



PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FOURTH SESSION - THIRD MEETING

TUESDAY, 13 MAY 2025



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FOURTH SESSION - 30TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Tuesday, 13 May 2025

Parliament met at 2.00 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I welcome you to this afternoon sitting. I also welcome our guests in the VIP gallery this afternoon - that is, His Excellency Archbishop Luigi Bianco, the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda; you are most welcome. *(Applause)* He is accompanied by Monsignor John Baptist Kauta, Secretary General of the Uganda Episcopal Conference and our own Fr Kaweesa. You are most welcome. *(Applause)*

Honourable members, we have noted with a lot of concern what is happening with the roads in Uganda. Recently, we have had a lot of accidents. The worst was this recent one that involved one of the young businessmen, Rajiv Ruparelia, that happened on the Kampala-Entebbe Expressway. The contractors were given work, but they put blocks on the road without any signage indicating that the road was blocked. They remove them and put them back at leisure.

There has been a problem. The fact that we rationalised the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) – we thought we would have

some kind of efficiency in the Ministry of Works and Transport. To our disappointment, things have continued worsening every day. When you look at this road to Mityana, the road to Karuma- within town here, so many accidents are happening. The potholes can even swallow a whole car because they are not being maintained. I do not know whether it was a good idea to rationalise UNRA in the name of efficiency.

We allocated money - there was money that we put in the works ministry, which was out of the rationalisation process. However, this money has not been put to use, and because it has not been utilised, there is a claim that the funds have not been released. Yet on 17th April, the House passed a resolution to reallocate the budget for pending works under the Ministry of Works and Transport. That was out of RAPEX. This money was sent to the works ministry.

Now, we want a report from the Minister of Works and Transport on what is happening on the roads, especially around Kampala, on the accident that occurred on the Kampala-Entebbe Expressway, and on how they are handling the contractors that are working on those roads. That report should come to the House tomorrow. We cannot continue losing people day in and day out, and yet we have a whole ministry responsible for the works.

Honourable members, you recall, on Monday, 21 April 2025, we lost the Roman Catholic pope, Pope Francis. This marked the end of the pope's 12-year reign. At that time, the House was not in session, so we could not pay tribute to the holy

pope. That is why today, you can see a team here, so we can formally move a motion of tribute in honour of the holy pope.

In the meantime, I would like to request that we all rise and observe a moment of silence for the loss of the holy pope, the loss of Rajiv Ruparelia and all the Ugandans who have lost their lives.

(The House rose and observed a moment of silence)

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, as you are aware, the Roman Catholic Church has a new pope, Pope Leo XIV, who will formally be inaugurated on 18 May 2025. We join the global community and all the people of goodwill to congratulate Pope Leo XIV upon becoming the Pope of the Catholic Church. We pray for him to have an impactful legacy just like what Pope Francis did.

Honourable members, allow me to receive the corrigenda this afternoon from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. You know the corrigenda forms part of the budgeting process. They want to make an amendment. We will have to have it laid on the Table; we will invoke Rule 26(1) of the Rules of Procedure to vary the Order Paper.

I would like to thank you once more for coming. Have good deliberations.

2.08

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to join you in passing on my commiserations to the catholic community in Uganda and the world at large on the passing of Pope Francis and also congratulate you and the catholic community on the attainment of a new Pope, Pope Leo XIV. We will discuss some more when we are paying tribute. I am glad you have varied the Order Paper for that to happen.

I have a quick procedural matter that I seek your indulgence on, to help us deal with certain matters. This Parliament, where we sit, passes laws - the Parliament that you, Madam Speaker,

head. We are pretty much the custodians of the Constitution, which was passed by Parliament and the laws attendant to that.

Madam Speaker, Article 21 of the Constitution of Uganda provides that nobody is above the law. We are all equal under the law. Article 28 of that same Constitution provides for a right to a speedy hearing before a court of competent jurisdiction when anybody is suspected of having committed any crime.

My challenge is that we continuously see people in Government offices operating as if they are above the law. That is problematic, and this is a matter we have raised here. You have commented about it, but it seems like it continues unabated, which bothers me.

On the 27th of April, a gentleman called Edward Sebuufu - many people know him as Eddie Mutwe, was abducted from Mukono where he had gone for a function and was missing for a couple of days. We went to file a matter before the police, but they said they did not know him and the Spokesperson of Uganda Police Force said that they did not know where that person was.

A few days later, the Chief of Defence Forces of this country, Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, spoke about this matter and said, "I have got this person, I am teaching him Runyankore, I am disciplining him..." and so many other things that he said. He displayed a picture of him naked with bruises. Meanwhile, we were continuously, together with the family of this man and lawyers, looking for where this person was. However, somebody said he had him in his basement.

Eight days later, he was produced at the Masaka Court, which we were happy about because we were saying that if he had committed any offence, produce him in a court of law. He was produced in court, limping with bruises. Police, which should have ideally been holding him only for 48 hours, did not know where this person was.

We applauded the Uganda Human Rights Commission because for a very long time, we have been asking, “What is the Uganda Human Rights Commission doing?” It released a statement saying that the Chief of Defence Forces, Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, should release this man because they knew he had him. I guess because of that and a lot more pressure, this man was freed.

However, my challenge is that it is good that the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and the Minister of State for Internal Affairs are here. Maybe the Government needs to help us understand. Are there some people for whom Article 21 of the Constitution does not apply to and who some are above the law?

Finally, Madam Speaker –(*Hon. Macho rose*) – I am on a point of procedure. Hon. Macho who has been in Parliament a bit longer, knows that procedure takes precedence. I request him to kindly relax.

THE SPEAKER: He is on a procedural matter.

MR SSENYONYI: As I finish my procedural matter, Madam Speaker, this very Government official was summoned by the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs of Parliament. This House operates through committees, and you are the custodian of these committees as our leader. When this committee summoned the Chief of Defence Forces, he said, “I will not appear before those clowns.”

These Members of Parliament whom you lead were called clowns. The clowns, as he called them, decided to leave the man alone out of fear. I had expected that that would be a very serious issue for the committee to raise before you.

I do not know, Madam Speaker, if you lead clowns, and I do not know what that would make you, if you are the leader of clowns. We would like to know whether there are people who are above the law; why does a Government official who is paid from the Consolidated Fund continue to operate as if he is above the law, and it is okay? It is not. I would like to beseech you, as our leader, to take this matter up; it should not be okay.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. Hon. Macho, do you need clarification?

MR MACHO: Yes, Madam Speaker. First, I want the Leader of the Opposition in Uganda to sit and settle when Hon. Macho is speaking. (*Laughter*)

The Leader of the Opposition has given a good submission, saying that there are people in this country who seem to be above the law. He makes me bring up a point of clarification, whether he is walking the talk. I want to know whether the leader of his political party is above the law when he says statements that are detrimental and incite the public against his fellow MPs, like Hon. Ssewanyana against Hon. Mpuuga. (*Hon. Ssemujju rose*)

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members-

MR MACHO: I am seeking clarification whether the leader of his party is above the law that he gives his – (*Member timed out.*)

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, these are serious matters. Leader of the Opposition, sit, let us not bring politics into this.

MR SSENYONYI: I am glad, Madam Speaker, that you have ruled that he is being irrelevant by bringing politics into the critical issue I raised. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, one, I do not lead clowns, and nobody has ever told me that I lead clowns. This House is for Honourable Members of Parliament.

Two, when you say that the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) was summoned, I did not see the summon. There is only one signature in this Parliament, and only the Speaker is supposed to sign.

How can a chairperson of a committee start summoning anybody, let alone the CDF. There should be a process of invitation- listen, honourable members. (*Hon. Macho rose*) Hon. Macho, I will throw you out. There must be a procedure for inviting witnesses.

However, let us not deviate from the real issue; the principle of fair hearing, the presumption of innocence - over to Hon. Mao- the human rights issue.

I would like to advise you, honourable members. When you invite these witnesses, you are inviting an office. An office is not Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba. There was a Deputy CDF. I saw it on social media. You cannot start attaching a single person to this. It is as if the Deputy Speaker is chairing the House; it does not have to be me.

Hon. Mao, the issue of –

2.18

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS (Mr Norbert Mao): Madam Speaker, we are over 45 million Ugandans, and there are many infractions against the law every day. People are being killed and robbed. It does not mean those who break the law are above it. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, the court process is ongoing. We should make sure that we expedite the process. *(Members rose_)* Honourable members, sit.

Honourable members, I did not introduce Fr Frederick Tusingwire, the Parliament Co-Chaplain. Father, you are welcome. Thank you so much, for coming. *(Applause)*

MR SSENKYONYI: Madam Speaker, I would like to appreciate the Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs for stating very unequivocally that no one is above the law. I appreciate him because he released a statement in regard to this particular matter, condemning the abduction and the torture of this person called Edward Sebuufu.

Away from the letter, which I do appreciate that he wrote, I do not know whether he wrote it because of the opposition politician he has been for a long time but as a Government official, we would want to know, is action going to be taken against this errant Government official that broke the law?

When a Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs writes a statement saying, “Government official X, the CDF, here you are breaking the law. You cannot abduct people and torture them in your basement. Release them. That is a Government minister writing.

Away from the fact that that is good and it excited us, what action should be taken against this errant Government official? Or, is he above the law? That is the question that I was asking. We have now recognised that he was operating outside the law. What, then, gets to be done? Is anything going to happen to him?

I am glad that even the Prime Minister has walked in. Maybe Hon. Mao might not have an answer – maybe he should as a minister - but for the Prime Minister, who often says she is very able and action-oriented, is she going to take action against this errant Government official, called Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have never, just like when there are arrests by the police and the army, I have never seen the Inspector General of Police (IGP) himself going to do the arrest. The arrest is made by other people. We may not talk about the CDF now, but rather look, in depth, into who did it and why it was done. However, the court process must be expedited. Next item. *(Hon. Ssemujju rose_)*

BILLS FIRST READING

THE COPYRIGHT AND NEIGHBOURING RIGHTS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, we have been having this Bill for long and I congratulate Hon. Kiyaga, who introduced it. It was taken over by the Government and I now call the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to table the Bill.

MR SSEMURJU: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The procedural issue I am raising is that Hon. David Muhoozi, the former CDF - and, usually, he is the one who comes here because Hon. Otafiire does not

come – came and told Parliament that when soldiers and policemen are arresting people, they must identify themselves. Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba said, “I disagree with that minister”.

When I raised, here, the issues of deploying soldiers to South Sudan and Parliament asked the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs to explain, immediately, the Spokesperson of Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF) dismissed him, saying: “That one represents us only in Parliament”.

Lt Gen. Elwelu, there, was called “a buffoon” by the CDF. *-(Laughter)-* One by one -

THE SPEAKER: What is the procedural matter?

MR SSEMUIJU: I am raising it, if you allow me to give the background; one by one, ministers, UPDF soldiers and committees of Parliament are becoming victims of the CDF.

The procedural issue I am raising, Madam Speaker, is whether you should not get the Government, at the highest level, to tell us, because recently he said: “You, the Opposition, we are going to beat you during elections; for us we are Tutsi”.

These are serious matters, Madam Speaker, that every sane person must be concerned with. They are not matters that can just be ruled on, and we continue.

Lt. Gen. Elwelu is about to run away. I do not know whether Gen. David Muhoozi sits in his office comfortably. The minister for defence, the other day, was here. So, we have all become victims of this one man called Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba. This Parliament must find a solution.

THE SPEAKER: At least, I am not a victim – honourable members, what we need to look at is: where does that information come from? On social media, anybody can post anything, anytime. Next item.

(Hon. Odur rose_) Honourable members, you are going to drag us, yet this Order Paper is long. I am going to give you a chance after he has laid it. *(Hon. Odur rose_)* Okay. He has something.

MR ODUR: Thank you, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: He is the alternative justice minister. Just hear from him.

MR ODUR: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have two procedural matters –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister for works, while you were away, we raised issues of roads and accidents in Kampala. As Parliament, we regret why we rationalised the Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA). We want a statement from you tomorrow.

2.26

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WORKS AND TRANSPORT (WORKS) (Mr Musa Ecweru): It will come, Mama.

MR ODUR: Madam Speaker, I have two procedural matters. The first one regards the application of our Rules of Procedure. I have seen, in circulation and the gazette, that we have new Rules of Procedure, which are not accessible to Members. I do not have a copy, and I do not know whether this Parliament is now proceeding under the old or new rules, such that we are guided properly in processing the business.

The second procedural matter is that – I do not remember the day, but we had asked for the new regulations, by statutory instrument, on the UPDF establishment and there was a commitment from the Attorney-General that that copy would be brought here, because it is the one that operationalises the UPDF Act and it gives, potentially, the CDF some powers.

If Parliament, which made the law, cannot follow up on that establishment to see where the powers begin and end, it may be difficult. Some of the questions asked by Members here maybe are in that regulation. Can we get a

commitment that it comes here so that we can examine whether the CDF and how the army is being managed, now, is in order, or there is something that Parliament can do to change that law?

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The new rules that have been gazetted will be distributed. The Clerk should distribute them. That is what we are using now.

Attorney- General, the issue of the UPDF?

2.28

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The UPDF is run in accordance with the UPDF Act. The establishment of the UPDF is an administrative instrument which is used by the UPDF in setting up its structures internally.

However, all the powers are granted under the UPDF Act. That is where you should look.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR ODUR: Madam Speaker, that instrument –

THE SPEAKER: He has only spoken English, which you have not understood. You would have asked him, maybe, to speak in Luganda. Yes?

MR ODUR: Madam Speaker, you know I do not speak Luganda. Are you addressing me?

THE SPEAKER: No, I am responding to him. *(Laughter)*

MR ODUR: Yes, make it clear to the person.

THE SPEAKER: It was to the person asking: what has he said?

MR ODUR: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The issue I am raising is that the instrument was made pursuant to a provision of the UPDF Act. It is a statutory instrument. By law, if you read that Act, it is supposed to be laid here so that

Parliament can interrogate whether it does not contravene the spirit of the Act. That is all I am asking.

THE SPEAKER: Okay. Attorney-General?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: I do not know it. I am going to look for it, but I do not know it. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Mao?

2.29

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS (Mr Norbert Mao): Madam Speaker, there are some Members who are above the law here, obviously, as I have seen. You can call someone to the Floor, but they interrupt and say whatever they want. I am also calling for the rule of law in Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: Can you lay your Bill?

MR MAO: Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled “The Copyright and Neighbouring Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2025” be read for the first time. I also beg to lay a copy of the Bill and a Certificate of Financial Implications. I beg to move, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Pursuant to rule 129(1) of the Rules of Procedure, the Bill stands referred to the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, and rule 129(2) applies. *(A Member rose_)* Can I have these Bills laid, and then you bring your procedural matters?

II) THE UGANDA PEOPLE’S DEFENCE FORCES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister? *[Mr Ssemujju: “There is no minister.”]* The minister is there. Honourable members, the Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs will lay the Bill, which is “The Uganda People’s Defence Forces (Amendment) Bill, 2025”. This Bill is in compliance with the court ruling of the Kabaziguruka case.

2.31

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the Bill entitled “The Uganda People’s Defence Forces (Amendment) Bill, 2025” for the first reading.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister – [*Hon. Ssenyonyi: “Point of order.”*] Wait.

MR SSENYONYI: Madam Speaker, you have even told us that we have got new rules in this House because the intention is to see that we streamline and get orderly. There is a way we ought to operate.

The Minister of State for Trade, Hon. David Bahati, has come here and told us that he begs to lay a copy of I-do-not-know-what. Madam Speaker, that is not the way procedurally Bills are read for the first time.

The Prime Minister is here. Madam Prime Minister, why don’t you organise your Cabinet because even Hon. Bahati has just been ambushed? Your minister for defence is not present. You say you are always in charge; why don’t you take charge?

The reason I am insisting on this, Madam Speaker, is because we have seen a certain draft being circulated. We want to be sure of what is being laid. The one being circulated, according to what we have read, actually contravenes Article 92 –

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order.

MR SSENYONYI: I am on a point of order. Prime Minister, calm down; just relax. The draft that we have seen being circulated, Madam Speaker, contravenes Article 92, which says you cannot pass a law to upset a decision of the court because the Supreme Court said civilians have no jurisdiction under military courts. That is what we are saying. What is being laid here? We need to know.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, we will debate the Bill when it comes here; let it

be laid. Can you get the certificate and lay it on the Table?

2.33

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (VETERAN AFFAIRS) (Ms Huda Oleru): Madam Speaker, I am requesting that the second item on the agenda be read. Within a minute, we will read the document.

THE SPEAKER: The document is there. (*Laughter*)

MS OLERU: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. My senior minister is here. I kindly request that he comes and lays the certificate. (*Laughter*) Honourable minister, you are welcome.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Defence, please lay the certificate.

