first go to the Auditor-General for audit. This Parliament as we are constituted here cannot audit. Any document in response to the findings of Parliament must be audited first by the Auditor-General, by our own rules.

Therefore, the minister cannot bring a document here and expect us to start auditing them. Audit is a process, there are source documents that you must look at -

THE SPEAKER: He is responding to what we raised in the report of Hon. Kivumbi. Can we schedule a debate for the report on Thursday? We will have a debate for the report on Thursday. Yes, Hon. Patrick?

MR NSAMBA: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I am raising a procedural matter. What the minister is presenting here should go before the committee, and the committee processes it. When you are dealing with the audit, the audit queries go to the accounting officers who respond to them accordingly. When we have a response from the minister at this level, I do not know how we are going to process this report.

THE SPEAKER: We have a room for Treasury Memoranda under Rule 221 of our Rules of Procedure. This was just made to form a debate in the House.

MR NSAMBA: The minister is supposed to act on audit queries.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have made a ruling. We will debate this on Thursday. Next item?

LAYING OF PAPERS

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the Public Service Commission is established under Article 165 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, and Article 163 of the Constitution requires the Public Service Commission to make a report to Parliament each year on the performance and functions of the Public Service Commission.

I received the Public Service Commission Annual Report for the Financial Year 2023/2024 last Friday and pursuant to Rule 31 of our Rules of Procedure, I invite the Parliamentary Commissioner to lay the annual report on the Table.

11.37

MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri): Madam Speaker, and honourable members, I beg to lay the annual report for the Public Service Commission, Financial Year 2023/2024. I beg to lay.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Pursuant to Rule 189 of the Rules of Procedure, the report stands referred to the Committee on Public Service and Local Government for expeditious consideration and report back.

BILLS SECOND READING

THE UGANDA NATIONAL KISWAHILI COUNCIL BILL, 2023

THE SPEAKER: We stood over this Bill, pending reconciliation between the two ministries. Today, we have the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and the Ministry of Education and Sports.

The House requested you to reconcile and see which ministry houses the Bill. Honourable minister?

11.39

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (GENDER AND CULTURE) (Ms Peace Mutuuzo): Madam Speaker, in the cabinet sitting of 21 October 2024, the Cabinet reconsidered its earlier position on hosting the Bill from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to the Ministry of Education and Sports.

On this note, I beg to withdraw the National Kiswahili Council Bill, 2023. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The Bill has been withdrawn.

I put the question - why are you so fast? I put the question that the Uganda National Swahili Council Bill, 2023 as laid on the Table for the second reading by the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development be withdrawn and referred to the Ministry of Education and Sports.

(Question put and agreed to)

THE SPEAKER: The Bill has been withdrawn. We have approved its withdrawal and whether they bring it back or not, that is their business. Next item.

BILLS SECOND READING

THE COTTON DEVELOPMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

11.41

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (MR FRANK TUMWEBAZE): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, "The Cotton Development (Amendment) Bill, 2024" be read for the second time.

THE SPEAKER: Is the Bill seconded? It is seconded by the Prime Minister, the Government Chief Whip, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, the Minister of Education and Sports, the Minister for Public Service, Elder Representative, Hon. Ogwang, Hon. Commissioner, Hon. Shartsi, Hon. Alayo, Hon. Nekesa, Hon. Grania, Hon. Noah, Hon. Acuti, Hon. Apea, Professor, Member from Busia, Hon. Achayo, Hon. Opolot, Hon. Davis, Dr Isamat, Hon. Loki, Hon. Feta, Hon. Wanda, Hon. Wilson, Hon. Faith, Hon. Tembo, Hon. Wandwasi, Hon. Oulanyah, Hon. Achan by all Members With Disabilities and the Members representing the elderly (*Laughter*). Would you like to speak to your motion?

MR OGUZU: Madam Speaker, I rise on a matter of procedure. Yes. The procedural issue is that by now we expect that the Office of the Clerk to Parliament is supplied with a Bill whose memorandum is signed and yet the copy which has been availed to us is not signed by the minister.

It is important that the minister owns these documents by putting a mark which will comply with the rules. You therefore need to guide this House on whether we can continue with this kind of irregularity in full glare of all these Members of Parliament and rules.

THE SPEAKER: The issue of signing was discussed last week that once a memorandum is signed, that is sufficient – they are signed. Clerks, can we have a copy?

MR OGUZU: Under the rules when we ask to examine, we should be availed with a copy

THE SPEAKER: Yes, we are getting you the signed copy. Can you justify your Bill?

MR OGUZU: This is going to affect whether you should -

THE SPEAKER: No, we have not yet reached the second reading.

MR TUMWEBAZE: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to enable me to justify the Bill entitled “The Cotton Development (Amendment) Bill, 2024”.

The Bill seeks to give effect to the Government policy of rationalisation – (*Interjection*) - Oh, thank you so much, I have been told to smile a bit - (*Laughter*) - and I am trying.

THE SPEAKER: You are correct.

MR TUMWEBAZE: The Bill intends to:

- i) Amend the Cotton Development Act, CAP 30 to among others enable the mainstreaming and rationalisation of the functions of the Cotton Development Organisation (CDO) into the ministry responsible for cotton processing and marketing, which is the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.
- ii) It is to facilitate efficient and effective service delivery by clearly delineating the mandates and functions of the ministry responsible for cotton development and administration of CAP 30, thereby avoiding duplication of mandates and functions.
- iii) It is to promote and coordinate the administrative arrangements, policies, and procedures for ensuring the efficient and successful management of the entire cotton ecosystem.

Madam Speaker, the Bill tabled will create a number of efficiency gains after the functions have been merged and the savings made from the administrative layers will be invested in the production of cotton seeds, among others. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Can we now call the chairperson to present the report?

11.47

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY, AND FISHERIES (Ms Linda Auma): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

On behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, I beg to report the Cotton Development (Amendment) Bill, 2024.

Before I proceed with my report, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the minutes of the meetings that we held. I also beg to lay a copy of the report.

We also have two minorities whose copies I have with me. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Could they consolidate the minorities?

MS AUMA: They fail to agree. *(Laughter)*

Thank you, Madam Speaker. As we are all aware, the Cotton Development (Amendment) Bill, 2024 was read for the first time on 24 September 2024 and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, in accordance with Rule 129(1) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

The Bill aims at dissolving the Cotton Development Organisation (CDO) and mainstreaming the functions of this organisation into the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. Madam Speaker, the committee scrutinised the Bill in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and I now beg to report.

Madam Speaker, we are all much aware of the background of rationalisation, and because of time, I beg that I move to another.

We are also aware, as I presented, the Cotton Development Organisation, which was formed and established by the Cotton Development Act, Cap 36 of the 7th edition of the laws of this country.

The organisation is a statutory body responsible for the promotion, monitoring, production, marketing, and processing of cotton in Uganda. It further carries out ginnery inspections, and certification, and gives guidance to farmers and ginners on seed cotton and lint quality, as well

as on packaging requirements as provided by the Cotton Development Act, Cap 36.

The justification of this Bill is the same as for all the Bills that colleagues have, and I beg that I move on.

Methodology

We held meetings, and received various relevant documents, including petitions from stakeholders and cotton farmers from Lango, Acholi, West Nile, Midwestern region of this country.

Findings, observations, and recommendations

Madam Speaker, as a committee, we came up with a guided question that would help us in our findings and observations.

Honourable colleagues, we came up with a question of whether there are mandate overlaps between CDO and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. The CDO is mandated to set standards for Uganda Seed Cotton and Lint Organisation against international standards; that is the International Cotton Association, Liverpool and Bremen Cotton Exchange, as provided for under Section 5 of the Act and is responsible for determining the farm-gate prices at the commencement of the cotton market season.

The committee notes that there is a need to regulate the cotton industry under liberalisation.

We also asked whether CDO has served the purpose of which it was established. CDO is charged with monitoring the production, processing and marketing of cotton. It is also responsible for developing cotton planting seeds. Honourable colleagues, cotton is not like our seeds that we normally plant. Planting needs a long process for us to get the seeds.

Maintaining the quality of the seeds through strict regulations

The entity put in place a third-party ginnery monitoring system to ensure that the quality

of cotton seeds entering the ginnery meets the requisite standards.

CDO has put in place a cotton classing laboratory equipped with two high-volume instruments, testing machines for computerised fibre testing to carry manual classing of cotton lint, prepare a fair average quality standard for cotton seed to guide ginners during the marketing period and provide technical advice on cotton quality issues for the cotton stakeholders. CDO carries out cotton seed development, which is a seasonal activity.

The committee observed that monitoring cotton production, processing, marketing, plus quality control requires swiftness and a high level, which can only be provided by a specialised, and accredited body.

The third question we raised was whether the CDO cost of administration drains the Treasury at the expense of service delivery. Over the years, CDO has built a cotton quality system through rigorous training of staff and investment in cotton laboratories. It has also built its staff expertise over time. During the Financial Year 2023/2024, CDO was allocated Shs 5.37 billion and it contributed through Non-Tax Revenue Shs 4.1 billion to the Consolidated Fund.

The committee observed that rationalising CDO into the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries will result in cost saving while maintaining the NTR, which will boost the Consolidated Fund.

Recommendation

The committee recommends that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries be strengthened by integrating and absorbing the staffing, expertise, and system built by CDO over time.

The committee further recommends that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries expedites accreditation, certification of relevant departments that will oversee the cotton subsector.

Conclusion

Madam Speaker, the committee is cognisant of the critical role played by CDO in the cotton value chain and the challenges faced by the institution. The committee notes that mainstreaming CDO into the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries will not adversely affect the cotton subsector.

The committee, therefore, recommends that CDO be dissolved and absorbed into the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries as proposed in the Bill. I beg to report.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, committee chairperson. Honourable members – Yes, minority –

11.55

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO (FDC, Woman Representative, Hoima City): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving us this opportunity –

THE SPEAKER: Give me a summary.

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO: Madam Speaker, a number of colleagues and I have come up with a minority report against the rationalisation of the Cotton Development Organisation. The Members include; Hon. John Paul Mpalanyi, Hon. Santa, Hon. Stella Isodo, Hon. Florence Kabugo, and Hon. Charles Matovu.

Madam Speaker, I will just concentrate on the observations and recommendations. However, I would like to put it to this honourable House that we still note that mainstreaming agencies like the Cotton Development Organisation into the parent ministry will compromise and affect the delivery of the technical and regulatory functions this agency has been undertaking, since its inception by an Act of Parliament in 1994, Cap 30.

The main objective of this Bill, under clause 4, is to dissolve the Cotton Development Organisation and transfer the mandate to the mother ministry. In scrutinising the Bill, the minority views were guided by the

following questions as per the objective of the rationalisation.

One of the questions which arose was whether the funding of the Cotton Development Organisation is a wasteful expenditure or whether it causes financial drain. Madam Speaker, not at all, the funding to the CDO is not a wasteful expenditure.

The Government of Uganda, during Financial Year 2023/2024, allocated only Shs 5.3 billion to the Cotton Development Organisation. The CDO has been an underfunded entity yet over 250 households and over 1.5 million Ugandans survive on it.

Besides the underfunded allocations, and being a marginalised subsector, the CDO was able to contribute Shs 4.1 billion as Non-Tax Revenues to the Consolidated Fund in the Financial Year 2023/2024. Here, there is a table showing the investment in cotton production *vis-à-vis* the cotton contribution to the economy.

The table below shows the allocations of the Government of Uganda and the private sector but also the total investments and the total returns for the last six years; that is Financial Year 2018/2019 to Financial Year 2023/2024. Madam Speaker, in the last six years, the Government of Uganda has only contributed Shs 50.726 in the budget allocations.

The private sector has been able to allocate Shs 104.476 billion to the Cotton Development Authority, giving it a total of Shs 155.200 billion. Given this underfunding of the Cotton Development Organisation (CDO), it has been able to bring returns of Shs 1,653.15 trillion.

The savings from rationalisation of CDO is estimated at only Shs 8.18 billion in 2024/2025 according to the certificate of financial implication. There will be no terminal benefits which will be incurred because the contracts of all the 39 CDO staffs have expired.

The Ministry of Public Service approved a structure of 47 positions. It also noted that a staffing gap of eight positions were realised.

However, the Bill under clause 29(3) and (4) do not give assurance of job continuity to the CDO staff and board members, thus misleading this honourable House.

The minority report notes that the certificate of financial implications provided by the Ministry for Finance, Planning and Economic Development only focuses on savings calculated based on non-tax revenues contributed by the sector without valuing the technical expertise, the quality assurance and the ready market at international prices provided by CDO.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Cissy, come back here.

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO: Madam Speaker, the other question as per the objective of rationalisation was whether the mandate of CDO overlaps with the mandate of the ministry. The mandate of the two entities do not overlap at all.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries mandate is to formulate, review, and implement national policies, plan, strategies, regulations, standards, and enforce laws, regulations, and standards along the value of crops, livestock, and fisheries.

