

**PARLIAMENT OF GUANDA**

**Thursday, 3 March 2022**

*Parliament met at 2.04 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.*

PRAYERS

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

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, we welcome you once again to today’s sitting. The Chairperson of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs has invited all members of the following Parliamentary Groups: Teso, Karamoja, Sebei, Acholi and Lango to a meeting to harmonise security matters in the area.

In that meeting, I would like Gen. Elwelu to take the lead. If it means going on the ground, he must take the lead. The leadership of the committee is there and my office will be represented by Lt Col Charity, the Dean for the UPDF. Let us get a lasting solution for whatever is happening in Karamoja, Sebei, Acholi, Lango and Teso subregions. It can be found by ourselves because we do not need external people. This meeting should take place tomorrow at 2.00 p.m. in the Conference Hall before I dispatch the team to different areas.

When you the leaders speak, the locals will understand. Therefore, I need the leaders to champion this security harmonisation - I have not yet finished with my communication. Anyway, since he has stood up, the Commissioner has a procedural matter. I thank everybody for always coming to the House. I am humbled when I see you, honourable members. Do not imagine that I do not notice it.

2.08

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My procedural matter concerns your communication about security and the security situation in the country, particularly, Teso and other subregions.

Around October, last year, while in the House here, the Rt Hon. Speaker of Parliament, Jacob Oulanyah, made a ruling when I raised a procedural matter, requesting the President of Uganda to come and give Parliament a comprehensive update on the security situation in the country.

I remember then, the Rt Hon. Speaker made a ruling that it is okay and he is going to give us feedback on when His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda will come and give us an update.

Some of these things and security issues would have been sorted because the roadmap of how things are going to be done would be very clear to Parliament. Therefore, wouldn’t it be procedurally right for the House to get to know when this will happen from the side of Government?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. We delegated this to the Executive to ensure that - I know the Members miss an interaction with the President. The Government Chief Whip should be able to give us feedback on this.

2.11

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Consultations are still going on and the feedback is coming. We could not rush the President considering the very many issues he was handling.

I can assure you that the President is very much aware of the situation and he will be updating Parliament once we finalise consultations on the same; and he will directly get in touch with you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** It is not Parliament that needs to know the security situation, rather, the country needs to know the state of security in this country and we would be pleased if what Hon. Silwany is asking for - if he finds it not too big for him to handle.

2.12

**MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. From your communication, I pray that Gen. Elwelu goes to that area in the capacity of a Member of Parliament - not a full General. His record in Kasese is not very good because he commanded there so badly.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** He is a Member of the Committee on Defence.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** I pray that he does not run out of his cool the way he did in Kasese. We might get another disaster and yet, this is in good spirit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** It is in good spirit –*(Hon. Nakut rose\_)* Hon. Faith is a member of the committee and of the area.

**MS NAKUT:** Madam Speaker, I wish to thank you for calling that meeting. We will be there as members of the Karamoja Parliamentary Group. My colleague should not be worried because as representatives, we will all be there.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. At the right time, he is among those people who are going to answer very serious questions when things normalise in this country - of the atrocities he committed and he has to tell us who directed him. He now has a blanket cover because of the regime that is sitting here.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Even today, things are normal. What is not normal? Would you be moving without an armed guard?

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Madam Speaker, you cannot say that things are normal when some Members of Parliament have been under incarceration for six months at Kitalya. No investigations have taken place; you have given in some good support –*(Hon. Tayebwa rose\_)* Hon. Tayebwa, let me conclude this. You know you have to defend Government. I have to tell you your mistakes and it helps you because one time, you will be this side, the same way you were this side one time. Things are not normal, but you must accept that we shall correct them and I am serious on this.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssewungu, can you take your seat? The principle of presumption of innocence, under Article 28 provides that the due process will take place. We do not want Members to get out without going through the due process. We would be happy for them to come out when there is no case, and glad to have our people.

Let us not mix politics with criminality. There are some people who were arrested and they are criminals. They are those who are incarcerated because of politics. This is why the other time we requested that those who have been incarcerated because of politics be given a Presidential pardon. Honourable members, criminals will remain criminals. Otherwise, for those incarcerated due to political reasons, we have requested for a Presidential pardon so that we have our people out here, but not as criminals.

**MR TAYEBWA:** Madam Speaker, there is something I want to put clear and straight. It will be very unfortunate, if we continue condoning situations, where a Member stands on this Floor, talks about a deputy army commander of this country and starts directing Government on who to deploy and not to deploy.

I just want to assure the Member that, that is beyond him because that is the duty of Government. We have a Commander-in-Chief, so we shall deploy our people where we feel they can suitably perform their duties. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What is the issue? I have already given my ruling. I said Gen. Elwelu is a member of the committee. I have powers to choose who should lead the committee; it is within my powers.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Madam Speaker, most obliged. However, when you allow us to respond to your communication, the Chief Whip cannot “gulag” us here.

What I am saying is on the Floor of Parliament. I am, therefore, saying that let us pray - and you have given a very good ruling, Madam Speaker. So, is it in order for the Government Chief Whip to come out to continue to “gulag” me in this House?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Government Chief Whip is under mandate to protect his Members. *(Applause)* I have given a ruling. Gen. Elwelu will lead that team.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** But, he is insinuating as if he is the one who decided to give the name to him. Please, be careful. *(Laughter)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can you sit down? Hon. Ssewungu, I thought you were observing the Lenten Season as the number one *Mukatuliki*. Yes, matters of national importance. Can I have Hon. Christine Sendawula? Is Hon. Christine here? If she is not here, let us have Hon. Ssebikaali?

**MR MOSES OKOT:** Madam Speaker, I know you have already made a ruling, however, pardon me for arriving late. I am a member of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs that has been delegated to handle effectively –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You have taken us back to what I have made a ruling on.

**MR MOSES OKOT:** Pardon?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You have taken us back to what I have made a ruling on. You know the rules of this House; you cannot go back to what I have already made a ruling on.

**MR MOSES OKOT:** I did not know you had made a ruling on it, but the procedural matter I am raising is pertinent to this issue.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Under what rule?

**MR MOSES OKOT:** Rule 78 of our Rules of Procedure.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What does it say?

**MR MOSES OKOT:** The procedural matter I am raising, Madam Speaker, is -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** So, what is your issue?

**MR MOSES OKOT:** Your wise ruling is to the effect that this House and the committee proceed to Karamoja to investigate the murder. Madam Speaker, the same committee I sit on did go to Masaka, but the report has not seen the light of day. Today, we are still being sent on a wild goose chase to Karamoja to come out and pacify the same actions of this committee for –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is a leadership of the committee here and she knows what is happening. Can I hear from the leadership?

**MR MOSES OKOT:** I had not yet raised the procedural matter I wanted to raise. Is it procedurally right to engender an investigation on a matter in Karamoja, yet there is a pending report on Masaka?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** So, must we stop work in other areas because there is a report pending, when people are dying? This is not correct.

2.20

**THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Ms Rosemary Nyakikongoro):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Issues of security are scattered everywhere and we deemed it important to undertake comprehensive investigations in the different corners of the country, like you assigned us. The committee will be going to Apaa, Karamoja and Sebei subregions. We thought we would come up with a comprehensive report, with regard to insecurity in the country.

My member is aware that we discussed this in our committee, so that instead of bringing bits and pieces, we bring a comprehensive report on the Floor of Parliament. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, to ask you to have a meeting before you go on the ground is for the good of the committee. You need to meet the Karamoja team; hear from them because there are accusations left, right and centre. Meet the Teso team and hear from them too, the Sebei people, as well as the Acholi, and then you agree on a way forward. When you start taking us back and forth -

Hon. Okot Moses, you will have a comprehensive report on security matters. I am also happy that the Commission has requested for a statement on security matters, which is going to be handled. Hon. Yoweri?

2.22

**MR YOWERI SSEBIKAALI (NRM, Ntwetwe County, Kyankwanzi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am raising a matter of national importance about land evictions of people from Ntwetwe Constituency, Kyankwanzi District.

The land I am talking about was acquired by the late Gen. Aronda Nyakairima. Whenever I say this name, I get hurt, but due to the present situation, I am unable to control myself and so I have to mention it. Madam Speaker, the widow of the late Gen. Aronda is evicting people from Gayaza Subcounty, Kiyuuni Parish. The parish has six villages namely; Kyerere North, Kyerere East, Kiyuuni Central, Kikandwa, Kyamulalama and Bulyanzige.

As I speak, over 2,000 people – from 200 households - have been evicted and rendered homeless in their own country. The people who have been evicted were born and raised from there.

Our prayers are:

1. The Ministry of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees provides immediate relief, in terms of food and shelter, to the victims.
2. The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development compensates the affected people; and
3. The Ministry of Security interests itself; stops the evictions; and restores peace in the constituency.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Government, there is somebody who has evicted about 2,000 people.

2.24

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Madam Speaker, it is a very touching situation, according to my colleague.

Therefore, I am going to look for the Minister for Lands, Housing and Urban Development; and the minister for security, so that we urgently meet with the MPs, go on the ground and report back to this House next week. Our major aim will be to ensure that indeed, justice is served.

On the issue of the Rt hon. Prime Minister and the Government coming in for the rescue and compensation, we shall need to make an assessment, and we are going to work closely with the Member and ensure that we arrest the situation.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We need to know the legal ownership of this land and justice must prevail. You cannot evict all those families and just leave them there. If you are saying these families have been there since 1990, what does the Land Act say? So, you need to handle that immediately and go to the locus with the area MPs.

2.25

**MR FRANCIS ADOME (NRM, Moroto Municipality, Moroto):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance regarding the deteriorating security situation in Karamoja. A lot has been said about security, but I would like to inform this House that whatever has been mentioned does not, in any way, reflect the actual situation in Karamoja.

At the moment, we are losing lives on a daily basis; almost between five and 10 people lose their lives daily. We are losing cattle and we are seeing less of Government intervention. It is true that the UPDF has tried here and there, but they keep complaining about lack of logistics.

When the logistics are available, they, again, complain that they do not have the numbers. So, as Karimojong, we think that Government does not have the will to pacify Karamoja subregion.

It is very unfortunate that this Government has always found it fashionable to deploy in the neighbourhood to protect the lives of those in the neighbouring countries and their property, but they leave the Karimojong to die on a daily basis.

My prayer is for Government to wake up and realise that their primary function is to protect its citizens and their property, but not to protect the neighbours. It is good to cooperate internationally, but after you have sorted out the issues at home.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, it is just unfortunate that Hon. Adome came in late, but I had made a ruling, in my communication, in regard to the insecurity that is being caused by cattle rustlers in Karamoja, Teso, Sebei, Lango and Acholi. There is a meeting tomorrow at 2.00 p.m. I am happy that Hon. Peter Ogwang is here; he has been running up and down there over the same. So, the meeting will be in the Conference Hall at 2.00 p.m. tomorrow.

Therefore, all those with issues of cattle rustling must attend that meeting so that we get a permanent solution to that issue.

**MR ADOME:** Madam Speaker, we are aware of that meeting, but I just wanted to inform this House that what we regard as cattle rustling is actually not what is happening on the ground because if you look at the activities, people’s homes and houses are burnt, people are being killed, and the cattle are being killed too. In some cases, even the kraals and cattle are burnt. That means it is -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is what you are going to discuss in tomorrow’s meeting.

**MR ADOME:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

2.29

**MR PAUL AKAMBA (NRM, Busiki County, Namutumba):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I stand on a point of national importance. The Government of Uganda acquired land, about five years ago, to implement the Standard Gauge Railway project.

Many people were affected by this programme, after their land was taken, but with no compensation done by Government. People’s projects such as schools, ponds and health institutions were taken over. Very few of these project-affected persons (PAPs) have been compensated. Our health centre II at Nsinze has also not been compensated.

Madam Speaker, under Article 26 of the Constitution, Government is supposed to compensate anybody whose land has been compulsorily acquired by Government for purposes of implementing a government project. They have to be compensated adequately and promptly –*(Interjection)-* I take the information from Hon. Pacuto –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Why don’t you give us your prayers?

**MR AKAMBA:** My prayer is for Government to come to this House and inform us about the list of the project-affected persons (PAPs) under this project, the plans it has for compensating these PAPs, and whether a fresh valuation is going to be carried out. This is because I do not think that valuations that were undertaken five years ago would reflect the same value for the property today. It is urgent that these people are compensated. I pray.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Government Chief Whip, the PAPs need to be compensated for their land that Government has compulsorily taken.

2.32

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Madam Speaker, my colleague, Hon. Akamba, in his prayers, said that the minister should come here and bring an updated statement. All I know is that around 50 per cent of the people had already been compensated, but we got budgetary constraints. Also, there is a method clearly provided, for compensating or paying interest for valuations which are already made by Government.

However, I am going to ensure that the Minister of Works and Transport comes here with an update to the House on compensation for this project. If you could give us two weeks. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am giving you up to Wednesday to give the House a response on the compensation.

**MR TAYEBWA:** Much obliged.

2.33

**MR JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I am raising this matter under rule 49 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament. The environmental police has been in Lira and the greater Lango. They have also extended to Teso and Acholi, in enforcing the law on wetlands.

The unfortunate bit is that they are burning the rice fields and slashing down tomatoes and the food crops that have been planted. I know that two wrongs do not make a right. However, we are coming from a dry spell and this enforcement has been selectively done, targeting people who are growing food crops in the swamps in the northern part of the country.

The whole of last week, I took trouble to drive on other major routes - the ones going through Masaka and Fort Portal. I noticed people growing all sorts of things and conducting various activities in the swamps. Our people are now putting us on pressure to ferry them from Northern Uganda to areas where people are allowed to degrade the wetlands without any sanctions.

Madam Speaker, the reason I am raising this is because, first of all, these people must be cautioned and allowed to remove the food crops that they have grown. Since we are coming from a dry spell, people do not have food. Let them be given a grace period of three to six months to remove their rice and tomatoes, and they should not come back.

Secondly, let the ministry bring a comprehensive list here. We know wetlands where foreigners are allowed to do whatever they want; where big people are allowed to degrade. This will make all Ugandans to actually go there. Otherwise, this selective enforcement that usually begins from the North must actually stop. *(Interjections)* I will take information from the two colleagues, with your permission, Madam Speaker.

**MR KINOBERE:** Thank you, honourable colleague, for allowing me to give information. Madam Speaker, I want to add my voice to what my colleague said. The information I want to give him –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** From which region are you?

**MR KINOBERE:** I am from Eastern – Kibuku District. Madam Speaker, what is happening in the north is the same thing happening in the east. It is my prayer as well, as I give information to my colleague, that let there be a process of transition. People have been surviving on crops grown in the wetlands. Yes, we must conserve it; but the way we are getting people out of there is where we are failing.

People in Kibuku and Bukedi subregions at large – Bukedi subregion, for example, is entirely a wetland. Everywhere, even where my house is built, is a wetland. Therefore, if they do not give us time to draw clear demarcations of where wetlands start and end, we shall end up in the IDP camps.

The information I want to give to my colleague is that as Government tries to get people out of the wetlands, they should do it slowly. They need to find alternative enterprise opportunities for the people, to help them survive other than rice growing - like for some of us who are rice growers.

Also, there should have been a way - for a place like Kibuku, they would just empower us to grow rice. Give us schemes so that people produce rice for the country.

**MR ODUR:** Thank you for the information. Madam Speaker, allow me - my chairperson of the committee is here - I do not want to deny her *–(Interruption)*

**MS NYAKIKONGORO:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The issue of wetlands is known everywhere and so, allow me make some clarification; that the eviction of people is not being done selectively. I have heard complaints from my area where they have cleared coffee plantations in Bugongi subcounty, for example. They have cleared the coffee and every other plant. When you say that it is being selectively done, we are also part and parcel of the whole system.