2.34

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (Mr Jacob Oboth): I take the pleasure to lay a copy of the Certificate of Financial Implications.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Bahati, move the motion. Hon. Oboth, please start afresh.

MR OBOTH: Madam Speaker, in accordance with Rule 134 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of Uganda, I beg to move that the Bill entitled –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members?

MR OBOTH: Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, rule 134 is on the first reading of the Bill. If you do not know how to read – [*Ms Betty Namboozie: “Madam Speaker, I have the rules here.”*] Go ahead.

MR OBOTH: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the guidance I am getting from the House.

I beg to move that the Bill entitled “The Uganda People’s Defence Forces (Amendment) Bill, 2025” be read for the first time. I would like to attach a copy of the Certificate of Financial Implications, in accordance with Section 76 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015, as amended and Rule 124 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of Uganda. I lay the same certificate for the Uganda People’s Defence Forces (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Pursuant to Rule 129(1) of the Rules of Procedure, the Bill stands referred to the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs and the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs.

In furtherance to Rule 200(3) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, the chairperson of the Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs is hereby designated to chair the joint committee. He will be deputised by the chairperson of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs. *(Hon. Betty Nambooze rose_)*

Hon. Nambooze, we are not in a market. Can we move correctly? I am not going to allow people to come and do politics here. Given that this Bill is straightforward, honourable members, I expect the committee to handle this and it should be resolved before the end of the Fourth Session. Therefore, I expect the Bill back soon.

Next item? Allow me to first leave that item and we go to the tribute. Can we first pay tribute?

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF
PARLIAMENT TO PAY TRIBUTE TO HIS
HOLINESS, THE LATE POPE FRANCIS,
THE SUPREME PONTIFF OF THE
CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SOVEREIGN
OF THE STATE OF THE VATICAN CITY,
FOR HIS SELFLESS AND DEDICATED
SERVICE TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
AND HUMANITY

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, as you may be aware, Pope Francis died on Easter Monday –*(Hon. Betty Nambooze rose_)* Hon. Nambooze, have respect for our church.

Honourable members, as you are aware, Pope Francis died on Easter Monday, 21 April 2025. Being an iconic, global religious figure, it is only prudent that this House records a motion to pay tribute to him formally.

Pope Francis was a man of God who lived a life of simplicity, humility, love, respect, and unity. He lived with compassion. He gave Uganda an honour by canonisation of Ugandan Martyrs in the Vatican. That was last year. Pope Francis also came to Uganda.

Pursuant to Rule 56 of the Rules of Procedure, I will invite the Rt Hon. Prime Minister to move a motion to that effect. Prime Minister?

2.40

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Madam Speaker, I move under Rule 58 of our new Rules of Procedure a motion for a resolution of Parliament to pay tribute to His Holiness the late Pope Francis, the Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic Church, a Sovereign of the State of Vatican City, for his selflessness and dedicated service to the Catholic Church and humanity.

“WHEREAS THE Parliament of Uganda received with deep sorrow the sad news of the death of His Holiness Pope Francis, which occurred on Easter Monday, 21 April 2025, in Vatican City;

AWARE THAT His Holiness Pope Francis has been the Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic Church and the Sovereign of the State of the Vatican City from 2013 until his death;

NOTING THAT His Holiness Pope Francis has been a unique and historic Pope, being the first Jesuit Pope, the first Pope from the Southern Hemisphere, and the first person born or raised outside of Europe to be elected Pope since the 8th century;

RECOGNISING THAT His Holiness Pope Francis advocated for reforms in the Catholic Church by appointing various synods, including the Synod on the Family in October

2014 and 2015, the Synod on the Young People in 2018, the Synod on the Pan-Amazonia region in 2019, and the Synod on Synodality in 2024, through which the Pope consulted the world-wide Catholic Church on matters affecting the Catholic Church;

APPRECIATING THAT His Holiness Pope Francis lived a life of distinction, exalted, unique compassion and kindness, exhibited charity, selflessness, humility and wisdom, and led a humble life free from the trappings of power and gave up most of the privileges attached to the Papacy;

FURTHER APPRECIATING THAT His Holiness Pope Francis advocated for the protection of the environment, migrants, women and children, and preached reconciliation and inter-religious tolerance and advocated for world peace and the peaceful resolution of the wars and conflicts in South Sudan, Gaza, Ukraine, Democratic Republic of Congo, and other parts of the world affected by war and conflict;

COGNISANT THAT His Holiness Pope Francis visited Uganda in November 2015 to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Canonisation of the Uganda Martyrs, during which visit Pope Francis preached reconciliation, unity, peace, harmony and urged leaders to work for the common good of the people;

FURTHER COGNISANT THAT His Holiness Pope Francis recognised and bestowed upon Fr. Guiseppe Ambrosoli of the Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus, the rite of Venerable at an event that took place on 20 November 2022 in Kalongo, Gulu Archdiocese;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that:

- 1. Parliament collectively conveys its deep condolences to the Catholic Church and the people of Uganda for the loss of His Holiness Pope Francis.*
- 2. Parliament takes cognisance of the distinguished, selfless and dedicated service of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Catholic Church and humanity.*

Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Is the motion seconded? It is seconded by the Leader of the Opposition and the whole House. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, can you justify your motion? (*Hon. Sseggon rose*)

MR SSEGGONA: Madam Speaker, I am not opposed to the motion, but I want us to reorganise the records. My brother, the Attorney-General, stood up in support and yet he is not a voting member of the House. I want you to expunge his vote.

THE SPEAKER: He was walking out. That is why I only mentioned the Leader of the Opposition, but the Attorney-General was walking out.

MR SSEGGONA: Now that it is expunged, I am comfortable. (*Laughter*)

THE SPEAKER: That was a light moment. Prime Minister, justify your motion.

MS NABBANJA: Madam Speaker, below is my justification.

On Monday, 21 April, we received shocking news of the passing of Pope Francis, the head of the Catholic Church, a Sovereign of the State of the Vatican City.

Pope Francis, originally Jorge Mario was the 266th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church but the first Pope to come from Latin America and from the Southern hemisphere.

He was born in Buenos Aires on 17 December 1936. His father was Mario Jose Bergoglio who was an accountant, and his mother was Regina Maria Sivori a committed wife, dedicated to raising their five children.

Pope Francis graduated as a chemical technician and then chose the path of priesthood, entering the Diocesan Seminary of Villa Devoto in 1958 and becoming a priest on 13 December 1969.

On 20 May 1992, he was appointed Bishop of Buenos Aires and named the Archbishop of the

same in 1998. He was consecrated a Cardinal in 2001. He was elected the Supreme Pontiff on 13 March 2013.

The profound pontificate of Pope Francis touched many minds and hearts. He set personal connections with individuals and people with close attention to those in difficulty, giving himself limitlessly, especially to the marginalised.

He was a Pope among the people with an open heart towards everyone. Rich in human cordiality and profoundly sensitive to today's challenges, the late Pope Francis truly shared anxieties and sufferings, and the hopes of this time of globalisation.

Confronted with the present-day global inequality and raging wars with their inhuman errors and innumerable deaths and destruction, Pope Francis persistently raised his voice, imploring peace and calling for reason and honest negotiation to find possible solutions.

The late Holy Father extraordinarily used his papacy to push for action on climate change. He always proclaimed that environmental degradation is a moral issue, spurred by greed and unchecked capitalism, which causes human beings to lose sight of relationships that bind them together and to neglect Earth, their common home.

Promoting the concept of integral ecology, the late Pope Francis condemned sinful actions against the natural world, which included the common exploitation of impoverished human beings and the abuse of human rights.

Madam Speaker, Pope Francis, a pope of the people and a transformative figure who embodied a spirit of international solidarity, has left behind an extensive diplomatic network across the world. Uganda was blessed to be one of the 68 countries the late Pope Francis visited in the 12 years of his pontificate, recalling that he never even visited his home country of Argentina while he was a Pope. These visits offered Pope Francis the opportunity to call for justice, peace, inclusion, and love for the entire human family.

Many of Pope Francis's visits were undertaken as pilgrimages of peace and reconciliation in an open invitation to politicians to overcome partisan interests and push forward processes for the common good of their people.

Madam Speaker, particularly while he was in Uganda in November 2015 to celebrate with us the diamond jubilee of the canonisation of the Uganda Martyrs, Pope Francis encouraged us to reach out to those in need, co-operate with others for the common good and to build a more just society, which promotes human dignity, defends God's gift of life and protects the wonders of nature.

In a more concrete way, the late Pope Francis greatly contributed to the realisation of the Vision 2040 agenda of transforming our country into a modern and prosperous nation. This was achieved through social welfare interventions and development projects of the Catholic Church, which the Pope leads.

The Catholic Church has been collaborating with the Government in various projects all over the country; in quality education, holistic health and sustainable agriculture, humanitarian relief, peace maintenance and rural micro-finance, among others.

On a more personal level, I had the opportunity of meeting the late Pope Francis in 2017, 2022 and 2023. These one-on-one encounters left a lasting imprint on me and I believe many of you, including you, Rt Hon. Speaker. *(Applause)*

In these moments, what always shocked me most was not the magnificence of his title or the admiration he inspired around the world, but his overwhelming humility, sincere graciousness and politeness. In these private conversations, the Holy Father thanked the Government of Uganda and the President, His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, for maintaining peace and for the worthwhile policy of hosting refugees.

On the complex subject and the grave question of family planning, His Holiness encouraged us to remain faithful to God's design in the generation and rearing of new lives. Pope

Francis said marriage and conjugal love are, by their nature, ordained for the procreation and education of children.

He, therefore, implored us to reinforce the correct policies, laws and practices on the regulation of birth through natural, not artificial methods of family planning. He, as well, reminded us of the duty and responsibility of raising our children to reflect the image and likeness of God in which they were created.

In February 2025, Pope Francis was hospitalised for several weeks, which developed into double pneumonia. He was discharged in late March and subsequently made several public appearances, but sadly died on Easter Monday of 2025 of cerebral stroke and cardio-circulatory collapse.

Pope Francis has left behind a towering legacy for individuals and leaders to emulate. Some key valuable lessons from his life and teachings include: one, humility (simplicity). Pope Francis emphasised the importance of humility and simplicity in leadership, encouraging leaders to act with humility and avoid seeking to elevate themselves above others.

On compassion and empathy, he demonstrated genuine care and understanding for individuals from all walks of life, fostering trust and connections with others. He was always on the side of the discarded, those no one looked upon.

On social justice and advocacy, Pope Francis championed poverty alleviation, environmental stewardship and human rights, urging world leaders to prioritise the poor and the vulnerable.

On inclusivity and unity, he sought to break down barriers, promote unity, and highlight common values and shared humanity.

On selflessness, sacrifice and servant leadership, Pope Francis emphasised the importance of self-sacrifice and humble service in good leadership, asking leaders to act with humility and respect towards others.

Madam Speaker and honourable members, he advocated for forgiveness and reconciliation as tools for healing and peacebuilding.

On environmental stewardship, Pope Francis highlighted the need to address climate change and promote sustainable practices.

I would like to thank the Speaker for acknowledging this remarkable and admirable leader and giving him special recognition in his honour through the consideration of this Motion before the House today.

Madam Speaker, as I conclude, I thank you and your delegation for having attended the burial of the Holy Father. (*Applause*)

The NRM Government, under the wise and able leadership of His Excellency President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, wishes to extend its profound sympathies to the Catholic Church, the Christian family and all Ugandans. May the Almighty God grant his soul eternal rest.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, for the tribute that speaks all about the Pope. His humility, simplicity and unity. He preached love for the poor and peace. His last words were, “Peace be with you”. The Leader of the Opposition will second the motion, then we will have an Independent.

3.02

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Madam Speaker, I rise to second the Motion and pay tribute to Pope Francis, an exemplary religious leader who significantly contributed to the reshaping of the global moral compass. His legacy will be remembered not only within the Catholic Church but also around the world by those who cherish truth, justice, and the inherent dignity of every human being.

Pope Francis was more than a religious leader. He was a voice of reason and compassion in a world increasingly torn by division, inequality and greed. He championed social justice, urged governments to prioritise the poor and advocated against global systems that perpetuate suffering. His encyclical, *Laudato*

Si' reminded us all of our urgent responsibility to care for our planet.

This message is even more critical today, as we witness the devastating impacts of climate change across Uganda and the world. Pope Francis warned us of the consequences of exploiting nature and ignoring our duty as stewards of creation.

Sadly, environmental degradation continues to displace communities, destroy livelihoods and deepen poverty. Pope Francis's clarion call should, therefore, serve as a wake-up call to urgently rethink our development approach and harness the environment sustainably for the benefit of present and future generations.

Pope Francis was a bridge builder who crossed the boundaries of faith, politics and ideology. He reached out to Muslims, Jews and people of no faith. If we are to move forward as a country, we must begin by seeing one another not through the lenses of politics or belief but as fellow citizens who deserve dignity, fairness and a place in our shared future.

He spoke to presidents, prisoners, refugees and the forgotten with the same humility. Perhaps what made him truly revolutionary was his simplicity. He rejected the glorification of titles and preferred to be called just "Francis". In a world where power often corrupts, he embodied the opposite.

Madam Speaker, as you will recall, he visited Uganda in 2015 and brought with him messages that were both timely and deeply powerful. Speaking with clarity and urgency, he reminded our leaders that the development of a nation depends not only on infrastructure but more importantly, on upright and honest leaders and citizens who are guided by a spirit of service.

His words were not abstract. They were a direct call for action for all of us in public leadership. Honourable colleagues, the legacy challenges us to reflect deeply on the kind of leadership we offer this country. It must never be about position, entitlement or self-preservation.

True leadership, as he demonstrated, is about serving the people with humility, dignity and humanity. He advocated for justice, transparency and servant leadership.

We, as leaders, must reflect seriously on these values today. At a time when our nation is experiencing a painful breakdown in governance, public resources are being looted and citizens are living in fear.

That fear is not abstract, but a bitterly lived experience. Ugandans are being arbitrarily arrested, tortured and detained without trial for days, some months. Security forces are used to silence dissent and citizens speak quietly about issues that should be debated openly.

Pope Francis' message on such situations was very clear. The dignity of every human being must be upheld and no government should rule through fear.

To the youth, he urged them not to lose hope and not to be discouraged. In today's Uganda, where the youth face unemployment, repression and hopelessness, his message was more urgent than ever. He wanted young people to become change makers, not victims of a broken system.

The Pope's humility stands in stark contrast to the emergence of a new class of untouchables in Uganda. These individuals conceal their abuse of power behind their titles and they trample on the rights of ordinary people.

In Pope Francis' world, titles are meaningless if they are not accompanied by service. Today, titles have increasingly become shields against accountability.

During his visit to Nalukolongo, Pope Francis met the elderly and the disabled. He said, "*It is in caring for the weakest members of society that we show our true strength*". It is, therefore, a tragic irony that while many Ugandans go without health care, clean water or even hope, their taxes are stolen by a few who occupy various positions of influence in our country.

Madam Speaker, Pope Francis's legacy challenges us. It highlights our failures as the political elite

and motivates us to strive for improvement. He serves as a reminder that leadership is not about status but about service. Service means standing with the vulnerable, speaking the truth and living with integrity.

As we celebrate his life and legacy, let us pledge to uphold the principles he represented: humility, justice and compassion. That is the Uganda that Pope Francis would have wanted to see. May the soul of Pope Francis rest in eternal peace. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, as we pay respect to the most respected holy Pope, we should do it with respect and dignity. We can talk politics after, but for now, let us speak about the man of God who was full of humility and simplicity.

Hon. Tinka?

3.09

MR BARNABAS TINKASIIMIRE (NRM, Buyaga West County, Kagadi): I would like to thank you, Madam Speaker. I also thank the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition for their good submissions about the late Holy Father, Pope Francis.

Today, I would like to thank Parliament for giving us, particularly the Catholic Church, a shoulder to cry on following the loss of our Holy Father. We move in strength because we got a new Holy Father when we saw the white smoke. However, for this purpose, I would like to state that I will greatly miss the Holy Father, whom I met.

When we went to see him last year – when you moved through the first gate, you would think that you were meeting a serious head of state. When you went through the second gate, you would start seeing simplicity. Through the third gate, you would start seeing a man who was trusting in the total protection of God. Then, after the fourth gate, you would see joy and peace prevailing in the environment where he met his subjects – all the people that he would meet.

I was very excited to receive his blessing. I was very excited to kiss his ring and to accept that, at the age of 53, as a Catholic, I was able to meet him – to at least touch the hands of the Pope. It was incredible. I would like to say that this leader that we met had special attributes.