While the Cotton Development Organisation was established by an Act of Parliament in 1994, to monitor the production, processing, and marketing of cotton so as to enhance the quality of lint exported and locally sold, to promote the contribution of high-quality cotton seed, and generally to facilitate the development of the cotton industry. In short, CDO is mandated to set standards for Uganda cotton seed and lint against international standards as provided for by Section 5 of the Act.

Madam Speaker, CDO is also a member of the International Cotton Association (ICA - Liverpool and the Bremen Cotton Exchange) for the purposes of setting quality standards for Uganda's cotton. Without this, cotton would not be traded.

Every after two years, CDO presents its standards to the two bodies for approval and

to get on the market and are developed by specialised teams. This is a continuous activity, season after season. Therefore, the two entities mandate not only differ but are also too unique and do not overlap.

We must note that the ministry does not have the capacity. It has insufficient budget funding. It is also struggling with too much bureaucracy, which will affect efficiency and effectiveness.

The above is coupled with the *laissez-faire* syndrome of permanent and pensionable staff that has seen the ministry to date fail to come up with fisheries and aquaculture regulations to protect our fishermen, even after this 11th Parliament passed the Bill.

The MAAIF has failed to come up with the T-Regulations up to date, even when Parliament resolved that the minister in charge of agriculture come up with the T-Regulation. The ministry gave out tractors without ploughs and other spare parts in Northern Uganda and in other parts of the country.

MAAIF has occasionally failed to regulate the fake agricultural inputs on the market, like pesticides, fertilisers and the agrochemical inputs. Equally important to note is the fact that MAAIF has failed to guide the Government on the long-delayed Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) which are flooding our market.

MAAIF has failed to implement water for production projects in most parts of the country. Technically, the ministry has been launching these projects and failed to complete them and they end up not handing over anything to local governments. This has been evident in Moroto, Karamoja Sub region and other parts of the country.

MAAIF has failed the mechanisation centres across the entire country. They are dysfunctional wherever they were established. A case in point is Kiruhura District where the committee, at one of its oversight roles, visited and discovered that officials upon discovering that the Committee on Agriculture, Animal

Industry and Fisheries was going to visit the place, carried two tractors, slashed around and poured some murrum so that their presence avails. In actual sense, they are non-functional. This was the same in Agwak, Dokolo and in Mbale.

Madam Speaker, the Agricultural Cluster Development Project has terribly failed under MAAIF. The ministry has constructed factories for cooperatives for cotton and other products across the country, where there is no electricity to run these factories, rendering these them mere white elephants abandoned in the areas where they were established. For instance, in West Nile, where they built a cassava drying and peeling plant which has never kicked off up to date.

We observed that monitoring cotton, processing and marketing plus quality control requires swiftness and high-level efficiency, which can only be provided by a specialised and accredited agency like the Cotton Development Organisation.

Madam Speaker, with the overwhelming demand for textile products in Uganda and abroad, the task ahead is so enormous that it requires empowering and supporting the Cotton Development Organisation (CDO) to mobilise farmers to grow more cotton, quality assurance, consolidate and build on its achievements.

Mainstreaming CDO into the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), will lead to failure to promote quality and loss of market. The minority report notes that in countries like Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi, which liberalised their cotton industry without setting up a regulator like CDO, the sub-sector collapsed.

The minority report also observed that regulating on-farm and off-farm cotton activities is a function that requires full-time attention by a specialised agency that is internationally accredited. Such a role is not duplicated anywhere in the mandate of MAAIF or any other Government agency. Accreditation

can only be done by a body-corporate, thus the need to maintain the Cotton Development Organisation.

In the spirit of the main objective of rationalising the Cotton Development Organisation, the minority report observes with concern the Food and Agriculture Authority Bill that the Ministry for Agriculture brought before Parliament. This Bill is aimed at creating another authority. This contradicts the Government's objective of rationalisation.

In conclusion, the minority report is alive to the Government's intention to revive the cotton production value chain, invest in apparel for export and garment production in the country.

The minority report further appreciates the role played by the Cotton Development Organisation in promoting quality, quantity, cotton production, quality technical expertise and market access to the cotton farmers.

To be a member of these cotton standard bodies, it is a requirement for a country to have a cotton regulatory body for the purpose of standard enforcement. CDO is a member of international cotton standard bodies, namely; the International Cotton Advisory Committee, the International Cotton Association of Liverpool and the Bremen Cotton Exchange. Without a cotton regulatory body, it will be difficult to sell Ugandan cotton on the international market at a premium price.

The minority report therefore notes that the justification to rationalise the Cotton Development Organisation is not tenable, and the economy recommends that the Bill entitled the Cotton Development (Amendment) Bill, 2024, should not be passed –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, do not destroy the chairs. *(Laughter)*

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO: Madam Speaker, I want to re-echo this. The minority report therefore notes that the justification to rationalise the Cotton Development Organisation is not tenable, and the economy

recommends that the Bill entitled the Cotton Development (Amendment) Bill, 2024, should not be passed. It should be rejected by this Honourable House. *(Applause)*

Finally, the minority report also recommends that the Food and Agriculture Authority Bill, 2024, which was presented before by the Minister for Agriculture – *(Interruption)*

THE SPEAKER: There is an order. Honourable members -

MR OBUA: Madam Speaker, The Bill being referred to, named by the Member presenting the minority report, entitled the "Food and Agricultural Authority Bill" has never been presented.

THE SPEAKER: It is not anywhere.

MR OBUA: Is the Honourable Member therefore, in order to allege that a Bill has been presented and make it part of her minority report?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I do not have that Bill. The Bill I have is on cotton, not food, so she is not in order.

Honourable members, we are not adopting any report. The minority and major reports are only going to form the basis of our debate then they will form the basis for the Second Reading.

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO: Madam Speaker, thank you, very much for your wise guidance -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, can you listen?

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO: However, I want to clarify. In the –

THE SPEAKER: Now that you do not want to listen, let me first introduce the visitors. In the public gallery this morning, we have pupils and teachers of St Andrew Kaggwa, Ndejje Primary School from Wakiso District, Makindye-Ssabagabo Municipality.

They are represented in Parliament by Hon. David Sserukenya and Hon. Ethel Naluyima. Thank you, and most welcome. Members, join me in welcoming them.

In the public gallery this morning, we have a team of Editors of Hansard from Kenya and Tanzania. They are in Uganda to join the colleagues of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) for an interim committee meeting of the East African Parliamentary Editors.

They include Ms Gladys Ndeda, you are most welcome. She is an Editor of Hansard, Senate of Kenya; Ms Anne Njoroge, Editor of Hansard, National Assembly of Kenya; Ms Lulu Lupondo, Hansard Editor, Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania; Mr George Wanyoko, Deputy Editor of Hansard, Senate of Kenya; Mr Christopher, Hansard-Rapporteur, Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania. You are most welcome to Uganda and while you are here, feel at home. *Karibuni sana.*

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your wise guidance. I conclude by saying that the minority report therefore notes that the justification to rationalise the Cotton Development Organisation is not tenable and recommends that the Bill entitled the Cotton Development Organisation (Amendment) Bill, 2024, should be rejected by this Honourable House. I submit. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, you have heard the reports. You have the majority report from the chairperson and the minority report. We need- I told you people to put your minority reports together. Honourable members, is it a point of departure from what Hon. Asinansi raised?

12.17

DR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanya-Kabonera Division, Masaka): Madam Speaker, allow me to speak our position by ourselves.

THE SPEAKER: Okay, you and who?

DR BWANIKA: On the Cotton Development Organisation, we have harmonised with the report that has been read, and it is okay for us to move forward. That is with the minority report – *(Interjections)* - that has been read by Hon. Asinansi -

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR SSENKYONYI: Madam Speaker, I do appreciate the two colleagues who have read their reports. I would like to be advised, procedurally, because the chairperson of the committee, in the report, indicated that the committee interacted with some stakeholders.

I thought it would have been a good thing for her to appraise this House with what they discovered or what they got from the stakeholders. *(Applause)* What did the stakeholders tell the committee? This is because we do not want stakeholders out there to keep thinking that whenever we invite them to have input into the Bills, we do it for formality and their views do not matter. Sometimes they will give “position A” and then the committee completely disregards what the stakeholders have said.

Therefore, I think it is important that the House is updated: for these particular stakeholders that the committee interacted with, this was their view. I think it is important that the House gets to know what those stakeholders got to say, and why the committee agreed or disagreed, if at all, with those particular stakeholders. It is very important and that is why they are invited to have an input, as stakeholders.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, you should also be cognisant of the fact that what the people you invite in the committee say is not binding on the committee. It is just informative.

Yes, honourable member?

12.20

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Madam Speaker, I wish to appreciate the chairperson of the committee and I associate myself with the findings of the committee because of the reasons given by the minority opinion. I will sample one: Cotton Development Organisation was underfunded and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) was underfunded. Therefore, the question of funding is not an excuse. It does not explain anything – whether it is a reason for not rationalising.

Secondly, they said that there is non-functionality of equipment that was given by the ministry on account of utilities. It is not the mandate of the Ministry of Agriculture to put electricity to districts. We cannot castigate the ministry for agriculture when we have not given them a chance to do work and also for the work, which is not their mandate.

Madam Speaker, it is my hope that this House will allow the Ministry of Agriculture a chance to handle the Cotton Development Organisation.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, there is one that thing we need to understand. What this rationalisation means is that they are taking the cotton organisation to be a department in the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and it will remain functional the way it has always functioned.

12.21

MS ROSE OBIGAH (NRM, Woman Representative, Terego): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Supplementary to what my colleague has said, I remember the minority report saying that the people working in the Cotton Development Organisation are going to lose their jobs. No! They are going to move with the Ministry of Agriculture because there is already a scarcity of human resources and they will be able to be absorbed. There is no excuse. We must be able to move on. Let us move on with the committee's report. Thank you.

MS NAKUT: Madam Speaker, I had not finished when you – *(Interjection)* On the issues of quality and seeds, the minority opinion has not given evidence –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I did not open the debate. I thought that you were raising matters of procedure. We cannot open a debate before we suspend rule 204.

The Government Chief Whip?

12.24

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Denis Hamson Obua): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that rule 204 (5) (b), which reads:

“(5) The report of a Committee on a Bill shall... (b) only be debated after the expiry of at least three days from the day it was laid on Table by the Chairperson or the Deputy Chairperson or a Member nominated by the Committee or by the Speaker.”

Madam Speaker, rule 204 (5) (b) is not an entrenched rule. I, therefore, move that, in order for us to proceed with the debate on the report, this particular rule be suspended. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Is it seconded? *(Members rose)* It is seconded by Hon. Ogwang, Hon. Tonny Ayoo, Hon. Bua – the whole group is seconding, except Hon. Odur *(Laughter)* – Hon. Sharts, Hon. Sauda – by everybody on the NRM side – Hon. Mushemeza, Hon. Apea, Hon. Muwuma, Hon. John and Hon. Luke.

Hon. Aisha, are you standing to second?

MS AISHA KABANDA: Madam Speaker, I am standing on a procedural matter.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, it is seconded. This is a self-explanatory rule. Okay?

12.27

MR JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to debate against the

motion by the Government Chief Whip to suspend rule 204 for the following reasons.

If you look at the history for the provision of the three days, it is because a document laid before this Parliament must be interrogated by the Members. When reports are presented here, we only have access to the reports; we do not have access to the submissions and the minutes, in detail, to be able to follow them up. Unless the person presenting the report will tell us – and this is in reinforcement of the point raised by the Leader of the Opposition – that the House is, therefore, denied the opportunity to interrogate and understand what took place behind the scenes. *(Applause)*

Therefore, the three days were provided for so that Members of Parliament would even go to the library and extract the minutes and look at the different submissions of the stakeholders and, therefore, come to a conclusion that the report can be supported or not.

In the absence of access to those documents, Madam Speaker, I would like to persuade you that, first of all, the mover has not justified any time constraint at all. *(Applause)*

There is absolutely no justification for us to rush and therefore we might end up crashing.

Secondly, Madam Speaker, we have not had access to all the details. If that has to carry the day, Madam Speaker, I therefore ask that you provide us with an opportunity to get copies of those documents, which are not uploaded by the way; it is only the report that has been uploaded here. The rest of the accompanying documents laid by the chairperson are the minutes but the proceedings have not been provided to us. So, if you are persuaded to take that, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes?

MR ISAAC OTIMGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi): Madam Speaker, in all of this we should not forget that the guardian of our rules of procedure is the Speaker of Parliament and it is upon her judgment to decide, after

weighing all the submissions that have been given, whether she can suspend any rule or not.

I think the Speaker is within her mandate to decide whether it is right to suspend this rule. If she makes that decision, it is not upon us as Members. Yes, we can give our justifications, but I feel the Speaker's decision on this matter should be obeyed. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Another point of procedure.

