



PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FOURTH SESSION - THIRD MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 5 MARCH 2025



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA
IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - 20TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Wednesday, 5 March 2025

Parliament met at 2.17 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker, Mr Thomas Tayebwa, in the Chair.)

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to this sitting. As Christians who have begun the lent period. Today, we were blessed to have His Grace, the Most Rev. Archbishop, Samuel Kazimba, leading us in prayers organised by the Parliamentary Anglican Chaplaincy. I believe most of us were late because we were still with His Grace.

In the evening, we shall have prayers led by the Catholic Chaplaincy in the conference hall, and they will be led by Bishop Christopher Kakooza, the Bishop of Lugazi. Therefore, I will adjourn the House at 5.00 p.m. so that we can go and welcome him. It is very important to accord these leaders that kind of respect because it is only once in a while that we get such opportunities.

I wish to remind the Executive of the deadline for the submission of the ministerial policy statements, which is 15 March 2025. This is the statutory deadline clearly stipulated in the PFMA but also in our Rules of Procedure.

Therefore, we will not accept any policy statements that are submitted after the deadline.

I confirmed this with the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, who has communicated to all accounting officers.

I do not expect any accounting officer to disturb the ministers by asking them to run to the Office of the Speaker to be helped. I hope that we can keep that deadline – and I think some of them should be here by now. That is why I want to give a strong reminder. I request the minister for finance to request the PS/ST to write again to all accounting officers as a reminder.

We take these things for granted but I know that when some of them miss – and I do not want to have issues, which we usually have, especially when it comes to policy statements. We would also appreciate it if you send us soft copies so that they are uploaded. This is because sometimes, we have had cases where chairpersons of committees have told me that statements are laid on the Table and then withdrawn because they have issues.

We will be glad to have soft copies so that as you lay on the Table, they are also uploaded for the Members to look at. I will start allocating space on the Order Paper tomorrow to receive ministerial policy statements and we shall end that next week.

Colleagues, today, I am not handling matters of national importance. We will handle all of

them tomorrow, Thursday, during the Prime Minister's time so that we can save some time to handle critical issues on the Order Paper.

The things I have communicated are straightforward. Next item? (*Hon. Ssewungu rose*) I know the rights of the Leader of the Opposition (LOP) more than – the presiding officer is guiding us to the next item. Next item?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE ONGOING HEAT WAVES AND CLIMATE MITIGATION MEASURES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, as you bring your statement, let me just get a comment from the acting LOP.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for allowing me to raise a matter relating to your communication. This week, I am the Shadow Minister for Education and the LOP. We have had the ministry for education here, and we raised a number of issues concerning the new curriculum. There was a debate last week, and we got assurances from the minister.

However, this Monday, senior five students began school with a new curriculum, which the teachers have not been trained on. The call that I have just received is from two head teachers in my constituency, who have been given a new voluminous curriculum, and they are asking me to photocopy it for them for all their teachers.

What we would like to know is what senior five students are going to learn. Which curriculum will they be taught because no single teacher has been trained under the new curriculum? However, they say that they are using the old curriculum, which was used in senior four -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssewungu, that is neither part of my communication nor is it a procedural matter. I just want to remain relevant.

MR SSEWUNGU: Mr Speaker, I said "procedure" and you permitted me.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, but it is not a procedural matter. Procedure is for what is going on in the House, not issues we are not handling today.

MR SSEWUNGU: Mr Speaker, your discretionary powers are very good but with this problem – if you allow me to find out from the Ministry of Education and Sports - because it is beneficial to all of us. We cannot have schools beginning senior five, without a proper curriculum, and yet they spent four years in a new curriculum. This is the work of the National Curriculum Development Centre and the ministry for education. They must come and update us - (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can I give guidance? The communication we have here on the Order Paper is communication from the presiding officer; No one else has the right to communicate. LOP, you can only stand up to either speak to my communication or a point of procedure.

Point of procedure is for issues going on in the House as we are sitting. This is also now your communication. I know the matter might be critical, but it should fit within what is provided for in the rules. Therefore, since they have taken note of this matter, they should handle it tomorrow during the Prime Minister's time.

Colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have students and teachers of Seven Hills International School, Kampala. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Muhammad Nsereko and Hon. Shamim Malende. They are here to observe proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Honourable minister, the Floor is yours.

2.26

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (ENVIRONMENT) (Ms Beatrice Anywar): Mr Speaker, I am privileged to be given the opportunity to respond to the issues, which were raised. This is a brief that has been prepared to update you

and the House on the current high temperatures being experienced across the country. The brief also addresses the concerns raised by Hon. Simon Opio, Kole North County, regarding the ongoing heat wave - those are the high temperatures and the mitigation measures.

The Ministry of Water and Environment is committed to providing regular weather updates to this House.

As you are aware, the effect of climate change and increasing climate variability have made weather and climate conditions more challenging. Weather-related disasters are becoming more frequent with severe impacts on agriculture, livelihood, infrastructure and aviation, amongst others.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, is your statement uploaded? Colleagues, do you have it; because it is a requirement?

MS ANYWAR: Mr Speaker, I submitted it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: When?

MS ANYWAR: To the Clerk's office.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not have a copy of this statement, and it is not uploaded. Honourable minister, I request that we stand over it, do what is necessary, and then you will come back.

MS ANYWAR: Most obliged.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Can we borrow your copy so that we can use it for uploading and then return it to you? You see, if it is not copied to my or the Speaker's office, we cannot have copies; and I do not have it. Next item?

LAYING OF PAPERS

DEBT SUSTAINABILITY ANALYSIS REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/2024

2.30

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table, the Debt Sustainability Analysis Report for the Financial Year 2023/2024. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The report is referred to the Committee on Budget for processing and reporting back.

Thank you. With guidance from the minister and in consultation with the Clerk, it is referred to the Committee on National Economy. Thank you.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON THE OVERSIGHT VISIT TO THE EMBASSY OF UGANDA IN BUJUMBURA, BURUNDI

2.31

MR GABRIEL OKUMU (NRM, Okoro County, Zombo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I beg –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, who are you?

MR OKUMU: I am Gabriel Okumu. I am standing in for the Chairperson of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. It is under rule 204 of our Rules of Procedure. I rise under that rule.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, the committee chairperson should inform the Speaker. Therefore, because of that, I will not allow it.

MR OKUMU: Mr Speaker, the letter was written and handed over to your office.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I want to guide you. You make our work difficult. For every document in Parliament, the moment you write to the Speaker, you should copy to the Deputy Speaker unless it is personal. I have seen the committee chairperson. It becomes very easy for us to – because I do not have a copy in my office and my Executive Secretary is here. No, I do not have a copy. I have checked all my documents, so I know. Putting that you have copied to my office is not enough.

Since it was received, I will allow it, but next time, ensure that copies are sent. It makes our work very easy so that we do not keep running around.

Yes, Hon. Okumu.

MR OKUMU: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for your indulgence. I would like to lay the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs on the oversight visit to the Embassy of Uganda in Bujumbura, Burundi. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rule 34(2) for field visit reports requires that once you lay the report, you give us a summary. Honourable Member, do you have a summary? It should be just a summary of the findings; one page is enough. I see you have a big document.

MR OKUMU: I will make it in about three minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Very good.

MR OKUMU: It will be about the highlights. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. A delegation of the committee, comprising 11 members, accompanied by four staff, conducted an oversight visit to the Embassy of Uganda in Bujumbura from the 13th to 19th of February 2024. It comprised of the then Chairperson, Hon. Norah Bigirwa Nyendwoha, Hon. Fred Opolot, Hon. Noah Mutebi and others.

In this report, what was really fascinating was the issue of education. You find that they have adopted, among all other things, and are using

our curriculum. Children have to travel from Bujumbura to come and sit for the exams here. When the children come here, usually you find that they come a day or two to the exams, and it has really been affecting them.

The committee observed as follows:

The committee learned that learners in Bujumbura studying in the Ugandan curriculum are required to travel to Uganda to sit for UNEB examinations. This arrangement is not only costly but also an inconvenience to them, causing psychological strain on the children. They often travel one or two days before the exams. They arrive when they are fatigued. They need to actually settle down before they sit for the final examinations.

The committee – I am reading only one recommendation of education, which I felt was very important. The committee recommended as follows:

The Ministry of Education and Sports, in collaboration with Uganda's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, should engage the Government of Burundi through diplomatic channels to negotiate and formalise the establishment of a UNEB examination centre in Burundi. This will reduce the financial burden and psychological strain on the learners travelling to Uganda for exams and encourage more schools in Burundi to adopt and promote the Ugandan Curriculum.

We also recommended that the Ministry of Education and Sports, through the Embassy of Uganda in Burundi, should work closely with the schools teaching the Ugandan Curriculum to ensure that they meet the necessary requirements of establishing a UNEB centre, including recruiting qualified staff and adhering to the Uganda education standards.

We also recommend that the Ministry of Education and Sports should deploy an education attaché to Burundi to capitalise on the significant export potential of the Ugandan education curriculum, strengthen education partnerships, and provide guidance to schools using the Ugandan curriculum.