For instance, I remember there was a time when he spoke about blessing the homosexuals and a tirade of attacks went against him, including from the church – the people whom he was leading, with the cardinals and bishops writing letters. However, he said: “Even when I have authority to excommunicate anyone who disagrees with me, I will not call forth against that.” You would see a leader who understood his responsibility as handed over to him from the reign of St. Peter, the Apostle of Jesus, the first Pope. He recognised that he was merely the 266th Pope of the Catholic Church.

I was very excited that in one of his actions, as the Pope, he allowed single mothers who wanted to return to receiving Holy Communion to receive it.

We cannot under-look that aspect because we have seen the world growing, with single mothers struggling for years and I think they needed to struggle with the Lord.

What else can I say? I pray that we, who had that personal touch with him, shall slowly stand the loss and move with the strength of the blessings that we received from him. May the Lord have mercy on his dear servant, Francis, and receive him on his right hand side.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us have Hon. Lucy, followed by Hon. Musasizi.

3.15

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving us this opportunity to honour Pope Francis –

THE SPEAKER: Let us reduce the time so that more Members can speak.

MS LUCY AKELLO: I know the title “Pope” is not there now. Even on his grave, he just put a simple mark, “Francis”. On behalf of the Catholic chaplaincy, we continue to pray for Pope Francis to rest in peace.

Madam Speaker, I had the rare opportunity to meet Pope Francis over seven times – *(Interjection)*- yes, that is the grace of God. Every time I met him, it was different. This year, in August, I was looking forward to meeting him again, but maybe we shall meet Pope Leo XIV.

Madam Speaker, I just want to bring to your attention that Pope Francis served to the last. He did not allow his sickness to pull him down. Actually, in January this year, he took the longest trip to East Timor, Philippines, to go to the people. I watched that papal visit and I was struck. I think my faith increased because of what he did.

Secondly, this year, he launched the year of jubilee. He died when it was not complete, but I know it was dear to him. He was buried at St Mary’s Major Basilica. For some reason, every time I am in Rome, this is my favourite place. For the seven years that I went to Rome, I would not leave Rome without visiting that basilica. I am happy that he chose that place as his final resting place.

Madam Speaker, Pope Francis was a peacemaker. You watched the video of him kissing the feet of the leaders of South Sudan. I pray that South Sudan finds peace even when Pope Francis is no more.

When Pope Leo XIV was addressing the cardinals on Saturday, 10 May 2025, this is what he had to say about Pope Francis. He said: “I continue and follow closely in the footsteps of the late Pope Francis.” He called it a “precious legacy” and said we must make good use of this legacy.

Madam Speaker, if I do not say this about Pope Francis, I would not have done justice to him.

Finally, Pope Francis loved children with a passion. He also loved the elderly and the disabled. I remember that every time we had a private audience, there was a special corner for families with children. Even if you were the president, you would never take that seat as long as you did not have a child. It was a front seat from where he would emerge because he wanted to emerge and see the children. When he saw children, you would see a genuine smile that beams from his face, and the excitement that he has. Several times, he has stopped his motorcade just to greet children or say hello to a disabled person. My God, this world will miss Pope Francis.

However, we are consoled as Catholics that we now have Pope Leo XIV. For those of you who do not know him, go and study about him. He is going to be a lot more because the Catholic Church relies on the Holy Spirit in the selection of the Pope. We were wrong as human beings in saying we want this, we want that, but the Holy Spirit had already chosen Pope Leo XIV.

He is taking over from Pope Leo XIII, who was the promoter of Catholic social teaching. If you do not know, this is the best document you can read. Go and read. It has everything to do with human rights, justice, and democracy, which was promoted by Pope Leo XIII. Pope Leo XIV is going to continue with this legacy. He will continue from where Pope Leo XIII stopped.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity, and I greet our Papal Nuncio and the team that has come from the Catholic Secretariat. We continue to pray for Pope Francis to rest in peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Akello is the *Ssabakulisitu* in Parliament. I would like to introduce Fr Raphael Romero Augustine, the Director of Divine Vachan Ashram Centre, India. You are most welcome. *(Applause)*

We have: Ms Lijjo, the retreat coordinator, Mr Liyoj, the retreat coordinator, Ms Anne Makokha, also a retreat coordinator from Kenya,

Ms Margaret Karuga, a coordinator from Kenya, Ms Evelyn Arinaitwe, a coordinator from Uganda. You are all welcome. They are here to listen to the motion as we pay tribute to the Holy Father. *(Applause)*

Hon. Musasizi?

3.21

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: We will reduce the time to two minutes, yes?

MR MUSASIZI: Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the late Pope Francis. I first saw Pope Francis in 2015 when he visited Uganda. I thank him because he brought blessings to the construction of the Uganda Martyrs Shrine, Namugongo. It is now a beautiful place for pilgrimage. *(Applause)* I am privileged to have seen my mother for the last 11 years, a walking pilgrim from Kabale Diocese.

Madam Speaker, I also had an opportunity to meet Pope Francis on 24 August 2024. I was part of the delegation, which you led, and had a private audience with the Pope. Not only a private audience, but also the discussions we had, especially on peace and justice, were quite immense. We thank him for that.

I also had an opportunity to attend the burial of Pope Francis. What do I pick from this? Simplicity and humility. Even in death, what he prayed for was that his burial be simple. It was the first time I saw the whole world in attendance, but everything was done in a simple way.

Madam Speaker, I pray that God continues to grant eternal rest to the late Pope Francis. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Pope Francis was very passionate about Uganda because of the Uganda Martyrs, and that is why we had a canonisation of the Uganda Martyrs

in the Vatican. Hon. Ariko? *(A Member rose.)*
No, I was calling Hon. Ariko.

3.24

MR HERBERT ARIKO (NRM, Soroti East Division, Soroti City): Madam Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity. I stand here to second the motion to pay tribute to the late Pope Francis.

Madam Speaker, I come from the Holy Family Parish in Soroti Catholic Diocese, which is located in Gweri. Pope Francis was the first Jesuit priest to be Pope, the first Latin American, and also the first Pope who had been born and raised outside Europe since the 8th century, when we had Pope Gregory the Third.

When we talk about Pope Francis, we talk about a Holy Father whose leadership of the Catholic Church was characterised by humility, simplicity, and a break from the tradition of having church leaders at that senior level detached from the flock they lead.

I personally had the privilege of meeting Pope Francis five times when we travelled to the Vatican.

Madam Speaker, because of his Jesuit background – *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: One second; give him a minute.

MR ARIKO: Madam Speaker, Pope Francis chose to lead a simple life. He resided at the Domus Sanctae Marthae Guest House, rather than living in the papal apartments in the Apostolic Palace. That exemplified his desire to remain simple and to show the world that even as you are a great leader, you can still lead a life that touches many people in a simple way. He wore simple vestments rather than the ornamented ones.

Pope Francis was also at the centre of ensuring the full restoration of diplomatic ties between Cuba and the USA.

He was instrumental in ensuring that the Chinese Communist Party had its influence in

the appointment of bishops regulated so that they no longer dictated who was appointed bishop. As you know, these are tenets of a person who is able to negotiate and bring people closer to a sense of peace and reconciliation. Thank you, Madam Speaker - *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Sseggoni and Hon. Bahati. The altar boy will come last. *(Laughter)*

3.28

MR MEDARD LUBEGA-SSEGONNA (NUP, Busiro County East, Wakiso): Madam Speaker, thank you for this opportunity, and I want to join colleagues in celebrating the life of the Pope. I thank the Prime Minister for bringing this motion and I want to support her with all my heart.

For the record, I am Anglican, and on behalf of the Anglican Chaplaincy and my colleagues, I want to join you in paying deep tribute to His Holiness, Pope Francis, who was a global moral compass; the person who we would all look at, emulate, study, and have some take homes.

Pope Francis has been described as humble. Even when I wanted to disagree with the Prime Minister that he told her that President Museveni was ruling Uganda very well - with his humility, I am tempted to think it happened. Even when we belong to different denominations, you would look at the Pope and take lessons.

He was not self-imposing. One of the causes of the dangers that we experience today is having self-imposing persons, even when they are not as big as they think. I believe if Pope Francis was here, he would not allow Mukajanga to kill the martyrs. He would not allow my brother Jacob Oboth Oboth to bring the Bill he has brought today. He would not allow self-imposition - *(Member timed out)*

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Bahati?

3.30

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to thank you for the opportunity to pay tribute to Pope Francis, a man of God who guided the world for the years that he was a Pope. The Bible says that we shall know them by their fruits and I am sure that the works of Pope Francis produced good fruits in his time.

He was a firm leader who never feared anybody. I want to quote two examples. In the recent times in the war of Ukraine and Russia, he was courageous enough to stand up and tell the Ukrainian President that it is time to raise the white flag and negotiate. In the elections of the U.S.A, he was able to stand up and tell the Americans that you are choosing between two evils - the one against migrants and another one against life.

Therefore, we want to celebrate his life and to congratulate the Vatican for choosing and giving us a new Pope who will build on the works of St Francis. At the end of the day, Pope Francis was a holy man who worked so hard to enter heaven. I hope that through his works and belief, all of us will follow in his footsteps towards working hard to one day to enter heaven. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Pope Francis indeed was known by his works. Teso Affairs minister and then Hon. Mpuuga.

3.32

THE MINISTER OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER (TESO AFFAIRS) (Dr Kenneth Ongalo-Obote): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I rise to support this motion to pay tribute to Pope Francis, who was not just a Pope for the Catholics, but a shepherd to all humanity.

Pope Francis had the rare and unique ability to touch all people in different ways. Perhaps it was because of his love for the earth. The Leader of the Opposition mentioned here a document called the *Laudato Si'* - a very important document

about our care for our common home, which is the earth. I often listened to him cry out for the earth as our mother and for the harm that we inflict on it because of our irresponsible use and abuse of natural resources. He saw the earth as an environment for our sustenance, but which, because of our greed, we turned into something that we use for our immediate satisfaction and interest.

Pope Francis will be remembered as a Pope who was simple and yet profound in the way he thought about set doctrines of the Church. I was particularly intrigued and followed his discourses about the Lord's Prayer, which I thought were truly meaningful about our relationship with God and about the relationship of God with people and their sins. It should not be said, as he said, that the Lord should not lead us into temptation; but his cry was that we should be saved from temptations.

As the English would say, I would like to conclude with enthusiasm that even though the Pope has died, the Pope lives again. I would like to congratulate the Catholic Church upon the election of Pope Leo XIV, and I hope that he will continue in the path that was set by Pope Francis. May God rest his soul in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Mpuuga?

3.34

MR MATHIAS MPUUGA (NUP, Nyendo-Mukungwe Division, Masaka): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to join the Prime Minister in the secondment of this special motion in remembrance of the Holy Father departed.

When Pope Francis visited Uganda on 27-30 November 2015, his message had three critical issues for our memory.

One is remembrance: because the Ugandan martyrs were a major attraction for his coming, he reminded us to remember their cause, the nature of their sacrifice, and what it reminded us as leaders, Catholics, Ugandans, and all duty-bearers, family leaders, et al.

Secondly, fidelity as a key message he left behind. Fidelity to all manner of vocations. I believe that even our own calling as leaders is a vocation. But do we ever reflect to understand the meaning of what we say, what we do in whichever space, and how it reflects on our scope of fidelity as leaders. The laws we make, the views we bear, the way we try to influence society for posterity; for me this is a very critical message.

Then lastly, his insistence on prayer. That a living being must be reminded about prayer, because he knew then and now, that human beings have a tendency of receding to prayer.

May we use his message in a threesome to understand our duty as leaders of this country – *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Aisha?

3.36

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

For the record, I am the Secretary to the Muslim Parliamentary Caucus. Therefore, on behalf of the Muslim community at Parliament, I join colleagues in celebrating the life of the Pope and paying tribute. I would, therefore, like to support the motion.

I would like to say that the epitome of the Pope's humility was exhibited at that time when he was asked by some journalist to talk about himself. He referred to him by his real name, Jorge Mario Bergoglio. He asked, who is he? And he said, I am a sinner. Now, for a Pope, who is known to be the most holy to describe himself as a sinner; he lowered himself to the most common man, to tell people that I am human, just like you are.

Indeed, his humility was exemplary and there was a lot to learn from him. If the Pope were to come back here to Uganda, he would have been most disappointed because: the environment – the way he left it, when he left here – has been further degraded; human rights abuses are at

the extreme; respect for human dignity is zero. So, he would be very disappointed.

As we mourn him, we should learn more from him – his humility, his interest in not wanting to amass wealth. He never supported the accumulation of primitive wealth to himself. We shall live to remember him. I pray that the Catholic community, together with the world as a whole, takes lessons from him.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. One thing I am sure and aware of is that the Pope loved Uganda very much. I had private audience with the Holy Pope eight times. The refugee policy in Uganda is what the Pope loved very much. Dr Lulume?

3.38

DR LULUME BAYIGGA (DP, Buikwe County South, Buikwe): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I thank the Prime Minister for moving this motion, and everybody's submission.

Madam Speaker, I was humbled when I saw a picture of the Pope bowing down to kiss the shoes – (*Interjection*) – you say they were feet, but they were wearing shoes – of the President and Vice President of South Sudan. If a catechist was to bow down just to fasten my shoelaces, I would faint. Just imagine a pope bowing down to an African president and vice president and kissing their shoes; they should have fainted. That was a very big message for them. I do not know what they derive from that kind of action, but I believe that African leaders need to pick a leaf, even after the demise of our Pope. That lesson must continue to live.

When the Pope visited us in Uganda, he used a small car, and incidentally, I did not see escorts –(*Interjections*)– It was a lesson that God provides security. I wish we could pick a leaf from that –

THE SPEAKER: I am offering you the opportunity to go to the Vatican in the next session.

DR BAYIGGA: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: You will see the security in the Vatican. Yes. I will go with the doctor on my next trip to the Vatican.

Yes, Hon. Gonzaga Ssewungu?

3.41

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu): I support the motion. Madam Speaker, in the Catholic faith, when a pope dies, bells are sounded in every Catholic Parish. When a new pope is announced, it is the same action. Our prayer to you, Madam Prime Minister and Members, is the message of reconciliation that the Pope was promoting. The moment you do that, you will win the heart of the pope. That is why we do not say, “may his soul rest in peace”, instead we say, “May he be canonised as a saint”. *Roma locuta, causa finita*; what the Pope says, nobody else should ask.

We pray for reconciliation. The moment we achieve that, all the actions he carried out were basing, training, and teaching us the message of reconciliation. Can you reconcile? You with the rosary, and I, let us promote reconciliation on both sides. We shall have promoted the message of the late Pope. Thank you.

3.42

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving us a chance to recognise the works of the Pope.

Madam Speaker, the Pope loved the environment so much. When he came up with the document called *Laudato si*, very many countries since 18 June 2015, have been following it to actually develop their laws to govern the management of their environments.

Madam Speaker, the Pope reminded us that whether you have money - there had been research that there could be some planets where humans can settle. However, from what the Pope analysed, he echoed it that all of us have a common home which is the earth. In that document, it had seven principles. He reminded us that the earth also cries, and he

called on political leaders to mind the earth's cries and the cries of the poor.

Madam Speaker, within the seven principles of *Laudato si*, he reminded us to build the resilience and empowerment of our people. Many countries that have followed the directions of the Pope have actually come up with mechanisms to reduce their greenhouse emissions. In the 10 years, some of the countries can show that after the reference to the *Laudato si* – (Member timed out.)

3.44

MR FRANCIS MWIJUKYE (FDC, Buhweju County, Buhweju): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also support the motion.

Madam Speaker, from the teachings of the late Pope, he was pro-life, pro-people, and pro-poor. I remember his famous quote: "Life is good when you are happy, but life is better when you make other people happy." For me, that was touching.

Madam Speaker, I am also one of the people who met Pope Francis many times. Whenever I got close to him, I wanted to tell him that I am also called Francis. When I said, "I am Francis from Uganda," he asked, "How is the land of the Martyrs?" From then on, I started walking to Namugongo because I saw how emotional he was when he talked about the Uganda Martyrs. Every year, I walk; but let me tell you, Members, there is power in Uganda Martyrs. Those of you who go to Namugongo, even if you walk from here or from your home, or just drive there, you see the power of the Uganda Martyrs.

Finally, let us not just talk about how he loved Uganda or how good he was. Let us go and live in his footsteps. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, and may he continue to intercede for us.

3.46

MR SILAS AOGON (Independent, Kumi Municipality, Kumi): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity.

First, I convey special condolences to you because the Pope was your special friend. That is one thing everybody in Uganda knows. I know how you feel and how you miss your dear friend.

Madam Speaker, for the years that I have been in Parliament, I have developed a very big connection with the Catholic Church, much as I am from the Anglican faith. These days, I even understand special terms and words in the Catholic system, such as synod and synodality.