Anyhow, the issue is about giving them prior notice -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Maybe, I could first find out about the NEMA Act; is it drafted selectively?

**MR ODUR:** Thank you. Madam Speaker, we are not far from Lwera here. You see, on Masaka Road, rice is being grown up to the roadside, but it has never been slashed. It has never been burnt. I take your information in good faith, but there is a class of people that appears to be protected. They are free to degrade the wetlands as if we do not have a law in force.

My prayer is -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I think what we need to do is have a transitional process of getting those people who have grown crops in those areas. Also, the people must respect the law. Once these people harvest their crops, they should be advised not to plant for another season. Remember, we are trying to preserve the environment and it is upon us all to do that.

There is a procedural matter. Does the Honourable member from Kigulu also want to say something? Is it the same thing? Anyway, you are all from Busoga.

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, when you talk about wetlands, we who come from Busoga get affected because we might end up staying hungry when we are told not to use well-managed wetlands. There has been a process to evict people from the wetlands.

However, the procedural matter I am raising is: Wouldn’t it be procedurally right for Government to use the existing laws and then agree with the communities? When you go to Busoga, in the districts of Bugweri and Iganga, you will notice that people have been evicted from the biggest swamp – Igogero. Wouldn’t it be procedurally right for Government to first meet with these people, give them information and a livelihood survival mechanism, before they are told, “You’re moving out of this wetland?”

Also, tell them how they can use our wetlands constructively. Wetlands have not started today. They have been with us since time immemorial. Therefore, wouldn’t it be right for Government to guide the population, especially the people living within areas with wetlands –*(Interjection)*- let me finish the procedural matter; you can give information to the House.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** All of you standing are from Busoga. I thought you are talking for and on behalf of Busoga.

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, Basoga MPs are voted in their own right.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have got the procedural matter. However, I direct that the responsible minister comes and explains why there are discriminative actions taking place, if at all that is happening. We need to find out that it is happening. The minister should come and explain if there are discriminative actions taking place.

That said and done, the issue of wetlands is a serious one. You will find that even my own home in my village is a wetland, yet, that is where all my parents have been buried. Anyhow, let the minister come and explain.

2.42

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Thank you, Madam Speaker.  I am happy that even Hon. Jonathan Odur said that it is very important to protect our wetlands. That is why he was saying, “Give them a transition period.” I am happy to see that all of us are in this fight together.

In Mitooma District, they destroyed my crops, which had been in wetlands. Every district has an environmental officer. Each one of them was directed to ensure wetlands are protected and Government is determined on this matter. However, it is very important to also note that Government is working out a method of alternative livelihoods, for example, in Kibuku, Bukedi and Pallisa; fish farming is what the President has proposed.

Therefore, I request colleagues to make their input so that we look at the different livelihood alternatives for our areas together. However, like you have guided, I am going to talk to the Minister for Environment to come here in two weeks and give a comprehensive national report relating to the protection of wetlands. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The people’s food is being slashed and burnt. What we are saying is, can this stop until people harvest their food? This must be stopped until people harvest their food because there will be hunger if we do not stop this. Then, we will ask these people not to grow their food again.

Government Chief Whip, slashing and cutting of people’s food must stop because you are not going to provide food for everybody. Let them harvest their food. You cannot start talking about alternative processes; that you are giving Kibuku fish farming. Who has told you they are fish farmers? Those ones grow rice. If you are giving an irrigation scheme, for instance - I must thank you, you gave me an irrigation scheme in Bukedea. But you have given it to one village, yet this is a whole district. What are you going to do for the rest of the area? Therefore, we must think aloud.

2.45

**MR ABDULHU BYAKATONDA (Independent, Workers Representative):** Thank you, Madam Speaker -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Paul, you had a point and I gave you time to talk. Let other people also raise their issues.

**MR BYAKATONDA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am rising on a very important issue of national importance regarding workers in Uganda. We have laws that handle disputes in Uganda; laws that do performance appraisal in Uganda, and disciplinary procedures.

The country was shocked on Tuesday when a team arrested a one Bangirana Baterana, the Executive Director of Mulago, arbitrarily when he was in the intensive care unit in the line of duty.

When we talk of quality services and service delivery, we must ensure that the rest of the workforce is protected. This is one of the few highly trained consultants in the country with a trajectory record performance. He came up with the women’s hospital in Mulago. He was also the first person who initiated the first oxygen plant in Uganda; previously, we would get oxygen from Kenya. He has so far built 110 apartments for the workforce.

Recently, in the COVID-19 fight, Mulago was known to have actually subsidised the charges of COVID-19 victims –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What are your prayers?

**MR BYAKATONDA:** My prayers, Madam Speaker, are:

1. This arrest be condemned; and
2. We need an independent investigation into this matter so that at least we unleash the underlying causes of this.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is the person in court already?

**MR BYAKATONDA:** No, he has been under custody for three days. I have been there trying to tell them I am a credible surety, but after a very -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** He has been released on bond - maybe we need to hear from the minister.

**MR BYAKATONDA:** Madam Speaker, we need an independent investigation because any investigation must have the Auditor-General’s report. Let us see justice done, and the rights of workers must be observed.

This is because in this instance, they should actually ask somebody to appear with his lawyer. If he is unionised, then let him appear with the members of the union. This business is really scaring people. That is why we continue to have braindrain where people prefer to go and work outside the country, and yet this is a person who is destined to bring this institution to a national status.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, we are now discussing a case that is before the courts of law.

**MR BYAKATONDA:** No, it is not in the courts of law, for your own information, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay, “before the law” – you remove “the court” –

**MR BYAKATONDA:** No, it is under the monitoring unit, but I think the manner -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, it is before the law. He was arrested and released on police bond. Why don’t we leave the investigations to go on?

**MR BYAKATONDA:** He was in police custody –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let us leave the investigations to go on. If he has a problem, the law will take its course. Why should we – there is independence of this institution.

**MR BYAKATONDA:** Madam Speaker, he has grievances with the investigators. He may not get justice in this matter.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** How did you know that he has issues –

**MR BYAKATONDA:** I am aware of this, Madam Speaker. I have recordings.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You are debating in speculation.

**MR SILWANY:** Madam Speaker, I am constrained to call my honourable colleague to order. However, Madam Speaker, when you are speaking in this House, our rules are very clear; that the Speaker will be heard in silence. Also, when you have made a ruling on an issue - Madam Speaker, is the honourable member in order to continue arguing and debating? Moreover, he is not listening to you in silence.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Ssewungu, when you moved away from being a teacher to a lawyer, I thought you had changed. Now, I am surprised you can still argue like that. Let us hear from the acting Leader of the Opposition.

2.50

**MR JOEL SSENYONYI (NUP, Nakawa Division West, Kampala):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition is running late. He will be joining us, but he asked me, in the meantime, to warm his seat.

Madam Speaker, the side on which I seat has for a long time raised issues of human rights violations and arbitrary arrests. People are taken in drones without due regard to the law –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We have a paper to that respect from the Leader of the Opposition.

**MR SSENYONYI:** Yes, Madam. I would just like to make a connection –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, I have already made a ruling on what was mentioned. We have a paper from the Leader of the Opposition on that issue. Thank you.

**MR SSENYONYI:** Madam Speaker, if you would allow me in a minute to finish the procedural matter, with your permission. I would like to emphasise, first of all, that it is important that the law is followed, regardless of who it is.

We have talked about our two Members. Madam, you made a ruling and said, “Let the law take its course.” Of course, on our end, we have said, regarding Hon. Ssegirinya and Hon. Ssewanyana, that we have investigations expedited. Yes, they are before courts of law, but can we quicken the process? Our colleague is raising a similar matter about somebody that he knows and we want to fight for his rights too, so our call is for equity.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Joel, the paper was delivered to this House on those issues, and was referred to the Committee on Human Rights. Unfortunately, or fortunately enough, you decided not to be in the House. That issue is being handled by the Committee on Human Rights.

On the matters of the Ssegirinyas, I have even asked that same committee to go there and interact with them. I have personally called the Attorney-General, and the DPP to ask them what was happening. The matter is being handled. It is unfortunate you were not in the House.

2.52

**MR MAPENDUZI OJARA (Independent, Bardege-Layibi Division, Gulu):** Madam Speaker, I rise on a matter of national importance with regard to the security situation in Gulu city. For the past few weeks, there have been increasing cases of unknown gunmen waylaying and robbing people in Gulu City and the neighbouring districts.

There have also been increasingly reported cases of attacks by thugs, especially in the night. The most affected category of people by these armed robbers are the *boda boda* cyclists, who have lost several motorbikes and a few reported cases of loss of lives, especially in the areas neighbouring Gulu City.

Madam Speaker, these criminal acts, including the attacks by thugs, commonly referred to as “*augur”* have sent fear and panic, and have greatly affected economic activities and the safety of the citizens of Gulu City at night.

I thank the RCC and the police in Gulu for the efforts being made to salvage the situation. However, it is sad to note that the efforts of the police are greatly affected because of serious challenges, including their inability to respond timely when called upon.

As I speak, four District Police Commanders - and those are for Gulu City, Gulu District, Bardege-Layibi, City Division and Pece-Laroo City Division - all share one old vehicle; a vehicle that has been in use for over 10 years can be in a terrible state.

Madam Speaker, this is not right and it renders the police ineffective even when they have the goodwill to ensure the safety and security of the citizens.

It is, therefore, my prayer that the Ministry of Internal Affairs urgently responds to the Gulu City situation and provides additional vehicles to these police commanders and the police force, so that they can effectively work with the local leaders to deal with this very disturbing situation. Thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Ojara. Government?

2.55

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Madam Speaker, Hon. Ojara raises an important issue, but also one where we have to be very cautious.

Hon. Ojara and colleagues, do not let district or any other Government officials directly lobby for services through MPs instead of going to their superiors. I am sure whenever you reach most of them they say, “I do not have a car.” However, they should handle these issues with their ministers because they know the due process.

That aside, I am going to ensure the Minister of Internal Affairs is informed so that he can come here and explain, but also go to Gulu and handle the situation. However, I want to reiterate that police commanders should not have excuses for not doing their work. They should deliver. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We must take the issue of security very seriously.

Government Chief Whip, ask your ministers for Security and for Internal Affairs, to make a follow-up on that. We should not just sweep it under the carpet; these issues should be handled so that we find the culprits. Hon. Ssewungu?

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Madam Speaker, I am raising a procedural matter. Members of Parliament are representatives of the people and their constituencies, and to the largest extent, the districts.

When Members discover anomalies in their districts, by the time they come to the Floor of Parliament, the best routes and options have failed to take course. So, if a Member comes on the Floor of Parliament - I have done it before - and states that his district or constituency lacks police vehicles and what have you, he is giving the position of what is happening, after failure of other options.

So, is it procedurally correct for the Government Chief Whip, who is also a Member of Parliament of a particular constituency in Ankole, to say that Members should not come here to ask or beg for things that have failed to be delivered to different entities?

These police officers have sworn the oath of allegiance to their bosses. Once he asks for these things and they fail, they write letters and do not get answers, the last option is a Member of Parliament because he sits in the biggest institute of Government, which is the national assembly.

Therefore, is it procedurally okay for the honourable member, who is also a Government Chief Whip, and who is only supposed to whip Members here, to say that Members are making mistakes and that they should leave those to go to their particular ministries and yet even the bench is not full today?

You have been complaining about the same problem of ministers not appearing here; leave alone those who have come today, but will disappear for another long period.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I like the way you spend other people’s time. Next item.

PETITION BY UGANDA WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS ASSOCIATION (UWOPA) ON THE ESCALATING CASES OF MATERNAL MORTALITY

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, matters of maternal mortality have been discussed in this House extensively. I am happy we have the Minister for Health, who is a mother and a doctor - a very long-serving doctor.

As of today, the maternal mortality rate in Uganda is reported at 336 maternal deaths for 100,000 lives. This ratio seems not to be very good, but it has improved from where it used to be. We will get a petition from Hon. Sarah Opendi and discuss it for about 10 minutes after getting a response from the minister.

Actually, instead of discussing the petition, we will refer it to the Committee on Health.

3.01

**MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. As you have rightly said, maternal mortality in this country is still high, although progress has been made. Previously it was at 438 per 100,000 live births and now it stands at 336 per 100,000 live births. If you look at the reports in Africa, we are doing badly; I am talking in comparison to the other countries.

This petition has been uploaded and, therefore, I am not going to read it verbatim. I will only pick on a few issues.

We are all aware that during the COVID-19 lockdown, we lost a number of mothers and we continue to lose more due to various reasons, and yet these deaths could be avoided.

We have seen incidences where health workers have been asking mothers to pay money before a caesarian section; asking mothers to buy supplies. We had an incident in Mityana where a mother was rescued by the Rt Hon. Prime Minister who was on her other duties because the health worker had asked for some money.

Madam Speaker, even though 74 per cent of child births in Uganda are attended to by skilled health personnel, it is still important to note that 44 per cent of the women do not receive postnatal care within the two weeks after childbirth, yet we know that many women die at that time before, during and sometimes after childbirth.

The current high teenage pregnancy rate, Madam Speaker, is another challenge that will likely contribute to high maternal mortality, if Government does not intervene to ensure that there is facility readiness to deliver these mothers with dignity and necessary supplies, including the availability of health workers.

Yesterday, the discussion was on comprehensive nurses that have been phased out. Instead of recruiting midwives, some of the districts were recruiting these comprehensive nurses and yet, they are not adequately skilled. Maternal and child health is a key indicator for measuring the development of any nation, including Uganda.

The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda sets out the State’s duty to ensure that all Ugandans enjoy access to health services and take all practical measures to ensure the provision of basic medical services to the population. However, there is no specific provision on the right to health.

Uganda is a signatory to international conventions and it has committed to respect and ensure that the rights set forth in these various conventions for each pregnant woman or girl within their jurisdiction, are respected without discrimination of any kind, neglect or abuse. Therefore, we note that there is an omission to adequately provide for basic maternal health care services in public health facilities and this violates the right to life, and is inconsistent and in contravention of Article 22 of our Constitution.

In line with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) III, UWOPA is advocating for a reduction in maternal mortality in the country. This is possible because we have countries that have been registering zero maternal deaths. If you look at the African map, Tunisia, Egypt and Algeria are some of them. So, every life matters, Madam Speaker. Since Government has spent a lot of resources – and continues to do so – to prevent death from COVID-19, which is commendable, we now appeal to Government that since COVID-19 infection is below one per cent, can we see the same energy and resources applied to end maternal mortality in this country? *(Applause)*

Our prayer

In order to meet the constitutional obligation of the State to uphold the right of women and fulfil their reproductive rights, Government should prioritise and provide sufficient resources in the National Budget for the Financial Year 2022/2023, to address issues of maternal mortality.

Government of the Republic of Uganda, through the Minister for Health – my colleague - should ensure that all staff who provide maternal health care services in Uganda are fully trained, and all health centres are fully equipped.

In order to maintain a consistent and deliberate effort to improve the status of maternal health care in Uganda, Government, through the Minister of Health, should compile and submit to Parliament an annual audit report on the status of maternal health in Uganda at the end of each financial year. Madam Speaker, this decision was also made in the previous Parliament.