The Embassy of Uganda in Burundi should be allocated adequate funding to organise an education expo aimed at promoting Uganda's education system and attaching more Burundian learners to Ugandan institutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can you conclude, honourable Member?

MR OKUMU: In conclusion, I request Parliament to take a keen interest in this report for Bujumbura, and they should adopt it. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, the rules unfortunately say it is laying of papers - rule 34(3). We shall appoint a date for considering this critical report. I can see Members were already excited to debate. The rules unfortunately limit us when it comes to such reports.

Honourable colleagues, as I had mentioned to you earlier on, at the beginning of our session, today, we are privileged to be hosting the Most Rev. Dr Samuel Kazimba Mugalu, the Archbishop of the Church of Uganda. He is in the VIP Gallery. *(Applause)* Your Grace, you are always welcome, and thank you for blessing us. Next time when you are blessing us, remember Manchester United Football Club because the Speaker always has headaches, so I will be glad. *(Laughter)*

He is accompanied by Rev. Canon Dr Rebecca Nyegenye, Provost of All Saints Cathedral, Dr Tendo Mukadde Ayigga, a Priest at All Saints Cathedral, Rev. Gillian Amongin Okello, our very own Chaplain of the Parliamentary Anglican Chaplaincy, and Rev. Johnson Kansiime, the Chaplain to the Archbishop. Honourable colleagues, they have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Once again, join me in welcoming them. In a special way, we welcome the Head of Laity, Hon. Hamson Obua. *(Applause)*

Honourable colleagues, there is an item that I know the archbishop would be interested in. I request that we first handle that item because it is very critical. It is to do with financing the

Uganda Cancer Institute. Let us handle item number six, and maybe he will follow the debate. He requested us to have empathy when we are legislating here.

Honourable minister for environment, you shall come on later after item number six.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT TO AUTHORISE THE GOVERNMENT TO BORROW UP TO UNIT OF ACCOUNT, 13,500,000 (\$18.09 MILLION) ADDITIONAL FINANCING FROM THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FUND, TO FINANCE EAST AFRICA'S CENTRES FOR EXCELLENCE FOR SKILLS AND TERTIARY EDUCATION IN BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES PROJECT - PHASE I - UGANDA CANCER INSTITUTE

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister for finance. Hon. Gabriel Okumu, thank you very much. You did a great job on your maiden report.

2.41

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, pursuant to Article 159 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Section 34 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015, as amended, and rule 155 of our Parliamentary Rules of Procedure, I beg to move a motion for Parliament to approve the proposal by the Government to borrow up to \$18.09 million as additional financing from the African Development Fund, to finance East Africa's Centres For Excellence For Skills and Tertiary Education in Biomedical Sciences Project - Phase I - Uganda Cancer Institute. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Is the motion seconded? *(Members rose_)* It is seconded by Hon. Okupa, Hon. Isingoma, Hon. Ongiertho, Hon. Saazi, Hon. Kajwengye, Hon. Muzaale, Hon. Alanyo, Hon. Acon, Hon. Martin Mugarra, minister of state for local government, minister of state for the elderly, Hon. Lillian Paparu, Hon. Dorcas Acen, Hon.

Songa, Hon. Itungo, and most of you. For the Uganda People's Defence Force, I had already captured you.

Yes, honourable minister, give us a brief.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, the justification for the loan is as follows:

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the cash flow issues faced by the main contractor, the civil works activities for the project were delayed for over 18 months, stretching the civil works contract from 24 months to 42 months.

These delays led to a substantial increase in prices of materials and labour, and slow execution of other dependent project contracts, such as the procurements of; laboratory furniture and equipment, equipment for ICT and telemedicine, Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machine, which are all sensitive to price escalations on the world markets.

The bank, in 2022, undertook preliminary assessment for the project's suitability for additional financing against the criteria set out in Section 5 of the Additional Financing Policy and Section 3 of the Additional Financing Guidelines.

These assessments determined that;

1. Providing additional financing would be a better option than starting a new project to complete the outstanding works;
2. That the overall project was consistent with the original project's development objectives; and
3. That the project was technically feasible, and economically and financially viable.

The bank further determined that the causes of the financing gap were outside the control of both the borrower or recipient and the project implementing entity and that the ability of the project to meet its development objectives without additional financing was minimal. Mr Speaker, I will come to the terms of the loan –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you can leave that to the committee since it assessed it.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, with your indulgence, the terms are the reason I am here.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Then, committee chairperson, do not repeat that.

MR MUSASIZI: Mr Speaker, what are the terms of the loan? The terms are as follows:

1. Loan amount is unit of account 13.5 million, an equivalent of \$18.09 million.
2. Commitment fees - 0.75 per cent per annum on the undisbursed loan amount. This will accrue 120 days after the date of loan agreement.
3. Service charge - 1 per cent per annum of the disbursed loan balance.
4. The tenure is 50 years, including the grace period, which is 10 years.

Honourable colleagues, the African Development Fund is the concessional financing window of the African Development Bank that finances low-income regional member countries. The terms are concessional with a loan period of 50 years, including the grace period.

I now conclude with the benefits. Currently, Uganda gets 60,000 new cancer cases per year. While most are attended to locally, a significant number also seek treatment in India, USA and other countries with superior facilities.

The project will, therefore, reduce the cost of treatment abroad by approximately between USD 100,000 to 300 million spent by the Government of Uganda on care abroad. The introduction of the BTM treatment unit would be a major leap in treating blood cancer.

Mr Speaker, with this justification, I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable minister. We have to receive the

committee report and then get that during the debate, okay? Committee Chairperson-

2.48

MR ROBERT MIGADDE (NRM, Buvuma Islands County, Buvuma): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Before I proceed, allow me to lay on the Table the minutes of the Committee on National Economy for the meetings held in consideration of this loan request. I beg to lay.

Please allow me also to lay on the Table a report of the Committee on National Economy and a proposal to borrow up to USD 18.09 million, additional financing from the African Development Bank Fund to finance East Africa's Centres of Excellence for Skills and Tertiary Education Biomedical Sciences Project, Phase I, Uganda Cancer Institute. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, the minister has highlighted a number of issues within this loan but for emphasis, the Committee on National Economy considered the request by the Government to borrow up to units of accounts USD 13,500,000 (18.09 USD) as additional financing for the Uganda Cancer Institute from the African Development Bank Fund of the African Development Bank Group, for financing East Africa's Centres of Excellence for Skills and Tertiary Education in Biomedical Sciences, Phase 1 Project.

In accordance with Rule 178(2)(b), of the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure, we beg to present this report. As the uploaded report highlights, conducted field visits, among them, Lubowa Specialised Hospital and East Africa's Centres for Skills and Tertiary Education in Mulago. Since the minister highlighted some of them, allow me to go to the components.

Component one is the creation of the Centres of Excellence in Oncology Sciences in Uganda East African Oncology Institute, which will aim at addressing labour market strategies for skilled professionals in oncology.

Under this component, additional financing will support:

1. Cost of allowance towards the finalisation of construction of the infrastructure at the Uganda Cancer Institute (UCI) multi-purpose building.
2. Enhance treatment and training of high-level manpower under centres of excellence in the East African region with a specific focus on oncology.
3. Provision of mechanical and electrical systems.
4. Training of biomedical staff. Specifically, the additional finance will be used to provide additional hospital space for specialised cancer services; provide additional specialised equipment for bone marrow transplant, provide mechanical and electrical systems; finalise the Information Communication Technology systems, MRI procurement and installation, and undertake greening of the project through water harvesting, solar-powered water heating and solar lighting backup.

Component 2: Support East African regional integration agenda in higher education and labour mobility. The East African Secretariat of Health Department is supported to implement its common market protocols including, among others, free labour mobility.

The additional finance will enhance the same activities envisaged in the Cancer of Excellence Phase I, specifically funding an East African member state's forum, to harness collective resources and comparative advantages in biomedical skills and knowledge development; to enable the centre of excellence to hold at least two thematic forums for knowledge sharing based on the biomedical focus in areas of each of the centres of excellence.

The outputs from this forum will constitute joint publications which will demonstrate the attainment of the centres of excellence, further support the East African Community study

and analysis of the labour market needs for the health sector and the development of the East African Community non-communicable disease registry.

Component three is project implementation which will involve providing resources to ensure effective project management at the country level.

Under this component, additional financial resources will be used for effective projects at UCI and other public partner institutions for training and research, including Makerere University of Health Sciences, Mbarara University of Science and Technology and Gulu University.

As the minister has already highlighted, the loan is concessional. Allow me to proceed with observations and recommendations.

One is an increase in the number of additional financing requests. The Committee notes that of late, the Government has tabled before Parliament a number of proposals requiring additional financing to the already ongoing projects.

A case in point is the Laropi-Moyo-Afoji-Katuna-Muko- Kamuganguzi Road Project, the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Project loan, Masaka-Mutukula Road Project; addition to this one and the Masaka-Mutukula Road Project, in addition to this.