MS NAKUT: Madam Speaker, the committees of this House do business on behalf of the House. When they submit a report, the majority report and the minority report, it is in trust that the House gave them that responsibility and we trust the findings of the reports.

For us to go and investigate in detail the minutes one by one - We are giving a vote of no confidence to the basic work of the committees. *(Interjections)* Madam Speaker, are we proceeding right to castigate the committee that we trust to do the work on behalf of the House?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, out of courtesy I thought of allowing the House to debate on this, and we agree. But when you look at rule 204(6), "*Notwithstanding sub-rule (5), debate on the report may, at the discretion of the Speaker, ensue -*"

Read (a) and (b). Do not read (a) alone, read both of them, but I can move under (b).

All the same, I want to put the question that Rule 204(5)(b) be suspended as proposed by the Government Chief Whip.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Rule 204(5)(b) suspended.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Patrick?

MR NSAMBA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Rule 204 sub rules (1) and (2) requires that we confirm the signatures of the members of the committee that signed the report.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the report is here. The signatures you know - how many members of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries are here? They do not have to be here. Honourable members, I am still a custodian of your signatures. Where you sign when you are entering here, the signatures are here; there are 22 signatures.

MR NSAMBA: Madam Speaker, the reason I was raising that is because I was trying to access that report.

Madam Speaker, you have the benefit of having that report on your table, can we also get printed copies of the same so that we can also have all? Because we are trying to access the same and we are unable to.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members. If we are trying to go zigzag - we will have these reports go through. Let us go on, and where you do not agree on a clause - what is not uploaded, Clerk? Honourable members, I do not know if we are using the same system, IT? You know we can all have iPads, but we may not know how to switch them on. So, can we now allow a debate on the report? Dr Apea, Hon. Atkins - I am allowing only five people.

12.35

DR AGNES APEA (NRM, Woman Representative, Amolatar): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Mine is on the issue of mandates - (*Interjections*) - pardon? I am not a member of the -

THE SPEAKER: She was re-designated. She is not a member.

DR APEA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think there are a lot of assumptions and emotions in the House, as I can see.

THE SPEAKER: Do not put personal feelings in this.

DR APEA: I also feel that the spirit of the minority report was not really based on research. Because if you start saying that

international standards are only got by the CDO, then you are missing out on something because even you, your own company, can get the ISO certificate. Therefore, I think if we bring submissions there, we need to be mindful of the statements that will be referred to when we leave this House.

Madam Speaker, my issue is on the overlap of the mandate and the duplication of roles in all these agencies and the ministry. When you refer to the roles of the ministries, not only that of Agriculture, their role is to formulate policies, design strategies, implement them, and ensure that standards are in place.

Moreover, when you listen to the minority report that is what the CDO is doing. In addition, when you talk about strategies, one of the key roles of the ministries is actually to design those strategies. So, whatever any agency is doing in this country, it is implementing the strategies of the mother ministries.

When we talk about the issue of failure of a ministry, colleagues, we have been in this House for over four years now, and we know that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is one of the least funded, and yet they have so many roles. So when you talk about a failure of a ministry, I begin to wonder what it is that we funded and it was not done. And if it was not done and the money is there, then we need to question where the problem is. Then we come back as a House, develop the appropriate policies so that they can actually implement that.

Madam Speaker, I stand here to support the motion, not only for CDO, but also for all these agencies to go back to the ministries, and if they are talking about efficiency or monitoring, all those roles are the mandate of the ministries. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Atkins?

12.37

MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonzo County West, Kasese): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I have said it before, and I

will say it again. The element that we have in this particular House is our inability to cluster fields. This is a professional field. It is not for everybody.

The last time I submitted on this Floor, I said that some of us become emotional, and we bring a lot of emotions to professional fields. As a result, we end up focusing on Social Studies, geography, and history.

Madam Speaker, amazingly, I will support the report, not the minority report. And for one reason, the reason why a lot of our interventions are not making the desired impact is that our interventions are not informed by our research.

I believe that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries has many professionals. I also know they collaborate and cooperate extensively with universities, specifically Makerere University, the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES), and the College of Veterinary Medicine Animal Resources and Biosecurity (COVAB).

My only observation, and I hope the ministers and the leadership of the ministry and the chairperson, is - there is a lot of research lying lower on university shelves. I would like to ask the committee and the leadership of these ministries - Please, the reason why universities exist is to generate knowledge. The reason why the Government has to collaborate and cooperate with the university is to get into the universities and tap into their knowledge for consumption.

The Government is supposed to be the primary consumer of their knowledge and that is the reason why we support universities.

Madam Speaker, as I see, 80 or 75 per cent of our population derive their livelihood from agriculture. We are people's representatives. I would like to appeal to everybody that we consider giving significant support to the agricultural ministry, including establishing an agricultural bank, so that our fellow citizens who have no pay slip to use to borrow from

banks; our fellow citizens who do not have logbooks or land titles can go to that agricultural bank and borrow and secure money enough to boost their livelihood. I appreciate you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Emmanuel?

12.41

MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach): Thank you once more, Madam Speaker, for this opportunity. I want to say, in principle, I support it. Generally, I know our minds are already set on rationalisation and rationalising everything.

Madam Speaker, I want to put the ministers on notice. I want to repeat this; I want to put the ministers on notice: They know for sure, that we have had problems, where even where some organisations were still working and were responsible for a number of things. And now, organisations are being rationalised. That means a lot of responsibilities will come back to the ministries, which will require them to be alert and to make sure that they are making the right kind of follow-up for those ministries to do the right things. That is why I am putting them on notice.

Colleagues, let us rationalise, but also be alert and make sure that every ministry and every minister must perform and make sure that the gaps that were being created by those entities are now being done by the ministries and being closed well. If they are not, then we will get back at them. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Aisha.

12.42

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. I support the minority report. First, the Chairperson of the committee talks about the findings and they are not "findings" unless they are findings. They have not told us the findings from there. They are unable to tell us who they talked to which supported their rationalisation. Findings are findings from interactions.

Madam Speaker, the Coffee Development organisation is charged with the responsibility - Cotton. I am talking about cotton.

THE SPEAKER: Hajjat, *nga* you are too fast going to coffee.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Madam Speaker, I had the opportunity to visit West Nile last week. Particularly, I went to Pakwach, where there is a very big cotton factory. And I want to say -

THE SPEAKER: That is where Hon. Emmanuel comes from. And he is supportive.

MS AISHA KABANDA: He should know that I have a very close relationship with the Wadri family that is resident around there; he is aware. So, I am only speaking the truth. And the people around the area, people who grow coffee - (*Interjections*) - Cotton. I beg your pardon. People who grow cotton and produce and live on cotton have no confidence in the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to market their cotton.

The organisation is not charged with the production. It goes beyond production, quality and marketing and for the external market. That is export. Our people, and inclusive of myself, have no confidence at all in the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries as a marketing agency. They can only do agriculture very well. That one I know. But they cannot do marketing because there is nothing they have been able to market.

For that reason, Madam Speaker, while voicing out the voice of the people that grow cotton in Pakwach, where I was and interacted with the people, I persuade this House to stand with the people and withhold the Coffee Development Organisation - (*Interjections*) - I mean, substitute "cotton" wherever it appears and put "coffee." I grow coffee, that is what I understand best but I interacted with people that grow cotton.

Madam Speaker, I speak on behalf of the people of the West Nile, where I was last week and interacted with them. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ayoo.

12.45

MR TONNY AYOO (NRM, Kwania County, Kwania): Thank you, Madam Speaker -

THE SPEAKER: I need a response from West Nile first.

12.46

MS ROSE OBIGAH (NRM, Woman Representative, Terego): Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. We, the West Nile Members of Parliament, are alive and kicking, and we are in the House. Before rationalisation, cotton in the Rhino camp was in full gear and operating well. However, after we moved to rationalisation, cotton was totally phased out from West Nile. It is now trickling. There is not much production. That is why we are saying we want to go under the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries so that we improve on production. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ayoo.

MR TONNY AYOO: Thank you. Order, Order. James -, Hon. Ayoo. Honourable members, please -

MR AYOO: Madam Speaker, I thank the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, please -

MR TONNY AYOO: I rise to support the majority report on mainstreaming or rationalising the Cotton Development Organisation.

Madam Speaker, I come from Northern Uganda, where at one time, cotton was one main cash crop. Today, even with the Cotton Development Organisation, the main team driving the cotton agenda are the ginners and exporters. The private sector is the one leading the production and exporting of cotton. The Cotton Development Organisation at one time would determine a lower price and farmers would not accept them until the private sector

opened up competition and prices would go up a little bit.

Madam Speaker, our main debate here should be on the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. Have the Cotton Development Organisation rationalised and get it back to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. Then, as this Parliament, we should push for funding for the sector under the Maputo Declaration, where 10 per cent of the national Budget is supposed to go to agriculture. This should be our main debate. *(Applause)*

For all these commodities, we only need to move for strong cooperative organisations that will give command and ownership to the farmers and the people engaged in this production to have control and command and engage the Government. *(Applause)* Otherwise, the CDO and all these other institutions are also trying to survive and not creating any great impact. Cotton was better before CDO.

As a farmer, when I used to produce and trade in cotton, I never saw the CDO anywhere. You would only hear them come at the time of price fixing and disagreeing with the farmers.

Therefore, I support the motion. The CDO has no great impact on cotton production in the country. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

12.48

MR JAMES MAMAWI (NRM, Adjumani East County, Adjumani): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I support the motion and totally concur with Hon. Tonny Ayoo. I come from the West Nile region and I want to be open that the Cotton Development Organisation is not known to our farmers.

All we are saying is that the Cotton Development Organisation is working under the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, as of now. The debates would have been centred on areas where the agricultural ministry is saying, “Yes, you are under us, but we want you in our compound”. That is the only thing because as of now, the Cotton Development

Organisation is still under the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

Madam Speaker, we need assurance from the minister. The minority report is saying the contracts of the staff in the Cotton Development Organisation have expired. For this to work better still under the ministry, we want some of those experts who were in those authorities to still work in the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. That is the only thing we want. Otherwise, taking the Cotton Development Organisation in the ministry is not a problem. We want it to shine. Thank you.

12.49

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I listened carefully to both of the reports and my understanding is that they can be harmonised. What the minority report presented can be accommodated in the functions and roles played by the ministry because the organisation falls under the ministry.

I have never seen a contentious matter that cannot be handled under the ministry. This harmonisation is going to handle one major issue; which is the reduction of administrative costs. If we move the organisation to the ministry, that means we are going to mainstream and reduce overhead costs and the functions, which are being done by the authority can still be done under the ministry.

Therefore, I do not see any contentious issue in this matter. I support the majority report. Thank you so much.

THE SPEAKER: Motion from Hon. Isaac Otimgiw.

12.52

MR ISAAC OTIMGIW (NRM, Padyere County, Nebbi): Thank you. Madam Speaker, when you opened the debate, you guided that you are giving slots to only five Members to debate and you have been confident enough to give more people.

I would like to move that we go to the Committee Stage, where Members are able to still make the necessary changes if needed, because we have a number of Bills to process today under rationalisation. Therefore, I move a motion that we proceed to the Committee Stage. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Is it seconded? (*Members rose*) It is seconded by this whole side. I see Hon. Ogwang, “elder”, chairperson for the agriculture committee, Hon. Tom Bright, Hon. Frank Tumwebaze, Hon. Chris Baryomunsi, Hon. Shartsi Musherure - by this whole side.

Honourable minister, before we go to the Committee Stage, can you clarify the issues that are being raised?

MR TUMWEBAZE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Honourable colleagues, I acknowledge your submissions and if you give me a minute, I will summarise them in about three issues.

Honourable colleagues, you hear the word “agencies.” Agencies do work on behalf of their mother ministries; from the agent principle. There is no agency that is implementing a mandate that is not aligned to the purpose of the ministry.

So, the decision of the Government was mainly to remove duplication at the administrative level, procurement, transport, human resource and so on. My assurance to this House - and which we gave to the committee - is that under CDO, UCDA or any other, there is some commodity-specific expertise that the staff there have acquired.

We have accordingly been allowed by the Ministry of Public Service. Those commodities will be having commodity-specific departments. All the scientists under those agencies will be absorbed into the ministry; there will be no expertise lost. So, I want to make that clear.

The second point is that the duplication will be removed at – (*Interjections*) - I beg to be protected, Madam Speaker, so that I give information to the House.

THE SPEAKER: Minister?

MR TUMWEBAZE: The second clarification I would like to give is on accreditation and membership – (*Hon. Katabaazi rose*) -

THE SPEAKER: *Mukatuliki*, why are you crying more than the bereaved? (*Laughter*) Minister, go ahead.