When we talk about synod, some people may not understand, but it means the gathering of bishops and other stakeholders to discuss matters that affect the church. The Bishop that we are talking about was not a dictator. He is a man who managed to put bishops and stakeholders of the church together to discuss special matters. When we talk about synodality, it means the process of walking together, listening to each other, discerning the will of God, but not taking upon the will of man. That is what the Pope was known for.

We shall remember him forever. He was a great man. He loved Africa. He loved the world. I guess if he came back, and if he had not passed on, he would have touched my hand as well. The Pope was a true Ugandan, based in Italy. May God rest his soul in eternal peace. Thank you.

3.48

MS CATHELIN NDAMIRA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kabale): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, allow me to add my voice by thanking our Prime Minister for tabling this motion to pay respect to our Pope, who is in heaven already.

Madam Speaker, the man of God reshaped the image of papal leadership, making it less about power but more about being a shepherd who walks with the flock he is looking after. His personal conduct was unmatched; you can imagine, he used to carry his own briefcase. What kind of person would you want to see in Pope Francis?

His language of humility would hit you down as a believer. He frequently referred himself as a sinner in need of God's mercy. What about us Christians? Let us learn and follow the teachings of Pope Francis and let us preach unity and love to one another. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Betty, then Hon. Thomas.

3.49

MS BETTY ENGOLA (NRM, Woman Representative, Apac): Thank you, Madam speaker. I am a Catholic Christian from Lira Diocese. This is what I can say about Pope Francis; he was the head of the Roman Catholic Church in the world. He was a public figure and a world figure.

What I remember about Pope Francis was that he was always concerned about the poor, about refugees and climate change. He was always concerned about Catholic projects in the world, which is a very important thing.

The Pope, as I remember and it is very important that we pay this tribute because he visited Uganda. I remember where he stayed, in Mbuya; as a Catholic we would line up there in the evenings when he gets back to his residence to wave and smile at him. He urged leaders to work very hard - (*Member timed out.*)

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Thomas?

3.51

MR TOM AZA (NRM, West Moyo County, Moyo): Thank you, Madam speaker, for the opportunity. As an ex-seminarian, and on behalf of all the more than 20 ex-seminarians who are here. We have Hon. Musasizi, Hon. Tinkasiimire, Hon. Niwagaba and so on-

THE SPEAKER: Make your presentation.

MR AZA: On their behalf and on behalf of the people of Moyo District, I condole with the people of the world, the Catholic Church, all the Christians, non-Christians, everybody for the demise of the pontiff.

We are here to celebrate his legacy and life as a selfless person who fought hard for peace, unity, development, humanity, harmony, dialogue, democracy and encouraged consensus amidst contentious issues related to leadership and governance in the world.

I will vividly remember him for his Latin words like *Lavoro non vebe* (work not words). *Ad futurum edificamus* (we build for the future). *Si insti, et inste, cur Non ego* (If others can, why not I?) Very good. And his sayings about the timing; *tempus est pecunia* (time is money). We have to work hard and catch up with time.

Lastly, I would like to congratulate the Catholic fraternity for electing a new Pope in the name of Pope Leo XIV. Thank you, very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Faith?

3.53

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Madam Speaker, I also join colleagues to condole with the entire Roman Catholic community globally, upon the passing of Pope Francis. As they have already mentioned, his humility stood out.

I would like to testify that the manner in which Pope Francis carried himself made the Catholic Church more admirable. There are people who had stopped praying but resumed in the reign of Pope Francis.

The numbers grew, there are people in my community who were received in the Catholic faith in this season because the humility was excessive. If the statisticians knew how to count, they would already tell us that the numbers of the Catholics in Uganda increased, not just because people are producing but because the Catholic faith was more admirable at this time. It is a lesson that we carry on.

The other thing I admire about the life of Pope Francis was a time he took to give an apology to the indigenous Canadians on the past colonial atrocities that happened in the schools.

For a Pope to apologise, it is not easy. We will carry on the lesson as leaders, that even

for the crimes that were committed by those who came before us, we should be able to take responsibility. It helps the country and the world to heal.

The life of Pope Francis is a lesson for us who are still alive. I pray that we get a little portion of his humility and how he – *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Sam, Hon. Huda and finally-

3.55

MR SAMUEL OKWIR (NRM, Moroto County, Alebtong): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for this opportunity. I appreciate the Prime Minister for this motion. The life of the late pontiff was a remarkable one to us, who were his followers- I picked one thing; When my Bishop of Lira Diocese returned from the Vatican, I thought he had brought something very special and I visited him.

However, he told us that Pope Francis requested that we should pray for him, yet I thought we needed him to pray for us. The spirit and the humility in the person of the Pope was a good lesson that all of us should look at and follow. May his soul rest in peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Whenever you asked Pope Francis to pray for you, he would equally tell you to pray for him, too. Hon. Huda.

3.57

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (Veteran Affairs) (Ms Huda Oleru): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to thank the Rt Hon. Prime Minister for the motion and I support it. Pope Francis was known for his humility, accessibility and compassionate leadership style. He was also recognised for his strong communication skills, commitment to social justice, and environmental stewardship, which he offered to the world.

Pope Francis showed a gesture of interfaith dialogue and he demonstrated it by visiting many mosques. He was in Qatar, went to Abu Dhabi,

he was in Indonesia. Whenever he entered the mosque, he joined and prayed together with the Muslims. *(Applause)* - There is a lot that we can learn from that.

Madam Speaker, we are all one people before God. Therefore, whichever house of God you go to, Pope Francis showed us that we all believe in one God. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. This was witnessed on the day of his burial. All the other religions were given a chance to pray for his soul.

3.59

MS CATHERINE AKUMU (NRM, Older Persons Representative, Northern): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I thank God that I was able to come to Parliament today when there was a very important issue on the Order Paper about paying tribute to the late Pope Francis. I thank the Rt Hon. Prime Minister for bringing the motion, and I strongly support it.

We all agree that Pope Francis was very unique in all his ways. In 2016, when the late Pope Francis came to Uganda, there was very heavy rain before he prayed for us in Namugongo. I remember we walked through the rain up to Namugongo and had to spend the night there, in order to attend his prayer, the following day.

Madam Speaker, I did not have the opportunity of meeting him many times as other colleagues did, but I want to say how happy I am that in 2021, just before COVID-19 came, I was one of the people who was nominated to go to Rome to meet Pope Francis because we were going as Life Ascending International. In Uganda here, we also have Life Ascending Uganda and this is an association of older persons.

I would like to thank my diocese of Nebbi for supporting me and giving me – *(Member timed out.)*

4.01

MS DORCAS ACEN (NRM, Woman Representative, Alebtong): Thank you, Madam

Speaker. I would like to join my colleagues in paying tribute to His Holiness, the late Pope Francis, for the great things and great lessons that we have learned from him. From him, we have learned the values of universal love and courage.

Specifically, what touched me the most was that act of humility when he knelt down and kissed the feet of President Salva Kiir and the leader of the opposition. As leaders, we pick a great lesson of humility from a great man who has been honoured by the whole world. I pray that his memory helps us to know and have concrete actions, and pick lessons of peace and reconciliation from this great man of God.

I would like, therefore, to thank the Catholic fraternity for electing the new Pope, Pope Leo XIV. We pray that the legacy of Pope Francis continues to live forever in our lives. Thank you.

4.02

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: There is a motion by Hon. Santa.

MS OPENDI: Can I complete this? Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank you for dedicating time to discuss this very important subject matter of our dear Pope, who I was privileged to meet physically twice in the Vatican. I will speak about two things.

One issue that has not been spoken about, Madam Speaker, is that when we met him, he told us to ensure that we preach peace. He detested war and I would like to quote this because I still have the speech that he made to us when we visited him.

He said that as legislators, we must know that war is a failure of politics and of humanity, and a shameful capitulation, a stinging defeat before the forces of evil. He actually told us that the only war that we must fight is war against evil. If corruption is evil, let us fight it. If homosexuality is evil, let us fight it. If we feel anything is evil, let us fight it.

Secondly, this gallant son also recognised the women. The leadership of women was one thing that he recognised. I would like to state that he actually appointed Sister Simona Brambilla, a nun, as the first woman prefect of the Vatican, overseeing religious orders.

Other notable women that he appointed, in the interest of time, were Sister Nathalie Becquart as Undersecretary of the Synod of Bishops. He also appointed Sister Raffaella Petrini as the president of the Pontifical Commission – *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The Pope was a man of everybody; for children, the poor, the church and we are happy that he recognised women in top leadership of the Catholic Church. *(Applause)*

We will always remember him for his humility, simplicity and love for humanity. He was a peacemaker. He served with dignity and will leave a precious legacy. He declared 2025 as a year of jubilee. Let us remain positive in everything that we do. There is a motion.

4.05

MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. Everything good has been mentioned about the late Pope Francis. I now move that we close the debate. I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Is it seconded? *(Members rose_)* It is seconded by Hon. Milton, Hon. Aisha, Hon. Nyamutoro, the mover who is the Prime Minister and the chairperson of the committee for finance.

Honourable members, I now put the question that the House pays glowing tribute to His Holiness, the late Pope Francis, the Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic Church and the Sovereign of the state of Vatican City for his selfless and dedicated service to the Catholic Church and to humanity in the world.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Motion adopted.

THE SPEAKER: I now instruct the Clerk to extract the resolution and transmit it to the Papal Nuncio to Uganda. It will be transmitted, thereafter, to the Vatican.

We would like to thank you so much, Papal Nuncio and your team, for coming over to Parliament of Uganda. As Parliament of Uganda, we will dearly miss Pope Francis, but at the same time, we are consoled that we have a new Pope. Prime Minister?

MS NABBANJA: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank Members for having supported my motion. However, I feel it necessary to also give a congratulatory message to His Holiness, Pope Leo XIV.

On behalf of the Government of Uganda, I would like to congratulate His Holiness, Pope Leo XIV upon becoming the new Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic Church and Sovereign of the Vatican City.

Pope Leo XIV, over the years, has been a leader in various positions in the church. He has always been promoting love, harmony, and humility, among other things.

Madam Speaker, indeed, the new Holy Father has begun his papacy with a message of peace, which is a fundamental aspiration for the Government of Uganda, led by His Excellency Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. Following the Pope's call, may the true peace and friendship prevail in our country. For God and my country.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable members, for paying tribute. Next item? Let us first lay the papers; then you will come with the procedural issues.

LAYING OF PAPERS

THE GAZETTE PUBLISHED BY
THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY
SECRETARIAT VOLUME 1, NUMBER
13 DATED 17 MAY 2024, ON THE
DECISIONS AND ORDERS OF THE
18TH, 19TH, 20TH, 21ST, AND 22ND
EXTRAORDINARY SUMMITS OF THE
EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY HEADS OF
STATE

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Prime Minister? Next?

THE MINERAL PRODUCTION SHARING AGREEMENT FOR KILEMBE MINES

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, Section 28(5) of the Mining and Minerals Act, 2022 requires the minister to lay before Parliament a mineral agreement signed and adopted by the Government within 60 days of the date of signing of this agreement. I, therefore, invite the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development to table the agreement.

4.10

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (MINERALS) (Ms Phiona Nyamutoro): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I beg to lay the Mineral Production Sharing Agreement dated 3 March 2025 between the Government of Uganda, represented by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, and Sarrai Group Limited, Nile Fire Board Limited and the Uganda National Mining Company for the exploration, development, production, and processing of minerals in Kilembé Mines. I beg to lay.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, the agreement is for information purposes. It will be deposited in the parliamentary library for easy reference by all the interested Members. If you want, you can go and look at it.

THE CORRIGENDA TO THE DRAFT
BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE
FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/2026

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister? Please lay that corrigenda and it goes to the Budget Committee.

4.12

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the Corrigenda for the draft Budget Estimates for the Financial Year 2025/2026 dated 13 May, 2025. I beg to lay.

THE SPEAKER: The Corrigenda stands referred to the Committee on Budget for expeditious consideration.

MOTION SEEKING LEAVE OF
PARLIAMENT TO INTRODUCE
A PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL,
THE POLITICAL PARTIES AND
ORGANISATIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, Article 94(4)(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995 and rule 121 of the Rules of Procedure grant private Members to move a Private Member's Bill. It is upon this that Hon. Faith Nakut seeks to exercise her role.

4.13

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Madam Speaker, I beg to move a motion seeking leave of the House to introduce a Private Member's Bill entitled – *(Interruption)*

THE SPEAKER: Yes, there is a procedural matter.

MR SSEMUGJU: Madam Speaker, the names appearing on the Order Paper are: Hon. Bosco Okiror and Hon. Asuman Basalirwa. The Order Paper that you gave us indicates that they are the movers of this Private Member's Bill. I did not know that my sister would be the one trafficking it because the –

THE SPEAKER: It is not trafficking.

MR SSEMUGJU: Okay, vending it, Madam Speaker. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: It is not cast in stone. It is an agreement. There is no problem and no law stops it.

MR SSEMUGJU: Can I raise the procedural issue for your ruling, Madam Speaker?

THE SPEAKER: Okay.

MR SSEMUGJU: Have these two colleagues abandoned the Bill, maybe during the sitting of Parliament? This is because on the Order Paper we received today by lunchtime, they were the ones appearing, and now Hon. Nakut picked it. Or is she moving it on their behalf? That is the procedural issue, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Nakut, move the Bill.

MS NAKUT: Motion seeking leave of the House to introduce a Private Member's Bill entitled, "The Political Parties and Organisations (Amendment) Bill."

"WHEREAS Article 79 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995, empowers Parliament to make laws on any matter for the peace, order, development and good governance of Uganda;

AND WHEREAS Article 94(4)(b) of the Constitution and rule 127 and 128 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament permit a Member of Parliament to move a Private Member's Bill;

AWARE THAT Parliament enacted the Political Parties and Organisations Act, Cap 178, to among others, regulate the formation, operation, and membership of political parties and organisations in Uganda;

NOTING THAT the Political Parties and Organisations Act establishes the National Consultative Forum, a forum with membership of all registered political parties and political organisations created with the aim of facilitating

dialogue and communication between political parties and organisations and their supporters;

FURTHER NOTING THAT Political parties and political organisations with representation in Parliament have also established private sector-led initiatives for facilitating and encouraging dialogue between political parties and organisations and their supporters, such as the Inter-Party Organisation for Dialogue, through which political parties and organisations amicably manage conflict and settle their political differences;

APPRECIATING THAT as a mechanism for encouraging the growth of strong and independent political parties and organisations, the Government is mandated, under Section 14 of the Political Parties and Organisations Act to provide funding and other resources to political parties and political organisations represented in Parliament;

CONCERNED THAT in spite of the specific provisions of the Political Parties and Organisations Act, some political parties have refused or failed to commit to the principles of tolerance, dialogue and peaceful coexistence between and among the different political parties and organisations and their members by participating actively in activities of the National Consultative Forum or being members to the Inter-Party Organisation for Dialogue;

FURTHER CONCERNED THAT the provision of funds and other resources to political parties under Section 14 of the Political Parties and Organisations Act is not conditional on the political parties and political organisations' commitment to the principles of tolerance, dialogue and peaceful co-existence, making it impossible for the Electoral Commission to effectively deal with political parties that do not comply with the principles of tolerance, dialogue and peaceful co-existence;

CONVINCED THAT in order to strengthen the operations of the National Consultative Forum, there is need to provide for the organs based on the interests that the respective political parties

and political organisations represent, that is, political parties and political organisations that represent the electorates in Parliament and political parties without representation in Parliament;

FIRMLY CONVINCED that unless provision is made in the Political Parties and Organisations Act to condition access to Government funds and other resources by a political party or organisation to the principles of tolerance, dialogue and peaceful co-existence among political parties, these principles shall remain statements on the law book without any legal implication for non-adherence;

NOW, THEREFORE, this motion is moved that:

This Parliament accepts the introduction of a Bill for an Act entitled, "The Political Parties and Organisations (Amendment) Bill", a draft of which is attached hereto."

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Can we hear from the seconders, Hon. Mutembuli, Hon. Afidra – (Hon. Oshabe rose) - Let it be seconded first and then you can ask for clarification.

4.20

MR YUSUF MUTEMBULI (NRM, Bunyole East County, Butaleja): Thank you, Madam Speaker. It must be put on record that I am a seconder. Someone is doubting.

Madam Speaker, I do second this motion for leave of Parliament to introduce a Private Member's Bill entitled, "The Political Parties and Organisations (Amendment) Bill, for two reasons. One, whereas the Act provides for the National Consultative Forum, most of our parties do not want to associate with that forum. Two, whereas we have Interparty Organisation for Dialogue (IPOD), most of our parties do not want to associate with it.