This has been attributed to delays in the implementation of the projects, lack of adequate planning and preparedness for these projects, and variations in the scope of work, among others.

These lead to cost overruns resulting in requests for additional funds, ultimately increasing the financial burden on the Government.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the Government should minimise variations in, therefore, recommends that Government should minimise variations in projects except in unavoidable circumstances, such as changes

in scope or design, which may necessitate requests for additional funding.

A case in point, in terms of infrastructure, the scope changed by 80 per cent for this project. The plan was not to build a new structure so they ended up building a new one.

Two, the performance of the projects in the health sector. The committee noted that most of the ongoing projects in the health sector have faced slow progress and this is attributed to low disbursement rates.

Delays in the procurement process, incomplete or errors in designs, and compensation issues that make sites inaccessible. Bureaucracy, delayed payment due to lack of funding mostly brought by conditions precedent to disbursement, among others. Delays in implementing or executing critical health projects have a significant impact on service delivery.

The committee recommends that for efficient and effective implementation of this project, the implementing agency should ensure adequate identification and evaluation of risks that occur throughout the project cycle so that they are adequately mitigated to avoid further delays.

As the committee was considering this request, we toured the Mulago Cancer Institute, we saw the situation there with patients on the floor, in the corridors and everywhere.

Based on that, in addition to what the minister highlighted, as noted, the Government's efforts to improve health outcomes in the country and in the East African community, at the regional level, the proposed projects provide a vehicle for implementing key disease control strategic priorities of regional level, the proposed projects provide a vehicle for implementing key disease control strategic priorities of regional institutions.

Mr Speaker, the committee, therefore, supports and recommends to this House to approve the Government's request to borrow up to

UA 13,500,000 (that is \$18.09 million) as additional financing for the Uganda Cancer Institute from the African Development Bank Group for financing East Africa's Centres of Excellence for Skills and Tertiary Education in Biomedical Sciences Phase 1 Project. I beg to report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable chairperson. Members I open the debate.

2.58

MS LILLIAN PAPARU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee, for the detailed report. I am going to support the request for this loan. I lost my father last year at the Cancer Institute, and it was my first time being there.

I saw what happens there, and I was just whispering to a colleague that this is one of the needs that we have as a country. One of the components for the request for the loan is additional hospital space, and the chairperson mentioned that. At the Uganda Cancer Institute, there are patients who sleep in the corridors, verandas, because the space is not enough.

In addition to that, at times some of the equipment is not there. When they request for a test, you have a very ill patient and you have to go and look for equipment somewhere to do tests.

Colleagues, I rise to second the request for this loan. My only appeal is that let it be used at the right time and for the cause for which we are requesting it, so that we can see the impact and is implemented at the right time. Thank you.

MR OCHAI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I rise to seek clarification. I listened to both the minister and the chairperson during the presentation of the report, it took for granted the concessionality of the loan.

I am much more concerned about debt sustainability in Uganda and I wonder whether

the committee made any effort to calculate the grant element of the loan. This would actually demonstrate to us how concessional the loan is, how I wish that could be highlighted to us and then the impact on our debt levels. Thank you.

3.01

MS ROSE OBIGAH (NRM, Woman Representative, Terego): Thank you, Mr Speaker. If there is any loan that does not need too much English in this House; it is the loan for the Cancer Institute – (*Applause*) - I have so many patients from Terego and when they arrive for proper handling in Mulago, it is so painful.

You find them under trees because we do not have enough space. If there is any construction work that should be approved in this House, it should be the construction of an additional cancer ward space.

The first cancer machine came from India and I pray that part of this money will be used to purchase an additional machine. Everywhere, cancer is now on the rise and we need to decentralise regional hospitals fast testing.

You find people with wounds and cuts and by the time they are brought, they say cancer has already spread. We need to find a way of combating cancer in this country. I stand here to support this motion. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: (*Hon. Lokwang rose*) Hon. Lokwang Hillary _

MR LOKWANG: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am a Member of the committee, so the rules do not allow us to speak.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is because I saw you standing up.

MR HILLARY LOKWANG: Maybe I-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable, please. There is no maybe.

3.03

DR EMMANUEL OTAALA (NRM, West Budama County South, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to support the proposal by the Government to borrow this money and the justification that has been given.

In no uncertain terms, this loan is in the right direction and will go a long way to help this nation build its capacity in terms of health facilities that are available and help us save on referrals of patients abroad. I cannot explain them all.

Not so long ago, one of the leaders in the world, whose name I will not mention, challenged African countries to build the capacity of their own health systems. I cannot applaud the Government more when I see my own Government, the NRM Government, now borrowing money to strengthen the health sector.

We have highly qualified Ugandan medical doctors. When you go to Nairobi, South Africa, you find them, they are everywhere.

This loan is helping us to patch up and tie the strings together so as to create a robust healthcare system. I implore my colleagues to support this loan and pass it without much ado. I thank you.

3.05

MR HERBERT KINOBERE (NRM, Kibuku County, Kibuku): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I equally stand to support the proposal to acquire that facility. Just as my colleague, Hon. Obigah, has said, recently, I visited a facility in India, and I found one gentleman. At first, I thought he was maybe from Ghana. I picked interest and asked him, "Where do you come from?" He told me, "I am from Uganda. I was placed here for three years training from Mulago."

And if we have such a facility here, they would be training here and give us services after. Honourable colleagues, with this loan we should not even debate a lot. I request

the Speaker to put the motion and we pass it. Thank you. *(Laughter)*

3.06

MR SETH WAMBEDE (NRM, Northern Division, Mbale City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. They are urging me to move a motion, but I will not do that. My concern is the cause for the loan is justifiable. If you go to Mulago Cancer Institute, you will see really pathetic situations. However, my concern is the debt sustainability. For how long shall we borrow for every activity?

Secondly, there is a component of Government commitment and there are many loans that we have passed in the House, but there has not been any Government commitment. Can the minister assure us that there is commitment that will enable the disbursement of the loan? We may pass it and it remains in the books. No commitment fee paid there, the loan is, therefore, passed but not disbursed, which is the biggest problem with our Government and the Ministry of Finance. Otherwise, I support the motion.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Gafabusa -

3.08

MR RICHARD GAFABUSA (NRM, Bwamba County, Bundibugyo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join colleagues to thank the committee and the minister for this noble cause. I would also like to be on record, supporting this proposal for the Government to borrow to build capacity for our healthcare system.

In the last three years, I have lost four close relatives to cancer. I have been to the Cancer Institute and the conditions there are very deplorable. Sometimes you do not know where to run to because people they are also constrained.

In my view, we should have borrowed this loan yesterday but all the same, it is here and I stand to support it, so that we build our own capacity to manage it.

The cases are increasing, and any of us can fall victim to cancer. If we have our facility and capacity, we should be able to use that. Thank you.

3.09

MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join colleagues in thanking the honourable minister for coming up with this loan-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, what is going on in that corner? Honourable, continue.

MS SANTA ALUM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As Parliament, we have passed very many loans, but for this one, I beg that we pass it. You cannot imagine what is happening at Mulago Cancer Institute.

Last year, I had my late father there, and at night, when it was raining, patients had nowhere to sleep. They are all congested on the veranda and the medicine is very expensive. So, in memory of my father, I would like this House to pass this loan and not even delay for one minute. *(Applause)*

There was a day I was with Hon. Ntabazi, the former minister. We had nowhere to sit. We only secured seats for our patients.

Finally, I add my voice to the issue of counterpart funding from the Government. Honourable minister, is Government, really ready to provide the money? If the money is provided, what about corruption? As we are here passing this loan, there are people who are now salivating because “food” is coming. While I join colleagues in thanking the minister and passing this loan, I pray that we put it to good use to help our country and beyond. Thank you.

3.11

MR PATRICK ISINGOMA, (Independent, Hoima East Division, Hoima City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also join colleagues in thanking the minister for bringing forward

this loan. I am happy that for the first time, the whole House seems to be reading from the same page regarding this very important loan, and we think it will go a long way in mitigating some of the effects of cancer management in this country.

However, there is still a gap in the management of cancer in this country. That gap is caused by the continued lack of the Positron Emission Tomography (PET) machine in our country.

Recently, when we were debating the Budget Framework Paper here, we noticed, that some of the unfunded priorities in the health sector, included the installation of the PET machine in Mulago hospital.

I remember emphasising the importance of this PET machine in this country, which we do not have. Many people in this country who can afford it go out to seek its services, including going to Nairobi. Therefore, there is a need to find money to install this PET machine.

Therefore, honourable members, let us collectively urge the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Planning to bring a loan here, geared at the purchase of the PET machine.

The gap was only Shs 62 billion, it is not much money, given the importance of this machine, for the management of cancer in this country. I beg you to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, you should only come to this Table with the permission of the Presiding Officer. We made that pronouncement some time back. I have to respond to colleagues but you are distracting me. Sometimes it becomes difficult for me to follow. Hon. Allan Ssewanyana, Hon. Okupa, Hon. Kayondo, Hon. Rwabushaija, then, Hon. Kabasharira.