The Government should improve access to quality care. It is very unfortunate that it is now becoming rampant for colleagues to fundraise to construct maternity wards in Government facilities. This should not happen. *(Applause)* We must see Government allocating money for the construction of these health centres III, not Members of Parliament, who are leading the drive to construct maternity wards at these health facilities. *(Applause)* This programme had started and, therefore, we need to allocate more resources so that the programme of elevating health centres II to health centres III in the different subcounties can continue.

The ministry should set up dedicated – and I mean dedicated – hotlines. I know the ministry has a hotline and we appreciate it, honourable minister. However, we need a dedicated hotline where women in labour can report all cases of corruption and negligence at health facilities. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, when mothers are in labour, they do not have money with them, yet, they are asked for money. Sometimes, the attendant is some young girl, who is unable to find money. Where do they report? If this hotline is in place, it will go a long way in helping so that immediate action is taken to save the life of a mother.

Madam Speaker, if we provide the necessary resources and everybody does his or her bit, we can end this maternal mortality. All lives matter. We are going to celebrate International Women’s Day. Some women are not with us because they lost their lives. Let us ensure that as we move from this year’s Women’s Day celebration to the next, we see a complete reduction in maternal mortality. I beg to submit on behalf of UWOPA, which also has male members. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable members, when you look at the number that is being talked about and the expectant mothers who go to the hospitals - the hospitals still ask for gloves, plasters, cotton wool and a delivery kit. This is a shame. Some of us are afraid of producing because of that. *(Laughter)*

We should not make childbearing a burden to the population. You cannot have a State, if you do not have citizens who reproduce. The Bible says, go out there and reproduce. Why are you denying us the chance to do that? Most hospitals do not have enough medical personnel. This is why women give birth at home. The hospitals are not equipped. Women who are pregnant even end up giving birth on the way.

Members of Parliament have become purchasers of ambulances and builders of wards. Recently, I was in Hon. Nakato’s constituency building a ward. *(Laughter)* I was also in Hon. Muwuma’s constituency. Look at this kind of thing, honourable minister. I am happy the minister is a woman who knows the pain of a woman while giving birth.

The petition, under rule 30(6) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, is referred to the minister, who is a mother – to come and give a statement to this House in two weeks’ time on how we should mitigate the maternal mortality rate and what planned budgetary interventions she requires from this House. Honourable members, we should stop buying ambulances, paying for women to give birth and building maternity wards. Let Government do its part.

Honourable minister, we need that statement in two weeks’ time. We are not doing very well. Of course, the men need to do their work.

PETITION BY AGRO-INPUT DEALERS ACCREDITED BY THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES UNDER THE AGRICULTURE CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

3.14

**MR MAXWELL AKORA (UPC, Maruzi County, Apac):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise under rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure, to present the humble petition of the agro-input dealers accredited by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, under the Agriculture Cluster Development Project (ACDP), to supply various agricultural products.

I present as follows:

*Your humble petitioners are dealers in agro-inputs, who were accredited by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries through a memorandum of understanding to supply various agricultural inputs under the Agriculture Cluster Development Project;*

*The project is a six-year project implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries with support from the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank with the objective of raising on-farm productivity, production and marketable volumes of selected agricultural commodities in specified agricultural clusters;*

*The project targeted commodities were maize, rice, beans, cassava and coffee and this was to be implemented in a phased manner and first piloted in five districts, each with one commodity; Iganga (maize), Ntungamo (beans), Kalungu (coffee), Amuru (rice) and Nebbi (cassava);*

*After a successful pilot phase, the project was rolled out to 13 districts, with five clusters: Cluster 1 (Mpigi, Masaka, Rakai/Kyotera); Cluster 2 (Namutumba, Bugiri and Bugweri); Cluster 3 (Gulu, Omoro and Nwoya); Cluster 4 (Kabale, Bushenyi, Isingiro and Rubanda); and Cluster 5 (Arua, Maracha and Yumbe);*

*In order to facilitate the implementation of the project, the accredited agro-input dealers were to supply certified agro-input products through the e-voucher scheme managed by an e-voucher management agency;*

*The e-voucher scheme was meant to enable farmers access agro-inputs, that is, seeds, fertilisers, pest control chemicals and post-harvest handling materials where a farmer would contribute a portion of the cost of the agro-input, while the Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, would provide a subsidy through the World Bank grant;*

*The ministry would enrol farmers on the e-voucher system through structures where farmers, in selected districts of clusters, would be uploaded on the e-voucher system;*

*The e-voucher system process would enable farmers to deposit money in their respective e-wallets managed by the e-voucher management agency and then would, in turn, make orders on the system for inputs needed to their preferred agro-input dealers in their respective subcounties;*

*Thereafter, transactions between the agro-input dealer and the beneficiary farmer would be concluded or settled on the e-voucher system, including the transfer of Government subsidy to the agro-input dealers’ e-wallet and, ultimately, a beneficiary farmer would obtain the ordered inputs;*

*However, currently, the project is facing a number of challenges resulting from the shutdown of the e-voucher system since December, 2021. As a result, the agro-input dealers are stuck with stock worth Shs 16.9 billion imported specifically for the project;*

*In addition, during the implementation of the e-voucher system, there have been glitches as the system would often go off and the projects’ management would direct the agro-input dealers to supply the inputs manually to the beneficiary farmers, but todate, the agro-input dealers have not been paid;*

*Further, the agro-input dealers, who supplied through the e-voucher system since March 2021, have only received part-payment and are demanding about Shs 21 billion. These number about 110 agro-input dealers;*

*As a result, the agro-input dealers have adversely been affected given that the funds to support the project were predominantly acquired through bank loans on the understanding that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries would be making instant payments for every transaction;*

*Now, therefore, by this petition, the petitioners pray that:*

*Parliament intervenes in the matter and urges the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to meet its obligations to pay the agro-input dealers the outstanding monies for the supplied agro-inputs to the beneficiary farmers.*

*And your humble petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.*

*And hereto, your humble petitioners appended their signatures.*

Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the humble petition of the agro-input dealers.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, please lay the petition.

**MR AKORA:** Let me just add that yesterday, my colleague, Hon. Jonathan Odur, presented this as a matter of national importance -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is the same thing. Hon. Odur, do you have something to say on the same?

**MR AKORA:** I would just like to conclude.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay.

**MR AKORA:** The agro-input dealers have been engaging with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, especially the permanent secretary, but they have got no clear response on why they have not been paid.

They acted in good faith, based on the MoUs they signed with the ministry and committed personal resources to import these inputs that they cannot sell anywhere else because they were subsidised, but also, that their monies are stuck and most of them are facing challenges with their financing.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**MR ODUR:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank Hon. Maxwell Akora. The petition partially raises the issue I raised yesterday, but I am particularly concerned about the issues and the problems that we are seeing with Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

Therefore, the procedural issue I am raising is that we see that the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is one ministry with lots of money and most of this money is coming from the World Bank and lying there idle. This is a ministry that should ordinarily be promoting the people involved in the agricultural value chain very strongly by acting swiftly.

Wouldn’t it be procedurally right that this House now takes a stronger stand to investigate the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries because the explanations that were given here, that a permanent secretary is now more powerful than a minister, cannot be acceptable. The minister is the political head of the ministry.

So, wouldn’t it be procedurally right that the minister comes here and accounts to us and a strong committee of this House looks into how much is lying idle in the ministry?

Most of these monies are loans approved by this House. How are the loans performing? This is becoming too much, yet farmers are suffering, the agricultural sector is declining and one of the challenges we have now is that the ministry is not taking the correct steps.

Madam Speaker, I beg that you guide strongly on this matter.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries has pending obligations to meet. A petition is not for debate; people are standing up to debate. Under rule 30(6), I am ordering the minister to come to this House and give us the status on the action taken on the petition, within two weeks. Remember, this is a ministry where there is under absorption of funds yet many people are crying; the cassava cuttings in Busoga, the *ebikadho*. All those people are complaining; yesterday, there was such a complaint.

So, we need a response on this petition from the Minister of Agriculture in two weeks’ time. *[A Member rose\_]* Yes, on the same? *(Laughter)* It is a petition. Bring your own petition; stop smuggling yourself into people’s petitions. *(Laughter)* Next item?

LAYING OF PAPERS

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, we had asked the Minister of Local Government, our own Hon. Rapheal Magyezi, to provide this House with the Parish Development Model guidelines and the Parish Development Model policy. These are very key instruments, in as far as the implementation of the Parish Development Model is concerned - I wish my own little brother could first sit.

These are very key instruments, in as far as the implementation of the Parish Development Model, which has been commissioned is concerned. I wish to remind the House that various Government projects that have been aimed at reducing poverty have met a stillbirth because of failure to provide the policies and guidelines. Talk about *Entandikwa;* talk about PEAP; talk about all the others.

This time round, as we said the other day, we need inclusion, as Members of Parliament; full inclusion! Honourable minister, in whatever you do, we must be included and involved. We are the representatives of the people. We represent the 40 million people outside there. I want to urge you, Members, to look at these documents as we prepare to have an elaborate debate or discussion on these documents.

He has also requested us to have a half-day seminar or session for all Members of Parliament. We will put a tent in the parking and we will exhaust the Parish Development Model from there. We will give our ideas. We need full involvement and I suggest we do that seminar next Friday so we can debate this matter comprehensively.

3.27

**THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Mr Raphael Magyezi):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker –*(Interruption)*

**MR PAUL NSUBUGA:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a procedural matter. Being my first year in the House, I rise under rule 82 of the Rules of Procedure.

Madam Speaker, I am getting confused. I do not see the reason we debate with masks on. The Ministry of Health told us that –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** First tell the Members your name because it is your first time.

**MR PAUL NSUBUGA:** I am Paul Nsubuga, MP Busiro North constituency.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Nsubuga is one of the youngest MPs in the House.

**MR PAUL NSUBUGA:** I am rising under that rule because the honourable member who is putting on a “People Power” neck-tie had unmasked, but that is not the concern. The concern is, being that –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Which honourable member?

**MR PAUL NSUBUGA:** He has again masked up; maybe he suffers from some diseases. *(Laughter)* He is there with a “People Power” necktie –*(Interjections)*- of course, don’t you see the “People Power” necktie?

Anyhow, Madam Speaker, the procedural matter I am raising is, now that COVID-19 is done – *(Interjections)* - please, please, please! Let me raise my procedural matter.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, let us hear what the honourable member is saying.

**MR PAUL NSUBUGA:** Madam Speaker, now that COVID-19 is done, as the minister told us, why don’t we unmask because our people are complaining that they do not recognise us whenever we get onto the microphone like this? *(Laughter)* So, my humble prayer is that we unmask so that our people can recognise us. I beg to move, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, order! You know that, that is Hon. Nsubuga’s maiden speech and I really appreciate what he is saying about the need for his voters to always see him while he gets on the Floor to debate.

However, it is just because of this epidemic that we cannot unmask. So, go and tell the people in that good constituency that COVID-19 is still alive; it is still existent and so, it is still important to observe the COVID-19 SOPs. We do not want to lose our voters. Tell them to watch when you are going to speak and they will see you. And we will call out your name, “Nsubuga, speak” so that they know that it is Nsubuga speaking.

**MR PAUL NSUBUGA:** Still, I was speaking on behalf of the other honourable member; maybe, he has some diseases, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, there is no honourable member who was not putting on a mask.

**MR PAUL NSUBUGA:** Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, say a word; I am not a medic, but you could also say something about COVID-19. Is it true that COVID-19 is done?

3.30

**THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (Dr Jane Aceng):** Madam Speaker, allow me to appreciate Hon. Nsubuga. I know he is tired of masks and generally, people are tired of masks. However, like you have correctly said, COVID-19 is still with us. It is only until the World Health Organisation declares this pandemic over that we can comfortably say COVID-19 is gone. We have not declared that, Hon. Nsubuga.

Secondly, the World Health Organisation was very clear. If a country can attain 70 per cent vaccination coverage with at least two doses of the vaccines, then you can attempt to remove the masks. We are still at 35 per cent, two doses; 65 per cent, one dose. So, my appeal to you is to intensify sensitisation to the communities, so that more people can get vaccinated.

At this point in time, we are still losing people and every day, we lose at least one person, which is not acceptable. And amongst us here - because we come to this House when we are not tested; we need to be very careful.

So, while I appreciate that everyone is tired, let us work hard to enhance our coverage so that we can move towards removing the masks. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, there is something we saw on social media, about your plans to bring a law, in regard to vaccination. Is there any law that you are bringing to the House on mandatory vaccination?

**DR ACENG:** Madam Speaker, the Public Health Act (Amendment) Bill is before the Committee on Health. So, they will make a report to this House.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We will be very glad to have it. Hon. Magyezi, sorry you were disrupted.

**MR MAGYEZI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you very much for giving us a day, next Friday, to interact at length with all Members of Parliament on the Parish Development Model. We will invite all the ministries and agencies concerned so that we all come out with up-to-date information, and answer all the questions on the Parish Development Model.

For now, allow me to lay on Table the implementation guidelines for the Parish Development Model. I beg to lay.

Regarding the policy of the model, I beg your indulgence and that of the House to give me up to Thursday, next week, to bring the policy document for the model and also, to make sure that we have copies for the Members.

For the guidelines, I want to confirm that we have already delivered 600 copies to the Office of the Clerk for distribution to Members. I thank you and I beg for your support for the model. I invite you to come on Friday; please, be there so that we share this information.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is a different view from Government.

3.34

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Madam Speaker, like I consulted with you, I was of the view that the minister brings, first, all the necessary documents so that Members are able to read them. They then prepare for the debate with him other than bringing the documents now, then the next day we have to discuss them.

Therefore, I need your guidance. I propose that he brings all the necessary documents first and then we can also do it on a normal session day so that it is a full session, with your guidance and clearance.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have reserved Thursday to receive the ministerial policy statements. I want all the ministerial policy statements by Thursday 10th.

**MR TAYEBWA:** Madam Speaker, we have already written to the ministers to ensure that they comply and they are working around the clock.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I do not want the parish model to disorganise my day.

**MR TAYEBWA:** Our thought was that maybe laying 17 ministerial policy statements would not take more than an hour because it is just laying.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Who tells you that?

**MR TAYEBWA:** I do not know. That is why I was thinking.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You see, people need full information on the Parish Development Model; read and go through these documents and then debate. When training them on this, they should be able to ask questions and understand. These are going to be the ambassadors in the constituencies. These people are going to talk to their locals.

Hon. Ogwang, please, do not go away. I see you going, but we need you in that session so that you monitor Government funds.

3.37

**MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu County West, Kalungu):** Actually, I am supporting the Government Chief Whip that after everything is presented, we need a full debate in the House because it must go in the *Hansard*. And if we go out -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The House will be outside.

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Most obliged, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We need everybody involved. We do not want 100 People. Remember the COVID-19 regulations that we gave in the House where we sit only 100. Therefore, even if you were to vote, only 100 people would vote. But now, we are saying we need it outside. We need people educated on what is happening. Which date do you suggest?

**MR SSEWUNGU:** Madam Speaker, that is under your discretion. We cannot suggest a day when you are not there *–(Interjections)–* may be -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** It is a Friday.

**MR ODUR:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. This House had made some pronouncements. There was a session we dedicated to this process and we made some recommendations. So, I am seeking your guidance whether it would not be procedurally correct to refer these two or three days to the relevant committee, to look at it and see if the input of the House that was debated here was captured in this policy, so that we debate it *vis-à-vis* the report of the committee.

I think the committee -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** So, should we debate it when the report is out?

**MR ODUR:** Yes, within two or three days, I think the Committee on Public Service or the one on Local Government can look at it.