Madam Speaker – (Interjections) - we have the National Consultative Forum but it is - I would use the word "redundant" because most of the parties do not want to participate in the activities of the forum. The reason being that you can either be a member of that forum or not. Most parties decide not to be.

Three, as I conclude, if we need to have political stability or unity in this country, dialogue is the way to go. If we are to do that, then we must have IPOD as an institution under National Consultative Forum. That way we, as parties, shall come together to dialogue and have unity and political stability in this country. We can only do that by having this amendment. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Attorney-General, do you have any objection to that? There is a procedural matter first – honourable members, the Member is seeking leave, which you have not given yet. Let us first hear from Hon. Mpuuga, then you come in.

MR MPUUGA: Much obliged, Madam Speaker. Short of accusing the movers of legislative fraud and the Speaker of insensitivity, allow me to say this, procedurally, so that you can guide the House.

On the 8th of October last year, I filed with –

THE SPEAKER: Did you say “insensitivity on the Speaker’s side?”

MR MPUUGA: I said, “short of” and it does not mean I do –

THE SPEAKER: No, rephrase your statement. *(Laughter)*

MR MPUUGA: The neighbour is disorganising me, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: First rephrase it or else – *(Hon. Ssemujju rose_)* Put him on point of order.

MR SSEMUJJU: Madam Speaker, it does not matter which tactic you use, we will get the meaning and intention of your statement. To suggest that the presiding officer is insensitive is unfair of my brother. Is he in order to suggest that the Speaker is insensitive?

THE SPEAKER: He is not in order, let him withdraw it. *(Laughter)*

MR MPUUGA: Madam Speaker, Hon. Ssemujju is my senior brother and a sheikh. He has guided me from senior one when we first met. I want to withdraw the word. English is not my first language, Madam Speaker, so I withdraw that.

THE SPEAKER: Okay.

MR MPUUGA: Madam Speaker, on the 8th of October last year, I filed with the Speaker’s office eight Bills, including the Political Parties (Amendment) Bill, as a private member. Effectively, it is seven months and five days since I filed and I have not had the occasion to be heard on the Floor for me to go and make the amendments that I thought would probably return even more sanity and clarity to our intentions as leaders.

Now that we have one lucky mover who filed several months after –

THE SPEAKER: All the Members are lucky in this House including yourself. There is no one lucky mover.

MR MPUUGA: She is ahead of me. May we be guided – especially now that the two senior ministers, the learned Attorney-General and the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs are in the House – on how can we bring to bear the desire then to amend the same law to which I was not lucky to have precedence, that I was heard either on the Floor or in the committee to have these sought amendments to the Act considered so that I do not go back to Masaka and tell my voters that indeed the Speaker never heard me. May I be guided procedurally on how to bring to bear those amendments?

THE SPEAKER: I think it will not cause any harm if you went to the committee with the amendments.

4.25

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Madam Speaker, at this stage I cannot even purport to oppose because I do not even know what I am opposing.

THE SPEAKER: So, let it go to the committee.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: It is a matter for leave.

THE SPEAKER: Yes. You people want to talk about something that is not yet given leave. Yes, Hon. Patrick?

4.26

MR PATRICK OSHABE (NUP, Kassanda County North, Kassanda): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. We have many political parties in this House and all would be interested. However, there are two terminologies that have been used. I am seeking clarification from the movers over what they mean by “dialogue” –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, you are discussing something that –

MR OSHABE: Madam Speaker, allow me time –

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order.

MR OBOTH: Madam Speaker, you have guided and I have a lot of respect for Hon. Patrick because we joined this House almost together. Is he in order to go to the definition section of the Bill, which we still do not know? *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I now put the question that Hon. Nakut Faith be granted leave to introduce a Private Member's Bill, “The Political Parties and Organisations (Amendment) Bill.”

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE SPEAKER: Pursuant to Rule 121(2), (3) and (4) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, the Clerk is hereby instructed to support the Member in ensuring the Bill is tabled in the House. Procedure from Hon. Sarah?

MS SARAH OPENDI: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Before we broke off, I raised the issue of police officers who have not been receiving salaries. Some have gone without salaries for over six months. I was surprised-

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Sarah, can we handle that on Thursday as a substantive item?

MS SARAH OPENDI: Madam Speaker, there were responses and a statement by the Minister of Internal Affairs-

THE SPEAKER: You are disorganising the flow of the *Hansard*. Can we handle it on Thursday?

MS SARAH OPENDI: Okay.

4.29

MR MUHAMMAD NSEREKO (Independent, Kampala Central Division, Kampala): Thank you, Madam Speaker, on a lighter note, when we were here three months ago, as you were presiding, Hon. Norbert Mao pledged to this House that he would come up with comprehensive electoral reforms. Parties have begun their internal frameworks for selecting leaders. There is a motion of the introduction of the use of digitisation and an electronic voter verification system, which many people are not privy to.

The other issue was about the involvement of the people in the diaspora in the election process of this country, which he said was being discussed in the Cabinet. With your guidance, Madam Speaker, I would like to put it to Hon. Norbert Mao that as the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, he deserves to guide this nation – especially as political parties, including his own, are going through their internal mechanism of choosing their leaders.

It is important that with the launch of the national electoral commission roadmap, the country is made aware of what mechanism, system, and extra that we are going to use in the elections so that there is clarity.

In the same sense, Hon. Mathias Mpuuga, as he said, had presented comprehensive amendments and shared them with different political parties. We deserve to know how far that process has gone so that we can tell the public that this is what you ought to be ready for. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Minister, just give a response.

4.31

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS (Mr Norbert Mao): Madam Speaker, I am a man of my word, and this Parliament deserves to know the truth. There is an amendment that will make biometric verification of voters, compulsory. It came before the Cabinet, and after debate, the Bill was referred to a cabinet committee, chaired by Hon. Chris Baryomunsi, to study it.

I have been informed that he has his report ready. By now, the Bill would have been discussed, but we have not had Cabinet for the last two sittings. Therefore, I want to assure this House that-

THE SPEAKER: Is that amendment for this election or the next one?

MR MAO: Madam Speaker, we want free and fair elections. The purpose of amendments is to ensure free and fair elections. This proposal deals with the problem of ballot stuffing. It also has a lot of financial implications.

When I went for the meeting with the President, I told him that as minister for justice, I cannot guarantee that citizens can be biometrically verified unless we have at least two machines because we tested the batteries of the machines used by Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) and we found that they could not last for the duration of the election day.

I have to safeguard the right of citizens to free and fair elections. The electoral reforms are not just mantras; they have a purpose, and that is what I promise and it is what I will deliver.

THE SPEAKER: The president of UPC has something to say.

4.33

MR AKENA JAMES (UPC, Lira East Division, Lira City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am a little bit confused and concerned. The preamble to the amendment of the Political Parties and Organisations Act, talked about parties refusing to

be part National Consultative Forum of Political Organisations and the Interparty Organisation for Dialogue (IPOD)-

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Akena, we moved from that.

MR AKENA: I am building it. It is relevant to what the minister just said.

THE SPEAKER: Okay.

MR AKENA: I can speak on behalf of UPC. We have participated fully in IPOD and the national consultative forum. There is no point where we have not been involved. On the concern-

THE SPEAKER: I thought her statement was "some parties."

MR AKENA: The second one that talked about "parties are not". On this particular issue, and seeing that the corrigendum for the budget for Financial Year 2025/2026 has been laid, Section 14(a) of the Political Parties and Organisations Act, which has not been adhered to in the past elections.

I am on record to have written to the minister and copy to the relevant areas. I am wondering how we are going to deal with this one because we are at a very late stage of the electoral process and the budgeting process. Yet Section 14(a) of the current Act — which the President himself, in our IPOD meeting, said that the NRM had acted in an un-Christian way in handling that matter.

Where we are going, we seem to be going from un-Christian to diabolical ways. From my point of view, we have moved from the un-Christian to diabolical because we are deep in the budgeting issue, and we do not know how things stand, we have issues of amendments which have not yet been cleared by the Cabinet.

Madam Speaker, as we head into an election which is of great importance, I would hope that the president-general of the Democratic Party can give me some hope and clarity that there is

something good happening in the kitchen, and we should not expect something worse to take place.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Mpuuga? Honourable Members, you are all going to go and leave us here with the Tax Bills. Let us sort out the Tax Bills.

MR MPUUGA: Much obliged, Madam Speaker. The Motion was moved to allow the private member to amend the parties' Act. However, your guidance on my intentions was a bit equivocal. May I be further guided on what you ordered me to do in the face of what I had proposed and the Motion moved?

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Mpuuga, I thought I spoke in the language that we all understood. I said, if you have an amendment to the Political Parties and Organisations (Amendment) Bill, go to the committee. That is why the learned Attorney-General said that he cannot comment on it because he does not know the amendment that you are going to bring. Take your amendments to the committee, and you interrogate it at the committee level. That is what you wanted? So, I have told you.

MR ODUR: Madam Speaker, the procedural matter I wanted to raise, last time we were here-

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Mpuuga, you need to liaise with the drafters because there is no Bill yet. We have only given leave.

MR ODUR: Madam Speaker, I am doing a follow-up; last time you required the Attorney-General to give us the correct position on how he will deal with the issue of the election of the MP representing Workers so that the regional balance is taken care of, and the Attorney-General had committed that he was going to carry out consultations, come back and brief the House on how Northern Uganda would -

THE SPEAKER: The four traditional regions not specific -

MR ODUR: Yes. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Attorney-General there was an issue of the traditional four regions.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Like I committed here, as soon as I left the House, I forwarded this matter to the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development under which docket it falls and copied my communication to the Clerk to Parliament.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has been handling that issue; they have even had two or three meetings with the workers but I can always find out from them and come back.

THE SPEAKER: Get back to us on that because we are now going into the election process and we need it resolved. Hon. Aisha?

4.38

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am so happy for catching your eye over this procedural issue. The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Article 129 that talks about the courts of judicature, if I may quote very briefly;

"1) the judicial power of Uganda shall be exercised by the courts of judicature which shall consist of—

- (a) the Supreme Court of Uganda;
- (b) the Court of Appeal of Uganda;
- (c) the High Court of Uganda; and..."- this is where my interest is
- (d) "...Such subordinate courts as Parliament may by law establish, including Qadhi Courts for marriage, divorce, inheritance of property and guardianship, as may be prescribed by Parliament".

Madam Speaker, we have just received an amendment to the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) Act that wishes to bring in the court-martial and they are referring to 129(1) (d) which specifically speaks about the Qadhi Courts but for 30 years the Government has not

had interest of introducing them and the people of Uganda-

THE SPEAKER: Why are the lights off?

MS AISHA KABANDA: The people of Uganda have cried for their establishment for a while but the Executive has refused to listen to our plea. Now that they have the appetite of introducing courts that people of Uganda do not desire and yet there are courts that we desire.

May this House put it to the Executive to establish the Qadhi Courts and for that matter allow me move a motion without notice to compel the Executive to introduce a law that will establish and guide those courts in Uganda. I so pray.

THE SPEAKER: Attorney-General-

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I request the Honourable Member to find some time and come so that we can have a conference on this matter because a lot has been done. Meetings and consultations have been carried out with the leadership of the Muslim community. Work has already started not that we have not done anything.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item? (*Hon. Aisha Kabanda rose*) He has told you that he will get back to us on what you have agreed. Next item?

BILLS SECOND READING

THE VALUE-ADDED TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

4.41

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Henry Musasizi): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that The Value-Added Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be read for the second time.

THE SPEAKER: Seconded by Hon. Ogwang, Minister for Veteran Affairs, Minister for Finance, Hon. Moses, Hon. Omara, Lt. Col. Alanyo, Col Nekesa, Member for Karamoja, Hon. Acon, Hon. Thomas, Hon. Patience, Hon. Oboth Oboth - the one in charge of UPDF, Hon. Kabanda, Hon. Vicky, Hon. Betty, Hon. Catherine, Hon. Faith, Hon. Edakasi- by the majority. Would you like to speak to your motion?

MR MUSASIZI: Madam Speaker, the object of the Bill is to amend The Value-Added Tax Act CAP 344-

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Nathan?

MR MUSASIZI: To provide for the anti-fragmentation rule for imported goods, to exempt biomass spirits and solar lanterns from value-added tax to zero rate. The supply of aircraft to prescribe the United Nations related agencies and specialised agencies as listed institutions. The Bill also provides for other related matters. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Chairperson of the committee?

4.44

THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, PLANNING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Amos Kankunda): Madam Speaker, as stated by the minister these Bills were laid before Parliament the first time on 27 March 2025 and referred to the Committee on Finance Planning and Economic Development for consideration in accordance with Rule 135(1) of Parliament.

The committee scrutinised the Bills in accordance with rule 135 section 2, 3 & 4 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament and now begs to report.

Madam Speaker, allow me at once, if it pleases you to table and lay all the minutes of the committee and the original copies of the seven Bills as tabled.

THE SPEAKER: We are going to deal with each being separately though they have the same minutes. Do you have the same minutes?

MR KANKUNDA: I have all the minutes

4. Prescribe the United Nations-related agencies and specialised agencies as listed institutions.

THE SPEAKER: Different minutes? Lay them one by one.

Methodology

MR KANKUNDA: I have them all of them at once so, I beg to lay all the minutes at once and then I will lay the Bills one by one.

While considering the Value Added Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025, the committee utilised the following methods.

THE SPEAKER: Okay. However, some of your Bills have minority reports. So, you must capture that some of them have minority reports.

Meetings

The committee held meetings with the following entities:

MR KANKUNDA: Yes, Madam Speaker. Much obliged.

1. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development;

THE SPEAKER: There are about three minority reports.

2. Uganda Revenue Authority;

MR KANKUNDA: Yes, they are three but four because one is doubled by different Members.

3. PricewaterhouseCoopers;

THE SPEAKER: Okay

4. Certified Public Accountants of Uganda;

MR KANKUNDA: Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the original report of the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development on the Value-Added (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

5. Private Sector Foundation Uganda;

THE SPEAKER: Please lay.

6. Uganda Manufacturers Association;

MR KANKUNDA: Madam Speaker, the Value-Added (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was read for the first time on the 27 of March 2025 and referred to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development for consideration and in accordance with Rule 135 (1) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, the committee scrutinised the Bill in accordance with rule 135(2), (3) & (4) of the Rules of Procedure and now begs to report.

7. Birungyi, Baraata and Associates; and

The object of the Bill is to amend the Value Added Act, Cap. 344, to:

8. American Chamber of Commerce, the French Chamber of Commerce, the British Chamber of Commerce, the Netherlands Trade and Industrial Platform.

1. Provide for the anti-fragmentation rule for imported goods;

We received written submissions from the Attorney-General, Kikuubo Entrepreneurs Initiative and Bawunha & Badebye, Certified Public Accountants.

Under document review, the committee reviewed and made reference to the following documents:

2. Exempt biomass pellets and solar lanterns from Value Added Tax;

1. Submissions from the stakeholders mentioned above;

3. Zero-rate the supply of aircrafts; and

2. Policy Note: the VAT Exemption for Biomass Pellets in Uganda from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development;

3. Policy Note: Imposition of VAT on supply of billets from the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development;

4. The Value Added Tax (Amendment) Bill explanatory notes; and

5. The Value Added Tax Act, Cap. 344.

Committee's observations and recommendations

Certificate of Financial Implications

The Certificate of Financial Implications indicates that as a result of the proposed amendment to the VAT (Amendment) Bill, the Government will experience a revenue loss estimated at Shs 38 billion annually. The committee noted that based on the objectives of the Bill and the expected achievements, the Bill's likely implications will be as follows:

1. The introduction of the anti-fragmentation rule, whose objective seeks to combat tax evasion by preventing importers from intentionally splitting consignments to remain below the VAT registration threshold is expected to enhance tax administration, improve revenue collection and strengthen Uganda's VAT compliance framework. This provision, if passed and implemented as planned, will yield a positive effect on the revenue;
2. The refinement of the VAT exemptions for the solar lanterns and textile inputs addresses previous drafting errors, ensuring that the law aligns with its intended policy objective. This correction will promote consistency and clarity in the application of tax laws. This provision, if passed and implemented as planned, will yield a neutral or positive effect on revenue;
3. The repeal of the VAT exemption on billets is intended to boost local production, reduce reliance on imports, and advance Uganda's industrialisation agenda. By supporting domestic manufacturing, this measure is expected to create jobs, enhance value addition, and stimulate economic growth. This provision, if passed and implemented as planned, will generate revenue of Shs 30 billion.
4. Exempting biomass pallets from VAT promotes – (*Hon. Ssemujju rose*)

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ssemujju, do you have something to say?