MR TUMWEBAZE: The second clarification I want to give is on accreditation and membership to international organisations. Honourable colleagues, first and foremost, membership in international organisations is by the country. (*Applause*)

The Minister of Foreign Affairs allows every agency of Government to be a member of any organisation. If the Minister of Foreign Affairs does not allow it, there is no agency that can seek any membership. Therefore, it is up to the country.

When you change your arrangement domestically, the CDO will be replaced in that membership organisation by the successor department or agency. (*Hon. Asinansi Nyakato rose*) So, there will be nothing lost – (*Interjection*) - okay; I take it.

THE SPEAKER: Can you conclude?

MR TUMWEBAZE: The Speaker has ruled otherwise, my sister; we shall discuss it later on. (*Laughter*)

Finally, Madam Speaker, it is of interest that people from the cotton growing areas know this. Let me tell you how the duplication of mandates affected cotton production. The National Semi-Arid Resources Research Institute (NaSARRI) in Serere traditionally was for cotton seed production.

When CDO came in, it encroached on NARO’s mandate. There was a push-and-pull on who produced cotton seed and who should not. NARO gave away the mandate to CDO, yet we know that the real competence of research in seed production is with NARO. So, all the

NARO institutes, be it for coffee, fisheries, or cotton, are staying; they are not being rationalised.

The foundation of seed, be it for cotton or any other crop, is protected. The rationalisation of the Cotton Development Organisation (CDO), colleagues, is for gaining efficiency, and removing layers of duplication in management, transport, human resources, and accounting. I pray that the House finds merit in the submissions made. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I put the question that the Cotton Development (Amendment) Bill, 2024, be read for the second time.

(Question put and agreed to.)

BILLS
COMMITTEE STAGE

THE COTTON DEVELOPMENT
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable members, I have 198 Members both virtually and physically; 147 inside and 51 online. Members, why are you making noise? So, what noise will you make when you go to coffee?

Clause 1

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 1 stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 2, agreed to.

Clause 3

THE CHAIRPERSON: Committee chairperson –

1.00

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY, AND FISHERIES (Ms Linda Auma): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Clause 3 is amended by substituting for the phrase “Cap.

30” wherever the phrase appears in the Bill. The phrase should be “Cap. 36”.

Justification

To align the citation of the Cotton Development Act, Cap. 30 to the revised laws of Uganda, 7th Edition.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable minister –

1.01

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): I concede. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 3 be amended as proposed by the chairperson of the committee.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4, agreed to.

Clause 5, agreed to.

Clause 6

THE CHAIRPERSON: Committee chairperson –

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In clause 6, Amendment of Section 1 of the Principal Act.

Clause 6 is amended –

(a) by substituting paragraph (a), with the following:

“(a) by repealing paragraph (a), (b) and (i);”

(b) by inserting immediately after paragraph (a), the following, by substituting for the definition of the word “minister”, the following -

“‘Minister’ means the minister responsible for agriculture, animal industry and fisheries;”

(c) in paragraph (b), subparagraph (ma) by substituting for the words “cotton production, processing and marketing”, with the word “agriculture”.

Justification

- (i) To delete the definition of the word “organisation” since it is being or proposed to be repealed by the Bill.
- (ii) The ministry in charge of cotton is the ministry responsible for agriculture, animal industry and fisheries.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Minister -

MR TUMWEBAZE: I concede.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Madam Chairperson, it should be the ministry responsible for agriculture. Just that because in the future, fisheries could be taken elsewhere, but cotton is agriculture.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, the ministry responsible for agriculture. Is that okay?

MR TUMWEBAZE: Madam Chairperson, I concede.

MS LINDA AUMA: Madam Chairperson, I too concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 6 be amended as proposed with an amendment from the Minister of Information, Communication Technology and National Guidance.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7, agreed to.

Clause 8, agreed to.

Clause 9, agreed to.

Clause 10, agreed to.

Clause 11

THE CHAIRPERSON: Committee chairperson –

MS LINDA AUMA: Madam Chairperson, clause 11 is amended by deleting the proposed section 5(j)

Justification

The proposed section 5(j) is redundant since the ministry and the Government are one and the same.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Minister -

MR TUMWEBAZE: I concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Government - *(Laughter)*

DR BARYOMUNSI: It is okay. We proceed.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I needed another opinion. I put the question that clause 11 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 11, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 12, agreed to.

Clause 13, agreed to.

Clause 14, agreed to.

Clause 15, agreed to.

Clause 16, agreed to.

Clause 17, agreed to.

Clause 18, agreed to.

Clause 19

THE CHAIRPERSON: Committee chairperson -

MS LINDA AUMA: Madam Chairperson, clause 19 is amended by inserting a new paragraph immediately after paragraph (b), as follows -

“by repealing subsection (4)”

Justification

Section 16(4) of the Principal Act refers to an aggrieved person whose application for registration has been refused or rejected by the organisation to appeal to the board yet both the board and the organisation are being repealed.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Minister -

MR TUMWEBAZE: I concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 19 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 19, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 20, agreed to.

Clause 21, agreed to.

Clause 22, agreed to.

Clause 23

MS LINDA AUMA: Madam Chairperson, Clause 23 is amended in paragraph B by substituting for the proposed sub-section 3 the following;

- “(3) Every registered ginner shall, within 21 days after completing ginning, forward to the minister details of all cotton gin, and the details shall specify:
- (a) The quantities ginned during the season;
 - (b) The grades into which the quantities are classified;
 - (c) The appropriate ginning outturn.”

Justification, to include the specifications under Section 19(3) of the Act which were erroneously left out.

MR TUMWEBAZE: I concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question at clause 23 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 23, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 24, agreed to.

Clause 25, agreed to.

Clause 26, agreed to.

Clause 27

MS LINDA AUMA: Madam Chairperson, clause 27 is substituted for the following; “27, repealed of section 30 of the principal Act.

Section 30 of the principal Act is repealed.”

Justification; following the revision of laws of Uganda as of 1st July 2024, Section 31 of CAP 30 was deleted. Since the section is no longer in the statute book, it is redundant to have a proposal to repeal it.

MR TUMWEBAZE: No objection, it makes sense.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 27 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 27, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 28

MS LINDA AUMA: Clause 28 is amended by substituting for the word “schedule” wherever the word appears, the phrase “Schedule 2.”

Justification

After the review of the laws of Uganda by the Law Reform Commission, a second schedule was created, hence the need to be specific which schedule is being repealed.

MR TUMWEBAZE: I concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question at clause 28 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 28, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 29

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 29 stands part of the Bill -

MR BASALIRWA: Madam Chairperson, I seek some clarification from the minister. 29(2) and (3); saving provisions. In 2, you are talking about board members and staff being paid terminal benefits in accordance with terms and conditions and in 3, you are talking about compensation as not payable to any member of the board of the Cotton Development Authority for loss of office resulting from dissolution. It does not seem to be very clear.

MR TUMWEBAZE: Well, I do not know what clarification you need, but when the rationalisation process started, Cabinet guided all ministers while appointing boards to be mindful of the process and include in their appointment letters terms and conditions that provide for termination when the process happens.

And for CDO, there will be no people to suffer any loss of terminal benefits.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Maybe 2 is on terminal benefits, that is an entitlement. You can even sue for it. Then, when you look at 3, somebody cannot ask for compensation because the entity has been rationalised. However, the committee made a mistake here and put coffee - I do not know why people love coffee. We change where there is coffee to cotton. That is on 3.

MR BASALIRWA: Madam Chairperson, you are right, but you have to reconcile this matter with the letters of employment that were given to these people. If there are aspects related

to compensation in employment letters, you cannot use a piece of legislation to take away that - yes, even Boards have letters. They do not exist just like that.

You have to reconcile it with the terms and conditions within the letters that are appointing them to serve on these boards. Otherwise, this will be problematic.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Which one? The terminal benefits?

MR BASALIRWA: Madam Chairperson, when you look at 3, it is completely closing out the element of compensation. I am aware that employment or engagement letters in some of these Boards have aspects related to compensation.

The minister has to be very clear whether this particular aspect is not embedded in the letters. Otherwise, this would be problematic. That is why I am seeking clarification.

THE CHAIRPERSON: It is not.

MS NALUYIMA: Why do we really have to include it? Why don't we do away with it, and then everything is catered for? Why should we put clause 29(3) as part of the law?

THE CHAIRPERSON: We need to know what-

DR BARYOMUNSI: I just want to supplement what the honourable minister said. The discussion on rationalisation started in the Cabinet 2018, and the guidance we got immediately was that, for any Board to be appointed, you must put that provision that there is this process, and once rationalisation takes place, you will cease being a member of the Board. So, it is covered for all those Boards.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable members - Can move an amendment to replace coffee with cotton?

MR TUMWEBAZE: Madam Chairperson, I beg to move an amendment on Clause 29(3) to

read as follows; “Compensation is not payable to any member of the board of the Cotton Development Organisation for loss of office resulting from the dissolution of the Cotton Development Organisation” I beg to move.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question – Yes? The issue of compensation is limited to board members only, not to staff.

MS CHRISTINE APOLOT: Madam Chairperson, in that connection, still under 2, he is saying; “the board members and staff.” Maybe we would have also had an additional point on the staff because rationalisation considers some of the staff who qualify, and then those who do not qualify to get some remuneration. So, in connection to that point, can we add a point or statement handling the staff, specifically, of Cotton Development Organisation?

THE CHAIRPERSON: That is sub clause (2)?

MS CHRISTINE APOLOT: Yes, under sub clause (2).

THE CHAIRPERSON: It is handled; the staff are part of it – *“The board members and staff of the Cotton Development Organisation shall be paid their terminal benefits in accordance with the terms and conditions of their service.”*

MS CHRISTINE APOLOT: Madam Chairperson, does it mean that all the staff of the Cotton Development Organisation will be laid off so that they qualify for the terminal benefits?

THE CHAIRPERSON: No, look at sub clause (4).

MR TUMWEBAZE: Madam Chairperson, sub clause (4) provides for her worry.

MS CHRISTINE APOLOT: I now understand; I withdraw.

MR TWESIGYE: Madam Chairperson, clause 29(4), which you are referring to, if it remains

like this, will bring more confusion. This is because the staff of the Cotton Development Organisation cannot be redeployed to serve in the public service. It is subject to the availability of the position.

The justification is that these people are being paid under a different salary structure and, therefore, if it is going to be a saving, once these people are terminated, those who qualify can apply for absorption in the new structure.

THE CHAIRPERSON: It says “subject to availability of positions” and “may”. If you do not want, because the money is less, then, you go.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Madam Chairperson, to make a general comment, rationalisation is not a retrenchment exercise. Our thinking, as the Government – and what we are doing – is that the public servants who are affected will be, as much as possible, absorbed in the public service, both at the Central level and the local governments. It will only be those who cannot fit anywhere that will be paid a severance package. That is the thinking of this rationalisation. That is why sub clause (4) is speaking to that – that members affected by the CDO will be absorbed in the wider government as much as possible.

MR BASALIRWA: Madam Chairperson, the minister for agriculture, when he was giving us assurance here, said all the technical people in these agencies are going to be absorbed in the ministry. Okay. And there are two issues. This clause, 29(4), does not speak to that assurance. This 29(4), first of all, is general, but he was specifically alluding to the experts.

Number two, his assurance is not in tandem with this provision because the assurance was coached in mandatory terms. When you look at this, it is coached in discretionary terms. So, I think, Minister, we have to be very clear. Are you absorbing all technical people as they are? In which case, this must speak to that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable members, the minister said that they will

absorb all the technical people, who are willing. However, if there are other people who cannot work in that entity, then, they can be taken up under public service. That is what the clause is saying. There is no contradiction – okay, you rephrase it.

MR BASALIRWA: Madam Chairperson – *(Mr Tumwebaze rose)* - I am not rephrasing it. I was seeking assurance and – *(Interruption)*

MR TUMWEBAZE: Madam Chairperson, you just said it. No one will be conscripted or taken by force to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. So, the discretionary nature of the provision is on the part of the staff, to make a decision. Now, as the minister for agriculture, the understanding we have had with public service is that for the structure I am given in the technical commodity department, I must take all the technical staff because I need them to continue doing the work that CDO was doing.

On whether the law can be mandatory, what if the other person declines it? I do not see a contradiction. I believe –

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 29 stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 29, agreed to.

The title, agreed to.

MOTION FOR THE HOUSE TO RESUME

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable minister?

1.23

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Madam Chairperson, I beg to move that the House do resume and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that the House resumes and the Committee of

the whole House reports thereto.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(The House resumed, the Speaker presiding.)

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE OF
THE WHOLE HOUSE

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

1.23

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Madam Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of the whole House has considered the Bill entitled “The Cotton Development (Amendment) Bill, 2024” and passed it with amendments.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE
WHOLE HOUSE

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

1.24

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the report from the Committee of the whole House be adopted.