**MR MAGYEZI:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We have actually interacted with the committee and even now, we continue to share the documents, interact with them and they are meeting various agencies. However, I thought that the Friday you had proposed was for equipping the Members of Parliament with information. And even as we go to debate, you will already have information from the various pillars. Therefore, the proposal is that on Thursday, next week, we shall be able to avail every Member of Parliament with copies of the policy statement, manuals and whatever document we have provided for the parish model.

According to the Chief Whip, the day is not adequate. My request is for you to give us the following week; either Tuesday or Wednesday, but dedicate at least half a day for that process. I really think that the Members of Parliament need that.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** After getting information from you on what role we have as Members of Parliament, we will again break off and go and monitor the parish model. We will send the Members to go as long as you give us the work plan or your schedule, where it is going to be and at what time. Members will go on the ground and see how the implementation is being done.

However, you cannot go on the ground before you know how it is being done and that is what we need the Members to get from the honourable minister.

3.40

**MS SHAMIM MALENDE (NUP, Woman Representative, Kampala):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. In the same vein, the people of Kampala feel marginalised on the fact that the legislature sits right in the capital, but the issues that are perturbing them are never discussed in this House.

I know that there is a procedure under our rules on how to catch the eye of the Speaker, but I pray -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What is the procedure?

**MS MALENDE:** Madam Speaker, there is a procedure, for example, under Rule 49 of the Rules of Procedure, where you can ask any questions to the relevant minister to answer in respect to their area of jurisdiction. But also, there is a procedure where you can raise questions to the minister in writing by first notifying the Speaker.

Therefore, my prayer and concern is that if possible -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is what you are saying related to the parish model as of now?

**MS MALENDE:** What I am saying, Madam Speaker-

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:**  If you had anything that is in regard to the people of Kampala, by the way, we are all residents of Kampala, and anything that happens to the people of Kampala is also our issue.

So, when you have anything that concerns the people of Kampala, we have a time for matters of national importance. Now, it is just a simple thing to walk to the Clerk and raise your matter of national importance. When we read the names here, these are the people who have raised matters of national importance. That is why we give them priority to raise their issues. Therefore, if you do not mind, on Wednesday, bring your matter of national importance and it will be tabled here and the responsible minister will handle it.

**MS MALENDE:** Much obliged. We shall address the issues of the taxi drivers, operators, workers and street vendors then.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Actually, the issue of the taxi drivers and operators was supposed to be a petition. You could bring a petition from them instead of a matter of national importance.

**Ms malende:** Much obliged.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Hon. Muwuma had something on the Parish Development Model.

**Mr denis oguzu:** Madam Speaker, I have a concern on the parish model. We have been told there is a guideline –

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Lee, have you become Hon. Muwuma today? Let him first talk then you will speak.

3.43

**Mr Milton muwuma (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. In 2014, this Parliament, through the Committee on Agriculture, came up with a programme of supporting Members of Parliament with the farm implements, specifically seeds, in our constituencies. This programme has been running very well.

Yesterday, as Members began picking the maize seeds, we were told this is the last batch we are to get. The whole programme has been taken up under the Parish Development Model. I think developing people without food security will be missing a point.

Therefore, I would like us to also get clarification from the minister responsible, on how food security can get absorbed into the Parish Development Model. This was a standalone programme under NAADS through the Ministry of Agriculture.

Before we begin struggling with people in the constituencies that they are demanding for maize seeds and the like, could we at least get enlightened on the same?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Keep that question for that day – Friday.

**Mr oguzu:** Madam Speaker, we have just been told by the minister that guidelines and a policy statement already exist to govern operations of the Parish Development Model. A meeting with the MPs is being proposed next week. I am just wondering at what point the views of Members will become part of a document, which is already being circulated?

Secondly, there are critical components, which should have been part of the Parish Development Model and have been omitted. I want to understand, through the minister, at what point can we be able to make that input?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Oguzu Lee, have you looked at the documents already? We are debating in speculation. Let us receive the document, see what is not there and raise our issues. Honourable members, the document is not in our record yet.

**Mr magyezi:** Madam Speaker, this matter is of national importance. My request is that we do not delay it longer; let us meet on Friday. There are these and other questions. Consultations with Members of Parliament and the public is a continuous process.

If we are now saying that we share the information, know what the pillar is supposed to do, get the manuals, then we can engage - I think, Government Chief Whip, we should not delay this process; we should have it on Friday and then we can move forward. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Maybe, honourable members, when you have questions to raise, you can also put them down in writing and send them early so that they put a response for us - a researched response, but not just coming to say, “We shall handle.”

**Ms alum santa:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The clarification I want from the Minister of Local Government is; you are aware that the Government Chief Whip was of the view that you give us enough time. I also support him because the Parish Development Model is a very important initiative or project. If you give us the document on Thursday, as you are saying, and we have the meeting on Friday - and I want to believe that it is a huge document. Do you think that time is enough for us to scan through?

Therefore, I want to know whether it will not be good enough for you to give us the document on Wednesday so that we look at it on Wednesday, Thursday and then on Friday we are good to go. That is the clarification I wanted from you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable members, the Parish Development Model guideline booklet is in your pigeonholes. Go and pick it. The others will also get there. The Friday we are talking about is 11th of March and today is just the 3rd. First read that today as you get more documents. I know you are not a very good reader, Hon. Santa. *(Laughter)*

**Mr magyezi:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think Hon. Alum, we shall start on Wednesday to give out the manuals and all these documents. The purpose of Friday is to carry you through so that when you go to read the manual in detail, you have been given the document and an explanation on what is there. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** An order on who? Honourable members, we will have a session on the 11th of March on the Parish Development Model. The only item on the Order Paper will be that. If you do not come, do not raise it again in the House that you were not there. I have dedicated the whole day for you people on the model. If you fail in your constituencies on the Parish Development Model, do not blame anybody else. Do not say, “We were not included in whatever was taking place.”

motion for adoption of the reports of the joint oversight committees oN foreign affairs and East African Community affairs to elegu

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable members, this oversight visit was as a result of a directive of this House on the security situation on the Uganda-South Sudan border.

As reported on the Floor of this House and in the media, many people had lost their lives and property at the border because of what was happening in the area. As the members of East African Community and the member states, they endeavoured to make sure that they resolve the issue. They had a meeting. As Parliament, we also sent the Committee on the East African Community Affairs to the area. Could we have the presentation from the committee.

3.51

**The chairperson, committee on east African COMMUNITY affairs (Ms Noeline Kisembo):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I am here to present a report on the joint oversight visit by the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on East African Community Affairs to the Uganda-South Sudan border at Elegu.

Madam Speaker, before I go ahead to present the report, allow me to lay on the Table a copy of the report. I also beg to lay minutes of the proceedings for the oversight activity in Elegu - the joint activity between the Ministry and the Committee on East African Community Affairs and the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Please, lay.

**Ms kisembo:** Madam Speaker, I also beg to lay a flood mitigation plan –*(Interjection)*

**The Deputy Speaker:** There is a procedural matter.

**Mr odur:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We are going to receive a report touching two ministries and they are very important. I do not see them here, but the Government Chief Whip is here. Wouldn’t it be procedurally right that you direct the Government Chief Whip to ensure that the two ministers responsible actually come to this House so that when the report is presented and we are debating it, we have somebody to respond to it.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I saw the Minister of Regional Affairs around. Where is he? Honourable members, there is a crucial procedural matter. We need these people in the House for us to complete this report. Can we have the ministers? In the absence of the ministers, lay the document on the Table so that it is captured on the *Hansard* record and then we will debate when the ministers are here.

3.54

**THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Mathias Mpuuga):** Madam Speaker, I contend that we all come here to transact very serious business. Even when I am off station, I delegate and the business of the House cannot stall because the Leader of the Opposition is not in the House. We are lucky that our Cabinet is the size of a primary school; so, every ministry has a sizeable number. A Government does not run like a *WhatsApp* group –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is a point of order.

**MR OGWANG:** Madam Speaker, with due respect to my good friend, the Leader of the Opposition, is it in order for him to impute a primary school in Uganda, which has over 81 pupils? Is he in order?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have known him - especially at this time when he is fasting - as a very decent person. I think it was a mistake. He mentioned it by mistake. I know Hon. Mpuuga cannot say such. It was a slip of the tongue.

**MR MPUUGA:** Madam Speaker, this is a very good observation. My friend was actually on *WhatsApp* and he never heard me speak figuratively so he missed my point –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No. It was a slip of a tongue that it is a primary school.

**MR MPUUGA:** He actually missed the point. I could have meant something different; probably, not in the realm of a primary school. It could have been something different.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You know, when he is fasting, he never tells lies.

**MR MPUUGA:** Madam Speaker, the point I am making is that the Government Chief Whip needs to do better. For some good reason, we are now doing a little better on the Order Paper. Therefore, ministers must find time to come and facilitate Members of Parliament to work. Otherwise, we shall have no choice, but to mobilise MPs to reject your business, if you are not going to be available. The rules are very clear. The first business on the Order Paper is Government business.

Look at the Order Paper. The Leader of the Opposition’s statement is the last. It is not because it is less significant but because we are prioritising your business. Will you stop taking us for granted, Government Chief Whip and be available? Or else, we will leave you to do your business alone. I speak in jest, but I meant it. Each ministry has more than one minister. Please be here and we do business. This is not acceptable.

3.57

**THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHI (Mr Thomas Tayebwa):** Madam Speaker, I share the disappointment of colleagues not being here in time. The honourable Minister of State for Regional Affairs is coming back in a few minutes. He had just moved out to have lunch, but he has been here.

My brother, the Leader of the Opposition, this happens. You have also just entered; you have not been here. Madam Speaker, the minister is coming back –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can we go on with the report? Let us continue with the report. He will get the issues and respond to them.

Nonetheless, this is a very serious matter. We may be blaming some people for whatever statement, but the point is: let us have ministers here. We have begged; let us have the ministers. If people who are holding positions do not want to be ministers, there are backbenchers who want to be ministers. Members, let us be in the House and do work for our people. When I make comments here, they say I am bad. I will accept to be bad, but you should do your work.

**MS KISEMBO:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your wise guidance. Allow me to lay on the Table the flood mitigation plan for the Elegu border as conducted by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, which we obtained in the course of the oversight visit. I beg to lay.

Madam Speaker, I seek your indulgence to present an executive summary of the report since the report was already uploaded on our iPads –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** May I know if the Minister of Regional Affairs will handle the security matters?

**MR TAYEBWA:** Madam Speaker, we do not work in silos, but as a team; so, we ensure that all issues are captured. Issues which cannot be handled right away are given to our other colleagues. Therefore, we try to work as a team, Madam Speaker. Though, of course, the desired position would be that all of them should be here.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Our issue at the border was about the loss of lives and properties. If we do not have the ministers of Security and Defence present, how do we respond to this? The Minister for Regional Affairs is basically for diplomacy.

**MR TAYEBWA:** Madam Speaker, Hon. John Mulimba is among the ministers who have been handling these security issues together with South Sudan at a bilateral level; so, he is in position to address those issues.

**MS KISEMBO:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I present the executive summary of the report that I have already laid on the Table.

At the 21st Sitting of the First Meeting of the First Session of the 11th Parliament held on Tuesday, 31 August 2021, Hon. Gilbert Olanya, the MP Kilak South, raised an urgent question on the deteriorating security situation in South Sudan and its adverse effect on cross-border trade and border communities.

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in charge of Regional Affairs, Hon. John Mulimba, presented a statement on the situation of the Ugandan traders and truck drivers in South Sudan.

Following the debate on the statement, the Rt Hon. Speaker tasked the Rt Hon. Prime Minister to convene an inter-ministerial committee comprising ministries of Foreign Affairs, Security, Defence, and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, to find tangible solutions to address the security of Ugandans and strengthen the liaison between Uganda and South Sudan.

A progress report on the matter was to be presented to the House within 21 days from the sitting date.

The matter of security of Uganda’s border with South Sudan and across the border, touches on the bilateral relations between the two countries, and has a ripple effect on EAC integration.

Against this background, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on East African Community Affairs undertook a joint oversight visit to the Elegu border from Thursday, 30 September 2021 to Saturday, 2 October 2021 to assess the situation at the border and to propose solutions to Parliament on the plausible way forward.

Summary of findings, observations and recommendations

Numerous killings and harassment of traders transiting to South Sudan, through Uganda, have been reported along the Nimule-Juba Road since South Sudan gained independence in 2011, the most recent one being the killings between March and August 2021.

Musisi Ssentongo, a truck drivers’ association member, reported 28 known truck drivers listed in Table 1 in the full report, who were killed; and 16 trucks, in Table 2, in the full report that were burnt along the Nimule-Juba route.

The deaths were attributed to resistance by truck drivers to pay illegal and unofficial visa fees and road tolls charged on traders, goods and trucks by unidentified armed men on the illegal roadblocks along the routes.

Uganda has maintained a diplomatic stance despite the continued killing and cruel treatment of Ugandans in South Sudan.

Through engagements, South Sudan issued a *note verbale* on Ref. RSS/MFA&IC/J/BIL/AAD/3/8/027 dated 6 September 2021, committing to providing security and safety of lives of truck drivers along the Juba-Nimule Road.

In a meeting held on 3 August 2021, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the International Cooperation of South Sudan, with envoys from Uganda, agreed to ensure compensation for the lives and property lost along the Nimule-Juba Highway.

There have been existent and unending contestation between Uganda and South Sudan over the borders, stemming from, among other factors, poor and inconclusive border demarcation, hence contributing to the incidences of insecurity and straining bilateral relations between the two states.

The local authorities reported that South Sudanese forces had interfered with the delayed construction process of the Aswa Hydropower Plant on River Aswa near Lamwo, claiming that the river falls on South Sudan territory.

The volatile security environment in South Sudan, coupled with the porous nature of Uganda’s borders, has increased Uganda’s vulnerability to illegal cross-border activities and trans-border crimes, jeopardising national and regional security efforts.

The Directorate of Immigration and Citizenship Control (DICC) at the Elegu border issues passports and visas, temporary movement permits, grants to work permits and national identity cards. Travelers must report to the DICC immigration officers before proceeding for examination by other agencies.

South Sudan remains a strategic trading and investment partner for Uganda despite the volatile security situation in the country.

The need to strategically manage the border post to pursue commercial and economic diplomacy is apparent.

Uganda and South Sudan are bound by the Customs Union Protocol, a critical pillar and first stage of the EAC integration process.

Trade and free movement of goods and people at the border were affected by the border closure/restrictions occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic. Traders lost capital and banks sold off their collateral for failure to meet loan obligations.

There were no banking services at the Elegu border or within the community. The DFCU Bank, singularly present at the border, closed shop and left after heavy rains and floods destroyed its offices.

Madam Speaker, the one-stop border facility at Elegu was relatively new and in good condition under the management of Uganda Revenue Authority (URA). However, the staff of the different Government agencies stationed at the border grappled with insufficient residential accommodation.

The Government agencies, business community, transporters and the district leadership at the border decried the recurrent floods that disrupted business and hindered the construction of the border export zone. This border export zone was to, among others, ensure Uganda’s full exploitation of the market opportunities presented by the regional integration and increase exports to South Sudan.

The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives conducted a flood mitigation study in 2019, resulting in two options to deal with the floods. Option one proposed the construction of a reservoir whose water would, in turn, be used for irrigation and this would be at a cost of Shs 198.1 billion. Option two of the study proposed the diversion of River Unyama at the cost of Shs 166 billion.

Recommendations to specific terms of reference that we had - in a summary.