MR SSEMUJJU: I was seeking your indulgence. These are seven Bills. There are Bills where we have divergent views and Bills where we do not have. Therefore, I was only seeking your guidance on whether, where we do not have too much difference the committee chairperson can summarise and we go to those that may take time.

THE SPEAKER: Yes. Committee chairperson, can you summarise and we go to the committee stage?

MR KANKUNDA: Much obliged, Madam Speaker. Having said that, I know the body would have built the argument, but allow me to go straight to -

THE SPEAKER: The recommendations.

MR KANKUNDA: Committee's recommendations
The committee recommends that;

1. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development undertakes a study on the impact of groupage/consolidated cargo on VAT compliance for future policy consideration.
2. Uganda Revenue Authority should apply sections 7 and 8 of the VAT Act to establish eligibility of each individual importer under the groupage cargo category for VAT registration.
3. Clause 2 of the VAT or Value Added Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be deleted.

Under the exemption of the United Nations-related agencies and specialised agencies from tax, the committee recommends that the proposed amendment be adopted.

Exemption of the tax for items under Schedule 3

Clause 4 of the Bill seeks to amend Schedule 3 of the Principal Act by replacing the exemption of the supply of composite lanterns and so on.

Madam Speaker, the committee recommends that the proposed amendments be adopted.

Imposition of VAT on billets

The committee recommends that the proposed amendments be adopted.

Inclusion of biomass billets in Schedule 3

The committee recommends that the proposed amendments in clause 4 be adopted.

Zero-rating the supply of aircraft

The committee recommends that the proposed amendments in clause 5 be adopted.

In conclusion, the committee recommends that the Value Added Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be passed subject to the proposed amendments. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, do you have an objection to what is being raised?

4.54

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Madam Speaker, I agree with the committee's observations and recommendations.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

4.55

MR NATHAN NANDALA-MAFABI (FDC, Budadiri County West, Sironko): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would also like to thank the chairperson of the committee. However, in good faith, I would like to ask the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. We have asked that you make research and tell us how to apply taxes properly – whom to tax and whom not to tax.

Now, on these exemptions that you are bringing this time, have you done a total analysis to confirm to the people of Uganda that you are not going to shift this tax to another person?

MR MUSASIZI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. We provided the committee with a number of research studies that we have undertaken on the proposed amendments.

Also, I wish to inform the House that we have done the tax policy, which is now before Cabinet for consideration, and this will streamline whatever proposal we shall be bringing and how we intend to streamline tax administration to raise the desired revenue.

Therefore, to allay the fears of Hon. Nandala, the chairperson of the committee can confirm that, this time round, we provided the studies and, when the Cabinet passes the tax policy which is under consideration, I will also be laying a copy of the policy before the House. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: There is a motion.

4.57

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Madam Speaker, as stated earlier by the Shadow Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, this is one of the Bills where the committee members from both sides of the House had no contention. I, therefore, move a motion that we go to the committee stage.

THE SPEAKER: What is –?

4.57

MR DENIS OGUZU (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha): Madam Speaker, we often run here because sometimes we are not heard whenever we seek an opportunity to be heard. Most of the proposals there, I agreed with, but the proposal that – (*Interruption*)

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order.

MR ENOS ASIIMWE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The honourable member is a member of the committee. If there is any disagreement with the committee's position, you know what should be done and how the procedure should be.

Therefore, I think coming here to say that you have not been heard is unfair.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I thought –

MR ENOS ASIIMWE: Is he in order?

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, you mean you were not heard in the committee?

Clause 1, agreed to.

MR OGUZU: Madam Speaker, the reason I am running here –

Clause 2

THE CHAIRPERSON: Committee chairperson?

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Karim has something to say.

4.59

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Amos Kankunda): Madam Chairperson, the committee proposes that clause 2 be deleted.

4.58

MR KARIM MASABA (Independent, Industrial Division, Mbale City): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The Member has not attended any committee meetings, but he is always on the WhatsApp group of the committee, posting and trying to disorganise, instead of coming to attend the meetings.

The justification is amendment poses the risk of blotting the VAT register with taxpayers who are not eligible for VAT registration. This amendment will curtail some small businesses which import goods under separate consignments and consolidation because of capital limitations. I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, I put the question that the Value Added (Amendment) Bill, 2025 be read for the second time.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Shadow minister?

(Question put and agreed to.)

MR OGUZU: Madam Speaker, that allegation is unfounded, and I wish –

MR SSEMUJJU: Madam Chairperson, that was the agreement. We had raised the notice to write a minority report, but we agreed with colleagues on the deletion. Therefore, we have no issues.

THE SPEAKER: If you have an amendment –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable minister?

MR OGUZU: Because a fair hearing deserves –

THE SPEAKER: Listen, if you have an amendment, bring the clause that we are amending.

MR MUSASIZI: Madam Chairperson, I already conceded when I appeared before the committee.

MR OGUZU: But the Member has imputed –

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I put the question that clause 2 be deleted as proposed.

BILLS COMMITTEE STAGE

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE VALUE ADDED TAX (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2025

Clause 2, deleted

THE CHAIRPERSON: Please sit.

Clause 3, agreed to.

Clause 1

Clause 4, agreed to.

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

Clause 5, agreed to.

The Title, agreed to.

MOTION FOR THE HOUSE TO RESUME

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

5.01

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Madam Chairperson, I beg to move the motion that the House do resume and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that the House resumes and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.

(Question put and agreed to.)

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE
WHOLE HOUSE.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

5.02

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Madam Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of the whole House has considered the Bill entitled “The Value Added Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025” and passed it with amendments.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

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

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

5.02

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the report of the Committee of the whole House be adopted.

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

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

BILLS THIRD READING

THE VALUE ADDED TAX (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 2025

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

5.03

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Madam Speaker, I beg to move the motion that the Bill entitled “The Value Added Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025” be read the third time and do pass.

(Question put and agreed to.)

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED “THE
VALUE ADDED TAX (AMENDMENT)
ACT, 2025.”

THE SPEAKER: Title settled and the Bill passed. Thank you. *(Hon. Odur rose_)* Yes, Jonah?

5.04

MR JONATHAN ODUR (UPC, Erute County South, Lira): Madam Speaker, I wanted to raise a matter on the principles of Value Added Tax but the minister may make a comment.

One of the concerns that has been around in the country is on the threshold. The Government had committed, at some point, that they would be looking in detail at the issue of the threshold for VAT, which is a big concern to most of the traders, well aware that the current threshold was put there some time back.

I wanted to know from the minister and the chairman whether this was considered in the committee, and if the Government has some

plans to look into the issue of the threshold of the VAT. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

MR MUSASIZI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, Hon. Odur's concern is one of the concerns we keep getting from the public. It is in the VAT, in the income tax, and also the Pay As You Earn.

Madam Speaker, I beg the indulgence of the honourable colleague and the public that we move systematically. Let us pass the policy, which will come soon, and the policy will inform us on how to move - (*Interjections*) - the policy is before the Cabinet for consideration. After it has been considered, we shall start implementing a number of things the policy will bring.

Let us study this. I cannot commit to the House, before I study and learn the implications of what this will bring to the revenue.

THE SPEAKER: Okay.

MR ODUR: Madam Speaker, thank you for this commitment. This is the ninth year I have been here, and the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development – even when the chairperson was still a chairperson of the committee - the commitment every year has been, “We are about to bring a policy.”

THE SPEAKER: Let us give them the last chance to bring the policy.

MR ODUR: Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Yes

5.06

MR MUHAMMAD NSEREKO (Independent, Kampala Central Division, Kampala): Madam Speaker, the concerns of my people as regards the same Bill, surrounding the same issue of taxation, is the 18 per cent. I would like to seek the view of the ministers, that they undergo a policy review on the entire taxation as to whether taxation in this country, we need to look at not only the threshold but also the percentages, the rate that we have set.

THE SPEAKER: Is the 18 per cent only on your people or on everyone?

MR NSEREKO: No, on our people in the country.

THE SPEAKER: Because you had said, “my people.”

MR NSEREKO: My view is that as you return to Cabinet, you consider lowering VAT to about 9.8 or 10 per cent as you go back to Cabinet. As you may realise, we are one of the countries in Africa with the highest taxes.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. That will be included in the policies. Yes?

5.07

MR DENIS OGUZU (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha): Madam Speaker, for me the concern was the environmental degradation we are going through as a country. Most of the people, even the well-to-do, are dependent on charcoal. This charcoal is devastating forests, and it has a cost for us, which the minister for finance should be able to address.

We know one of the greatest reasons people rely on charcoal is that gas cylinders are costly. There is a tax on it, as well as the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). A number of Members have moved that we should be able to drop some of the taxes on gas cylinders, and that matter has not been addressed. As a result, we are cutting down trees. That was the issue which I wanted captured, and this House should have provided solutions to, but it is now overtaken by events. I hope that this matter will be addressed in the policy review. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Let us wait for the policy review. Meanwhile, today you are very smart. (*Laughter*)

5.09

MR NATHAN NANDALA-MAFABI (FDC, Budadiri County West, Sironko): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, the 18 per cent - let me give an example of Value-Added Tax (VAT) - was put there in 1996. Now, it is 2025. It means

that for almost 30 years, it has been static, yet technology and the collections have improved. It means the more you improve, the more you reduce the tax rates if you want to collect more.

What Hon. Nsereko has brought up is that the minister may study direct taxes like income tax. However, an indirect tax like VAT that goes directly to the last consumer greatly impacts his livelihood.

The earlier the Government brings up the idea, first of all, to reduce – because in my view, with technology, everybody with a business should register for VAT. I have nothing to talk about, besides the threshold and the rate. The earlier we think about reducing it, the better.

Honourable minister, I plead with you that tomorrow you bring here a lower rate, so that you can collect more. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Oguzu, as we look at the taxes, we should also look at ethanol. The cost of ethanol is a little cheaper. It is actually exempt, so we should be telling our people to use ethanol more.

Honourable minister, can you move a motion?

BILLS SECOND READING

THE EXCISE DUTY (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL, 2025

5.11

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): I beg to move that the Excise Duty (Amendment) (No.2) Bill 2025 be read for the second time.

THE SPEAKER: Is the Bill seconded?
(*Members rose*)

The Bill is seconded by the Hon. Kateshumbwa, the Veterans, Hon. Acon, Hon. Alanyo, Col. Nekesa, Hon. Okot, Hon. Mutembuli, MP from Kabale, Doctor, Hon. Ojok, Hon. Annet, Hon.

Patience, MP for the Elderly, Hon. Betty, MP from Isingiro, Hon. Sam, MP from Alebtong, Dr Ayume, Hon. Siraji Ezama, MP from Tororo, and MP from Bukedi.

Speak to your motion.

MR MUSASIZI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The object of the Bill is to amend the Excise Duty Act to provide for the remission of excise duty paid on damaged, expired, or obsolete goods, to revise the rate of excise duty on certain excisable goods and services under Schedule II of the Act, and other related matters.

In the interest of time, Madam Speaker, we interacted with the committee on the Bill, and I am sure further information can be provided.

THE SPEAKER: Do we have a minority report on this? Okay. Yes?

5.13

THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Amos Kankunda): Madam Speaker, this report from the committee has a minority report from Hon. Ibrahim Ssemujju, and the team; I will put it that way.

Madam Speaker, I will go straight to observations in the interest of time.

The remission of duty paid on damaged and expired or obsolete goods

The amendment allows a person liable to pay excise duty to apply to the Commissioner General for remission of duty if they can provide sufficient proof that the goods were damaged, expired or obsolete.

This application must include:

1. Evidence that the excise duty was paid on the damaged, expired or obsolete goods, where applicable.
2. The goods delivery document, such as a formal order for the delivery of goods, should be available.

3. A report from a competent authority detailing the extent and cause of damage in the case of the damaged goods, and any other documentation prescribed by the minister through regulations.

Suppose the commissioner is satisfied that the excise duty was paid on the affected goods. In that case, they may either offset the excise duty paid against any other outstanding duty owed by the taxpayer, or at the taxpayer's written request, apply the excise duty paid in reduction of any other outstanding obligation or liability to a person liable to pay tax, concerning other undisputed taxes.

The committee was informed that the amendment aims to provide equitable relief for taxpayers by ensuring they are not unfairly taxed on damaged, expired or obsolete goods, and therefore unsellable.

The committee observed that the practice that requires a taxpayer to pay for the damaged, expired or obsolete goods is unfair, and thus this amendment seeks to remedy this anomaly.

The committee recommends that clause 2 be adopted.

Increase in excise duty on cigarettes.

The committee was informed that the amendment aims to raise additional revenue of about Shs 8 billion, while taking into account inflation. The proposal supports efforts to align Uganda's cigarette excise duty with the East African Community standards, where Uganda's rates are currently low. This amendment will also contribute to public health objectives by discouraging tobacco consumption.

The committee observed that there is a weak implementation of the Tobacco Control Act. For example, the labelling, advertisement and gazettement of designated smoking areas, among others, are not adhered to.

The excise duty has not been adjusted for inflation since the Financial Year 2017/2018, even though the consumer price index has

risen by 28.8 per cent from the Financial Year 2017/2018 to Financial Year 2023/2024.

An increase in excise duty on cigarettes is likely to lead to an increase in illicit trade. This will force consumers to opt for unregulated products, thereby leading to the unintended consequence of revenue reduction.

Therefore, the committee recommends that;

1. Clause 3A of the Bill be adopted; and
2. There is a need for strict enforcement of Tobacco Control Act, CAP 43, by Government.
3. The Uganda Revenue Authority and the Uganda National Bureau of Standards should strengthen efforts and mechanisms against illicit tobacco trade in the country, especially at border points, transit routes, and wholesale points.

Adjustment of excise duty rates for beer from local raw materials.

Clause 3B of the Bill proposes an amendment to Schedule 2 of the Excise Duty Act, to rationalise taxation of beer by repealing the redundant middle-tier tax rate and adjusting the bottom tier rate to reflect current economic conditions. The current excise duty structure for beer follows a three-tier regime:

1. The top tier, Shs 2050 per litre or 60 per cent, whichever is higher, for beer, there is no local raw material requirement imported beer.
2. Middle tier; Shs 950 per litre or 30 per cent, whichever is higher, for the beer made from barley grown and malted in Uganda.
3. The bottom tier; Shs 650 per litre or 30 per cent, whichever is higher, for the beer made, with at least 75 per cent local sourced raw materials.

The committee was informed that the middle tier rate has been obsolete because beer from barley grown and malted in Uganda qualifies for the bottom tier rate. Consequently, the bottom tier

specific rate of Shs 650 is no longer practical due to inflation. The proposed adjustment of the specific rate from Shs 650 to Shs 900, an increase of Shs 250, is intended to cater for inflation and the effective resultant tax rate.

The committee observed that the amendment aligns the tax structure with the present economic conditions. Therefore, the committee recommends that the clause be adopted as proposed in the Bill, and the URA strengthens the enforcement mechanism against illicit alcohol trade in the country, which currently stands at 65 per cent.

Reduction of tax on fruit and vegetable juice made from local raw materials

Clause 3(d) of the Bill proposes an amendment to item 5(b) of the Schedule 2 to exempt fruit and vegetable juice made from at least 50 per cent pulp sourced from locally grown fruits and vegetables in partner states.

The committee was informed that the proposed amendment aims to:

1. Eliminate the current ambiguity in the excise duty law.
2. Increase the uptake of locally grown fruits and vegetables and promote value addition.
3. Reduce post-harvest losses and improve returns to farmers.
4. Support the Government's agro-processing priority by promoting the creation of emerging local industries and employment.

The committee observed that the proposed amendment increases the requirement of pulp for fruit and vegetable juice from locally grown fruits and vegetables from 30 per cent to 50 per cent, but does not affect the excise duty rate. Therefore, the committee recommends that clause 3(d) of the Bill be adopted.

Increase in tax on motor spirits

This proposal was dropped by the sponsor of the Bill during the meeting with the committee. Therefore, the committee recommends that clause 3(e) be deleted from the Bill.

Excise duty on plastics

Clause 3(f) of the Bill proposes an amendment to item 11 to schedule 2, by changing the description of plastics to restrict it to sacks in bags of polymer, of ethylene, and other plastics under the harmonised system code 3923.21.00 and 3923.29.00, and make exceptions to vacuum packing bags for food, juice, tea coffee sacks, and the bags for direct use in manufacturing of sanitary pads.

The committee was informed that the proposed amendment seeks to clarify that the excise duty on plastics specifically applies to single-use plastics bags and plastic bottles as a major environmental pollutant, while keeping the excise rate unchanged.

The proposer acknowledges that not all plastic products have the same environmental impact. This approach seeks to promote environmental responsibility without unduly burdening industries which rely on durable or economically essential plastic products.