THE SPEAKER: I put the question that the report of the Committee of the whole House be adopted by this House.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

BILLS
THIRD READING

THE COTTON DEVELOPMENT
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Minister?

1.24

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Cotton Development (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read the third time and do pass.

THE SPEAKER: I put the question that “The Cotton Development (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read the third time and pass.

(Question put and agreed to.)

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED, “THE COTTON DEVELOPMENT AMENDMENT ACT, 2024”

THE SPEAKER: Title settled and the Bill passed. *(Applause)*

BILLS SECOND READING

THE DAIRY INDUSTRY (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, as part of the rationalisation of public entities and expenditure, the Dairy Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2024 was tabled on 24 September 2024. The committee is ready to report. However, to begin with, I invite the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to move a motion.

Honourable members, you do not make the Order Paper. In my communication, I made an amendment. If you have rationalised cotton, then why not DDA? Next.

1.26

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Dairy Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the second time.

THE SPEAKER: Is it seconded? It is seconded by the Chairperson of the Committee

on Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance, the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the Chairperson of the Committee on Public Accounts (Local Government). The representative for Older Persons, Hon. Margaret, Hon. Rose; Member of Parliament for Mitooma, Hon. Richard, Chairperson of the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs and Hon. Baka - by the whole.

Then, we have Hon. Kisa, Hon. Emmanuel, Hon. Koluo, Hon. Acuti, Hon. Catherine and Hon. Muhammad. Hon. Omoding, Hon. Noah, Member of Parliament for Alur, Hon. Prof. Mushemeza and Hon. Nandutu. Hon. Rose. Hon. James, Hon. John and Hon. Apea. Would you speak to your motion?

MR TUMWEBAZE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Dairy Industry (Amendment) Bill - first and foremost, the general principle of rationalisation also affects the dairy industry. We believe the ministry for animal husbandry and the relevant departments under there can ably integrate the functions of the Dairy Development Authority (DDA). As a country, we will be able to make efficiency gains from administration. We will consolidate all the staff together, pay them better and implement the policy without any duplication.

I believe the Bill will:

- i) Cure those overlapping areas and also enable the mainstreaming of the Dairy Development Authority into the main ministry;
- ii) Facilitate efficiencies and effectiveness in delivering services; and
- iii) Harmonise the remuneration of staff since, whether you work with DDA or the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), a veterinary doctor is a veterinary doctor and a scientist is a scientist. There is no reason, whatsoever, there should be a discrepancy in the remuneration.

Madam Speaker, fortunately, it will not be a problem to integrate most of these people who are even working in the agencies, in the main service, because the salary for scientists was harmonised and enhanced. Therefore, it will not be a problem, whatsoever, for the scientists to be from DDA or any other to join the service. In fact, the pay they get now in these agencies is lower than what the scientists in the mainstream are getting.

It is not only the Executive supporting rationalisation but even the scientists there are supporting it to make sure that the pay is harmonised -

THE SPEAKER: Is the minister also supporting it?

MR TUMWEBAZE: Fully.

MR NSAMBA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. When we were dealing with cotton, the minority report presented the expenditure of the Government in the Cotton Development Organisation (CDO). Would you be honest and tell us how much the Government has been putting in the Dairy Development Authority and how much you are saving?

You came here with an argument that you are going to be saving, as Government, on it. However, here you are making an argument that people are paid better in the ministry. Can you clarify, honourable minister, how much are we saving in terms of expenditure from where we are to where we are going?

THE SPEAKER: Why don't we wait for the report? Maybe it is provided for there.

MR NSAMBA: Madam Speaker, the minister who is justifying is the one who is supposed to bring that information in his justification.

THE SPEAKER: All these reports have certificates of financial implication. Honourable committee chairperson?

1.31

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Ms Linda Auma):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. As I presented a report for the committee on the Dairy Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2024, I beg to report- I had already laid it at the Table but I beg to report to the House that the committee sat and this is the report.

The Dairy Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2024 was read for the first time on 24 September 2024 and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries in accordance with Rule 129(1) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

The Bill aims at:

- a) Mainstreaming the functions of DDA into the ministry responsible for Agriculture, and
- b) Abolishing the Dairy Development Authority and transferring its functions to the ministry responsible for agriculture.

The committee scrutinised the Bill in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of Parliament and now begs to report. We all know the background of rationalisation, but it is important to know that DDA was established by the Dairy Industry Act, Cap. 84 and operationalised by the Dairy (Marketing and Processing of Milk and Milk Products) Regulations, 2003.

The mandate of the Authority is to develop and regulate the dairy industry in Uganda by providing development and regulatory services that will ensure increased production and consumption of milk, a sustainable and profitable dairy industry that will contribute to economic development and nutritional standards in Uganda.

DDA has its presence at some of the main dairy entry and exit border points, including Malaba, Busia, Mutukula and Entebbe International Airport, with access to Uganda Revenue

Authority's ASYCUDA system to clear dairy consignment.

Honourable colleagues, we all know the object and justification of the Bill. We, as a committee, met with this agency and other stakeholders. Others also presented written memoranda. We also reviewed various documents that were presented to us. These were the committee findings, observations, and recommendations:

- 1) The question was whether there are mandate overlaps between DDA and MAAIF.

Section 5 of the Dairy Industry Act mandates the Authority to register and license milk processors, traders, dairy farmers, groups and to support farmers' marketing organisations. DDA also advises and enforces milk standards established by the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS).

The committee notes that DDA has fulfilled the above mandate through;

- a) Registration of dairy businesses and issuance of registration certificates,
- b) Inspection of milk handling premises like equipment, milk tankers, processing lines, cleaning facilities and related dairy containers,
- c) Sampling and analysis of milk and milk products for chemical and microbiological analysis for adulterants and contaminants in accordance with international standards. DDA also carries out sensory evaluation of milk and milk products. It has also set up a national analytical laboratory, which is in Lugogo. The agency has on-spot milk testing and mobile laboratory vans.
- d) Rehabilitation of milk cold chain infrastructure and collection centres across the country and value addition training and skilling at the Entebbe Dairy Training School.
- e) Furthermore, DDA established a milk and milk product traceability system. If you move and sell bad milk, it can be traced to the source.

- f) Market access through the promotion of domestic milk consumption and access to regional and international markets.

The committee notes that while the Dairy Development Authority has restored the dairy sector, which had collapsed, following the dissolution of dairy cooperation, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) has at the same time maintained a dairy division over the years. However, the committee has not been able to establish the performance of this division under the ministry.

Whether DDA served the purpose for which it was established

Increased production and market potential for the dairy sector.

The committee notes that at the inception of DDA, the dairy industry and infrastructure had collapsed. By 1986, milk collection was 3,043,000 litres annually. With the intervention of DDA since 2000, milk production has increased to 5.3 billion litres. The milk collection centres have increased from 15 in 1986 to 547 in 2023. Milk processing companies have increased from one dairy corporation, with a processing capacity of 60,000 litres per day, to 160 processing companies today, with a processing capacity of 3.9 million litres per day.

The country has 87 high-volume milk-producing districts in the cattle corridor, which have cattle keeping as a source of livelihood. The dairy industry employs about 12 million people, majorly in rural areas. The dairy value chain is driven by smallholder farmers, input and service providers, milk collectors, milk bulkers, transporters, traders, and processors, among others. In addition, the Dairy Industry provides food and income for more than 40 per cent of the population of this country.

Dairy exports have more than tripled from Shs 287.4 billion to Shs 976.4 billion from 2019 to 2023. Uganda is now poised to enter the Algerian market, estimated at \$500 million annually. The export market required routine

inspection by competent and autonomous regulatory departments to ensure safety and quality of the dairy product.

International Accreditation

The National Dairy Analytical Laboratory under DDA is in the final stages of attaining full accreditation. I want to mark this, as “the final stages”; it has not yet got accreditation. Having been awarded recognition certification under the International Standardisation Organisation (ISO) 17025, which certifies all dairy export test results from the export market, the accreditation facilitates trade in dairy products and reduces the cost of doing business to make the country’s dairy products competitive.

The committee concludes that the rationalisation of DDA may affect the regulatory gains already achieved and adversely affect the markets. The Government needs to ensure - I want to re-echo this - the Government needs to ensure that mainstreaming DDA into MAAIF does not jeopardise the ongoing processes of recognition and accreditation that are critical for market access; meaning that MAAIF should take this as a serious matter since milk is a perishable good.

The Dairy Development Authority’s contribution to the National treasury

1. Wage Bill of DDA; this is what was being asked.

The DDA has an approved staff establishment of 140 positions with 91 positions filled; 63 per cent of DDA staff are scientists, earning less than the approved Government science scale.

The budget for the Financial Year 2024/2025 stands at Shs 10.9 billion, of which, Shs 3.7 billion is the wage component. Therefore, there will be marginal savings from the rationalisation of DDA as the scientists will be catered for as experts handling the milk products.

The committee notes that the rationalisation of DDA will not lead to the anticipated savings, as stated in the Certificate of Financial Implication (CFI), because it was misleading but it does not stop the aim of the Government from mainstreaming DDA.

This was what was anticipated. However, since the majority, 63 per cent, of the DDA staff are scientists, and these are experts, the ministry has assured us that it will be absorbed into the ministry. (Interjections) You will respond to that one later.

Value of dairy exports

The committee notes that Uganda processes several dairy products which are exported to various countries. The committee notes that the dairy industry has been able to access the international market as a result of quality assurance and certification.

The committee recommends that these gains need to be secured once DDA is mainstreamed into the mother ministry.

Privatisation of the Dairy Industry

The committee notes that when the Government liberalised the dairy sector and privatised the collection, transportation, processing, and marketing of milk and milk products, which required a robust, efficient, and effective regulatory framework, as a result, the dairy industry has attracted many investors; both local and foreign.

The committee observed that the rationalisation of DDA may, in a way, compromise quality assurance if not taken care of. We have to deal with this because you know a report has to be both positive and give options for gaps that have been identified.

Therefore, MAAIF must immediately establish a robust regulatory unit to ensure the quality of the dairy products; that should not be compromised. This is a perishable good that we are dealing with daily. That is why we need immediate action on that.

Whether international accreditation attained by DDA is transferable to MAAIF

The committee was informed that DDA Analytical Laboratory is in its final stages of attaining full accreditation, having been awarded certification under ISO, as I stated earlier. The accreditation facilitates trading and competitors of international markets.

The committee observed that mainstreaming DDA into MAAIF requires that the accreditation process is fast-tracked to protect market access and competitiveness.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker and honourable colleagues, the committee recommends that DDA be mainstreamed into MAAIF subject to the following conditions:

MAAIF should develop the capacity to deliver services including animal disease control and prevention in line with accreditation and certification requirements for the dairy sector.

Madam Speaker, I beg to submit. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Minority report?

1.44

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO (FDC, Woman Representative, Hoima City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Once again -

THE SPEAKER: Tell me the points of departure.

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO: The main object of this Bill is to dissolve the Dairy Development Authority today if the majority numbers say "aye."

Madam Speaker, in relation to the objectives of rationalisation, one of the questions was whether the funding of the Dairy Development Authority is a wasteful expenditure. The minority report says "No, it is not a wasteful expenditure." The Dairy Development Authority has been able to popularise the sector by which an estimated 12 million people, the majority in rural areas, are employed.

Additionally, the industry provides food and income for more than 40 per cent of the total population, thus improving the quality of life for value chain actors. DDA not only contributes 11 per cent of the total agriculture sector and 5 per cent to the total merchandise export but also 6.5 per cent of the agricultural GDP.

The Dairy Development Authority has effectively and efficiently performed its mandate given the meagre resource envelope of Shs 3.376 billion.

Madam Speaker, another reason for the rationalisation of the DDA was whether the mandate overlaps between the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the DDA.

The minority report states that the two entities do not overlap at all. The agriculture mandate is to:

- i) Formulate, review, and implement national policies, plan strategies, regulations, standards, and enforce laws, regulations, and standards along the value chain of crops, livestock, and fisheries.

While the mandate of the Dairy Development Authority is to;

- i) Provide dairy development and regulatory services.
- ii) To promote increased sustainable milk production and consumption, and attainment of a profitable dairy sector, increased economic development, and improved nutritional status for Ugandans.

This is a very unique role that has never been played by any other entity and also the ministry having performed before.

The final one was whether the Dairy Development Authority has served its purpose.

The Dairy Corporation has served its purpose according to the said mandate. The minority report also observed that the Certificate of

Financial Implication (CFI), which was presented before the committee has 89 staff - all of whom are on a contract basis, and all their contracts were renewed this year.

According to the Certificate of Financial Implication, only 10 staff, that is 11 per cent, will be laid off, leaving 79 per cent to be absorbed.

The new structure by the Ministry of Public Service indicates that only 40 staff from the Dairy Development Authority will be absorbed into the Dairy Department – under the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries leaving 39 staff not laid off or absorbed.