The security situation at the Uganda-South Sudan border in Elegu

The committees recommend as follows;

i. The Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of East African Community Affairs, should intensify engagements with the Government of South Sudan at both bilateral and regional levels to ensure the safety and security of Ugandans operating within South Sudan. The diplomatic engagements should be continuous until the safety and security of the Ugandans is guaranteed.

ii. The issuance by Government of travel advisory warnings or Ugandans not to travel to South Sudan without security guarantees should be augmented by enforcement mechanisms by Ugandan security forces at the Uganda-South Sudan border, to prevent Ugandans from crossing into South Sudan whenever there is insecurity in South Sudan.

iii. Government of Uganda, through Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, should sensitise Ugandans traveling to South Sudan about the need to register their presence with the Ugandan Embassy in Juba, to ease tracking whenever need arises.

Compensation of Ugandan traders

The committees recommend as follows;

i. The Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Uganda’s Embassy in Juba, should establish the actual number of Ugandans who have lost their lives in South Sudan, the property lost or destroyed and, thereafter, engage the Government of South Sudan on a comprehensive compensation plan for the lives and property lost and restore the confidence of the Ugandan traders doing business in South Sudan, improve bilateral relations between the two countries and further regional development through cross-border trade.

The security situation at the Elegu Border

The committees recommend as follows;

i. The Government of Uganda should expedite the completion of the joint border demarcation process with the Government of South Sudan to protect Uganda’s territorial integrity and mitigate the security threats posed by incursions by South Sudan armed forces into the Ugandan territory.

 The border demarcation exercise should be conducted jointly by the two countries and should be informed by the existing treaties, orders, colonial maps and the coordinates to lessen the possibility of conflicts in validating boundary points. Consequently, the required funding for the conclusion of the border demarcation exercise should be availed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

ii. The Uganda Peoples Defence Forces, together with the Uganda Police should intensify patrols along the porous borders to safeguard it and the surrounding communities, and increase border security training programmes for its officers to boost professional capacity to secure the border.

iii. The Government, through the Ministry of East African Community Affairs and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, should conduct sensitisation of the local leaders and border communities on the importance of peaceful co-existence and good neighbourliness, which are principles that underpin the EAC integration process.

iv. The Government of Uganda should harness its position in the EAC and Africa, as a regional promoter and exporter of peace by advocating for the training and professionalisation of the South Sudan security forces through the EAC, IGAD and African Union platforms. This will go a long way in improving the bilateral relations between the two countries and promoting regional peace and security.

Terms of reference No.2 concerns the operational controls at the border to deter illegal entry/exit and trans-border crimes

The committee recommends that Government, through the relevant security agencies, should strengthen the security monitoring systems, especially at the porous border of Uganda - South Sudan to ensure effective control of the border.

Terms of reference No.3, the process for issuance of travel documents at the border

The committees recommend that Government should strengthen the Directorate of Immigration and Citizenship Control, especially at the porous borders of Uganda-South Sudan, to ensure effective issuance of travel permits and enhance management of the border points.

Terms of reference No.4 on the overall management of the border post in pursuit of commercial and economic diplomacy, the EAC common market and Customs Union

The committees had the following recommendations on this term of reference:

i. That the Ministry of East African Community Affairs in liaison with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should fast-track the ratification process of the amendment of Article 24(2)(a) of the protocol on the establishment of the East African Customs Union to operationalise the EAC committee on trade remedies.

 This will put in place a trade dispute mechanism to handle all trade disputes that will arise between the partner states. A status report on the matter should be presented to Parliament before consideration of the ministerial policy statements for the Ministry of East African Community and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Financial Year 2022/2023;

ii. The Ugandan Minister of East African Community Affairs, at the level of Council of Ministers, should advocate for the expeditious full integration of South Sudan to allow for the ratification of the protocol on the establishment of the East African Customs Union by South Sudan. This will eliminate barriers affecting trade between the two partner states; and

iii. The Ugandan Minister of East African Community Affairs at the level of Council of Ministers, should advocate for an amendment of the EAC Treaty to allow for the commencement and implementation of any policy, protocol or act of community as long as two-thirds of the partner states agree to ratify the requisite instruments thereto. This will help to contain the sabotage occasioned by non-willing partners.

Madam Speaker, on the plight of traders at the border post, the committees recommend as follows:

i. The Government houses Post Bank in the OSBP facility, that is the one-stop border point or facility, to provide banking services. There is no bank along the entire border yet Uganda Revenue Authority is collecting good sums of money. Therefore, for the security of our funds, we recommend that the OSBP at least, houses the Post Bank to cure that problem;

ii. Government should provide incentives to attract financial institutions to set up offices at Elegu border. This will bring banking services to help provide improved trade.

Madam Speaker, on our last term of reference, which is the state of infrastructure at Elegu border, the committees recommend as follows:

i. That Government should liaise with the relevant local government authorities to secure land and construct quality and adequate housing facilities for its officials at the Elegu border. This will improve the officers’ working conditions and enhance service delivery at the border post. Madam Speaker, at the time of the visit, most of the officers were commuting from Gulu to Elegu;

ii. In addition, the Government should provide incentives to local investors to construct quality and affordable accommodation facilities at Elegu to facilitate trade there; and

iii. Government should deliberately enforce the Physical Planning Act, 2010 as (amended) through the relevant Government agencies, to address the challenges typical of border towns. This will improve the traffic impulses occasioned by the huge numbers of trucks and also improve service delivery to enhance trade at these high traffic points.

On the flooding at the one-stop border post, the committees recommended as follows:

i. That in line with the recommendation of the mitigation plan, funding for the proposal to construct a reservoir to a tune of Shs 198.1 billion be provided to help mitigate the floods in Elegu;

ii. The Ministry of Water and Environment should take the lead and expeditiously implement the flood mitigation plan, to construct the dam and reservoir, on the Unyama River to mitigate the flood threat fully. The dam could be utilised for agriculture through irrigation. Upon adopting this report, the ministry should initiate a roadmap demonstrating how to implement the plan and report back to the House within six months.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, the committees are conscious of the need for Government to maintain favourable bilateral relations with South Sudan as a strategic partner for Uganda.

However, this should not be done at the expense of the lives of Ugandans. Government should, therefore, take deliberate and constructive steps, to ensure the security of Ugandans in South Sudan is guaranteed.

At the same time, the Government should prioritise the demarcation of the Ugandan-South Sudan border to mitigate the recurrence of border conflicts and strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries to foster the EAC integration agenda. Madam Speaker,

I beg to submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, honourable chairperson. Members, as you have noticed, we are going to be dealing with another matter of compensation, again, regarding South Sudan.

However, this time, it is worse than what we encountered last time because last time, it was loss of property, but now, unfortunately, it is about loss of lives together with property. That will require appropriate compensation.

I urge the Government to always monitor the conditions in our neighbouring countries before our citizens travel because you need to assess the situation on the other side and advise the citizens whether it is safe to travel or not and for people to avoid investing a lot of money in whatever they are doing.

Protect the lives of the people and property and by protecting them, you are expected to monitor the situation as a country to ensure the safety of your people. Can we hear from the minister before I open the debate? Minister, give us your findings first.

4.23

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (REGIONAL AFFAIRS) (Mr John Mulimba):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to register my appreciation to the committee for the work well done and the very good report presented before this House.

I join the chairperson and members of the committee in acknowledging that, indeed, these findings had partially been findings of the ministry. However, they have gone an extra mile to give us details, which we did not know and I would also like to thank them for the recommendations which have been made.

These recommendations cut across MDAs of Government; they benefit the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the East African Community Affairs, the Ministry of Lands, the Ministry of Water and Environment, the Ministry of Energy and Minerals and the Ministry of Works and Transport.

Like the committee chairperson indicated in the report, these events stemmed from September last year and about September, I gave a report on this Floor and consequently, the committee did their work around November.

I would like to put it on record that the situation that obtained then could not be the situation subsisting now. Situations in some of these countries erupt spontaneously and the Government of Uganda has, on many occasions, responded appropriately.

We, indeed, regret the loss of lives and property. As Government, we are working together with the Government of South Sudan bilaterally and also through multilateral arrangements, to ensure that peace returns to that country.

South Sudan, like the committee has ably noted, is a strategic partner and for us to benefit from her, we need to work together to ensure peace subsists in that country; just like it is contained in our foreign policy objectives.

The ministry has gone ahead, since those findings were made, to do the following;

i) We engaged Government through the Ministry of Defence and the UPDF together with the army in South Sudan to devise mechanisms of escorting through conveyor systems, our trucks from Uganda along the Juba-Nimule Road and we registered some tremendous progress. I hope and pray that the situation continues.

ii) Through the Ministry of East African Community Affairs, we engaged the Republic of South Sudan and we did a reciprocal arrangement. The Visa fees requirement is no longer applicable for our traders who go to South Sudan.

iii) The issue of border demarcation was debated and the Ministry of Lands was directed in Cabinet to take on their role. Border demarcation is not only along the border with the Republic of South Sudan, it is across all our borders and the Ministry of Lands has progressed very well. What is only lacking in that respect is resources to complete and especially that part of the border with South Sudan.

We have also engaged the Republic of South Sudan bilaterally and multilaterally in respect to forging peace whereupon today, in the peace agreements that have been signed in South Sudan, Uganda is one of the guarantors.

We have also commenced issuance of bi-weekly advisories to our traders; since the meeting that took place in Elegu between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the traders, we have since established contacts and we issue travel advisories through the leadership of the traders every week; as we continue to monitor the situation.

A number of meetings continue to take place both bilaterally and multilaterally. It is just because of COVID-19, but we were supposed to have hosted IGAD to deal with the security situation in South Sudan. That could not happen. However, we are yet to get clearance from His Excellency the President, about hosting IGAD and it will basically look at peace in the Great Lakes region, South Sudan inclusive.

In respect to loss of lives and property, out of the information that has been gathered both by our mission in Juba and by the committee, we commit to preparing an information paper to Cabinet and accordingly pray that the Government of Uganda works closely with the Government of South Sudan towards ensuring that property and lives of our traders is compensated. I beg to submit. *(Applause)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister, for your statement. How I wish the statements we make here are implemented. We do not want things to simply look like we are working, yet, it is not factual. I am now opening this to debate.

4.30

**MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to give information to the chairperson and on that note, to thank her for doing a very good job.

First of all, I express my appreciation to the joint committees on East African Community Affairs and Foreign Affairs. Amuru District Local Government specifically asked me to thank you because you thoroughly involved them; they contributed and they are very happy. Madam Chairperson, I would like to thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, committees.

**MS LUCY AKELLO:** Unlike many committees - and the most recent was the one on Finance, they asked me to send this displeasure -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Which one?

**MS LUCY AKELLO:** The Committee on Finance was in Elegu and they did not inform the district officials. The Resident District Commissioner was very unhappy and asked me to specifically send his displeasure. So, that is -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You are accusing a chairperson of a committee who is in the House; she wants to clarify.

**MS LUCY AKELLO:** Okay, fine.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I know Hon. Avur as somebody who is passionate about local governments.

**MS AVUR:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to say that Hon. Lucy Akello, as we know, is a very truthful person. Indeed, the Committee on Finance was at Elegu on Saturday. We were also surprised because we did not only go to Elegu, we went to Padea in Zombo and the local government officials were there. We then went to Katuna; and the local government officials were there. Then, we went to Isingiro at about two and the local government officials were there. So, we also thought that probably, they did not like our presence in Elegu. Thank you. *(Laughter)*

**MS LUCY AKELLO:** Madam Speaker, I am conveying the message of the RDC of Amuru and I have done my part. Whatsoever –*(Interjections)*- No, I have reported.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Lucy Akello is just conveying the message and being a *Saba Kristu*, she does not lie. *(Laughter)* She does not lie, but maybe, your own people did not see any sense of meeting the finance people. So, you will find maybe the problem was with the people down there, but at least, I trust my committees. I have told my committees, when you go to a constituency or a district, meet the local leadership. If there was an anomaly, sorry for that.

**MS LUCY AKELLO:** Most obliged, Madam Speaker. I have done that part. The information I want to give is in regard to - perhaps - something that was not clearly brought out in the report and about the market, which was actually thoroughly discussed.

Madam Speaker, I also want to report to this House that on 21st of February this year, fire burnt down the whole market – Elegu Market - and it was not good. This is in regard to the failure to implement the building of the border market. Most of the traders who are there are actually in temporary spaces. If you will allow, just a summary of what happened;

 i. About 1,858 households were affected;

ii. 896 traders were severely affected;

iii. 30 fishmongers’ stalls were completely burnt;

iv. 20 tailoring shops were completely burnt;

v. 32 charcoal stalls were completely burnt;

vi. 20 mobile money kiosks completely burnt, but they could not establish the amount of money lost;

vii. Some 92 shops which were inside were completely burnt;

viii. 79 lodging buildings were completely burnt;

ix. 148 secondhand clothes and shoes were completely burnt;

x. 15 salon and barber shops were completely burnt;

xi. 50 fruit stalls were completely burnt;

xii. 20 chicken stalls were completely burnt;

xiii. 10 eating houses were completely burnt.

I am giving all these to show that actually, the whole market was completely burnt and because the only – remember, we discussed this when we were meeting. The only firefighting vehicle at Elegu had a mechanical problem; it was not there. They had to get fire machines from Gulu. By the time they arrived, it was too late.

So, this is the information I wanted to give, in addition to the report that the chairperson has given. I really appreciate her for bringing out the issues, especially the one on flooding. We are about to enter into the season of rain; we will still come back again and say “Elegu has flooded” and we do not want this.

I beg the honourable minister to really work on the issue of flooding because we are tired of bringing this here every year. Something has to be done. Thank you so much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. That is why the minister was saying this involves inter-ministerial action and that is why they are asking for Shs 198 billion to build the dam and reservoir.

As Parliament of Uganda, we should be able to act on that, to have a lasting solution.

4.36

**MR ERIC MUSANA (Independent, Buyaga County East, Kagadi):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, for this opportunity. I also commend the committee and the chairperson for a very elaborate report and I think the issue is very clear.

Madam Speaker, allow me to support this report, specifically, the three issues that are very clear about life, property and capital. If the honourable minister and the entire team - just like you have highlighted, we need their pro-activeness because if the matter is like this, it would be very difficult for us.

You know very well, as Uganda, what we are getting in South Sudan, in terms of the bilateral trade or the businesses that we are having there and the challenges we have here in Uganda, when it comes to doing business. So, looking at all the sectors that are involved; if we are proactive, it would be much easier managing this.

Honourable minister, I also see another issue here, especially when it comes to borders. The inter-governmental interventions, especially for Uganda and South Sudan, may need a clear discussion because when it comes to borders, you know what it means. It may not just be an issue of the Ministry of Lands; it may actually take a lot of time. However, if there was a thorough discussion between the two governments, it would probably solve this matter with a lot of ease.

Honourable minister, the last is about giving us timelines. How do we handle these issues? I know you are reporting that you have handled a few issues on compensation. Is it possible for us to have a clear way out on the timelines, especially when these people will be compensated? When will they be given a helping hand by Government? You know, businesses are almost not moving at all. People are dying; people are moving up and down and the committee has reported –*(Interjection)*- Information from Hon. Oguzu Lee.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Two minutes each. Honourable minister –

**MR OGUZU:** Madam Speaker, he has given me information. I would like to inform the Member on the Floor –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You will have your time. Stop getting information.

**MR OGUZU:** There is a pertinent issue I would like to inform him about.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You will get your time; you will speak for yourself. I am not saying we have handled compensation. We have had issues of compensation in this House on Ugandan traders in South Sudan and the issues have not been completed up-to-date. Some people have been paid; while others have not been paid. It came up in this House, two to three weeks back; it is still an issue.