The committee observed that the proposed amendment seeks to exclude not only vacuum packing bags for food, juice, tea and coffee sacks, and bags of direct use in the manufacturing of sanitary pads, but also all kinds of plastics which were included in the current provision.

The committee established that the proposed amendment exempts all plastic products and plastic granules and will only tax sacks and bags of polymer, ethylene and other plastics under the harmonised system code 3923.21.00 and 3923.29.00 with the exception of the vacuum packing bags for food, juice, tea and coffee sacks, and bags for direct use in manufacturing of sanitary pads.

The committee recommends that item 11 to schedule 2 be amended to provide for plastic products and plastic granules that have been left out.

In conclusion, the committee recommends that the Excise Duty (Amendment) Bill be passed, subject to the proposed amendments.

I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The minority, raise your areas of dissent.

5.24

MS HANIFA NABUKEERA (NUP, Woman Representative, Mukono): Thank you, Madam speaker. My areas of dissent are:

1. Lack of studies to support Tax Bills;
2. Withdrawal of clause 3(e) of the Bill without adjusting the resource envelope;
3. Lack of a comprehensive taxation policy in the country;
4. Instability of the tax regime coupled with multiple taxes that are crippling the businesses in the country.

Dissenting observations

Lack of studies of support tax Bills;

We continue to process tax Bills that are not supported by the studies and are contrary to Parliament's recommendations. In its report of Financial Year 2024/2025, the Committee on Budget recommended that, going forward, studies should be instituted by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the tax exemptions in greater detail.

In the same year, we also noted that the majority of the tax law amendments were not informed by the tax-related analytical briefs. It emphasised that the ministry responsible for finance failed to adhere to the previous recommendation of Parliament that while standing Bills for the Financial Year 2023/2024, every Bill should be accompanied by a standalone evaluation or regulatory impact assessment.

Madam Speaker, it is disappointing for the same Committee on Finance to continue supporting and approving Bills that it knows do not adhere to its recommendations every financial year.

We continue to witness a lack of appropriate studies on the current tax Bills. For instance, while appearing before the Committee on Finance to process the tax Bills, the minister

projected that the tax proposals for Financial Year 2025/2026 would generate Shs 538.6 billion.

Additionally, he projected to generating Shs 1.885 billion for the URA administration measures, making a total of Shs 2.4 trillion, while targeting a domestic revenue growth of Shs 4.8 trillion.

The Government does not explain how it intends to raise the remaining Shs 2,413.14 billion. This confirms that Government revenue projections are made without studies to support the tax proposals.

Failure of Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) to achieve targeted revenue projections further confirms our claim. For instance, in the fiscal trends for Financial Year 2023/2024, URA had targeted to raise Shs 29,218.98 billion in revenue but only managed to collect Shs 27,301.22 billion, leaving a revenue gap of Shs 1,917.76 billion. I will skip the table on the medium-term projections for Financial Year 2022/2023 to 2029/2030.

I will proceed with the Budget Framework Paper for Financial Year 2025/2026 revenue targets, which, compared to the 1st and 2nd Budget Call Circular's revenue projections, indicate very wide variations, suggesting a lack of studies underpinning these projections.

The first Budget Call Circular, dated 13 September 2024, projected domestic revenue at Shs 33.182 trillion with a budget of Shs 57.441 trillion. The Budget Call Circular issued three months later on 13 February 2025 projected domestic revenue at Shs 35,692.9 billion that the proposed domestic revenue amounted to Shs 38.818.66 billion (Shs 36.818.66 billion for a budget of Shs 71.98 trillion).

The frequent changes in the revenue targets imply a lack of thorough studies to support tax proposals. Madam Speaker, I will also skip this table and get to the national budget that was not adjusted, following the withdrawal of a clause from which Shs 200.30 billion in tax revenue had been anticipated.

The Certificate of Financial Implications submitted by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on 25 March 2025 indicated that the Excise Duty (Amendment) Bill was projected to generate Shs 227.70 billion annually from increased excise duty on fuel, cigarettes and beer.

However, during a session with the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development, clause 3(e) of the Bill was withdrawn. This clause, which proposed an increase of the excise duty rate on fuel, was expected to raise Shs 200.30 billion.

Madam Speaker, the tax proposals are intended to generate revenue for the proposed budget. Following the withdrawal of the fuel tax clause, the Government should have either reduced the proposed budget by an equivalent amount or identified alternative sources to raise Shs 200.30 billion to cover Financial Year 2025/2026.

There was also a budget shortfall, and this table which I will also skip, shows the budget shortfall and the proposed budget that led to the increase of taxes on fuel. It is indicated in the table below.

However, I will go to the third one on lack of a comprehensive taxation policy in the country. Madam Speaker, in our various minority reports, we have always advised the Government to develop a comprehensive tax policy for the country. With time, even the majority reports joined us in agitating for the same.

For instance, in its report, the Budget Committee on the Annual Budget Estimates for Financial Year 2024/2025 recommended that the Government develop a national tax policy that would form the basis of effective tax legislation and administration.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development presented tax Bills. I will stand down on this because the minister explained to us that he is going to present it in Cabinet.

I will go to instability of the tax regime, coupled with multiple taxes that are crippling businesses in

the country. While taxes are crucial for the country's development, a multitude of taxes and complex tax procedures have placed a significant burden on businesses, hindering their growth, profitability and overall sustainability.

A typical business pays corporation, income tax, VAT, excise duty on locally manufactured or imported goods and services. It, however, pays PAYE, withholding tax, stamp duty, to mention but a few.

The cumulative effect of multiple taxes significantly erodes profits, leaving businesses with little profit for reinvestment and expansion. It is high time this Government streamlined the tax policy, reduced the number of levies, simplified tax compliance and provided a more conducive business environment.

The frequent amendment of the tax laws has presented challenges for taxpayers and Uganda Revenue Authority in administering taxes. Previous reports from the Committee on Finance regarding tax Bills attributed this to the lack of a comprehensive tax policy.

While processing the Financial Year 2024/2025 tax Bills, the Committee on Finance recommended that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development establishes such a policy to ensure, among other things, stability of the tax regime.

Madam Speaker, it is regrettable that this year, the Government is proposing seven tax Bills that appear intended to further burden taxpayers without a commensurate improvement in public service delivery.

We continue to witness inadequate health care services nationwide, a severely underfunded education sector and the persistent problems of poor roads and floods, to mention but a few. Taxes must serve as instruments of development, not solely as mechanisms of revenue collection.

The Front Bench, spearheaded by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, in collaboration with URA, sets new proposals every year, and this House, the

Parliament of Uganda, legislates to increase taxes on the very people who elected us.

New taxes upon old ones are cumulatively added to the already heavy tax burden faced by most Ugandans. While it is the obligation of taxpayers to pay the tax dues, it is equally an obligation of the Government to offer services to its citizens in equal measure. Madam Speaker, countries must pay heavy taxes and have their services improved across the board.

In conclusion, the Government must adjust its budget by the amount it had proposed to raise from the withdrawn clause 3() in the Bill or provide alternative sources for the shortfall. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. *(Hon. Enos Asiimwe rose.)* Do you have a procedural matter?

MR ENOS ASIIMWE: Madam Speaker, when we say that we have a minority report, I thought it would be specific to the clauses. However, it is as if my honourable colleague is reading an alternative tax policy. Why don't you have a comprehensive tax policy and submit it to the Government?

THE SPEAKER: It is on literature, not clauses.

MR SSEMURU: Madam Speaker, I signed the minority report, but the former Local Defence Unit (LDU) personnel had started complaining in the committee: "Why do you have a minority report?" The minority report is –

THE SPEAKER: Let us go to serious business. Honourable minister, you have heard the minority report. It is more on policy issues, so you may need to capture the issues raised, and see how we can handle them in the next taxation.

I put the question that the Excise Duty (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2025 be read for the second time.

(Question put and agreed to.)

BILLS COMMITTEE STAGE

THE EXERCISE DUTY (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL, 2025

THE CHAIRPERSON: Leader of the Opposition, please, sit. Hon. Meddie, can you go there and leave the LOP to concentrate?

Clause 1

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

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 1, agreed to.

Clause 2, agreed to.

Clause 3

THE SPEAKER: Committee chairperson?

MR KANKUNDA: Madam Speaker, clause 3 is amended by deleting clause 3 (e).

Justification

The proposal was dropped by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development during the meeting with the committee.

MR OGUZU: I think the minority report raised the concern that when that clause is dropped, as proposed by the minister, he should be able to tell us how he is going to fund the budget, and the figures have been clearly outlined. So, it would be important that he allays our fear so that we can proceed from the point of knowledge.

MR MUSASIZI: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. There is a reason, when considering the budget, why we start with the revenue before we come to the expenditure. The outcome of this debate will inform the final resource envelope.

At the moment, the fuel which Hon. Nabukeera was talking about is not part of the projection.

This was a projection from the MTEF and it did not envisage that we would be imposing the fuel levy.

Therefore, to allay your fears, Hon. Oguzu Lee and the House, dropping this proposal, does not have any impact on the resource envelope.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Shadow minister?

MR SSEMURU: I think, Madam Speaker, the trouble is that when you are presenting the draft estimate, the requirement in the law, under section 12, is that you must issue a certificate speaking to the completeness of the information that you are giving to Parliament. So, you cannot be fidgeting every day, changing figures as if you were in a workshop. That is what the law says, under section 12 -

THE CHAIRPERSON: Are you in agreement with the dropping?

MR SSEMURU: We are actually happy that he has withdrawn. We are only alerting Parliament that the withdrawal will affect the budget.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Hon. Nathan?

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Madam Chairperson, I think the minister has a point. A budget is just an estimate of income and expenditure – even my brother Hon. Ssemurru has said it is a “draft”. The truth is that if the minister has withdrawn a proposal, then he will also have an alternative, and it is not that everything will be spent to the exact point. There could be other adjustments.

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

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

The Title, agreed to.

MOTION FOR THE HOUSE TO RESUME

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable minister?

5.42

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Madam Chairperson, I move that the House do resume and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that the House resumes and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(The House resumed, the Speaker presiding.)

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

5.42

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Madam Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of the whole House has considered the Bill entitled, “The Excise Duty (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2025” and passed it with amendments.

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

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

5.43

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Madam Speaker, I beg to move a motion that the report from the Committee of the whole House be adopted.

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

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report, adopted.

BILLS
THIRD READING

THE EXCISE DUTY (AMENDMENT)
(NO.2) BILL, 2025

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

5.44

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Madam Speaker, I beg to move a motion that the Excise Duty (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2025 be read for the third time and do pass.

THE SPEAKER: I put the question that the Excise Duty (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2025 be read the third time and do pass.
(Question put and agreed to.)

A BILL FOR AN ACT TITLED, “THE
EXCISE DUTY (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2),
ACT 2025”.

THE SPEAKER: Title settled and the Bill passed. Thank you and congratulations.

3) THE TAX PROCEDURES CODE
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister?

5.44

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi) Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Tax Procedures Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025” be read for the second time.

THE SPEAKER: Seconded? (*Members rose*)
It is seconded by Hon. Kankunda, Hon. Moses, honourable member from Karamoja, Hon. Bahati, honourable member for veterans, Hon. Alanyo, Hon. Nekesa, Hon. Omara, Hon. Patience, Hon. Annette, Hon. Nathan, Hon. Betty, Hon. Jennifer, Hon. Faith, Hon. Ezama Siraji, honourable member for Koboko, Hon. Enos, honourable member for Alebtong, Hon. Sam, honourable member from

Pallisa, honourable member for Hoima and Hon. Goli.

Speak to your motion.

MR SSEMUJJU: Madam Speaker, you said that one of the seconders to this Bill is “Karamoja.” I have looked at the -

THE SPEAKER: The Member for Karamoja Affairs.

MR SSEMUJJU: I have looked at the list of Members of Parliament and did not find anyone called “Karamoja.”

THE SPEAKER: The Minister for Karamoja Affairs. You know he is an old man; I cannot call his name, being my uncle.

MR MUSASIZI: Madam Speaker, the object of the Bill is to amend the Tax Procedures Code Act, Cap 343, to:

1. Provide for the use of the National Identification Number (NIN) and the Registration Number as Tax Identification Numbers (TINs);
2. Provide a gaming and betting centralised payments gateway system;
3. Provide for the penal tax for failure to use or integrate with the gaming and betting centralised payments gateway system; and
4. For other related matters.

I submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Committee chairperson, how many minority reports do we have? There is one from Hon. Nathan.

5.47

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Amos Kankunda): Madam Speaker, the Tax Procedures Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025 has minority reports from a number of honourable colleagues; Hon. Enos, Nandala-Mafabi, Hon. Ssemujju Nganda and the team.

Madam Speaker, allow me to submit the original report on the Tax Procedures Code. I will not divulge into the objects of the Bill and all the methodology, but let me to go straight to the real issues.

The replacement of the TINs with NINs and registration numbers

Clause 2(1) of the Bill proposes to substitute Section 4 of the Tax Procedures Code, Cap 343, to designate National Identification Numbers issued by the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) and the registration number issued by Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB) as the official Tax Identification Number; and the TIN issued by the foreign tax Authority, with whom Uganda has a tax treaty or agreement for exchange of information.

In January 2022, Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) issued a public notice requiring taxpayers to update their registration details to include the NINs, thus reinforcing the move towards a unified identification system. The committee was informed that adopting the NIN and URSB registration numbers as TINs offers several benefits as explained below:

1. Consistent identification; the NIN ensures continuity, remaining unchanged even when taxpayers' details, such as names and addresses, are updated. This minimises confusion and leads to more accurate identification, particularly in cases of individuals with similar names, company mergers or trade name usage.
2. Efficient data management; using a NIN as a unique identifier simplifies the integration of various data sources such as tax returns, payments and other relevant information. This facilitates easier cross-referencing, analysis and reporting, and
3. Improving communication; the NIN provides a clear reference point, enhancing communication between Uganda Revenue Authority and taxpayers through both digital and traditional channels, reducing ambiguity and streamlining interaction.

The committee therefore observed that:

1. The proposal will simplify the process of paying taxes.
2. The proposal will enable Uganda Revenue Authority to collect data on both individuals and non-individuals who are in the business but not paying their fair share of taxes and implement the requisite measures thereafter.
3. The proposed enhancement is aligned with Section 65 of the Registration of Persons Act, which permits the use of National Identification Registration for taxation purposes.
4. Use of NIN will enable taxpayers to easily comply with the registration of tax purposes. Majority of Ugandans already have the NINs, which shall not change even upon expiry of the taxpayers' National Identification Card.

4.3. Establishment of a central registry for non-individuals

Clause 2(2) proposes to amend the Tax Procedures Code to amend the URSB to establish and maintain a centralised register of all non-individual entities registered, incorporated, or operating in Uganda.

The committee was informed that currently, the registration and regulation of non-individual entities in Uganda is fragmented with multiple government agencies managing different categories of entities under various legal frameworks. This fragmented approach has resulted in data inconsistencies and duplication of processes, causing inefficiencies in licensing and regulation.

The absence of a centralised database complicates efforts to track beneficial ownership, creating opportunities for illicit financial activities, tax evasion and revenue loss. The proposed central registry is intended, therefore, to address these challenges by providing a unique database of non-individual entities, including trusts, societies, co-operatives, and non-governmental organisations.

The committee observed that establishing a centralised database will create a more efficient and transparent registration framework and

this will streamline taxpayer identification and enhance revenue mobilisation.

4.4. Inclusion of NIN and registration number in the returns of tax authorities

Clause 2(2) seeks to amend the Tax Procedure Code Act to require taxpayers to include NINs, business registration numbers or TINs used by foreign tax authorities, with whom Uganda has a tax treaty or agreement for the exchange of information on any return, notice, communication or other documentation submitted for tax purposes.

The committee observed that the amendment intends to preserve provisions of Section 4(4) of the Tax Procedures Code, which requires taxpayers to state their TINs on any return, notice, communication, or other documents lodged for purposes of tax.

4.5. NIN as a requirement for issuance of licenses

Clause 2(4) mandates a local authority, government institution, or regulatory body not to issue a licence or any form of authorisation required for conducting business in Uganda, unless the applicant possesses a NIN, business registration number, or a TIN issued by a foreign tax authority with whom Uganda has a tax treaty or agreement for exchange of information.

The committee observed that this provision mirrors the current Section 4(9) of the Tax Procedures Code Act, which imposes a similar requirement for an individual to have a TIN before obtaining a business license by extending this requirement to include NINs and registration numbers, an amendment aimed at enhancing business registration compliance and support formalisation of businesses.

4.6. NIN Requirement for registration of instrument for stamp duty

Clause 2(5) requires that any individual lodging an instrument subject to stamp duty must provide a NIN or business registration number before the instrument can be registered.