This is likely to cause the Government more financial losses in the courts of law as it is today with the former Rural Electrification Agency staff. Hence, the Certificates of Financial Implication should be withdrawn and new ones laid before Parliament. According to the Certificate of Financial Implications, the total cost for rationalisation of –

THE SPEAKER: Procedural matter –

DRAPEA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I hear the –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable, before you present your procedural matter, when I had an interaction with the Public Service Commission, I was informed that most of the staff of Rural Electrification Agency (REA) have been absorbed in in the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development. Those who were not eligible to go to the ministry were taken up by projects.

DR APEA: The issue is actually on the report being presented to us based on anticipation that the Government will lose money. Who tells you that the Government will lose money? And who tells you that the staff will go to court?

So, are we proceeding right to present a report which is anticipating issues that may not arise?

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Dr Apea. Our rules do not allow us to legislate in anticipation. Another procedural matter –

DR BARYOMUNSI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Our rules are very clear on what a minority report is. Ideally, what happens in a committee is that you sit, process the business before you, write a report and then if you disagree with the particular positions of the majority committee, that is when you write a minority report saying I disagree with “A, B, C, D” but not to go on a fishing expedition of raising emotions and all things which are not part of a response.

So, will you give us procedural guidance so that members will adhere to the rules now and in the future?

THE SPEAKER: Rule 205, “A member or Members dissenting from the opinion of the majority of the committee may state in writing the reason for his or their dissent”. That is on departure from the main point. So, can you conclude?

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The shadow minister is not debating in anticipation. The figures I have mentioned –

THE SPEAKER: I said you were debating in anticipation.

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO: Madam Speaker, I was trying to clarify. The figures in the minority report were presented before the committee by the Minister of Public Service and the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. So, I was trying to clear the air.

My points of dissent are here in the Certificate of Financial Implication and I am almost coming to a conclusion. I was saying that the total cost of rationalisation of the Dairy Development Authority is Shs 0.53 billion for terminal benefits for the laid-off staff, leading to savings worth Shs 11.02 billion in the Financial Year 2024/2025.

However, just like all other Certificates of Financial Implications that accompanied Rationalisation of Government Agencies and Public Expenditure (RAPEX) Bills, the indicated savings were more than the approved budget of Shs 10.95 billion in the same Financial Year 2024/2025.

Furthermore, the quoted savings are unrealistic since the 40 staff that will be moved to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) have wages and non-wages that are not considered by the Certificate of Financial Implication.

Conclusively, it is important to note that most of the achievements of the Dairy Development Authority have been registered after acquiring semi-autonomous status and its own vote.

Before acquiring the vote, the entity used to receive limited allocation from the mother ministry, which made it so difficult to enforce safety and quality standards.

The minority report noted that export of milk and milk products require observance of safety and quality standards and regulations along the dairy value chain, which MAAIF cannot effectively and efficiently deliver.

It is also important to note that milk is a perishable product and it is mainly driven by smallholder farmers, input and service providers, milk collectors, milk bulkers, transporters, traders and processors, among others.

Diary carries out activities, which are geared towards achieving middle-income status as envisioned in Vision 2040, where dairy was prioritised as a strategic commodity to realise the country's agro-industrialisation programme.

Therefore, rationalising the Dairy Development Authority may lead to loss of livelihoods for the estimated 12 million Ugandans earning from the dairy subsector.

Owing to that fact, the justification for rationalisation of the Dairy Development Authority was unsustainable. Therefore, the minority report recommends that the Dairy Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2024 be withdrawn.

Madam Speaker, I submit. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Asinansi. Hon. Christine, we can now open the debate.

1.55

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have listened to both reports and I am getting worried that when you perform well in Uganda, you are then rewarded wrongly or poorly because the Dairy Development Authority, is one of the best-performing institutions. Yes, based on the little that we invest in it. Now, I wonder what is going to motivate people to perform well because the background to rationalisation is relieving the Government of wasteful expenditure.

However, the authority has shown us that it cannot - we are actually proposing that the Government should stop funding and see if DDA cannot stay with its own performance.

The other issue is staffing. There is also some misunderstanding on staffing. We are told scientists are going to be taken to the ministry, but at the same time, they are showing us the salaries in the Authority are lower compared to those in the ministry. How do you say that we are going to make a saving when somebody is coming from a low salary to a high science salary in the ministry? Then, the availability, Madam Speaker -

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of information from Hon. Apea.

MS APEA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to inform my colleague that rationalisation is not only about saving money. There are a lot of other reasons for rationalisation and one of them is to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the Government.

The minister has just told us here that rationalisation is about reducing the operational costs. If there is a Board somewhere, somebody is being paid for procurement, somebody is being paid for human resource - Can we bring those brilliant Dairy Development Authority (DDA) scientists into the ministry and they are helped with the operational costs?

Madam Speaker, I agree with her that DDA has really performed very well. However, the approach that DDA and the Government have used is that the dairy industry is private sector-led.

THE SPEAKER: Are you giving me information or you are debating?

MS APEA: I have given the information and I was telling them that the performance of DDA uses a private sector-led approach. Thank you.

MR MUWANGA: Madam Speaker, for Members of Parliament to disguise concrete submissions as points of information - Hon. Apea seems to be a high priest of rationalisation. She should, when time avails itself, make a formal submission but to hide under information and give a solid submission is irregular. Is she in order to interrupt a submission of a Member -

THE SPEAKER: Can you finish?

MS KAAYA: Madam Speaker, we are also deviating from what is available. They say the staff will be taken to the ministry, depending on the availability of jobs. That statement and proposal is not giving us confidence and confirmation that the good scientists will be accommodated in the ministry. I pray that we move by our talk; our talk must be reflected in the statements and sections. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Flavia -

1.59

MS FLAVIA NABAGABE (NUP, Woman Representative, Kassanda): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have listened to both reports and much as we have some common ground in the majority report, I would like to side with

the minority report, reason being that - yes, DDA should not be merged with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

In my area, we have cattle keepers in Musozi and Manyogaseka Sub counties is a cattle keeping corridor so I know issues of dairy as well.

The reason why I am standing up is because cattle keepers in Kassanda District are still complaining that up to now - By the way, up to now, Kassanda District is still quarantined and our cattle cannot move because of *Kalusu*. What is *Kalusu*? - (*Interjections*) - That one. Thank you very much.

That means that we still have challenges but the cattle keepers in my area complain that up to now, the Ministry of Agriculture has failed to get for them the right medicine for dipping their cattle.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Flavia, they call it dipping.

MS NABAGABE: I said this eventually. Thank you. I think the message has been got because they said that for a very long time, they were still mixing tomato medicine; *nyanya* with other medicines. Their cattle are still suffering and that is a failure on the part of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

Now, if we are taking away DDA which is working and has the best scientists, efficiency is lost in the process. The cattle keepers will remain complaining because, on the other side, there is a lot of inefficiency. Thank you.

2.01

MR PATRICK NSAMBA (NUP, Kassanda County North, Kassanda): Thank you, Madam Speaker. We should not make this mistake. We have an agency that picked milk from down to where it is now. We must rationalise for purposes of efficiency.

We should think about some of the agencies that can do without the Government's money. If you left DDA to generate its revenue, it can stand.

Madam Speaker, we have seen the amount of money that is going to be saved, there is almost nothing. We know the ministry is inefficient. We cannot pick a very efficient agency and throw it in inefficiency. You will have wasted - it is a fact.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, if the ministry is inefficient, the Members of Parliament are inefficient. This is because you do - Why don't you listen? You do oversight on these institutions. If you have the power, why don't you close the ministry if it is inefficient? Hon. Emmanuel –

MR ONGIERTHO: Madam Speaker, I am listening -

THE SPEAKER: The one thing you want to do is post-mortem. You do a post-mortem. That is why I will agree with what the Leader of the Opposition (LOP) was doing; he goes before things get bad. Do your oversight.

MR ONGIERTHO: Madam Speaker, as I stated earlier, I am now on this bandwagon of rationalising. I heard this point about the “staff will be absorbed.” However, I am on the Committee on Education and Sports and I remember two entities; the Higher Students Financing Board and UNESCO, one of the reasons why the President returned those Bills to us was he was questioning who did the recruitment for those agencies.

To him, if the recruitment is not done by the Public Service or Education Service Commission then you cannot talk about automatically shifting them to the ministry.

Therefore, we need to be sure who was responsible for the recruitment of the staff in these entities. If the reasoning that the President brought in those entities applies here, it then means you cannot talk about ‘automatically’, unless they were recruited by the Public Service. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, before a Bill comes to the House, pre-legislative studies are done and that is where they get all those facts. Hon. Kangwagye –

2.04

MR STEPHEN KANGWAGYE (Independent, Bukanga County, Isingiro):

Thank you, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: Now, I want to look at cattle keepers.

MR KANGWAGYE: Yes, we are here. To be brief and precise, I support the majority report. When you see the stepmother of a child crying much more than the real mother of a child then there is a problem. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, I am a cattle keeper and we are the sole beneficiaries in this sector.

Madam Speaker, the real role of the ministry for agriculture is to formulate laws, regulations and set clear quality standards along the value chain of livestock –

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order from *Hajjat* – by the stepmother. *(Laughter)*

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I know Members of Parliament for being national leaders, here to legislate on all matters in this country. Is the honourable Member right to describe Members of Parliament that do not come from cattle-rearing areas as “stepmothers”?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, Hon. Kangwagye did not mention anybody as “a stepfather”. He was just making a phrase.

MR KANGWAGYE: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the wise ruling. I was trying to emphasise that for us, as cattle keepers who are the sole beneficiaries of this sector, we are saying that DDA should be rationalised, simply because we have seen all the challenges – what Dairy Development Authority has done to us, the cattle keepers.

For instance, for whatever has been happening to cattle keepers, it is only the ministry for agriculture, which has been coming to us so that all the challenges could be sorted out. Therefore, once we say “come back, child –

you, the prodigal son who has been lost, come back home so that you can be given the real care, given all the support and so that you are well equipped –”

When the ministry for agriculture is given full support, all the farmers in the dairy sector are going to be well motivated and all the challenges are going to be sorted out. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Let us be brief. Hon. Museveni?

2.08

MR WILLIAM MUSEVENI (Independent, Buwekula South County, Mubende): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I support that the Dairy Development Authority be taken to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. Why? I am a cattle keeper, but I have failed to see those people coming down to the farmers. They have no connection with the farmers.

How do you regulate milk, yet you do not know the cost of production of milk? When do you come to assist the farmers? If you make a report here and say, they have tried to increase the quantity of milk in Uganda, it is a lie. We are doing it on our own. We are dealing with the Ministry of Agriculture. Let them go back to the ministry so that they can come directly to the farmers and do what they are not doing today.

Madam Speaker, let it go.

2.09

MR ENOS ASIIMWE (NRM, Kabula County, Lyantonde): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I know I am bound by collective responsibility to support the Government's position, but I clearly state that I do not support the position of rationalising DDA. The Government made a promise that as we rationalise these agencies, they would bring a national regulator Bill so that the regulation element that has been handled by Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA), CDO and others could be dealt with under the national agency. We have no Bill in place. We

are now rationalising these agencies, but they have not giving us any assurance on when the Bill will be in place.

Madam Speaker, I think it is wrong for us to rationalise without the commitment made for the support of rationalisation, as much as we are bound by collective responsibility.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Nakut?

2.10

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Madam Speaker, the Dairy Development Agency has existed in Uganda for many years. However, DDA has failed to keep a national picture. Even for a region like mine; Karamoja sub region, that holds the biggest national herd of over 2.4 million cows, the DDA has not set foot there. Therefore, DDA has divided this country. On that basis, DDA must be rationalised.

When our farmers were faced with Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), I raised, in this House, a matter of national importance and the Ministry of Agriculture responded. FMD affects milk production very much. Therefore, the milk we are proud of cannot exist without the intervention that the ministry has put in this sector.

Madam Speaker, the entire debate, from the time we started the rationalisation Bills in this House, has focused on the welfare of staff; and on whether they would be absorbed. People have spoken passionately about the staff. Now, when we are handling the matter of DDA – where the staff should be promoted to a science scale; those experts that we thought we were caring about, the Members are saying, “No, they should be paid the little that they have been getting in DDA”, yet we know that pay and quality of work go together.

Why are we not supporting these staff who we represent here – they come from every part of the country – so that rationalisation happens for the good of the staff? The experts in DDA should be employed in the ministry.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I move to second the motion that DDA be rationalised to the Ministry of agriculture to improve efficiency and quality of work and to bring the national picture.

THE SPEAKER: Dr Keefa?

2.12

DR KEEFA KIWANUKA (NRM, Kiboga East County, Kiboga): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. A large swath of my constituency is in the cattle corridor; I have several sub counties, which are in the cattle corridor. My anxiety had been on whether, if the DDA is taken to the Ministry of Agriculture, it will aggravate some of the problems we have had, especially with the price of milk and the actual consumption of milk.