Remember, most of these traders mortgaged their properties to get money to do business. That is why I was saying, in my opening remarks, that the matter of compensation is coming back and we cannot set the timeline now because we do not know who is to be compensated. We need to have a thorough analysis of who is going to be compensated, who has been affected and how we compensate. That is what is supposed to be done. Of course, we are going to adopt the report and then, action must be taken.

4.41

**MR NOAH MUTEBI (NRM, Nakasongola County, Nakasongola):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also thank the committee for the elaborate report, which clearly shows that we have a lot of multi-sectoral issues –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Noah, I thought I had given him first, then it will come back that side.

4.41

**MR DERRICK NYEKO (NUP, Makindye Division East, Kampala):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I request Government to give a detailed report on the general status of all border points. In Isingiro, between Uganda and Kenya – and also Tanzania, we have the same problem happening. In Karamoja, we have the same problem; and today, we have insecurity and we do not know where the guns are coming from. So, I request Government to give us a detailed status of all border points. I submit.

**MR OGUZU:** Madam Speaker, the information I want to provide is that Government has not come up with clear procedures and guidelines on how to manage compensation and border land disputes. We would have expected the committee to interest herself in the border conflict between the South Sudanese and Ugandans around Moyo, where similar fights have often broken out.

In West Nile, in the district of Koboko, a number of traders from the Ugandan side are often killed and others are harassed on the South Sudan side, just because Government has not paid keen attention to these issues as comprehensively requested by colleagues.

Therefore, it is my plea that when we decide to do compensation, we should not just target the big guys. The small traders, whose voices have not been heard, should be considered. Otherwise, these resources will continue to end up in the pockets of well-to-do families, and the poor people suffer the losses.

Most importantly, we must demarcate our borderlines. We have similar conflicts with DRC, but when this was achieved, right now, we peacefully coexist. If we have entered into those people’s land - and that’s why Government is very reluctant - we should be able to make our people know, to avoid being victims. If indeed the land belongs to us, I am sure there are technical and scientific ways of resolving such matters and Government must prioritise them. I thank you.

4.44

**MR NOAH MUTEBI (NRM, Nakasongola County, Nakasongola):** Thank you, Madam Speaker, and the committee for the presentation, which clearly shows multi-sectoral issues that need a lot of interventions. The biggest concern that comes out of this report is on the data that has been shared about the reported deaths of truck drivers in South Sudan and properties/trucks destroyed in South Sudan. All this information from the report shows that it was provided by the association of the truck drivers.

This raises a big question about the functionality of the Ugandan Embassy in Juba. We would have expected this information to come from the Ugandan Embassy in Juba or the Uganda Police Force or UPDF, through these joint patrols and engagements. Yet, the information is coming from the truck drivers association. This is why we have challenges of verification for compensation purposes.

I would like to appeal to the Ministry of East African Community Affairs to strengthen the functionality of the Ugandan Embassy in Juba so that there is a stronger presence within the border areas, and we are able to do monitoring and provide better information on some of these happenings. I submit.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

4.46

**MR PATRICK ISINGOMA (Independent, Hoima East Division, Hoima City):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I also want to join colleagues to thank the committees for a very good report. Honourable members, we need to start calling a spade, a spade and not a big spoon.

When you look at South Sudan - I am not trying to talk about the elements of peace and security. When you look at South Sudan, you will find 95 per cent symptoms of a failed state in South Sudan. Madam Speaker, our Government knows this, but it will not publicly acknowledge it because we have people like my friend, Hon. Thomas Tayebwa, who is doing good business in South Sudan and, therefore, not causing any alarm, yet the situation is very bad and they know it.

I can see Hon. Tayebwa is shaking his head, but he knows that, that is the truth. My appeal is that we should look the king into the eye and accept that we have a problem. I do not go to South Sudan. In East Africa, I go to all other countries, but I will be the last person to go to South Sudan because I know what happens there.

Madam Speaker, the people who should be guiding the population have instead decided to bury their heads in the sand and assume a very normal situation, when the situation is not normal. Going forward, my appeal is that Government should come out openly to guide the population regarding the volatile situation in South Sudan so that when our people go there, they know the circumstances in that country. Otherwise, I want to thank my sister, Hon. Kisembo, for a good report. Thank you very much. I beg to end here.

4.48

**MR TONNY AYOO (NRM, Kwania County, Kwania):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson and members of the committee for a good report. I also want to agree with the minister that Government is working to ensure that there is security along the Uganda-South Sudan border.

Much as the minister says a lot is being done, over the years, the security situation between Uganda and South Sudan border has been appalling; the traders are killed from time to time. This, therefore, shows that much as some work is being done, the impact and the outcome is little.

I would like to ask the minister and the Government - knowing what South Sudan is and the security situation there - our contribution to support South Sudan is to continuously engage with them so that we stabilise the region. Madam Speaker, before instability broke out in September, we were doing very good business with them. And by the way, South Sudan is one of our markets that we cannot afford to let go - considering the challenges we have around the world and the region.

Honourable minister, we must put all our efforts together. This is not business as usual. All sectors must look at how best to resolve these problems at the border so that trade between Uganda and South Sudan continues and we increase our revenue.

We had initially proposed the establishment of a big market at Elegu so that our traders may not go up to South Sudan; the South Sudanese would come to buy all goods from the Ugandan side. This has taken a long time. I think this market should be established at this border.

The last issue is flooding. It has now been three years since we talked about studying, putting the channel and reservoir. Madam Speaker, anytime Elegu border will be swept away and it will affect our revenue. Therefore, the Government must act on it this time. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, as the minister has said, South Sudan is really our cash cow and we must protect it jealously. Therefore, we need to do whatever it takes to ensure that South Sudan -

4.51

**MR JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also join Members to thank the chairperson of the joint committee for doing a wonderful job. I would like to start from the point of security. What the report appears to capture as a border dispute, to me, is an occupation.

Whereas South Sudan is a young country that is brotherly to us and we have the responsibility to mentor them, it does not give them any right to enter and occupy Uganda. This committee went there, but they could not reach the border. The army of South Sudan told them: “You cannot proceed beyond this point.” It is Ugandan territory. We cannot allow such a thing.

I would, therefore, implore the Government to take decisive action. If it is because we do not have soldiers to deploy, let us recall those ones we sent abroad to go there. If it means that we do not have Generals to command, we can give leave to the ones sitting here –*(Interruption)*

**Mr baba:** It is not true that our delegation was stopped from going to the end of the border. We went. It is true they tried to stop us, but we insisted and reached where we wanted to go. So, do not mislead the House. *(Laughter)*

**Mr odur:** Actually, that confirms – “they tried to stop us”, meaning they were inside Uganda already. That is the point I am talking about. How can a foreign army be inside Uganda and try to stop you from reaching the border? He has just confirmed it and I am grateful that the ambassador is very honest -

**The Deputy Speaker:** Honourable member, you need to look at the allegation he is bringing up.

**Mr odur:** Secondly, Madam Speaker, the issue of compensation of traders is a very critical matter that must be observed by this House carefully. Every time an opportunity arises to compensate genuine traders, the delays are brought about by people who come along the way and also make claims that they are traders.

The traders are known. If you are crossing the border, the immigration must capture your data. Your declarations at ura are there for clarity. How come every time we want to compensate traders or the issue comes up, many other people come around? The excuse from the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives - I wish they were here - has been that we are verifying. It has gone on for three years.

We have people from my district in Lira, who are crying. They have never been compensated yet they are very genuine traders. Therefore, this time, I think Government should up its game. Let us use data that is easy to verify.

**The Deputy Speaker:** What do they use to verify people who do not have any document?

**Mr odur:** Madam Speaker, if somebody crosses the border to go and trade and they have not passed through immigration, and –

**The Deputy Speaker:** That is a very pertinent issue. If you say that you are a trader, there must be a document you have that is going to be used - that you paid taxes on this side and you are going the other side. There is a trader here. *(Laughter)*

**MR TAYEBWA:** Madam Speaker, the clarification I want to make is very simple, for purposes of the *Hansard*. There was no compensation made or passed here. If you can remember very well, the motion that was brought here, it was Uganda lending money to South Sudan to pay traders who supplied. That money has to be paid back by the Government of South Sudan *–(Interjection)-* that is a question for another day, but the record has to be very clear.

No compensation was made for anyone. They only paid debts on behalf of South Sudan and South Sudan must pay back. What that meant, Madam Speaker –

**The Deputy Speaker:** Uganda entered into a memorandum of understanding to pay the traders who lost their property for and on behalf of South Sudan. South Sudan is supposed to pay that money, interest-free.

**Mr tayebwa:** Madam Speaker, I beg your indulgence. I remember I was a member of the Committee on National Economy. It was for payment for supplies, which were never paid for by the Government of South Sudan.

Therefore, the part of compensation is not yet covered. I just wanted that to be captured for *Hansard* purposes so that whoever reads it in future, gets it right.

**Mr odur:** Thank you, Government Chief Whip. Of course, that information is accurate, but you remember this matter was debated in this House. Even trucks were added. We even had number plates. There was a committee by this House that went and brought the report. That is how it moved from 10 and 23 were added.

Nevertheless, Uganda being a guarantor of security, as the minister said, is a responsibility because these Ugandan traders are our citizens and need to be protected.

On the issue of loss of lives, I think as a country, there is a big problem that when we lose our own people, we do not feel any pain. However, when we hear that somebody has died in another country, the pain becomes unbearable for Uganda. We want to move there and ensure that, that life is secured. However, we do not care about our own from here. That is why in other countries, people take Ugandans very lightly. Even in South Sudan, Ugandans are being killed and you never hear the Government of Uganda becoming tough and saying, “You must account for the people that have been killed.”

Try doing it here – having any other foreigner dying here – and you will see how the pressure will pile on Government. Government will account and people will be arrested and prosecuted. For Ugandans in other countries, we just hear “eight lives have been lost” and it does not matter to Government.

This time, honourable minister, you should hold South Sudan accountable. They must compensate these people. We are not going to be picking money from Ugandans to compensate for things that we are not responsible for. They are a government and they must own up. If they do not, there are steps that Government can take to bring them to order.

We have seen around the world right now – just a small threat – how other countries are reacting even when nobody has been killed. How about us, when we have lost somebody?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Before we talk about compensation, let us look at our cardinal role of protecting lives and property. That is what we want. Let our people do business freely. Let our people keep alive. Let us look at that first.

4.59

**MAJ. Gen. henry masiko (UPDF Representative):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I join honourable colleagues in applauding the report. Particularly, I think the last portion was closer to what would be, fundamentally, the solution to some of these problems within the region. I heard, in one of the recommendations, something to the effect that we should move towards integration.

How I wish, in this august House, we would be in unison in supporting the advocacy for the speedy integration of these African regions. Strategic security of Africa, particularly of these regions, is not just about taking the matter of integration as a fashion, but a complete imperative.

When I listen, I see that we are just touching symptoms. We are not touching the root problem. If we had a big chorus from an honourable House like this one and even lobby Members of the East African legislature to begin talking, passionately, about the misfortune of the fragmentation of the African people. When I hear “borders” and “the country” – these are people who were once one. If we moved decisively –*(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Switch it on.

**MAJ. GEN. MASIKO:** Thank you, Madam Speaker for the one minute. My appeal, as part of adoption of this report, is for us to increase our voice on what the real medicine will be to these problems of fragmented regions, which have led us into these distortions and perpetual insecurity.

The recommendation is that we should increasingly urge ourselves and the governments of the region to speed up the integration process; not merely economic, but seriously thinking about the federation. That is what will solve these problems once and for all. This is from an ideological point of view, but we need to push it with the importance it deserves. Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. The General is talking about deepening the integration and fragmenting the areas. How I wish you engaged the security from the other side to stop whatever they are doing. We should integrate all sectors, including security, to ensure we protect our people and to facilitate free movement of goods and people.

5.03

**MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for this opportunity. I would like to join colleagues in appreciating the committee report.

The peace in the region and the protection of our people with their properties cannot be over-emphasised. It is our wish that our region remains peaceful though that may not be the case for all.

Government should do its best to ensure that our people, especially those operating along the borders and the communities surrounding the borders, are safe.

I agree with the committee’s report in its entirety. However, apart from the loss of lives and commodities, people have died outside the borders because of the free movement of people with illegal guns. We lost one person in Aringa, who was also its LC I Chairperson.

Therefore, I request Government to ensure that acquisition of guns and free movement of people is highly regulated so that our people can remain safe.

Secondly, my Government promised the people of Madi Subregion, Adjumani and Moyo compensation for the lost animals in the hands of the refugees; in the hands *–(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Please, conclude.

**MS ABABIKU:** For over seven years, the people of Moyo and Adjumani have not been compensated. Therefore, I request that Government responds to this issue so that people know what is in the plan. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

5.05

**MS JANE PACUTO (NRM, Woman Representative, Pakwach):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson and our committee. In the same bit, I would like to thank the minister for the efforts that the ministry is putting in place though I urge that we do a little bit more. Like I earlier stated, the Committee on Finance was at Elegu over the weekend. I think this Parliament should take the issue of security in Sudan very seriously because it definitely affects our country.

What we found out at Elegu is that about 500 trucks move to and fro in a month and that, for sure, impacts enormously on our economy. They also told us about the 2,000 to 3,000 people who move between the two countries. Yes, it could impact negatively, like my sister, Hon. Ababiku, has said, but in terms of trade, I look at it from a positive aspect; that in terms of trade - whether these people come for leisure or business - it still impacts positively on our economy. Therefore, we must do all it takes to ensure there is a good relationship between the two countries.

Not only that, Madam Speaker, since 2019, we were told that our revenue collection - remember Elegu is just a control border post - but our revenue collection has increased from Shs 2.5 billion to Shs 4 billion. Therefore, we are struggling at *–(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, please, use only two minutes because everybody wants to speak.

**MS PACUTO:** The country is struggling to mobilise domestic revenue to fund our budget. Therefore, we cannot leave this issue unattended to. Our exports to Sudan have increased and the value has increased from Shs 2.5 billion to Shs 3.5 billion. I, therefore, want to thank the committee and urge this Parliament to do what it takes to build a better relationship with South Sudan. I thank you.

5.08

**MR NATHAN BYANYIMA (NRM, Bukanga North County, Isingiro):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Mine is to add my voice to the voices of colleagues in thanking the committee. I can say that Uganda has been very hospitable all over the African Region, though we are not being received in the same manner.

Sudan has come from very far with us; we have done a lot, but they are not as friendly as we are. They enter Uganda; they roam around and all over the country and nobody touches them while Ugandans are suffering.

I was the chairperson of the bus owners association in Uganda some time back and I can tell you, they no longer want our buses in their country because they want to buy theirs to operate the routes, yet, we are supposed to - because ours should be their market. We have done a lot. We have sacrificed a lot for South Sudan. I can tell you, Maj. Gen. Masiko, we still have a lot to do.

We cannot run out of that relationship. After all, why should we even be paying for them? We are also chocking with debts; they should be paying for their money otherwise Uganda has been so hospitable. We pay for Burundi in the East African Community; we pay for Sudan, but there is an abuse of hospitality in this particular relationship. We should get into serious engagements to ensure our people benefit from this relationship. Our soldiers were there full-time to stabilise that country, but we are not getting the same services in equal portions.

Therefore, I appeal to the committee and the Minister – I am happy the minister is here - take note that we need to engage them and the people should get the message that we need to work together for the sake of the region. I *–(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. We need to do a lot of mind-set change on our friends. While we receive them, they should also be able to receive us in the same manner.