The committee observed that the proposed amendment mirrors the existing provision under Section 4(10) of the Tax Procedures Code, which requires a TIN for such a transaction. By including NINs and registration numbers in this requirement, the amendment ensures that Stamp Duty obligations are linked to traceable taxpayers' information, further promoting tax compliance and business formalisation.

The committee recommends that:

1. NIRA should simplify the NIN acquisition process to make it faster and easier for Ugandans to acquire the NIN and thus ensure operationalisation of this provision;
2. NIRA should deploy technologies and tools like fingerprint readers and biometric identification to enable taxpayers to file returns, notices, communications, or other documents for purposes of tax, especially in cases where the taxpayer may not have a physical national identification card owing to loss or misplacement, among other reasons; and
3. The proposed amendment in clause 2 highlighted above should be adopted in order to ease tax administration, enforce compliance, and consequently, expand the revenue base.

4.7 Waiver of interest and penalty upon payment of the Principal Tax

Clause 3 of the Bill proposes an insertion of section 47B in the Tax Procedures Code Act, which provides that any interest and penalty outstanding as at 30 June 2024, shall be waived where the taxpayer pays the principal tax by 30 June 2026.

Further, Clause 3 proposes that where the taxpayer pays part of the principal tax outstanding as at 30 June 2024, by 30 June 2026, the payment of interest and penalty shall be waived on a pro-rata basis.

A similar provision was introduced in 2023 and 2024 by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and passed by Parliament.

The committee was informed that this proposal is aimed at providing taxpayers with additional time to resolve outstanding tax issues, stabilise their cash flows, and settle obligations.

The committee observed that many taxpayers have not benefited from the 2023 and 2024 amendments because of the outstanding issues with their respective URA ledger reconciliations. Therefore, the committee recommends that;

1. The proposed amendment to extend the waiver of interest and penalty upon payment of principal tax should be adopted, and
2. URA should clean up tax ledgers to address the numerous taxpayer complaints.

4.8 Revision of penalties for non-compliance with EFRIS

Clause 4(a) of the Bill proposes an amendment to section 93 of the Tax Procedures Code Act to revise the penalties of non-compliance with the Electronic Fiscal Receipting and Invoicing Solution (EFRIS) by imposing a penalty of double the tax due on the goods or services.

The current penalties impose either the tax due on the goods or services, or 400 currency points (Shs 8 million), whichever is higher, for not using an Electronic Fiscal device, or the tax due to the goods and services, or 300 currency points (Shs 6 million), whichever is higher for not using the EFRIS system, that is, issuance of a fiscalised receipt.

The amendment seeks to replace these penalties with a revised provision imposing a penalty of double tax on the goods or services.

The committee was informed that the proposed amendment aims at addressing the inequity in the current system where small businesses bear an unfair burden due to the disproportionately high penalties.

The committee recommends that the clause be adopted.

4.9 Introduction of a gaming and betting Centralised Payment Gateway System

Clause 5 of the Bill proposes the insertion of a new section 93A immediately after 93. The insertion requires operators of casinos, gaming and betting activities to conduct all transactions - both for receiving wages and making payouts - exclusively through a centralised payments gateway system, licensed by the Bank of Uganda under the National Payments System Act.

The system will be directly linked to the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) electronic notice system to facilitate real-time monitoring and reporting of transactions.

Clause 5 of the Bill, also seeks to introduce Section 93B, which stipulates that an operator of a casino, gaming and betting activity who fails to use or integrate with the gaming and betting centralised payments system shall be liable to a penal tax equivalent to double the gaming or withholding tax due or 5,500 currency points, whichever is higher.

The committee was informed that this provision is intended to enforce compliance with the system, given the substantial cash flows and heightened risk of non-compliance in the gaming and betting sector.

The committee was also informed that the amendment will help curb illicit financial flows, minimise the risk of tax evasion and improve oversight of the industry's financial activities.

Further, the amendment aims to reduce and eliminate the use of cash in the gaming and betting industry.

The committee observed that;

1. There are two categories of slot machines used in the betting and gaming sector: slot machines which accept Ugandan currency (coins and paper notes) and slot machines which accept electronic cards/ biometric access. The second category is in line with

- technological advancements in the gaming world. The gaming standards developed support the second category, which is in line with the centralised payments gateway system.
2. The National Lotteries and Gaming Regulatory Board is unable to ascertain the accuracy and authenticity of the stakes and payouts transactional data submitted by operators on the National Central Electronic Monitoring System.
 3. There are a number of betting companies which have slot machines that accept Ugandan currency (coins and paper notes) and will be required to comply with the requirements of the provision;
 4. The Centralised Payments Gateway System will enable the National Lotteries and Gaming Regulatory Board to access transactional data and validate data submitted by operators and therefore, enhance tax administration.

The committee recommends that the operators who are not compliant at the commencement of this Act should be given a one-year transition period to integrate their equipment with the Centralised Payment Gateway System.

4.10 Personal liability for failure to comply with tax-exemption requirements

Clause 5 of the Bill proposes insertion of a new section 93C, which will require a taxpayer exempted from tax to continually maintain the conditions necessary to qualify for an exemption under the tax law. If the taxpayer fails to meet these conditions, they will be liable to pay the tax due for the period in which they were non-compliant. It is pertinent to note that the tax due shall be paid personally by the taxpayer who failed to uphold the exemption requirement.

The committee was informed that this amendment addresses a significant gap in the law regarding the treatment of taxpayers who cease to meet exemption conditions. Under the current regime, there is no clear guidance on what happens when an exempt taxpayer no longer satisfies the legal criteria for their exemption.

The proposed amendment resolves this by specifying that the exemption will not be applied for any period when the conditions are unmet but may resume once the taxpayer regains compliance.

The committee observes that the introduction of a personal liability in the case of non-compliance will mainly affect the taxpayers enjoying the Value Added Tax (VAT) and Excise duty on supplies received.

The proposed amendment indicates that if the taxpayer previously enjoyed an exemption but fails to maintain the required conditions, that taxpayer will bear the responsibility of paying the unpaid tax on supplies made during the period of non-compliance.

The proposed amendment will ensure accountability and prevent abuse of exemptions by certain taxpayers.

The committee recommends the proposed insertion of Section 93(C) be adopted.

The committee, in conclusion, recommends that the Tax Procedures Code Amendment Bill be passed, subject to the proposed amendments. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Minority?

6.06

MR KARIM MASABA (Independent, Industrial Division, Mbale City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will be brief. We have two areas that we are dissenting with the main committee report, that is, clause 4 and clause 2.

When you look at page 2, that is on the penalty of the Electronic Fiscal Receipting and Invoicing System (EFRIS) and then the issue of using the National Identification Number (NIN) as the Tax Identification Number (TIN).

When you go to page 2 of the minority report, the negative impact of double EFRIS penalties. We are proposing to have a capping of a penalty not exceeding Shs 10 million.

The Government's proposal to double the penalty for non-compliance with EFRIS irrespective of

the transaction value is a counterproductive measure, particularly burdensome to taxpayers—the proposed doubling of the structure risks posing crippling financial penalties.

When you go to page 3, I have given an example—they are taking the attention of the Speaker. I want to give an example of what is happening currently- (*Interruption*)

THE SPEAKER: Yes.

MR SSEMURU: Madam Speaker, I am wondering whether it will not be procedurally right first to conclude that important engagement, such that we present the

THE SPEAKER: We were discussing the Tax Procedural Code Bill.

MR MASABA: Thank you. Madam Speaker, I was trying to give an example. If a taxpayer fails to issue a receipt, say someone has sold goods and is supposed to pay a tax of maybe Shs 100,000 and fails to issue the receipt, he is supposed to pay a fine of Shs 6 million.

THE SPEAKER: Double.

MR MASABA: Currently, he is supposed to pay Shs 6 million irrespective of the value. If I fail to issue a receipt of Shs 100,000, I pay Shs 6 million, and if I fail to issue a receipt of Shs 50 million, I will still pay the same amount which is unfair to the small taxpayers.

Now, this amendment, yes, it would be good but again it is disadvantageous to the large players; those who fail to issue receipts of huge transactions. For example, in the new proposal, if I fail to issue a receipt of Shs 100,000, the penalty will be double, which is Shs 200,000, and if I fail to issue a receipt and the tax is Shs 100 million, I will have to pay Shs 200 million.

THE SPEAKER: Yes.

MR MASABA: The tax due on the receipt- I am saying that if you fail to issue a receipt, you are supposed to pay a penalty double the tax.

What we are looking at is, when we double and leave it open, it might affect the people who transact in large volumes, and we are solving the problem from the small players, but again disadvantaging-

THE SPEAKER: What is your suggestion?

MR MASABA: I propose that we have a cap because when you look at other tax laws, for example, when you look at Section 54 where someone fails to furnish a tax return, there is a limit to that not exceeding 50 currency points.

My request is for us to set a cap on the penalty because when you look at one of the amendments, people have failed to even pay the tax because of the penalties being way more than what they are actually supposed to pay. Our proposal is to have a cap to that, and we could set or agree on- but my proposal was maybe Shs 10 million because initially they were paying about Shs 6 million. To solve the problem for the small players, let us increase it to maybe 10 million (*inaudible*) currency points.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. Elijah.

MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere): Madam Speaker, I want to just make-

THE SPEAKER: No, let us dispose of that. What is wrong with-

MR OKUPA: My proposal- (*Interjection*)- Thank you, Madam Speaker. If you say that we are going to cap, why not a percentage of the value of the tax, say 5, 10 or 20 per cent, other than having a value. That would be proportional to what you would have been supposed to pay, other than having those caps and doubles.

THE SPEAKER: Okay.

MR MASABA: We are going to bloat the tax register. One of the challenges the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) has is the tax register with taxpayers who have even got TINs and are not paying any tax; they are a burden to URA. Right now, we are going- in the country, we will have over 23 or 25 million

people on the register. So, we are bloating the register. Another issue-

THE SPEAKER: When you do not have a business, are you still registered?

MR MASABA: Everyone with a NIN will automatically be registered.

THE SPEAKER: No, it is only those with the businesses. Yes, Hon. Moses.

MR MOSES ALEPER: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will provide some information to the Member of the dissenting - one, what they want to be used for identifying taxpayers is the National Identification Number instead of the TIN.

That is for those people who will register for taxation, not just anyone with a NIN.

THE SPEAKER: As individuals.

MR MOSES ALEPER: That is what I want to clarify. About the penalty, the penalty is on the tax due from the receipt that has been issued and not on the value of the receipt.

When you present it as the value of the receipt, it is misleading, and it looks like a big figure. You might find that someone has issued a receipt of about Shs 200 million, but the actual-

MR KATESHUMBWA: - a National Identification Number (NIN) for that tax, we would be able to facilitate Uganda -

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us get Hon. Masaba first.

MR MASABA: The proposal is to double that tax, and he or she becomes a taxpayer, and the argument Hon. Kateshumbwa -

THE SPEAKER: But you have a NIN, and you gave an example of if you bought a motorcycle, you can register using the NIN.

MR MASABA: Madam Speaker, they are replacing the Tax Identification Number (TIN)

with the NIN, so there will be nothing to do with TIN anymore in the country.

THE SPEAKER: How can you replace the TIN with the NIN? (*Hon. Masaba rose*) Hon. Masaba, are you finished with your areas of dissent?

MR MASABA: Yes, Madam Speaker. Those were the two areas, and the other issue concerns data integrity and security, and still, it is about the NIN and TIN. Someone has to file, which might become a burden. And this is one of the issues that we raised: a requirement for people now to file returns at the end of each year because they have a TIN -

MR ODUR: Madam Speaker, the procedural matter I am raising regards the presentation of this report. According to our rules, reports are not casual statements that are submitted or made on the floor of Parliament. That is why the requirement is for it to be written, and when you are presenting it, you are confined -

THE SPEAKER: Clerk, he was just explaining the report - but you capture what is on the report.

MR ODUR: The point I am raising is that, if he is not presenting the full report and this report has just been brought to us, it defeats the purpose for which reports are supposed to be presented to Parliament. It is either the reader confines, or we suspend and give Members time to reflect on the report.

THE SPEAKER: Capture whatever has been presented and what is in the report.

MR MASABA: Madam Speaker, the report was provided and uploaded. I was concluding on part C - I do not know if you were following, but it is on data integrity and security concerns.

Adopting NINs instead of TIN endorses data privacy by linking the national identification database with the tax system, raising serious concerns regarding data privacy and the potential for misuse of sensitive personal information.

Secondly, with the rampant cybercrime, assurance of the security of the integrated system against cyber threats and unauthorised access is paramount. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

6.19

MR NATHAN NANDALA-MAFABI (FDC, Budadiri County West, Sironko): Thank you, Madam Speaker – *(Interruption)*

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Nathan-

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Hon. Musasizi, remember I am the chairperson.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Musasizi, I have given you an off.

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Madam Speaker, the dissenting view I have is what the chairperson of the committee has talked about, and is on clause 3. That is a waiver of interest and the penalties. If we do not handle this thing very carefully, it will come year in and year out.

The chairperson of the committee has clearly stated that the ledgers of URA are a big problem, and because of that, I would like to refer to Section 38 of the Tax Procedures Code, which says that when a taxpayer is in law for penal tax and interest in relation to taxability, and the taxpayer makes a payment and is less than the total amount of tax, the penal tax and interest due, the amount is applied in the following order; in payment of the principal tax, in payment of penal tax, the balance of – *(Interruption)*

MR SSEWUNGU: Madam Speaker, my former chairman, a while ago, raised the matter of reading a report as it is, but now, Hon. Nandala -

THE SPEAKER: He is also referencing.

MR SSEWUNGU: He is also referencing, and yet he has a minority report - *(Laughter)* –

THE SPEAKER: The presumption is that all of you do not have the Principal Act, so he is just referencing everybody.

MR SSEWUNGU: We wanted to follow what he wrote as his minority report from the screen – *(Laughter)*

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Madam Speaker, this is the law. I was helping you to know. The amendment which I would like to raise is that under clause 3, the amendment should read that, “interest and penalties outstanding between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2025 be waived as long as the taxpayer pays the principal tax by 30 June 2026.

Justification

This will address the taxpayers who have been treated unfairly when they paid their tax, heavy penalties and interest as a result of tax ledgers by URA, which I have read to my colleagues.

The ledgers have been heavily over-inflated with interest and penalties since 2010. The principal tax outstanding in most cases is a result of overpayments in the earlier periods, with interest and penalties.

Before this amendment came, they would impose penalties whenever you would pay money. Until this one came, now that is where it leaves the principal. You will discover that the current, say the principal, could be even the interest. If you have applied the money to the principal, what would be outstanding would be interest and the penalties. This will help eliminate arrears, which result from only interest and penalties for a longer period.

This current clause helps offenders other than the compliant taxpayers. The justification is that those who have not paid their principal tax, interest, and penalties are being helped while those who paid earlier have been charged principal, interest, and penalties.

Now, I put it up to 2014, not 2010, to get a middle point so that the Uganda Revenue Authority can clean those ledgers and the people pay the right tax.

Madam Speaker, if we do this, it will address the issue of every year coming in, asking for waivers of interest and payments. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nathan is just talking about a bloated ledger. Yes-

6.24

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Madam Speaker, some of the issues that they are raising here, which are supposed to be minority reports, in my view, are questions for us to harmonise either by drafting or the understanding of what we are doing.

Is it okay to propose that you allow the people from the Ministry of Finance, the Government team and the Members on the other side with the dissenting views to sit and first harmonise these issues? For some of the issues that Hon. Masaba was raising, I thought that if we sat down, we would be able to find a common position on what we are trying to understand.

THE SPEAKER: Are you saying that we stand over this Bill?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Yes, so that the issues that are being raised can be harmonised.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Attorney-General, do you want us to pass the budget before we pass the Bills?

MR SSEMUKU: Madam Speaker, we met the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development –

THE SPEAKER: Maybe we can give you up to tomorrow, and we start with this at two o'clock.

MR SSEMUKU: Madam Speaker, we have had meetings involving us, the ministry for finance and the Uganda Revenue Authority. Where we have disagreed, we have disagreed, and that is why we are before Parliament to make the decision. So, the Attorney-General cannot advise that we go back and conduct meetings, which we have

had. We have disagreed. Let Parliament take the decision.

MR SSEWUNGU: Madam Speaker, I seek the indulgence of the Attorney-General. We have this minority report. Why don't we have it on the Floor –

THE SPEAKER: Can I ask this team to study the minority report and then, tomorrow, we start with this Bill.

The House is adjourned to 2.00 p.m. tomorrow.

(The House rose at 6.26 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 14 May 2025 at 2.00 p.m.)