3.14

MR ALLAN SSEWANYANA (NUP, Makindye Division West, Kampala City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also second the motion to avail finances for the development of the Uganda Cancer Institute.

The committee noted that there were so many delays, especially in the projects that are being carried out by the health sector. We, for a very long period got concerned about the delays in the construction of Lubowa Hospital.

These delays have been a very big concern to the population of Ugandans. They hear the speed at which we pronounce ourselves, as Parliament, to the very much borrowing that we do give to the health sector but on the ground, nothing is being shown.

For almost five years now, Lubowa Hospital has been in the news, they are not constructing it at a fast speed, until now. We, therefore, expect some change; when we avail you with such finances, we expect something to be done quickly.

In my own constituency, Parliament provided Shs 12 billion, to cater for a sewage plant at Kiruddu National Referral Hospital. It is now more than six years, and the construction is at a slow pace. Almost every financial year, money is provided but nothing is being done. We, therefore, expect something different because people are complaining about health.

We do not have money to take people to India as some people can, so, we expect Uganda to also have its own machines and structures of health. That is why Parliament is speeding up each and every request, which is being brought forward by the Ministry of Health. Therefore, we expect the issue, honourable minister, to be of concern to you and the Government. Thank you.

3.16

MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join colleagues in supporting this motion, for the loan request. Like many colleagues have stated here, you need to visit the cancer institute in Mulago and see for yourself, how people are suffering, both patients and attendants.

Last year, I lost three people; this year, I have lost close colleagues, the latest being the former Inspector General of Police, John Cossy

Odomel, who passed on and we buried him last Saturday. He also succumbed to cancer of the bones, which later on spread to the liver.

When we were at the funeral service, we were told about the machine which Hon. Isingoma was talking about, the Positron Emission Tomography (PET) machine for early detection of cancers.

Kenya has five, Tanzania has one, and Uganda has none. It is high time that as we borrow money to improve the Uganda Cancer Institute; it is necessary to look at human development, which is very necessary but we must also look at the equipment needed to help with early detection. We were told that the late Cossy Odomel succumbed to it quickly because of late detection. The doctors in India were asking, "What is happening in Uganda? We would be able to arrest this situation, but most patients are brought here when they are in stage 3 or 4?"

Why can't the Government of Uganda work towards acquiring the equipment, such that there is early detection so that they can be able to handle the situation?

Mr Speaker, we appeal to the Government to move faster. As we handle human development, we must also look for money to equip hospitals with the latest machines to help us have early detection. Otherwise, we shall be wasting money all the time to take people to India for treatment because the gravity of the matter would be beyond the manageable standards.

Two, we also want to call –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Were you still on one? I thought you were concluding. *(Laughter)*

MR OKUPA: I am concluding with this, Mr Speaker. As we ask the Government, some companies do Corporate Social Responsibility. We call should upon them to come in to help provide especially accommodation for those who take care of the patients at Mulago Hospital.

There are people who when we pass money here for the projects to continue, sabotage them and cause delays. We passed money here for the Uganda Heart Institute at Naguru, but what is happening today is that Phaneroo Ministries has blocked the officials of the institute from accessing the site for construction to take off.

I call upon the Government to rein in this ministry called Phaneroo, which this Parliament had even stopped from acquiring land at Naguru - Dr Omagino was telling me that they have a challenge. The contractor cannot access the site because Phaneroo Ministries has blocked it.

Mr Speaker, I call upon the Government to take these things seriously and solve the problem; they are the people who are delaying the construction of the Uganda Heart Institute. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, but this project was launched by the Prime Minister on behalf of the President the other day. The Government Chief Whip should update the Prime Minister on this matter so that tomorrow when she comes for the Prime Minister's Time, she should clarify. Otherwise, it would be a total shame. Phaneroo has their land and the hospital has its land; so, why should they block each other?

3.20

MR FRED KAYONDO (DP, Mukono County South, Mukono): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. It cannot be me not to support this loan. It would be somebody else to do that because I have been to the Uganda Cancer Institute at Mulago, and done many projects there and I know the need there. That is why I support it.

However, I would like to urge fellow Members to sensitise our communities to go for early cancer testing – *(Interjections)* - hold on. With cancer testing, there are physical tests we can do without the machine. For example, breast cancer – *(Interjections)* - listen to me. There is breast cancer –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, the women members are asking whether you have a breast. *(Laughter)* I saw men having breast cancer.

MR KAYONDO: Mr Speaker, given my background, I wish you could give me a chance to conduct a biochemical lesson here. Ladies, you know that you can physically detect breast cancer. If you test your breast and you are feeling some lumps in it, it is an early indication that you have breast cancer –*(Interjections)*- please, take it from me. Therefore, I urge you, fellow Members, to do these physical tests because if cancer is detected early –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, honourable colleagues. Please, do not demonstrate on your neighbours –*(Laughter)*- I see that some of you have started getting closer to your neighbours.

MR KAYONDO: Mr Speaker, men have physical signals and symptoms that one can see for prostate cancer. You do not need to go to a machine. When you have issues with retention of urine, it is an indication of prostate cancer and prostate enlargement; get it from me because if seen early, something can be done. If seen late, it is irreversible and unmanageable. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

3.23

MS MARGARET RWABUSHAIJA (Independent, Workers Representative): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I am one of those who have been injured severely by losing people to cancer and for that matter, I add my voice to support this motion, but as we give support, we also need to do comprehensive research so that we know what the causes are.

When you go to the wards in Mulago, it is painful to see the number of children. You find about 50 and 30 of them are seated outside and there is no bed for them to sleep on, so they are suffering a lot.

We have a new women's hospital but when you go there - because my mother was there for about six months - you find that three-quarters

of the people in that hospital are women with different cancers, as someone has said.

The number of people with prostate cancer is increasing. Is it the food that we eat? We are talking about testing, but what is it that is causing our children, men and women to contract this cancer? We need to conduct some research to find out what is exactly happening because it never used to be like that.

Whether we buy medicines or not, we need to do the research and also sensitise other people, as Parliament. Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity.

3.25

MS NAOME KABASHARIRA (Independent, Rushenyi County, Ntungamo): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this chance. I also thank the minister for tabling this loan and the committee for the report. We all know that construction will take a little bit of time, however, much money we have. As construction goes on, cancer will not stop affecting people.

As Members of Parliament, we know what is happening. The budget is appropriated by us, but we have failed to allocate money to buy this small machine called a Positron Emission Tomography (PET) yet we know that the number of patients at Uganda Cancer Institute in Mulago is on the rise.

We know the importance of this machine. We pass the budgets for other things - which at times I do not call priorities - and even remove it when it has even been put in the budget. Are we being fair? Yes, we are now excited about this loan. It is a good loan that is going to help us, but can't we do something as we wait for the ongoing construction?

Mr Speaker, it is my humble request that before we even pass this budget, let us put this money so that they process this machine. Let us treat those who are already there, rather than waiting for this construction. Otherwise, I support the loan.

However, before I sit, I need clarification on this 1 per cent of service per year. Isn't that too much, yet it is annual? Why not once? I need that clarification.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Acting Leader of the Opposition?

3.27

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee and the minister, for the report. I would like to refer the minister of finance to page 2 where the committee report indicates that the project is jointly financed - they give the dates between 2015 - that is when Parliament first passed this loan, and then they give the processes of 2016 to 2026.

My main interest is on the issue of counterpart funding by the Government because this is where we have the biggest challenge in this country, Mr Speaker. Where does the Government put its priorities?

Yesterday, I took time to look at the Joint Anti-Terrorist Taskforce (JATT) men, and I took an interest in the guns they were holding. One of the guns is called Goose from Russia, and each of those costs Shs 25 million. I saw them along the road; over 20 of them had guns each worth Shs 25 million, at the cost of the cancer institute. They were holding *solido* wires but in our villages, *solido* wires were stolen and they were being used to beat people.

Mr minister, through the Speaker, before you think of buying guns worth Shs 30 million—the M16 which is around Shs 30 million, and the bullets you are using, first put this money in counterpart funding to solve the challenges of the cancer institute. When you see us seated and sometimes refusing to support such motions, it is because we have such reservations due to these challenges.

I beseech, through you, Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to one day bring a loan for all the new districts in Uganda to have tarmac roads.

As we process all loans for the cancer institute, I want my district, Kalungu, which has only two kilometres of tarmac - constructed by the Catholic Church, from the main road to a parish church, to get some tarmac road as a new district. As a new district, we want to benefit from the loans as we pay or even when our children are paying.

Lastly *-(Interjection)-* yes, I support it, but what I am saying – Mr Speaker, the last issue I want to raise - Hon. Kabasharira and Hon. Santa Alum from the UPC - have helped me to say the same issue of that 1 per cent; it is very key. Vultures are waiting for this money. I request the Government to go and read about the loans Obote was taking while in the Government. They would come and perform as fast as possible.

Mr Minister, when we pass these loans, what period does it take to make them effective? Do you take three years or five months?

In 2013, Mr Speaker, we passed a loan but which became effective in 2020 during COVID-19, and all the areas that were supposed to get power through that loan were all left out because work was done during COVID-19 and the vultures continued enjoying.