However, listening to the debate that has been going on, I am persuaded by people from the cattle corridor that, yes, we can rationalise DDA.

I would like to conclude by appealing to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to look at the problem that we are having; the actual consumption and prices of milk, which seem to be going down increasingly. We would very much appreciate it if some solution is found to that. Thank you very much.

2.13

MR WILSON KAJWENGYE (NRM, Nyabushozi County, Kiruhura): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I represent Nyabushozi, where dairy farming has a recognised and uncontested footprint. We produce two million litres of milk per day. I, therefore, feel I should speak for them.

The problem of the farmers in Nyabushozi now is low farm gate prices. We are looking for an efficient market for our milk – we need massive consumption of our milk and DDA has not done that. *(Applause)* We should not scatter the little resources that we have, as a nation. Let us consolidate the resources under the Ministry of Agriculture and we demand from

them that they must produce market and better prices for our milk.

I, therefore, support this Bill. I support that we consolidate our resources in one area because what belongs to all belongs to none. Let us give what the Ministry of Agriculture needs and stand here and demand from them accountability for what we have given. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Laura?

2.14

MS LAURA KANUSHU (NRM, PWD Representative): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I am a cattle keeper, first of all, and all my school fees was paid from cattle keeping – milk and everything.

Madam Speaker, I am hearing people saying that we should allow DDA to generate income. Where have they been? Why were they not generating income before? I have never heard of DDA all my life.

Madam Speaker, the milk that people produce can drop to Shs 100 per litre under DDA when *kaveera* water is at Shs 500. We are not just rationalising for the sake of it like some Members want to think. We know what we are talking about: we want efficiency. We want the people who produce those products to earn because that is their only source of income. Some of us are here because that is what educated us. We cannot see milk being sold at Shs 100, where we come from. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I put the question that the Dairy Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2024 be read for the second time.

(Question put and agreed to.)

BILLS
COMMITTEE STAGE

THE DAIRY INDUSTRY (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024

2.17

THE CHAIRPERSON: The same quorum stands.

Clause 1

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 1 stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 1, agreed to.

Clause 2, agreed to.

Clause 3

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Ms Linda Auma): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Clause 3 is amended by substituting for the phrase “Cap. 30,” wherever the phrase appears in the Bill, the phrase “Cap. 36”.

Justification

To align the citation of the “Dairy Development Authority” to the revised laws of Uganda.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Minister?

MR TUMWEBAZE: I concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 3 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4, agreed to.

Clause 5, agreed to.

Clause 6, agreed to.

Clause 7, agreed to.

Clause 8, agreed to.

Clause 9

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Clause 9 is amended by -

- a) inserting a new paragraph immediately after paragraph (c), as follows-
“substituting for paragraph (c), the following -
“initiate dairy development policies and quality control in the dairy industry”
- b) substituting for paragraph (e), the following -
“repeal paragraph (h).”

Justification

- i) To provide for the ministry to initiate policies relating to dairy development and quality control.
- ii) The Authority, as a body corporate, is sought to be dissolved in the Bill.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Minister?

MR TUMWEBAZE: I concede, Madam Chairperson.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 9 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 9, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 10, agreed to.

Clause 11, agreed to.

Clause 12, agreed to.

Clause 13, agreed to.

Clause 14, agreed to.

<i>Clause 15, agreed to.</i>	Title
<i>Clause 16, agreed to.</i>	THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that the Title stands part of the Bill -
<i>Clause 17, agreed to.</i>	MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would like to clarify that clause 3 was supposed to be amended by substituting for the phrase “Cap. 85” wherever the phrase appears in the Bill, the phrase “Cap. 67”. Thank you.
<i>Clause 18, agreed to.</i>	
<i>Clause 19, agreed to.</i>	
Clause 20	
THE CHAIRPERSON: Committee chairperson?	Title
MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.	THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that the Title stands part of the Bill.
Clause 20 is amended by inserting a new paragraph immediately after paragraph (b), as follows -	<i>(Question put and agreed to.)</i>
“by substituting for section 25(1)(h) of the principal Act, the following- “prescribing fees or charges payable under this Act.”	<i>The Title, agreed to.</i>
Justification is that it is for clarity.	MOTION FOR THE HOUSE RESUME
THE CHAIRPERSON: Minister?	THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable minister?
MR TUMWEBAZE: No objection.	2.24
THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 20 be amended as proposed.	THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Madam Chairperson, I beg to move that the House do resume and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.
<i>(Question put and agreed to.)</i>	THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that the House resumes and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.
<i>Clause 20, as amended, agreed to.</i>	<i>(Question put and agreed to.)</i>
<i>Clause 21, agreed to.</i>	<i>(The House resumed, the Speaker presiding.)</i>
<i>Clause 22, agreed to.</i>	REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE
<i>Clause 23, agreed to.</i>	THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?
<i>Clause 24, agreed to.</i>	2.25
<i>Clause 25, agreed to.</i>	THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Madam Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of the whole
<i>Clause 26, agreed to.</i>	

House has considered the Bill entitled, “The Dairy Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2024” and passed it with amendments.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE
WHOLE HOUSE

2.25

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the report of the Committee of the whole House be adopted.

THE SPEAKER: I put the question that the report of the Committee of the whole House be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

BILLS
THIRD READING

THE DAIRY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

2.26

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Dairy Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read the third time and do pass.

THE SPEAKER: I put the question that the Bill entitled, “The Dairy Industry (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read the third time and do pass.

(Question put and agreed to.)

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED, “THE
DAIRY INDUSTRY (AMENDMENT) ACT,
2024”

THE SPEAKER: Title settled and the Bill passed. *(Applause.)*

BILLS
SECOND READING

THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL
ADVISORY SERVICES (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, move a motion.

2.26

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Mr Frank Tumwebaze): I beg to move, Madam Speaker, that the Bill entitled, “The National Agricultural Advisory Services (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the second time.

THE SPEAKER: Is it seconded? Seconded Hon. Alanyo, Hon. Obua, Hon. Okwalinga, Hon. Katenyi, Hon. Grania, Hon. Josephat, Hon. Ewewu, Hon. Lugolobi, Member representing the elderly, Honourable minister for Local Government, and the whole side, including Hon. Kamuntu, Hon. Prof. Mushemeza, Member for Aruu and Hon. Nebanda. Speak to your motion briefly.

MR TUMWEBAZE: Madam Speaker, the Bill seeks to rationalise National Agriculture Advisory Services, (NAADS), as abbreviated, to be part of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) and give effect to the objectives of the rationalisation policy.

Most importantly, colleagues, if you revisit the many decisions of this House over the years, there was a call to amend the NAADS Act. Why? The NAADS Act, if you look at it, was to create a framework for offering extension services to the country. When NAADS was started, you had sub-county NAADS coordinators, district NAADS coordinators and even Farmer Forums.

As time went by, duplication was very clear. We had the NAADs coordinators at the various local governments and we had the agriculture extension officers at the sub county. Even

before rationalisation, the Cabinet sat and adopted a policy of merging extension to adopt what is called “a single-spine extension policy.” Therefore, effectively, though the NAADs Act has been there, the district NAADs coordinators were all abolished as a result of the change of policy.

Therefore, in effect, the original mandate of NAADs was changed by that policy to avoid duplication because the NAADs coordinators at the district and the sub county had overlapping mandates with the traditional agriculture extension staff. Therefore, even before rationalisation, the NAADs Act should have been amended yesterday.

In addition, I want to make this clear. Rationalisation is not a vote of no confidence in the staff; it is just a strategy to have the governance of government, have the administration of services clear and streamlined. However, because the policy changed from offering extension, it was now supported with value addition, the same thing that departments of MAAIF are doing. Like Members have said, why have so little and then you scatter it across the structure? It is based on that, that we believe the mainstreaming of NAADS into MAAIF will give the country a better service delivery framework. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Chair -

2.30

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Ms Linda Auma): Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. I beg to present the report of the Committee on Agriculture on the National Agricultural Advisory Services (Amendment) Bill, 2024.

Madam Speaker, the National Agricultural Advisory Services (Amendment) Bill, 2024 was read for the first time on 24 September 2024 and referred to the Committee for Agriculture in accordance with Rule 129(1) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

The Bill aims at dissolving the National Agricultural Advisory Services and mainstreaming its function into the ministry responsible for agriculture. The committee scrutinised the Bill in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and now begs to report.

All of us are aware of the background of rationalisation, but it is important to also note what NAADS was established for. It was established by an Act in 2001, and Sections 5 and 6 of the Act empower them to organise and promote food security, nutrition, and household income, provide agricultural advisory services, support technology development, and linkages with the farmers, among other duties.

NAADS interventions focused on the following strategic objectives to contribute to the agro-industrialisation programme:

- (a) To increase access to critical and quality farm inputs for agricultural production and productivity.
- (b) To improve post-harvest handling and storage.
- (c) To increase agro-processing and value addition.
- (d) To strengthen institutional coordination for improved service delivery.

Object and justification are the same.

We met the agency itself, the ministry, and other stakeholders by reviewing relevant documents and including the written memorandum received from different stakeholders like Hass avocado farmers and others.

The mandate of the committee was to find out whether there are overlaps between MAAIF and NAADS. NAADS was established by the same note in 2001 as stated in Sections 5 and 6 which mandated them to empower the organisation and promote food security, nutrition, and household income, among others.

NAADS contributed to food security in the country through various interventions, which have led to increased agricultural production and productivity, value addition, and agro-processing.

NAADS has also promoted cash crops like cocoa, tea and other high-value crops like Hass avocado, macadamia and cashew nuts that need further intervention.

It has also promoted the beef and dairy sector that has resulted in high yield and export earnings. Similarly, NAADS has involved itself in the development of fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector. NAADS were everywhere.

The committee notes that Uganda has achieved relative food security and become the food basket for the East African region through the efforts of NAADS.

The absorption of NAADS into MAAIF needs to safeguard the gains that NAADS had achieved, especially on the high-value crops and other areas that NAADS had captured.

NAADS was the one giving us seeds and that is why we are saying, their gains should not be frustrated. The ministry should continue with what NAADS has been doing.

Two, whether NAADS has served the purpose for which it was established. NAADS was established to promote food security, as I stated earlier, in its objective. Its medium-term strategic objective includes scaling up the production of emerging high-value non-traditional cash crops that provide a special niche for import substitution and export earning for Uganda.

The committee noted that increased production of high-value crops has stimulated the establishment of processing facilities. Ensuring food security and provision of advisory services are core mandates of the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), even if NAADS was just doing it as an agency on behalf of MAAIF. Therefore, the absorption of NAADS fits within the mandate of the ministry, since it was established as a programme to deliver its core mandate on behalf of the ministry.

Another question was whether NAADS cost of administration drains the Treasury at the

expense of service delivery. NAADS currently employs 45 staff out of a staff ceiling of 56 with a total wage bill of Shs 3 billion.

The budgetary allocation for this Financial Year 2024/2025 is Shs 35.6 billion, most of which will be saved once NAADS is absorbed into the ministry.

The absorption of NAADS will result in a slight increase in the MAAIF budget because of the areas where they were giving us the seeds and equipment. However, MAAIF needs to be strengthened, honourable colleagues, to take on the additional programmes that NAADS was undertaking.

In conclusion, the committee is cognisant of the critical role played by NAADS in delivering the mandate of the ministry in ensuring food security and promoting high-value crops, livestock and fishery production to boost household income and increase export earnings and import substitution.

The committee therefore recommends that NAADS be mainstreamed into MAAIF, subject to the following conditions:

- i. MAAIF should develop its capacity and demonstrate its ability to deliver its mandate, especially on agricultural extension services and promotion of high-value agricultural products.
- ii. The Ministry of Public Service should revise the proposed structure so that relevant staff from NAADS are absorbed into MAAIF, especially the high technical personnel.

Madam Speaker, I beg to move that this report be adopted. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, committee chairperson. Minority report?

2.38

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO (FDC, Woman Representative, Hoima City): Once again, thank you, Madam Speaker. We dissent from the majority report. However, I also appreciate

the chairperson of the majority report because she seems to concur with the minority report; she only dissents by the conclusion.

We still note that mainstreaming NAADS into the parent ministry will compromise and affect the delivery of the technical and regulatory function that this agency has been undertaking since its inception.

The main object of NAADS is to ensure that today, without fail, if the majority has it, the agency is dissolved -

THE SPEAKER: NAADS does not do the regulation but advisory. Correct it that she does advisory. It is not a regulatory function.

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your wise guidance. I withdraw. I meant MAAIF.