5.10

**MR DAVIS KAMUKAMA (NRM, Bunyangabu County, Bunyangabu):**  Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the committee for the oversight role they played, but one thing I would really emphasise or advocate for is, as we all advocate for integration, let us look for a way of protecting our businessmen in South Sudan.

I really pray that Government makes a memorandum of understanding to protect our businessmen in South Sudan. As we all understand, most of our produce is sold in South Sudan. I have some shops in Kikuubo, but most of my customers are from South Sudan.

They bring income here by paying taxes. I implore the Government of Uganda to join hands with the Government of South Sudan to make a memorandum of understanding so that at least we strengthen security for the development of our country.

We have also kept a close eye as Government or security at the porous borders –*(Interruption)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is clarification.

**MS LUCY AKELLO:** Madam Speaker, not to disrupt my colleague; I have heard friends mention “Southern” Sudan, we are discussing “South” Sudan so we should not continue making this mistake.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** These are two different regions; there is South Sudan and Sudan.

**MR KAMUKAMA:** We have closed our eyes on the porous borders. I pray Government keeps an eye on the porous borders because they bring in criminals.

We also tend to mind about the main borders, ignoring the porous borders. I pray that security officials keep an eye on those porous borders. I beg to submit. Thank you.

5.13

**MS BETTY AOL (FDC, Woman Representative, Gulu City):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. One time, we had a debate here about the loss of our people in South Sudan.

However, we have never heard them debate the loss of their people here; it is usually the loss of our people in South Sudan.

Bringing it even nearer to me, my second born had a friend - I would call both of them my sons. That friend of his went to South Sudan and was killed, but the body was never recovered.

If we have to be friends, at least, it should not just be at the expense of Ugandans. We take care of them so well here, we make sure that - and you know, some of them are very wild, if any of them should get hurt here -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Former LOP, I just want a clarification; are you saying we should debate about the Sudanese who die the other side? Do we have the locus to discuss that? Do we know how many they are? We are talking about our people here and so, we cannot talk about their people. We do not have the locus to do that.

**MS BETTY AOL:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Mine is just a complaint that when our people get lost or when our people get killed that side, we should all feel hurt. However, when their people come this side, they are not killed. Have you heard of any of them being killed here by Ugandans? No; yet they kill our people and we just close our eyes.

Therefore, it is about lives; so, we can first leave trade. It is important that we take care of our people. Our people’s lives should hurt us very much when they die in unclear circumstances.

We have protocols like the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR); maybe the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will clarify to us; can’t you use such protocols to protect our people? We need our people protected. Yes, we need trade, we want markets for our produce, but it should be on a very fair ground, not on the ground that our people should die when they go there *–(Interruption)*

**MAJ. GEN. MASIKO:** Madam Speaker, this is a passionate issue to all of us. However, from where I stand, I am not condoning breakdown and criminality in our region.

I want to inform Hon. Aol Betty, that in the 70s, and part of the 80s, our people got shelter in that part of the world because of the confusion, which was here; it is not true that they have always been in that state.

There was a time when the people in the region of West Nile and parts of Acholi ran away as refugees and those people looked after us. Therefore, it is not true; factually, these regions, this turmoil can only be settled if we begin to decolonise our minds and know that these borders which, we are calling “porous”, are colonial borders. The solution is for us to start rebelling against these borders. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** And, one thing we may need to understand; is it a legalised activity? Is it something that has been legalised by the country, or it is the criminals, those thieves, like what Hon. Mapenduzi was saying; how people are beating others, stealing and that - it may be the criminals that need to be worked on. It is not something that has been legalised by the country. Yes, Government Chief Whip.

**MR TAYEBWA:** Madam Speaker, I never wanted to tackle this issue, because it already tackled me. However, it is indeed true, from 2007, I have been a trader in those countries.

Madam Speaker *–(Interjection)-* you were once a trader there; I do not know whether you are still there. You might find many of us -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Who is that who has been a trader? At least I know one trader in this House and that is Hon. Tayebwa -

**MR TAYEBWA:** Colleagues, sometime back, the Rt Hon. Speaker was trading there. *(Laughter)* Madam Speaker, just on a light note.

Now, colleagues, if you have gone and traded in South Sudan, because I remember there is a time, personally, I came from Wau in a cargo plane where we were seated on a coffin that had a body that had lasted about seven days! But that was the only way out; that is the price of getting money.

Madam Speaker, even if you told Ugandans here that if you cross that border you will die, the next day many of them will cross; reason being the profit you make in that country will compensate the risks you face. *(Laughter)*

Members, allow me to give you these facts -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You see, honourable Government Chief Whip, what Hon. Odur Jonathan wants to ask you is; were you trading in bodies? *(Laughter)*

**MR JONATHAN ODUR:** Madam Speaker, you know issues of human trafficking and dealing in organs; people are killing others and they are transporting the bodies. Therefore, you should be on record about what you were really doing.

**MR TAYEBWA:** No, Madam Speaker; that was the only means of transport available. It was so difficult to come from Unity State or Wau to Juba. Once you got an opportunity, even if you were to come in a boot, you would have to do so. That is what it meant trading in South Sudan.

Madam Speaker, if you went to the market like Konyo Konyo, which I would call the Nakasero or Owino of South Sudan, the language is Luganda. And if you go to the boys in Konyo Konyo and you start talking about all these issues, and you say, “Come back,” they can even pelt you with stones.

The problem is that we have failed to understand the risks involved in doing business in South Sudan. You want to travel at night, yet you know that there is insecurity. Similarly, we have failed to understand that this is a country whose systems are not yet strong; it is not yet like Uganda. These are people who have been fighting for over 20 years in the bush, they have faced challenges, but there are opportunities.

My advice to Ugandans is that you should be cautious and as Government, we will continue giving security advisory – the time to move and the time not to - but also, knowing which items to trade in and who to trust. The moment you leave it like that, many people will continue getting problems. Even if you guide them not to go, they will continue going because of the profits.

**MS BETTY AOL:** Thank you. Madam Speaker, when we talk about our people dying there, it is not about transport only. Sometimes, it is people who have been working there who are killed, yet we do not kill them here.

We have the Acholi of South Sudan and those of Uganda; we are just one people. As Ugandans, it should hurt us very much when our people are killed that side. If there is need for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to guide, why not? That is why I asked a question on ICGLR, leave alone East Africa and IGAD, because with ICGLR, already they have protocols in place. We deserve an explanation. If it is very risky for our people to go there, why should we allow them to go there? We should only allow them to go there when it is not very risky.

However, when it comes to compensation of the traders, our people have been very selfish. They only compensated those “big” people like the Government Chief Whip with their companies. However, the small companies who borrowed - some of them died because of the loans they borrowed. We said here that let the compensation be fair, and not only consider the Aponye Company Limited.

Please, South Sudan, we need to do *–(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable, we expect a report next week in this House on people who were not compensated. To the best of my knowledge, Hon. Thomas Tayebwa has not been compensated and his name is still on the list.

When you look at why we cannot stop people from going there, Hon. Thomas Tayebwa told you that he had to sit on a coffin to go there. Some of these people are not forced to go there, but what is important is for us to provide security in that area. In addition to what I said, we need the mind-set change; we need to talk to our people that it is not about war all the time. Youth representative?

5.25

**MR EDSON RUGUMAYO (NRM, Youth Representative, Western):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I join my colleagues to commend this very elaborate report. Madam Speaker, when your office facilitated Youth Members of Parliament to have a discussion in Arusha last September, I was privileged to sit with about 30 Youth Members of Parliament from South Sudan.

Gathering from their communication, there are key issues that came up when they submitted:

i. That whereas we have South Sudanese here, they were complaining to them that they also meet challenges here, especially in accessing work permits when they come as migrant workers.

ii. They raised an issue that they were not comfortable with the nature of jobs that the young people from Uganda were doing in South Sudan. For that reason, most of them said there is need for effort in the next five years before we see instances of xenophobia in South Sudan. Madam Speaker, this House has a great responsibility to ensure that it does not happen in South Sudan.

As Government, I think it is important that we devise a strategy of trading with South Sudan. The Government Chief Whip has been saying that when you go to a certain market in South Sudan, the language spoken there is Luganda.

Whereas we can happily say that, we should also be able to see that there is a risk with that because we would also complain about some of those jobs. For example, if we found Chinese in our Nakasero market trading, I do not think that we would feel comfortable. If we are going to allow that then there is need to beef up effort through Government to do much more; what we call corporate social responsibility to ensure we are doing well and that our people can live harmoniously with our counterparts in South Sudan.

I also want to inform this House that I received a distress call from a young man who had moved from Kabarole and was operating a forex bureau in Juba. He said that the agency responsible for revenue just came and collected all the dollars that he had worked for, for a month. He said that he lost over Shs 10 million. But what mechanism did he have to seek redress? He could not get any. I felt it important that this House gets this information. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Elder? *(Members rose\_)* I thought that there is only one elder, Hon. Baba.

5.28

**MR JAMES BABA (NRM, Koboko County, Koboko):** This one is stillyounger. Madam Speaker, South Sudan desperately needs help. South Sudan needs to be supported to stand on its feet. Even the people of South Sudan –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I thought you are a member of the committee?

**MR BABA:** Yes, I wanted to complement what *–(Laughter)–* but Hon. Lucy was a member of the committee.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Elder, whom are you giving information to?

**MR BABA:** To the General.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, let us be fair to other Members, if you are a member of the committee.

5.29

**MR STEPHEN KAGWERA (NRM, Burahya County, Kabarole):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My issues are just two:

First, is about the border. Madam Speaker, the border that we have issues with is not only South Sudan. Generally, the other day, we had conflicts with DR Congo and then again with Kenya. Therefore, as a country, I think it is prudent, especially through our ministers to make clear our borders. Even that of DR Congo, people are just silent, but it was not resolved completely, and the one of Kenya will come up one time.

I would like to agree with Maj. Gen. Masiko that these borders are not necessary, but for the time being, we must work using them *–(Interjection)-* We had conflict with Rwanda.

There are many issues at the borders and we encourage –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I thought the borders are constitutional.

**MR KAGWERA:** Are they constitutional?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes.

**MR KAGWERA:** That is why we must work using them and where we have issues, Government must come up and clear.

The second issue is about integration. I support Maj. Gen. Masiko on integration –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Whether you like it or not, the borders must be there; they are constitutional and it is not for debate. Whether we integrate or we are in love with whichever country, the borders must be there. How we manage our borders is the question.

**MR KAGWERA:** Madam Speaker, the point is how we manage them. Why is it that we have conflicts?

The other issue is about integration. It is very unfortunate that *–(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Nyakikongoro?

5.31

**MS ROSEMARY NYAKIKONGORO (NRM, Woman Representative, Sheema):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson of the committee for bringing out these issues, particularly the issue of security along the borders because we have been receiving similar scenarios with regard to the porous borders. Members bordering South Sudan have raised concerns about the uncontrolled movement of guns from South Sudan. Perhaps, this could be the reason we have insecurity in that part of Karamoja.

When we say the police and UPDF should continue to patrol - of course, the borders are quite wide. Therefore, there is a need to engage our sister organisation in South Sudan - much as we have said South Sudan is disorganised - I want to know whether the minister is privy to the East African joint military drills that happen annually. I am quite sure, this year, the exercise is going to take place in Uganda. How are they collaborating with the South Sudan People’s Defence Forces (SSPDF) to ensure that there is controlled flow of ammunition from South Sudan to Uganda?

We were informed that the SSPDF and South Sudanese take food forcefully across the border. They have even taken over most of the gardens and everything. We are wondering why Ugandan security forces cannot get into such a thing *–(Member timed out.)*

5.33

**MS ROBINAH RWAKOOJO (NRM, Gomba West County, Gomba):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to think that the principle of reciprocity is very important. Ugandans are very hospitable people. South Sudan nationals have not been discriminated against and have been welcomed as business partners.

It is very painful that our nationals face restrictions, loss of property and even suffer death. When you look at the statistics we have been given, eight Ugandan lives have been lost out of 28, and 13 vehicles out of 16 belong to Ugandans. I think Government should come out very strongly to protest these acts of discrimination and the serious losses.

Madam Speaker, I support the recommendations on pages 9 and 10, which talk about the intensification of bilateral and regional engagements with the Government of the Republic of South Sudan, issuance of travel advisories; warning Ugandans not to go to South Sudan without security guarantees.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives should sensitise Ugandans travelling to South Sudan about the need to register their presence with the Uganda Embassy. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, the problem is that some of you go out to take tea, then you come back and when I do not give you time to speak, you complain.

**MS NAKUT:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to inform the Chairperson of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs that the entire Karamoja borderline does not have a border post, which is open for South Sudan and Kenya. Anything can happen.

I commend the committee for a good job. Last week, I was at Elegu border with the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development. I would like to state that the findings of the defence committee are similar to what we found out, especially the status of the border itself.

The customs officers decried the flood. They are actually afraid that if it rains in a few weeks, there will be nowhere to even work. According to the customs officers, when there is flooding at the border, it is only the Government building that remains standing. The rest of the people stand on their rooftops waiting for the flood to subside. This is something that cannot wait too long.

The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Water and Environment have enough equipment. We could, therefore, deploy this equipment to open water ways before the next rainy season. This brings us to the disaster preparedness issue in the country. When we know that something bad is going to happen, we must prepare.

The Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development found out that, that border point is economically strategic for Uganda. We have few countries we trade with and so, we cannot afford to even lose one. We must protect that border point in every way, even security wise. I beg to submit.

5.37

**MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri):** Madam Speaker, I thank the committee for the report. I have one question for the minister. The biggest challenge we have in South Sudan is the porous border. If I may ask the honourable minister: How many Ugandan traders are in South Sudan? No one has a clear answer. Honourable minister, I would like you to clarify something. If we asked you -  how many traders do you have in South Sudan - As Government, we must account for our people who are in other countries.

Whereas to go to another country one requires a stamped passport, to go and trade in South Sudan, like the Government Chief Whip told us, you just walk in and walk out. This is a challenge the ministry must handle. The ministry should have handled it yesterday. The moment you cannot account for your people on the other side, then you cannot guarantee their safety because you do not know the number of people you should protect.

Honourable minister, I would like to request you to clarify to Members of Parliament and to the country the plan the ministry has to profile people who are trading in South Sudan.

As I conclude, honourable minister, can you clarify the ministry’s plan on profiling traders in South Sudan? This is the question I would like you to answer. I beg to submit.

5.39

**MR JOEL LEKU (NRM, Terego West County, Terego):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to commend the committee for the report. However, the report only brings out Elegu. This report clearly pointed out the loss of properties, but in West Nile, we lose a lot of properties not necessarily through South Sudan border -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable member, the report is on Elegu and not Bukedea.

**MR LEKU:** We lost a lot of property through the Congo border. As you are all aware, sometime back, Arua Regional Referral Hospital lost an ambulance, which is still stuck -

*Boda bodas* in West Nile lose a number of motorcyclesthrough theft. When these motorcycles enter Congo or South Sudan, there is no way of getting them back. Therefore, how do we protect the properties in West Nile, which are stolen and then taken to South Sudan? How do we get them back?

The minister should come out clearly on the mechanisms of protecting the properties of the people of West Nile -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Protecting the properties and the lives of the people of Uganda.

**MR LEKU:** Number two is about the flooding in Elegu. The UPDF has demonstrated that they can actually control flooding in this country. We have been talking about this flooding for years. Can’t we deploy the UPDF Engineering Brigade to handle the floods in Elegu? I thank you very much.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. I am happy you now appreciate the importance of the UPDF Engineering Brigade. *(Applause)* We will do that. Hon. Charity Bainababo – you are the leader here – ask if we can use the UPDF Engineering Brigade to handle that issue and report back to us.