That is why, as I conclude, today I was listening to a radio programme and the presenters were saying, “If you find the mansions and apartments in Kampala, the owners are government officials. They own 90 per cent of apartments, hotels and all these...” Where do they get that money from? It is from these loans we pass, which take so long to be effected. That is how they end up building and enjoying life yet at the end of the day, they can become victims of the same circumstance, and they will die, by the way. They will die and leave those apartments with the poorly educated children who have been enjoying their lives. They will drink whisky like black label or green label and they will also follow them by selling their assets.

Let us pass the loan, but the honourable minister should confirm to this House, and assure us

that once the loan is passed, this is the time of performance of the loan and we move on so that all the loans that come in move without any delays.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us hear from the Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development, then the Minister for Health.

3.32

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

(Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable members have raised several issues and I wish to respond as follows: first, as of June 2024, our total debt stock amounted to Shs 94.8 trillion, and the debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio was 46.8 per cent. This is far below the 50 per cent of the East African Monetary Union convergence criteria. It is also far below our charter of fiscal responsibility targets. Our debt sustainability analysis report, which I laid here a while ago, shows that our debt continues to be sustainable, both in the medium and in the long terms.

Why is our debt sustainable? It is because of, one, our robust growth in the GDP, and two, the onset of oil production, which will contribute to the domestic revenue. We hope that in the medium term, we will decrease the borrowing.

What should worry colleagues is our debt-to-revenue ratio; the debt repayment. This one poses some risk because it continues to perform far above the 20 per cent threshold.

Mr Speaker, there is a question, which normally comes. What are we doing to minimise debt?

Firstly, we are aggressively implementing the domestic revenue strategy so that we can raise adequate revenue to cushion the ever-growing borrowing needs.

Secondly, the oil revenues are projected to come in– *(Interjections)* - not far from now. *(Laughter)*

Thirdly, we continue to pursue the idea of improving efficiency in Government spending.

Last but not least, we continue increasing export earnings and our deliberate support to the private sector growth initiatives will also help us raise more revenue to cover up the ever-growing debt.

I now come to Hon. Ssewungu who is concerned about the counterpart funding. Specifically, for this loan, the counterpart funding was already provided for and paid in the initial request, which was presented in Parliament. For this additional borrowing –(Interjections)- can I finish? This additional borrowing is only for equipment, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and other things; there is no requirement for counterpart funding.

Hon. Naome asked about the 1 per cent service fee which is the same as interest. This is a concessional arrangement of borrowing, which attracts minimal interest. Our loan average, I can confirm, is between seven and eight per cent. This one is one per cent, which is far - these terms are very good.

What period will it take us to make this loan effective? This one is immediate. Today, if you approve for me, the next stage is to sign. Once we do that, the disbursement takes immediate effect. Mr Speaker, I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister for Health? – (Mr Aogon rose) - No, the minister has already taken his seat. That was a tactical way of saying ‘no.’

Honourable colleagues, these are your rules, not mine. You seek clarification when someone is still on the Floor. If the minister has closed his submission, he is no longer on the Floor so it can no longer be a point of clarification. Also, for clarification, he can accept or refuse; it is his right. Yes, Minister of Health.

3.38

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (GENERAL DUTIES) (Ms Anifa Kawooya): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I do appreciate the

Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, for bringing this loan request here and the Members of Parliament, for supporting it.

Mr Speaker, as a ministry and as a person, I feel what most of the Members and the rest of the country are going through because of the cancer situation in this country. I spent half of last night at the cancer institute. When I took my young sister to Nairobi for the PET scanning, we returned when she was at stage four. So, I feel the same pain that most of you are feeling.

Mr Speaker, I know what it means to have a cancer patient - the expenses, especially when we do not have equipment. I agree with the Member who has said that the most important issue is to have this PET scan machine. Hon. Kabasharira has said it: as we approve this loan, which the ministry strongly supports because we have been working with the cancer institute very closely and discussed it in many Cabinet forums, what I want to appeal, when the minister for finance says that when we approve this loan he must take it that everybody has said “yes,” because it is a big concern.

Then he says that the loan starts there and then. My appeal is for this august House to pass a resolution to purchase the necessary equipment; the PET scan machine urgently. As the Ministry of Health, we have tried our best. For them to find Shs 62 billion to purchase the PET scan machine when the loan goes through, is not asking for too much.

For all the cancer patients who are going abroad, it is because they cannot be diagnosed early from Uganda. When we send, for example, 10 patients out, the cost of the ticket and the treatment would purchase the PET scan machine itself; I speak with experience. I appeal to my colleague that since we have approved this, given what we have been going through, let him commit himself to give us the Shs 62 billion and we save the lives of the Ugandans. (Applause)

The last question is about the delay of the loans, which came from my son, Hon. Sewanyana. These are loans that go through a process with counterpart funding. At the end of the day – *(Hon. Amero rose_)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I do not have much time. At the beginning, I told you that we have a Bishop waiting to start mass.

MS KAWOOYA: Mr Speaker, we have been dealing with the Karamoja infrastructure development project for the last eight years. It was only on Tuesday that we managed to launch it, all comfortably.

Therefore, my colleagues, we should be patient as the Government is looking for these loans and the implementation is taking long, it is like we are saying that we need money, we shall implement whatever comes our way. If we have the PET Scan machine, we can process it. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Anifa, when you talk passionately about cancer, I know what you have gone through as a person and so have many honourable colleagues here. I have read in the news that the National Resistance Movement (NRM) Caucus is meeting to discuss the budget. I am sure Hon. Ssewungu is also about to call his team to discuss it, as the Leader of the Opposition, in terms of priorities, which should be looked at. However, let us all be ambassadors for the PET Scan machine. *(Applause)*

From the submission that Hon. Anifa has made, I think in the coming financial year, honourable colleagues, we should work closely with the minister for finance. I know the minister is very passionate about these issues. Let us go and look at the issue of the machine. I am saying this because only the rich can go to Nairobi or abroad but what about the poor people? I have poor people who are rotting. Someone in the village rots completely until they die. Even if you brought them here to Mulago, by the time cancer is detected, it is too late.

Therefore, let us have it as our commitment that we shall work together, right from colleagues who are in Cabinet. I know the minister for finance will bring this budget to you. Honourable colleagues, as you discuss it in your various political groupings, let us make it a deal that this coming financial year we provide for the PET Scan machine. It is to save all of us because you never know. Even with the medical board, by the time you go there, it might already be at stage four. You would be already finished yet it could be detected early.

Honourable colleagues, I followed the debate and saw the kind of consensus you were building. I now put the question that the motion for a resolution of Parliament to authorise Government to borrow up to UA 13.5 million equivalent to \$18.09 million, additional financing from the African Development Fund to finance East Africa's Centres of Excellence for Skills and Tertiary Education in Biomedical Sciences Project - Phase 1 - Uganda Cancer Institute; be approved by this House.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister for finance, minister for health, LOP, committee chairperson and your members, and the whole House.

Clerk, let us quickly extract these resolutions and pass them over to the ministry for finance for implementation.

Let us complete Item No. 4 and, then, we go to Item No. 3.

LAYING OF PAPERS

(I) REPORT OF THE SECTORAL COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON THE OVERSIGHT VISIT TO THE UGANDA HIGH COMMISSION IN KIGALI, RWANDA

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Representative of the committee chairperson?

3.47

MR GABRIEL OKUMU (NRM, Okoro County, Zombo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to lay the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs on the oversight visit to the Uganda High Mission in Kigali, Rwanda.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member, can you use three minutes to give us a summary?

MR OKUMU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In the report on the oversight visit of Kigali, I am going to talk about the catchword because it happened just after the closure of the border – that is what I have picked – among other things, which are very interesting in this report –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, the Rules of Procedure limit you to a few recommendations – straight away. Okay?

MR OKUMU: Thank you. On the border, the committee recommends as follows:

1. The Minister of Foreign Affairs urgently schedules the consultative meeting with his counterpart, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the International Cooperation of Rwanda, as agreed during the previous Joint Permanent Commission (JPC) session to ensure smooth implementation of the decisions of the JPC and strengthen the bilateral relations between Uganda and Rwanda; and
2. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should allocate adequate funding to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for hosting a Joint Permanent Commission meeting in the next budget cycle. This will ensure that Uganda meets the obligations to hold JPCs on schedule, facilitating smoother diplomatic relations and cooperation between Uganda and other countries.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion, I would like to request the august House to take interest in this report because there are very many interesting aspects, and the necessary Ministries,

Departments, Agencies (MDAs) should pick up the recommendations and implement them. I beg to submit. Thank you very much, for your indulgence.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Gabriel Okumu, for representing the Chairperson, Committee on Foreign Affairs. Honourable colleagues, I shall be appointing the date for debate. Read through the report so that you can prepare.

Honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have choir members from Queen of Angels, Kirowooza SubParish, Namilyango Parish in Mukono District. They are represented by Hon. Betty Nambooze and Hon. Hanifa Nabukeera. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

Hon. Lucy, I hope they are yours – because I see choir members.