Madam Speaker, the main object of rationalising asked three questions. One of them was whether the mandate of NAADS overlaps with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

The mandate of NAADS does not overlap at all with the mandate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. Sections 5 and 6 of the Act empower the advisory services to promote food security, household nutrition and income, provide agricultural advisory services, support technology development and linkages with farmers, among others. Moreover, this has been effectively and efficiently achieved by NAADS.

The minority report notes that cash crops like tea and cocoa, which have no regulation agencies, are being promoted by NAADS. As a result of NAADS interventions, production in the tea sector has steadily increased in units countrywide and it has gone to 81,675 metric tonnes of tea in 2022, worth \$38.36 million in comparison with the 50,055 tonnes produced in 2017.

NAADS has provided dairy heifers, beef cattle, pigs, poultry birds and associated feeds.

In order to improve livestock breeds, NAADS has promoted artificial insemination by distributing 39,371 doses of cattle semen and 33,399 litres of liquid nitrogen in partnership with the National Animal Genetic Resource Centre and Data Bank.

NAADS distributed livestock input to various local governments across the country in addition to the distribution of livestock, fish fingerlings for tilapia, catfish and mirror caps, as well as the fish feed for income and the Government.

In a bid to support storage, value addition and agro-processing, NAADS has set up community grain stores, milk coolers with their matching generators, maize milling equipment, feed milling equipment, rice milling equipment, among others. The entity has also established the following fruit processing factories: Yumbe Mango Processing Factory, Kayunga pineapple processing plant, Kapeeka multi fruit processing plant, Floki wineries in Bunyangabu for grapes and five mini dairy processing facilities.

The minority report notes that Uganda has achieved - The NAADS - Now we are answering another question of whether the NAADS services have served the purpose for which it was established.

NAADS has served 100 per cent of the purpose to which it was established. The main purpose was to promote food security, nutrition and household income, provide agricultural advisory services, support technology development and link farmers. This has been fully and efficiently achieved.

Given that the main report was also concurring with the minority report, I wish to go to another question; whether NAADS services costs are so high that they drain the Treasury at the expense of service delivery.

The answer is a very big, no. NAADS services do not drain the Treasury because of the following reasons:

Currently, NAADS employs 45 staff at different levels out of the staff establishment of 56. The financial implication indicates that 80 staff will be laid off, which the committee notes as a disparity in reporting, and therefore deems the certificate inaccurate. The reported number, which is the basis for the certificate of financial implication, estimates that the total cost terminal benefits will be only Shs 5.23 billion, equivalent to Shs 1.59 billion of the approved wages from the wage bill for the Financial Year 2023/2024. The minority report notes that this claim is false since it is based on staff establishment of 80, which is not the case.

The minority notes that the claimed savings are more than the projected budget allocations for the Financial Year 2024/2025 by Shs 67.88 billion. This is unbelievable as NAADS has been allocated only Shs 35.54 billion in the Financial Year 2024/2025.

Madam Speaker, the minority also notes that although NAADS does not collect NTR, it is also important to note that the NAADS value chain has contributed too much in GDP and export growth. Employment creation is majorly based on agricultural production that NAADS has helped to grow and sustain.

Madam Speaker, the fundamental role played by NAADS in filling the gaps in the agricultural sector and providing demand-driven services in line with modern agricultural trends and the global market demands cannot be taken for granted. This calls for strengthening of the institution rather than mainstreaming it into the mother ministry; Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

Therefore, the minority report recommends that the National Agricultural Advisory Services (Amendment) Bill, 2024 should not be passed but rejected. I submit, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Asinansi. Can I find out what you mean by NAADS value chain?

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. With the NAADS value

chain, as given in the mandate of NAADS, the number of livestock, cash crops and those high-value cash crops which NAADS was mandated to support - As I have told you, it has effectively and efficiently done its mandate and that is the reason the minority report still says that we should reject. Because it has –

THE SPEAKER: Maybe, we can talk about the agricultural value chain rather than NAADS, because NAADS' responsibility is advisory. It cannot –

MS ASINANSI NYAKATO: Thank you, for your wise guidance, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Professor – Honourable minister will clarify last.

2.47

PROF. ELIJAH MUSHEMEZA (Independent, Sheema County South, Sheema): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Through policy shift, as the minister stated, NAADS actually was abolished a long time ago. What we need is to sanitise the process as soon as possible.

When we are debating these Bills, we need to appreciate the relationship between the ministries and agencies. We should not assume that there is a Berlin Wall. Even for those agencies we have not rationalised, there should not be a Berlin Wall. That strong relationship should always be appreciated and recognised.

Madam Speaker, there are lessons we can draw from this process right now, for the wider operations in the Government. The Ministry of Public Service has been struggling with the issues of how to streamline the remuneration of public officers. This process of rationalisation is already giving us hope that it is possible to mainstream, streamline and remove inequalities. I strongly support the majority report and the submissions of the minister. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Dr Apea - Honourable members, in the Tenth Parliament, the Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities, and State Enterprises made a

recommendation that - I do not know if you remember the recommendation. Please come and tell us the recommendation.

MR TUMWEBAZE: As Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, I was accused of not appointing the NAADS Board. Up to now, there is no board for NAADS. *(Interjection)* Of course, let me tell you why.

THE SPEAKER: It had no law.

MR TUMWEBAZE: Because the law that establishes NAADS prescribes the constituency from which to select the Board members. The constituency were the farmers for us. There are no more because they were abolished by the policy shift.

I cannot get a constituency commanded by law from which to pick Members. The same Parliament observed rightly that how do we vote money to a Board that has no Board for oversight. Therefore, the amendment, in addition to rationalisation, is much more urgent. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister wants to say something. It was already buried.

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to clarify to Members by giving them a background of NAADS. It was created to replace extension services and along the way, the Government realised, through this Parliament, that actually, the services for NAADS were not being demanded. Therefore, we created the Directorate of Extension Services in the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

We laid off NAADS workers countrywide in all the districts and they were absorbed in the extension services; those who merited to be absorbed. Whatever NAADS has been distributing is what we vote here as a ministry and we are the ones who give them guidance where to put -

Now they are going into the Directorate of Extension in Agribusiness. Whatever they have been doing will be done in the Directorate of Extension in the Department of Agribusiness.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I put the question that the National Agricultural Advisory Services (Amendment) Bill, 2024 be read for the second time.

(Question put and agreed to.)

BILLS
COMMITTEE STAGE

THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL
ADVISORY SERVICES (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024

Clause 1

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 1 stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 1, agreed to.

Clause 2, agreed to.

Clause 3

THE CHAIRPERSON: Committee chairperson –

2.51

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Ms Linda Auma): Clause 3 is amended by substituting for the phrase: “Act 10 of 2001”, wherever the phrase appears in the Bill, the phrase “Cap 196”.

Justification

To align the citation of the National Agricultural Advisory Services Act 10 of 2001 to the revised laws of Uganda, 7th Edition.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Minister –

2.52

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (ANIMAL INDUSTRY) (Lt Col (Rtd) Bright Rwamirama): I concede, Madam Chairperson.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 3 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4, agreed to.

Clause 5, agreed to.

Clause 6

THE CHAIRPERSON: Committee chairperson –

MS LINDA AUMA: Clause 6 is substituted for the following –

“Section 1 of the Principal Act is amended:

- (a) by repealing the definitions of the words “Board”, “Organisation” and “Secretariat”;
- (b) by substituting the words “NAADS coordinator,” wherever the words appear in the Act with the words, “Agricultural Extension Services Coordinator”.

Justification

- (i) The renumbering of section 2 to section 1 is intended to conform to the National Agricultural Advisory Services Act, Cap. 196 (7th Edition, laws of Uganda)
- (ii) With the dissolution of NAADS organisation, the services currently offered by NAADS should be performed by the agricultural extension services officer(s).

MR OGUZU: I would like the minister to tell us how NAADS was structured - that even up to the sub counties, we would have NAADS coordinators. When you bring in this new structure, I want my people to be assured of

extension services at whatever level. So, you need to see how that will work.

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: Madam Chairperson, the NAADS coordinators ceased to exist and we appointed extension service providers at every sub county. They vary from enterprise selection of every sub county.

If there is a fishing community, there is a fisheries officer. If there is livestock, there is a veterinary officer. If they are both livestock and agriculture, they are both agriculture officer and a veterinary officer. They exist, Madam Chairperson, and we are going to recruit for the new districts where the extension gaps exist.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Are you okay with the amendment?

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: We are in agreement with the amendment, Madam Chairperson.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 6 be amended, as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7, agreed to.

Clause 8

MS LINDA AUMA: Madam Chairperson, clause 8 is amended by substituting for the phrase “section 3”, the phrase “section 2” and thereafter, align the numbering of the sections under the Bill to the numbering as provided in the National Agricultural Advisory Services Act, Cap 196.

The justification is to conform to the numbering of sections in the National Agricultural Advisory Services Act, Cap 196 (7th edition, Laws of Uganda).

THE CHAIRPERSON: Minister -

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: Madam Chairperson, we are in agreement.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 8 be amended, as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 8, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9, agreed to.

Clause 10, agreed to.

Clause 11, agreed to.

Clause 12, agreed to.

Clause 13, agreed to.

Clause 14, agreed to.

Clause 15, agreed to.

Clause 16, agreed to.

Clause 17, agreed to.

Clause 18, agreed to.

New clause

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Insertion of a new clause

The Bill is amended by inserting a new clause immediately after clause 18 and clause 20 respectively, as follows:

“Amendment of section 15 of the principal Act.

Section 15 is amended by substituting the words “NAADS services” wherever the words appear with the words “agricultural extension services.”

“Amendment of section 18 of the principal Act.
Section 18 –

THE CHAIRPERSON: First read the one of section 15; the one for justification.

MS LINDA AUMA: The justification is that the services originally provided by NAADS shall be provided by the ministry through the extension workers appointed for that purpose.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Is that okay?

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: We are in agreement, Madam Chairperson.

MROGUZU: My concern is that NAADS used to offer services beyond extension services, for example distributing seeds and seedlings. The current provision only limits the law to extension services. Are we seeing extinction of distribution of seeds and seedlings? We need assurance.

MR TUMWEBAZE: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. He has actually mentioned it. They were doing many other activities, even those not dictated by law. Those activities were assigned to them by the ministry and the Government. That will be done by -

For example, when you say distribution of heifers or seedlings, the relevant department of the Ministry of Agriculture will do that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that the proposed new clause stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

New clause, agreed to.

Clause 19

MS LINDA AUMA: Thank you very much, Chairperson. Section 18 is amended by substituting the words “NAADS services” wherever the words appear, with the words “agricultural service extension”.

The justification is that the services originally provided by NAADS shall be provided by the ministry through the same extension workers appointed for that purpose.

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: Madam Chairperson, we are in agreement.

THE CHAIRPERSON: The new clause that she has just read will be reflected after clause 20.

I put the question that the proposed new clause stands as part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 19, agreed to.

Clause 20, agreed to.

Clause 21, agreed to.

Clause 22, agreed to.

Clause 23, agreed to.

Clause 24, agreed to.

Clause 25, agreed to.

Clause 26, agreed to.

Clause 27, agreed to.

Clause 28, agreed to.

Clause 29, agreed to.

Clause 30, agreed to.

Clause 31, agreed to.

The Title, agreed to.

MOTION FOR THE HOUSE TO RESUME

3.03

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (ANIMAL INDUSTRY) (Lt Col (Rtd) Bright Rwamirama): Madam Chairperson, I beg to move that the House do resume and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that the House resumes and the Committee of the Whole House reports thereto.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(The House resumed, the Speaker presiding.)

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

3.04

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (ANIMAL INDUSTRY) (Lt Col (Rtd) Bright Rwamirama): Madam Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of the whole House has considered the Bill entitled, “The National Agricultural Advisory Services (Amendment) Bill, 2024” and passed it with amendments.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

3.04

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (ANIMAL INDUSTRY) (Lt Col (Rtd) Bright Rwamirama): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the report of the Committee of the whole House be adopted.

THE SPEAKER: I put the question that the report of the Committee of the whole House be adopted by this House.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report, adopted.

BILLS
THIRD READING

THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL
ADVISORY SERVICES (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2024

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

3.05

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR
AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY
AND FISHERIES (ANIMAL INDUSTRY)**

(Lt Col (Rtd) Bright Rwamirama): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The National Agricultural Advisory Services (Amendment) Bill, 2024” be read for the third time and do pass.

THE SPEAKER: I put the question that the National Agricultural Advisory Service (Amendment) Bill, 2024 be read the third time and do pass.

(Question put and agreed to.)

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED, “THE
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY
SERVICES (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2024”

THE SPEAKER: Title settled and the Bill passed. *(Applause)* Honourable members, the next one is the National Forestry Authority Bill but the minister is not in. We now adjourn the House to 10.00 a.m., tomorrow. *(Applause)*

*(The House rose at 3.06 p.m. and adjourned
until Wednesday, 23 October 2024 at 10.00
a.m.)*