5.42

**MR FRED KAYONDO (DP, Mukono County South, Mukono):** Madam Speaker, I like it when we say we need South Sudan, but I think South Sudan also needs us. I think we both need each other, but we are debating with –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Hon. Fred, I said we need to co-exist. Maybe, it was just English. *(Laughter)* “Co-existence” means we need each other.

**MR KAYONDO:** Madam Speaker, I am very comfortable with the Queen’s language. *(Laughter)* If we stand here and say, “If we open the border, which side would you like to go to?” We would see many people flocking to South Sudan.

In my mother tongue, we have a saying that when you see a rat running towards fire then, you know that what is chasing it is hotter than fire.

We should not be proud, as a country, that our nationals can run to South Sudan, where they are suffering from. That is not something we can be proud of. There is nothing we have not done for South Sudan. We have given them security, we have given them food, we have given them roads and we have given them power. What have we benefitted, Madam Speaker? They are very hostile, but we cannot –*(Member timed out.)*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We cannot talk about hostility of a country for relationship purposes. You need to be diplomatic.

**MR KAYONDO:** Madam Speaker, even –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, you are not on the microphone. Diplomatic relations demand that you hold the other one with respect, however much he has hurt you. That is why we have the ministers of foreign affairs and international relations to bring on board these kinds of things. We should not use unparliamentary language to castigate another country. *(Applause)*

5.44

**MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi):** Madam Speaker, diplomatically, I want to agree with you. *(Laughter)* South Sudan is one of us and we have got a responsibility to help them build their house. Once they have a good house, at any one point, we shall be visiting them and we shall be comfortable sitting with them.

Madam Speaker, in this Parliament, we have a forum on East African Community Affairs. That forum ensures that people have a platform for discussing matters to do with East Africa. If we want to escape all these troubles that we are facing today, we need to make the EAC real. It should get off from paper and become the real EAC.

Integration is what we need for us to change what is happening. We are only trying to fight symptoms, but the real causes are down there.

Madam Speaker, in Uganda, we have UPE. I am not sure that all the partner states have UPE because the people who are developing towards becoming thugs or whatever – violent - are people who have not gone to school, most likely. I say so because the uneducated are the roughest when they hold a gun.

So, Madam Speaker, we have a duty to make the EAC real. Uganda has done a big job in extending this role even up to DR Congo. That is the kind of thing that we must be able to do. That one will help us to do trade and it will bring dollars - if the Congolese have dollars, I do not know their currency - we shall benefit.

If we are talking about security – we cannot deal with our security without dealing with the security of South Sudan. It must be integrated.

Therefore, strategic security can only be complete when South Sudan is part of the equation - for those who have done mathematics. So, you cannot eliminate them. It is not about you or the other one, but us: the EAC. So, we must now think as East Africa.

Madam Speaker, we need to replicate this forum that we have formed in the Parliament of Uganda in the EAC partner states so that we have the platform to discuss with the rest in the parliaments of the partner states. Thank you.

5.47

**MR RICHARD WANDA (NRM, Bungokho County Central, Mbale):** Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. I also want to thank the committee for the great work done and the good report given to this House.

Madam Speaker, I am one of those who have taken time to work in South Sudan. Back in the day, I was working with KPMG and I was in charge of tax, as a manager, in South Sudan. I want to report to this House that they are a necessary partner. We need them and they need us.

Madam Speaker, what I also want to raise is that, yes, Hon. Aogon said that we have a forum, but we also have a minister in charge of East African Community affairs and a Minister for Foreign Affairs. I think it is necessary that they pick up this matter and discuss, diplomatically, with the necessary parties in South Sudan because we need each other and I believe a solution can be found. For the sake of development, we must work together. Thank you.

5.49

**MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga):** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It is a public secret that South Sudan is the youngest country on the continent. As we begin or continue castigating or accusing them for this and that, we should not compare it with countries like Uganda, which is 60 years old. So, let us accept the gaps and the loopholes and keep guiding and advising them in one way or another.

In the defence forces - I think Gen. Masiko ought to have mentioned this – there are fraternal arrangements that are taking place, whereby they are sending their forces to Uganda for training such that they get oriented on how best they can manage their own issues, moreso on security.

So, I want to appeal to colleagues that, yes, there are challenges here and there that we should keep looking at and advising them in one way or another, but let us look at the benefits that result from us working together.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank you, but also appeal to the minister in charge of lands to come up with a concrete programme of us surveying our borders. We should have it done such that these clashes over border points are sorted, once and for all. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Leader of the Opposition?

5.50

**THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Mathias Mpuuga):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I read and followed the report of the committee. I would like to appreciate the team for a job well done.

In November last year, as part of my tour to Northern Uganda, I visited this border post, and the issues emerging from the report mirror what we actually established that time.

Government needs to move in and address some of the issues. For instance, the issue of flooding came out critically, from all the stakeholders we met and the question that arose was whether Government is alive to the challenge of the community.

I would like to implore the minister to consider an inter-ministerial arrangement because as well as the issues therein, some of them relate to trade and others to agriculture and tourism. For example, we had reports of elephants invading the communities from South Sudan and we thought that could be easily fixed.

As night follows day, there will be a flood this year, and the traders will lose; it does happen every year. So, are there times when we do not have a government in this country? At least for the last 30 years, we have had something akin to a Government that must wake up and do something. Government should do something about the plight of the people in Elegu; it is a shame.

I was there with a team of honourable members and Government should go and take charge of this situation; I have a feeling that we can do more. I was part of the committee of Parliament that investigated the challenges of Ugandan traders in South Sudan as the legal counsel for the committee and my feeling is that we can do more for the people.

Madam Speaker, even the monies we voted for to take care of the losses occasioned to the traders in the 10th Parliament was not fully raised by Government. Instead of Government coming here with a report, they should first make available the money that Parliament duly passed. I do not know what happened to them.

Therefore, some of the follow-ups are so weak that our people are so threatened; Ugandans are very, very innovative people. We visited communities there and you could see the creativity of the common people trying to eke out a living and all they wanted was a stable state.

I agree with Gen. Matsiko; fragile states threaten the existence of our people and their innovative culture, but before we talk about integration, each individual state must sort out its own internal contradictions. For example, if we exported our own contradiction to South Sudan, you will have an Afghanistan in the region. So, we need to sort out individual state contradictions as we think about integration, both politically and economically.

However, there are easy ones in South Sudan who have made the biggest state investment, but the most frightening business as a company business. The Kenyans hover around watching what we are seeing. I wouldn’t be shocked if in DRC, after all, the roads are paved, you will find more Kenyan businesses thriving while Ugandans will be watching; something is wrong.

In finality, to make sure that our investment of time and resources doesn’t go to waste, when it follows up with more organised trade, the commercial attachments at the embassies need to be strengthened more than political and military operatives; we need more, maybe we need all.

However, now that we have made an investment in these countries, we need to see more organised trade in them, including South Sudan. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, Leader of the Opposition. Honourable members, I don’t want us to lose the issue of compensation; the outstanding compensation and then now the incoming one, especially for those families that have lost their dear ones and property.

You must be mindful that most of these people had mortgages. You cannot operate without a mortgage, especially if you are doing such a lucrative business. We need to look at all those issues as the Government and also cater for the orphans and the widows, whose husbands have been transporting these goods, and the drivers who have died on the road, and see how best we can help these people.

Let us do a proper analysis of the people who lost their lives? How much property has been lost? What can we do to the widows and the orphans in that area? The ministries of finance, foreign affairs, water and all the inter-ministerial departments, including tourism; all the responsible inter-ministerial ministries, must come together and look at this issue and handle it.

The problem we have is that when you bring up this kind of thing, corruption again comes in. Even those who are not supposed to get compensated want to be compensated. So, as ministers, you need to walk the talk. Have these people compensated and this issue solved?

The General talked about ensuring we have security to protect our people. Your role is to protect the lives of the people and their property. So, make sure that even when you are in Parliament here, representing the UPDF, you should be able to give them feedback; this is what we need and these are the issues that we have in Parliament. He asked in regards to security.

Honourable minister, do you have anything to say?

6.00

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (REGIONAL AFFAIRS) (Mr John Mulimba):** I want to thank you and colleagues who have expressed concerns and all the contributions that have been made. I have a few clarifications that I would like to put across. However, like you have said, we enjoy very cordial and warm relations with the Republic of South Sudan, and as an organ of Government, sometimes we need to take a little bit of care when we talk about the relationship between states.

On another account, Madam Speaker, I would like to seek your indulgence and correct the notion or assertion, as put by one of our colleagues from Hoima - I miss the name, but that colleague said that South Sudan is a failed state.

Madam Speaker, diplomacy requires that we use very palatable language especially as an organ of Government. We need to be careful sometimes when dealing with matters of international relations.

Just to give you clarification, our trade balance between the Government of Uganda and the Republic of South Sudan is in our favour. And as we speak, we reap approximately $400 million from that market.

Uganda and South Sudan collaborate very well on different arenas, including cooperation at political, defence, economic and commercial levels.

Just on the 21st of this month, 14 states convened *-(Interjection)-* I hope you listen to me very carefully. Just on the 21st of last month, 14 Heads of State convened in Kinshasa, under the framework arrangement of the Peace Security Cooperation Framework sponsored by the International Committee on the Great Lakes Region, South African Development Cooperation, African Union and the UN.

This cooperation framework began in 2018 and one of the governance arms was the Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM). In that meeting, His Excellency President Museveni was handing over the chairmanship of the ROM, as one of the governance arms of the peace, security and co-operation, to His Excellency President Tshisekedi. The 14 states include the Republic of South Sudan.

One of the objectives of this framework is to enhance cooperation in building capacities of member countries to deal with strategic security in the region. I want to applaud members who have spoken about our partnership. It is very strategic, especially in the region, including with the Republic of South Sudan.

The Government of Uganda is doing all that it takes to build its capacity to deal with security threats in the Republic of South Sudan, in order to maximise the benefits. However, the final shot in all these is going to be the actual Federation of the East African states and a little beyond that.

Madam Speaker, we deal with both bilateral and multilateral issues at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the Government of South Sudan, in dealing with most of the contradictions that have been earlier stated here. It is not that we are seated doing nothing, but we are trying, including the planned IGAD Summit, which is going to happen here this month.

On the issue of compensation, which has come up very severally - it is true that sometime this Parliament debated on the issue of compensation and some money was approved for it. However, the compensation we are talking about is not for all those who lost, especially those traders who lost their property. We were dealing with those who had supplied Government, which had failed to come forth in terms of making good their commitments.

Later on, there was another batch where some traders had claimed that Government had okayed. Fortunately, we had a swarm of claimants and Government hired a company. I do not remember which company that was, but I think it was Ernst & Young; to do the verification. During the verification exercise, most of the claimants fell short of making it to the list. That was the contradiction.

I have just been discussing with my colleague, the Minister for Economic Monitoring, and who has agreed to say he should *–(Interruption)*

**MR MPUUGA:** Thank you. On the issue of who merited compensation, we seem to have dealt with that matter deeply after the presentation of our report here in the 10th Parliament. There seemed to be consensus that those who insisted that they wanted compensation from Government should be evaluated.

However, we had a category of honoraria that required a Cabinet approval, of people - the *wanainchi* who were handling very humble business of $10,000 and below; whom Government should have recognised to give a start-up.

We ask you to go and dust up that report and take it to Government for a memorandum to take action from you and we move on with those citizens. Those for evaluation by Ernst & Young, were categorised. Please, just move and take action. That information is there.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can you conclude?

**MR MULIMBA:** Thank you for that information. I think Government is going to take this up. Madam Speaker, like you have directed, we have noted the ministries, departments and agencies, which are concerned. We are going to cooperate to ensure that all the recommendations out of the findings from this report and the attendant inclusions that have been submitted by the Members herein, will be taken on adequately. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable minister. We hope you are going to make a follow-up on all the recommendations in this report plus the amendments therein.

I now put the question that the reports of the Joint Oversight Committees on Foreign Affairs and the East African Community Affairs to Elegu be adopted by this House with the amendments.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION ON ACCOUNT OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN UGANDA FOR THE YEARS 2019, 2020 AND 2021

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, this statement is coming after the walkout, which was there before. Fortunately, when the Leader of the Opposition was still out, we got a report, which we referred to the committee. We will get this report from the Leader of the Opposition and also refer it to the same committee for us to debate it at once.

We will only debate this report once we have the responsible ministers. I do not want Hon. Tayebwa to be answering what he does not know. I would like the Minister for Constitutional Affairs here, the Attorney-General, Minister for Defence, Minister for Security and Minister for Internal Affairs. All should be available.

Therefore, the report of the Leader of the Opposition is uploaded. Let it be captured in the *Hansard* and then, taken to the committee – do you have a word to say?

6.07

**THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Mathias Mpuuga):** Thank you, Madam Speaker.  I do not have so much to say. First of all, when we chose to leave the House for two weeks, I thank the presiding officer and honourable members that I never heard anybody mock at our decision because it was well-informed; save for a one-off from the Government Chief Whip. We forgave him for caring a lot about food. That was forgivable and we ignored it.

On Tuesday, I was here and had very hearty submissions from Members from across the entire House about the issue of human rights. I recollect the submissions, for example, of the Hon. Chemonges from Kween, my sister, Rose from Terego and the Hon. Mourine from Arua City. These were very serious submissions.

Madam Speaker, it is not about me presenting a statement here. I am trying to request that these statements and reports coming from the Committee on Human Rights generate a consensus of the House on how this must stop in our time when we are leaders. It is not a question of me coming here to present a report.

That does not extinguish other issues on which we put the House on notice, including probably moving a motion to have this House make a countrywide inquest into gross human rights violations in this country over the last couple of months.

I do not know what is going on and what is wrong with sections of our security. Maybe, they need our help. That will offer an opportunity.

Madam Speaker, I am willing to put to rest that statement and give this House time to exhaust its procedures. I am aware that the Committee on Human Rights in the 10th Parliament, immediately after the last election, had its own inquest that we never debated here. Probably, the new committee will take interest in that matter and make an exploration of what was and what was not.

There is a lot of work to do and I do not want the house to gloss over this because I can assure you, comrades, it will come back to haunt all of us, which is why I have the patience to wait and observe. If anybody wants to get information from me, or any member of my team, we are at the service of this House because we are here to legislate for posterity. We are not about excitement or being vindictive. We want to make sure that victims of torture and abduction get justice. That is our quest, Madam Speaker, and nothing more.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. Could you kindly lay that report on the Table so that it is captured in the *Hansard*? You can use my copy.

*(The report shall appear as Appendix I in the Hansard Monthly Bound Volume of March 2022)*

**MR MPUUGA:** Madam Speaker, I wish to lay this report on Table so that it becomes Parliament property, including the attachments I had promised, which are part of the report, because I heard the minister denying ever receiving official information.

I have even received information in the office of the Minister of Internal Affairs and stamped as “received”, including my mention of the records in the *Hansard* of people’s names, telephone numbers and addresses of family members that have disappeared, which the minister feigned ignorance about.

I beg to lay, Madam Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you very much. What I can assure you, Leader of the Opposition, is that issues of human rights and torture are not issues of the Opposition per se; they are our issues as a country and everybody. I promise you that justice will prevail. I give you my promise and I will make sure that we follow it to the letter.

I would like to thank you very much. Have a blessed evening. I adjourn the House to Wednesday, 9 March 2022 at 2 o’clock. Have a blessed Women’s Day. Be good men. *(Laughter)*

*(The House rose at 6.12 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 9 March 2022 at 2.00 p.m.)*