3.51

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to welcome my village mates from Kirowooza, Seeta. For your information, my house is one block away from the church. They are here to celebrate Ash Wednesday with us. They are also here as my special guests.

I am not their Member of Parliament, but they are my immediate neighbours, and I pray with them regularly. You are most welcome, my dear people, to the Parliament of Uganda. Feel at home. Thank you so much for coming.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us go back to Item No.3, which we had stood over because the minister was already presenting. Honourable minister, you can start from where you had stopped - I only called Hon. Lucy because I saw that they are a choir, and we have mass. I wanted to confirm whether they are the ones leading today's mass. Otherwise, whenever people are here, we do not call on their MPs to speak.

Yes, honourable minister_

MS BEATRICE ANYWAR: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a brief that has been prepared to update this House on the current high temperatures being experienced across the country. The brief addresses the concerns raised by Hon. Samuel Opio Acuti from Kole North County, regarding the ongoing heat wave and the mitigation measures.

My ministry is committed to providing regular weather updates to this House. As you are aware, the effects of climate change and increasing climate variability have made weather and climate conditions more challenging. Weather-related disasters are becoming more frequent, with severe impacts on agriculture, livelihoods, infrastructure and aviation.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to strengthen the early warning systems to ensure that accurate and tailored weather information reaches all stakeholders.

In response to the issue, my ministry has provided an explanation for the high temperatures being experienced across the country and the measures to mitigate the effects.

Mr Speaker, Uganda is currently experiencing a dry condition with high temperatures. This situation is expected to persist until mid-March, after which cooling will occur as the rains begin. These unusual high temperatures are due to a combination of factors, among which are:

i) The dry season

The primary cause of the high temperatures is the ongoing dry season. The period from December to February is typically dry across the country, with February being the hottest month of the year. Temperatures begin to rise by mid-January, reaching the peak in February, and gradually decline from early March as the March-May rainfall season begins;

ii) Influence of a tropical cyclone in the Indian Ocean

A tropical cyclone currently present over the southern Indian Ocean is affecting Uganda's weather. This cyclone is pulling in moisture that would otherwise be carried by south-easterly winds into East Africa – that would include Uganda. As a result, rainfall formation is suppressed, delaying the onset of the MAM rainy season and extending the dry and hot conditions across the country;

iii) Position of the sun

Mr Speaker, during February, the sun moves closer to the equator, which runs through Uganda. It is directly overhead at the equator twice a year on March the 21st and September the 23rd. As the sun approaches this position in February, solar radiation increases, leading to high surface temperatures; and

iv) Urban heat island effect

Mr Speaker, cities and large towns in Uganda experience higher temperatures than the surrounding rural areas due to the urban heat island heat effect. This occurs because of:

1. The heat-absorbing surfaces such as tarmac roads, pavements and concrete structures, which retain and release heat into the atmosphere.
2. Greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles, industries and other urban activities, which trap heat and contribute to the rising temperatures.

Mr Speaker, in order to stay safe and reduce the impact of current extreme heat, my ministry has come up with the following measures:

- a. Stay hydrated – drink plenty of water during the day;
- b. Limit physical activities by avoiding excessive exercise during hot periods;
- c. Stay indoors or under a shade. This will reduce exposure to direct sunlight, especially during the peak hours of the day;

- d. Take frequent showers - cooling down with a bath or shower regulates the body temperature; and
- e. Make green urban areas – planting more and increasing vegetation cover in the cities can also help to reduce the urban heat.

By following these precautions, individuals can minimise the effects of high temperatures and stay safe during this period.

The general public, therefore, is also advised to protect our wetlands and forests because they are essential in rainfall formation and modulation of the climate.

Conclusion

I encourage you to make use of mitigation measures to minimise the effects of the high temperatures. This information should be used alongside other weather updates, regularly provided by my ministry, through the Department of Meteorological Services.

Finally, my ministry will release another update for the March-April-May 2025 seasonal climate forecast on Thursday, 6 March 2025 to support planning and decision-making for our country.

I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, honourable colleagues, these are updates, not issues for debating. It is a statement, which they have issued to the nation. *(Members rose)* Please, first take your seats and listen to me. These are statements read at the media centre, for the nation. So, whatever you add - even the minister has got it from another department –*(Laughter)*- which is in charge of the environment.

Therefore, I will allow only two people - please! By the way, rule 52 says it “may be debated”. So, it is up to me – and this is where I am basing my decision.

Now I have a Bill, which we must consider before we go - the Bill on the East African Community Mediation Agreement – because we have not domesticated that treaty. I want us to sort it out today. We also have to break off at 5.00 p.m. in order to join the Parliamentary Catholic Chaplaincy for prayers.

However, before that, we have guests. Honourable colleagues, once again – you know in the afternoon we were blessed to have the Archbishop of the Church of Uganda and, now, more blessings have come, with the presence of Rt Rev. Christopher Kakooza, the Bishop of Lugazi Diocese, in the VIP gallery. *(Applause)*

He is the main celebrant at today’s Ash Wednesday Mass that will be ushering the parliamentary community, under the Parliamentary Catholic Chaplaincy, into the Lent Season.

He is accompanied by:

1. Monsignor Dr Richard Kayondo. *(Applause)*
2. Fr Joseph Lubula. *(Applause)*
3. Mr Joseph Kyagaba. *(Applause)*
4. Dr Augustine Kato. *(Applause)*
5. Our own very own chaplain, Fr Pontian Kaweesa. *(Applause)*
6. Ms Agnes Nsubuga, and
7. Mr Frank Sempeebwa. *(Applause)*

Honourable colleagues, join me, once again, in welcoming them. *(Applause)* Thank you.

Honourable colleagues, we also have, in the public gallery, students and teachers of Mariam High School, Busabala, Wakiso. They are represented by Hon. David Sserukenya and Hon. Betty Naluyima. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in giving them a warm welcome. *(Applause)* Thank you.

I am going to only allow the Acting Leader of the Opposition and the chairperson of the Committee on Climate Change to say something.

4.04

THE SHADOW MINISTER OF EDUCATION (Mr Joseph Ssewungu):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank you, honourable minister, for bringing this statement – but it needs some corrections; I do not know which staff of yours made this statement.

There are very many crossings and, on the *Hansard*, they will not look good. For example, addressing Members before the Speaker is irregular in this House. I have seen “Rt Hon. Speaker, honourable colleagues and Members of Parliament.” Those are all things that we need to correct on our record.

However, Mr Speaker, the position of the sun – geographically or scientifically – is known. Whenever the sun is at the equator, that day, there is some sunshine for those closer to the equator. I do not think it can make a good justification for having these hot temperatures. It normally appears once, that day, when it is at the equator on the 23rd.

What we need to address is the deforestation that is taking place in the country. Can we opt for other sources of energy other than people cutting trees? Mr Speaker, as we talk, Ugandans have learnt how to use gas, but gas is very expensive and there are a number of vehicles carrying charcoal, which are still being given room to move.

The Government must come up to create and reduce the costs of all those available sources of energy that can save the environment. Without that – (*Interjections*) - I do not know – the Speaker has given his ruling and I want to conclude. Mr Speaker, this is my shadow minister. I can take the information and not come back. Thank you.

However, the correction on that statement – it was looking funny in the eyes of the public.

MS KAAYA: Thank you, my acting LOP, for giving way. Mr Speaker, we are very happy with the statement, but sometimes we need to substantiate. For example, when they say the

heat wave will have an effect on agriculture, some of our voters are waiting to know exactly what is entailed in the effect on agriculture. We can go ahead to give information that, for example, the expected yield from coffee is going to reduce, the breeds - including the white race of pigs – will not perform. We want actual effects on the agricultural activities, from the debate by the Members.

We are happy with the statement but sometimes, substantiation is very important. The information given by our agricultural extension and veterinary officers to the farmers – Of recent, many farmers in poultry have been reporting serious losses. This is the best time to think of agricultural mechanisation. For example, for cooling in animal husbandry, what can we do?

Mr Speaker, the issue of loss and damage, as a result of climate change, is a serious negotiation item. We would want the minister to tell us – we are undergoing all this not because of Uganda’s activities but because of other global mistakes. How far have we gone? What do we have? What can we use to offset the damages and losses that we are undergoing?

I am happy that we shall be getting regular updates but we need to come up with concrete targets of measuring our contribution to adaptation and mitigation options. Otherwise, this business of “this ministry was funded with this”, “this ministry was funded with this” without following what, actually, was done by a particular ministry is really draining us – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, that is why I was telling you that I would not open debate. These are issues to be dealt with, in detail, by the sectoral committee. These are the issues, which the sectoral committee is going to pick on in the Ministerial Policy Statements, in detail. Okay? Once you get a statement of update and you want to open it up, you end up not achieving that much. These are issues that the sectoral committee should look at, deeply, in the Ministerial Policy Statements, which are coming next week.

Honourable Chairperson of the Committee on Climate Change?

4.09

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE (Mr Lawrence Songa):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the minister, for the statement. It is true that many parts of the world are experiencing this heat wave and Uganda is not an exception. I agree with the previous speakers that we need adaptation because some of the causes of heat waves are natural and others are man-made.

Our focus should be on the man-made ones because we may do little to block the natural ones, for example, the high precipitation system and the high pressure system that the minister was explaining. We may do little to stop those but we need adaptation because we need to survive. Therefore, I agree that we need to focus on adaptation strategies as we experience the heat waves.

However, I want to agree with the Leader of the Opposition that one of the causes is deforestation. Deforestation has gone to high levels. Also, there is the destruction of the wetlands which would help in climate modification. We need to address that. There is also the issue of land use changes. We are seeing land changing from forest to settlement and urban centres. Therefore, we need to address some of those issues.

The issue of droughts, which are natural – yes, we can adapt to that so that we can help our smallholder farmers. However, one warning is that the heat wave is coming now. We are experiencing it now and it has an impact on health, agriculture and the economy. The end of the heat wave will come with a lot of floods. Why? It is because the heat wave is boiling open waters. There is high evaporation of open waters such as Lake Victoria. As a result, there will be a lot of rain coming with floods.

Therefore, we must also be prepared. We must have what we call “disaster preparedness”, not taking relief after disaster. These are some of the things that we need to prepare for.

The last is the issue of our transport system. We actually raise a lot of heat in our traffic jam. That calls for us to have a resilient transport system so that we can reduce the emissions. We are burning a lot of fuel and spending a lot of money maintaining our cars because we do not have resilient transport systems. That should be an area of consideration for future planning.

Thank you, honourable minister, for the statement and thank you, Mr Speaker, for the time.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, one minute.

MS BEATRICE ANYWAR: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to apologise for the uploaded copy, which, as you are aware, was the one I was using as a draft. With your permission, Mr Speaker, allow me to replace that one with the official one, for record purposes. My apologies.

Two, I would like to also thank the acting LOP for his submission. He has already alluded to other sources of energy that we ought to use. For information, yes, gas – first of all, as a country, we expect to produce oil and gas very soon. The Government has already subsidised gas cylinders by 40 per cent – the small cookers that you have. At Stabex, we already have an agreement. You remove 40 per cent from what was the original cost, which the Government has subsidised, and you buy your gas cylinder.

I also want to thank my shadow minister, Hon. Christine Kaaya. She has really been in all our international negotiations. One of her concerns is that we needed to have explained further what the effect of the heat is. Indeed, she did attempt to do that, which argument I am in agreement with. If we had all the time, we would have given a detailed presentation and that would have come out very clearly. Indeed, dry heat will cause a dry season. Crops will fail and many diseases will come up. That one was well taken care of.

On the issue of loss and damage, we have attended COPs and in all the COPs – that is the international negotiation – the loss and

damage item is on the agenda. We push for it because, in Africa, and Uganda for that matter, we are suffering because of the effect of other industrialised areas. The negotiation on loss and damage has not been completely effective – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kindly, switch your microphone on, honourable minister.

MS ANYWAR: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the one minute. I also want to thank the Chairperson of the Committee on Climate Change. We have equally been together in this. The issues he raised, indeed, are additional information.

Adaptation is now the item that we need to be implementing because the effects of climate change are with us here. Each country – under our nationally determined contribution, the NDP, we made clear what adaptation measures we are going to take, as a country. They will include planting more trees.

Lastly, on that, his warning for the subsequent heavy rains is real. In the subsequent information update, these are the things that we are going to highlight. Indeed, Ugandans, let us brace ourselves for the heavy rains that are coming.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, on the issue of the transport system, as the Government, we are aware of this. As of last Monday, for the information of this august House, there is deliberate effort to ensure - we are actually starting with our security; the police officers who need transport to move around a lot. We want them to have electric motorbikes and vehicles. Government is already in motion to answer what Hon. Songa alluded to – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Next item.

BILLS SECOND READING

THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY MEDIATION AGREEMENT BILL, 2024

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of East African Community Affairs -

4.18

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Mr James Magode Ikuya): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill, 2024, be read for the second time. *(Interjection)* Somebody has asked me who I am. I do not know whether I am a stranger in the House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, please just ignore. I called you and you are a minister.

MR MAGODE IKUYA: Much obliged.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded? *(Members rose.)* It is seconded by Hon. Itungo, Hon. Shartsi Musherure, Hon. Ekanya, Hon. Lucy Akello, Hon. Nakimwero, Hon. Musasizi, Lt Gen. Mbadi, Hon. Chemaswet, Hon. Kajwengye, Hon. Nabagabe, the Leader of the Opposition and many Members of the House. Thank you.

Honourable minister, in two or three minutes, just give us a snapshot. Thank you.

MR MAGODE IKUYA: Mine will be one minute.

Mr Speaker, the East African Mediation Agreement was made in 1984 by the signing of a Treaty between the three sister countries, that is, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya.

We are required to be compliant with the agreements that were made. We cannot subject ourselves to the freedom to begin questioning the agreement as it has been. We are part of this.

Our request is that the Bill comes here so that Parliament can domesticate the agreement to ensure that the laws can be enforced as part of the law of Uganda. That is number one.

Number two is the fact that in the course of the 40 years or so since the first East African Community was dissolved, there have been a number of things that have already taken place, including the sharing of assets. The sharing of assets was done in accordance with that agreement even though we had no particular law. However, the employees of the East African Community were supposed to be remunerated in accordance with certain terms which are not yet applicable in our country.

Part of our desire is to ensure that the whole agreement, already signed by the Heads of State, is made law in Uganda so that we can implement all of its necessary provisions. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The minister has made it very simple. When you look at this mediation agreement, we must be in line with the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties of 1969. However, the unfortunate bit is that you do not have any room for an amendment because it is the kind that we usually call a take-or-leave agreement.

Chairperson of the committee?

4.22

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Mr James Nsaba-Buturo): Mr Speaker, in accordance with Rule 130(2) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, I hereby present the report of the Committee on East African Affairs on the East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill, 2024.

Mr Speaker, according to Rule 219 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, I beg to lay on the Table the committee report together with the minutes of its meetings.

Introduction

The East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill, 2024, was read for the first time on 16 October, by the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the East African – *(Interruption) (Hon. Nambooze rose_)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order.

MS BETTY NAMBOOZE: Mr Speaker, this House has known norms and a culture; these are a set of rules that we follow. However, my colleague, the chairperson, indicated that he was about to lay the report. Eventually, I saw him walk to the Clerk's Table and then he went back to the microphone.

Is he in order to proceed in that way and claim to have laid a report that he has not laid on the Table? Isn't that a deviation from our usual culture? Wouldn't it be in order for him to lay the report as we usually do and then proceed?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before reading any committee report, the chairperson needs to lay a copy of it and its minutes. I thought I saw him do that. I want to confirm from the Clerk since he is the custodian of all our documents. Clerk, can you confirm to me if he has laid it because it has to be on the *Hansard*?

The Clerk has given me a copy confirming that it was laid. I am told you were shaking your head. Hon. Nambooze is monitoring you very well.

DR NSABA-BUTURO: Mr Speaker, the East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill, 2024, was read for the first time on 16 October 2024, by the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of East African Community Affairs. The Bill was referred to the Committee on East African Community Affairs in accordance with Rule 129(1) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament. *(Interjections)*

Mr Speaker, the -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson, I want to confirm. Did you lay

the minutes on the Table? I heard the report - Honourable minister, by the time you finish, please ensure the minutes are here. You have a clerk to the committee.

Honourable colleagues, what is important is that before we go to Committee Stage, the minutes are laid. Honourable chairperson, continue. I hope your clerk is helping you.

DR NSABA-BUTURO: Mr Speaker, I am looking around and she is supposed to be here.

DR NSABA-BUTURO: Do not mind, it will be done.

DR NSABA-BUTURO: Mr Speaker, the East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill, 2024 is a presentation of the East African Community Mediation Agreement which was signed on 14 May 1984 on behalf of Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda.

The East African Community Mediation Agreement is a Treaty within the meaning of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, 1969 to which Uganda is a signatory. The Bill is before Parliament for domestication in accordance with Article 123 of the 1995 Constitution.

Mr Speaker, in the past, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda enjoyed a long history of cooperation and successive regional integration arrangements. These arrangements included: the Customs Union between Uganda and Kenya in 1917, which the then Tanganyika later joined in 1927, the East African High Commission (1948-1961), the East African Common Services Organisation (1961- 1967), the East African Community (1967) -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson, you are taking us into too much detail of history. Kindly, take us to your observations and findings. Just state the object of the Bill and then we go to - Honourable colleagues, let us allow the chairperson to read.

DR NSABA-BUTURO: Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The moment I see it on our screens, it means that they are picking from Alfresco. Kindly, check with Information Technology (IT), they can help.

DR NSABA-BUTURO: Thank you. Let me go to the object of the Bill. Mr Speaker, the object of the Bill is to give legal effect to the provisions of the East African Community Mediation Agreement, 1984, which was signed on 14 May 1984 between and on behalf of Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda.

With your guidance, Mr Speaker, let me go straight to our observations and recommendations.

Provisions of the Bill

The committee notes that the Bill seeks to give effect to certain provisions of the East African Community Mediation Agreement, 1984. In this regard, clause 3 of the Bill provides Articles 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 15 of the East African Community Mediation Agreement, 1984, which agreement is set out in Schedule 1 to the Act shall have the force of law in Uganda. It excludes Article 1 on interpretation, Article 2 on assets and liabilities, Article 13 on the law governing the agreement, Article 16 on entry into force, Article 17 on citation and Article 18 which provides for the scope of the agreement.

Mr Speaker, the Attorney-General informed the committee that the drafting of the East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill, 2024 was largely based on the East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill, 1990, which had also proposed to only give force of law to specific Articles of the agreement. However, on further scrutiny, he observed that the entire East African Mediation Agreement Bill, 1984 be domesticated and given force of law.

Hon. Samuel Opio Acuti also submitted that the entire agreement should be domesticated because the Articles that had been excluded formed integral parts of the agreement which are key in the interpretation of the agreement.

Mr Speaker, the committee observes that all the Articles are significant for the effective implementation of the agreement.

Therefore, the committee recommends that the proposed clause 3 is amended to ensure that the East African Mediation Agreement has the full force of law in its entirety.

The committee also recommends ensuring that employees of the former East African Community are paid in accordance with the agreement.

Prior to its collapse, the defunct East African Community operated its own pension scheme under the East African Community Pension Act, Cap. 11 and upon its dissolution, the East African Community failed to pay its former employees' retirement benefits which liability their respective governments took on.

Mr Speaker, in the case of Uganda, the Government issued the Pensions (Amendment) Decree, 1979 which recognised the former employees as a category of pensionable persons payable by the Government of Uganda. The decree defined in section 2(g) pensionable office as one to which a Ugandan national was appointed on the grant of a pension under the Pension Act of the defunct Community.

The African Community Mediation Agreement which was signed much later in 1984 reiterated, under Article 10.5, that individual partner states shall pay their nationals who had worked for the defunct East African Community and retired from active service and those that were still in service at the division date of the Community.

The committee observes that the former employees of the defunct East African Community from Uganda are currently being paid their pension and retirement benefits under the Pension Act of Uganda. However, this has a different computation formula from that proposed in the East African Community Mediation Agreement and results into different payments.

The committee also observes that other former employees of the defunct East African Community from Kenya and Tanzania were paid in accordance with the East African Community Mediation Agreement.

Mr Speaker, the committee recommends that the Government harmonises the commutation of pension and retirement benefits in accordance with the mediation agreement.

The committee also recommends that the Government prioritises the full payment of the pension and retirement benefits of the former employees who have not been paid by the Government.

Proposals to introduce a new clause on interest and liabilities

The committee received a proposal from Hon. Opio Samuel Acuti to introduce a new clause in the Bill on interest and liabilities to provide that the Government shall pay an interest of 7 per cent on any outstanding liabilities from the division debt.

Hon. Acuti submitted that the proposal was based on a letter from the Solicitor-General in September 1993 in which he informed the Secretary to the Treasury that Uganda had adopted a 7 per cent interest based on the advice of the East African Community mediator in a mediation report.

Mr Speaker, the committee observes that the interest on liabilities did not form part of the East African Community Mediation Agreement, which had been signed by the partner states in 1984.

The committee recommends, therefore, that the Ministry of East African Community Affairs and the Ministry of Public Service should administratively explore the proposal to pay an interest on any outstanding liabilities after the recommendation of the Bill.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, the committee recommends that the East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill be passed into law,

subject to the attached proposed amendments. I beg to report.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, chairperson. Honourable colleagues, with this kind of argument, do we want to debate?

4.37

MR GEOFFREY EKANYA (FDC, Tororo North County, Tororo): I beg to move a motion -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let the chairperson lay the minutes.

DR NSABA-BUTURO: Mr Speaker, I thank you for your patience. I now have the pleasure of laying on the Table the report and minutes. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ekanya -

MR EKANYA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Aware of the Vienna Convention and the importance of this Bill, I beg to move a motion that the Bill be read for the second time so the House moves to Committee Stage.

Mr Speaker, Members shall interrogate those other very important clauses at Committee Stage. I beg to move that the House moves to Committee Stage.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleague, that is a motion that can be moved by the mover of the Bill. Let me give a chance to the minister to substantively -

MR EKANYA: Hon. Magode Ikuya is my voter and he is one of the senior NRM cadres and a very good minister in charge of the East African Community. To honourable colleagues who do not know him, he has dedicated his life for this country and sometimes he is not here because he is engaged in East African issues. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, Hon. Geoffrey Ekanya is a senior member of the Opposition – FDC. *(Laughter)* You can see they work together very

closely for the sake of the nation. Honourable minister -

4.39

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Mr James Magode Ikuya): Mr Speaker, first of all, I want to thank the honourable Member of Parliament, for giving me some compliments. Usually, I have not been getting many compliments elsewhere.

Notwithstanding that, I beg to move - the presentation made by the committee chairperson reflects much of the intentions of the Bill, which was originally put because the clauses, that were excluded in some provisions have been specifically identified and included in the whole Bill. Therefore, the amendments which are being made are just for additional implementation of the same Bill.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that the East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill, 2024 be read the second time.

(Question put and agreed to.)

BILLS COMMITTEE STAGE

THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY MEDIATION AGREEMENT BILL, 2024

4.41

Clause 1

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that clause 1 stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 1, agreed to.

Clause 2, agreed to.

Clause 3

DR NSABA-BUTURO: Mr Chairperson, clause 3 refers to certain provisions of the

agreement to have the force of the law. We are proposing that it is substituted for the following:

*“3 Agreement to have force of law
The East African Community Mediation
Agreement, 1984 set out in Schedule I to this
Act, shall have the force of law in Uganda.”*

The justification for this is to ensure that the entire East African Community Mediation Agreement, 1984 is domesticated and given the force of law by an Act of Parliament.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Honourable minister, are you okay with that?

MR MAGODE IKUYA: I am very pleased with the whole turn out. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, honourable minister. Honourable colleagues, I put the question that clause 3, as amended, stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Leader of the Opposition.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. This Bill has only one clause that requires an amendment and the rest have no challenges on the Floor. What I am proposing is that we pass the Bill with all the clauses because the one which required amendment has been settled by the minister. That is my proposal.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable member, these are few. Let us call each clause. We are supposed to call each clause. You never know, a colleague can propose an amendment.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Mr Chairman.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that clause 4 stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 4, agreed to.

Clause 5, agreed to.

Clause 6, agreed to.

Clause 7, agreed to.

Clause 8, agreed to.

Clause 9, agreed to.

Schedule 1, agreed to.

Schedule 2, agreed to.

The Title, agreed to.

MOTION FOR THE HOUSE TO RESUME

4.45

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Mr James Magode Ikuya): I beg to move that the report from the Committee of the whole House be adopted – *(Interjections)* - Which one is that again? What is a ritual?

Mr Chairperson, are there some rituals I must perform? I am not accustomed to performing too many rituals.

Mr Chairperson, I beg to move that the House do resume and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto. *(Laughter)*

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable colleagues, I put the question that the House do resume and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(The House resumed, the Deputy Speaker presiding_)

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE OF
THE WHOLE HOUSE

4.47

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Mr James Magode Ikuya): I beg to report that the Committee of the whole House considered the East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill, 2024 and passed it with amendments.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

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

4.48

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Mr James Magode Ikuya): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the report of the Committee of the whole House be adopted.

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

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

BILLS
THIRD READING

THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY
MEDIATION AGREEMENT BILL, 2024

4.48

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Mr James Magode Ikuya): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill, 2024 be read the third time and do pass. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will not disturb you again. *(Laughter)* Honourable colleagues, I put the question that the East African Community Mediation Agreement Bill, 2024 be read the third time and do pass.

(Question put and agreed to.)

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED,
“THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY
MEDIATION AGREEMENT ACT, 2025”

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, congratulations. I think you have seen we have very interesting rituals in the House. Do you have any message for Members?

MR MAGODE IKUYA: Mr Speaker, I thank the Members for considering this very urgent question. It has been vexing. I came here but I am a bit sickly. I even feared that somebody would hint on the kind of shoes I am wearing. *(Laughter)* The fact that it has not yet been mentioned, I am sure I received the protection from the Chairperson. I thank the Members very much for considering my situation. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, we have not had a good moment with a Member of the Front Bench like we have had with you today in a long time. We have had a very good moment.

Honourable chairperson and members, I thank you and your team for the good job and for considering this very critical Bill. I hope that now, honourable minister, we have set you free. This has been nagging you. It will help you to implement your work.

Honourable colleagues, we have church service, which is starting in the next 10 minutes. Let us join the Catholic chaplaincy. House adjourned to tomorrow at 2.00 p.m.

(The House rose at 4.50 p. m. and adjourned until Thursday, 6 March 2025 at 2.00 p. m.)