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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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THIRD SESSION - FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 27 JUNE 2023



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

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THIRD SESSION - 7TH SITTING - FIRST MEETING

Tuesday, 4 July 2023

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

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to Order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. I have been performing one of our duties at the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries conference where we had our joint Parliamentary Assembly with the European Union Parliament. I was accompanied by honourable colleagues who were designated; Hon. Bashir Kazibwe, Hon. Cecilia Ogwal, Hon. Dr Opio, Hon. Ssekikubo, Hon. Kibalya and others.

I just wanted to inform you about this because as Parliament, we decided to take parliamentary diplomacy a notch higher. We have found very many countries take it seriously because parliamentary diplomacy is anchored on state diplomacy. Rt Hon. Prime Minister and ministers, the questions you are answering from the diplomats, ministers and other countries come from the parliaments. Therefore, as Members of Parliament, using our own connections, if we got the chance to know Members of Parliament anywhere in the world, it is very important that we carry our

national interests at heart and explain to them the issues affecting our country, especially when we have an onslaught on some of the most critical issues.

I want to applaud you, honourable members. I have travelled with many of you. Whenever we reach those Parliaments and engagements, we never have issues of Opposition and NRM. We are Ugandans. *(Applause)*

I want to appreciate the way Hon. Cecilia Ogwal explained issues to do with the Anti-Homosexuality Act. Hon. Dr Opio also did an excellent job.

We also had very important topics. We were lucky to have had Hon. Kateshumbwa on trade matters. We utilised his experience as a former President of the World Customs Union. He is one of the most respected people in Brussels. While moving there, everyone told us we have a jewel. I really felt proud. The only problem was that in some cases, he would be given a red carpet instead of me – *(Laughter)* – I said a coup might be happening far away from home.

However, these are very critical issues. For example, I read the *Hansard* of the UK Parliament and came to discover where the issue of the travel advisory from the UK is coming from. It was raised by one of the Members of Parliament to the minister in charge of Africa affairs. The Member said, "Has the Government of Uganda reached out to us for support in addressing this issue? Have we equally advised our people about the terrorism situation?"

The minister promised saying, “Honourable colleague, I am going to update our people on travel to Uganda.” You can see how it came about. It came from a Member of Parliament. Therefore, it is very critical that all of us remain alert. I want to thank you for the support, which you have managed to give us, honourable colleagues.

The second issue I want to comment about is the current DNA tests *—(Laughter)*- I do not know whether some of you have fallen victim; that is an issue, which you swallow alone. We have counsellors in Parliament, if you are having such a problem.

However, I am talking about this issue because I think we need to guide the nation. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you need to come out. From what is going on, innocent children are falling victim. You do not know what your parents were doing or whatever happened but all of a sudden, you see someone saying, “Stop using my name...bring back your national ID; it bears my name. So, I want to go and change it.”

Honourable colleagues, as you know, Ugandans are very sharp. Now, in every corner, you are going to have a DNA laboratory. We want to know how this is regulated. How should it be handled? What are we going to do about these young children that are being chased out of homes and schools?

The boy-child is committing suicide. Men are suffering. At least the mothers know who the father of the child is but the men are in big trouble. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, at least come out, guide the nation on this matter and see how best we can counsel these people - maybe, if there are regulations around it, we should just not leave it.

Also, men out there, by the time you make a test for around 16 children, it means you also have your own issues unless you are a *hajji*. However, you might find out that someone is also looking after your own children somewhere.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I request you to get time. If you want to do it here, we shall give you space. If you want to use the Media Centre, you shall have our support on this issue.

Hon. Sarah Opendi, I want to invite you in my communication to help me lay something on the Table concerning the International Parliament Day.

2.26

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your communication. Before I lay this so that I do not come back on your communication, I want to request colleagues; men, fathers, the boy-child, you should know that you are not even sure whether you belong to that very clan where you are now.

Remember, we held a conference in this country. One of the things that we are proud about *—(Interjections)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Sarah, can you do what I have told you to do. *(Laughter)*

MS OPENDI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will come back to that. Every 30th of June, we are supposed to celebrate Parliament Day. In 1889, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) was founded on 30th June and the UN General Assembly, in 2018, declared this day “Parliament Day”.

This year, the day fell on a Friday and we were not sitting. The theme for this year was “Parliaments for the Planet” with emphasis that with climate change, action starts at home.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union, at a meeting I attended which was both virtual and physical, took the opportunity to launch the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its optional Protocol. This handbook for Parliaments No.36 was launched.

Mr Speaker, thank you for this opportunity. The Government adopted CEDAW as a guiding principle in promoting gender equality

and all the necessary legal frameworks are in place. We want to appreciate the Government. We are here because of the 1995 Constitution that provided space for women to participate in politics, and also economic and social spheres.

I beg to lay this book. I was given 10 copies to present to this Parliament and I request Members to read this book. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Can you read the title of the book?

MS OPENDI: Mr Speaker, the title is “*A Handbook for Parliaments No. 36 on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol*”. The last handbook was in 2003. So, this is a revised version. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You will find copies in the library. Clerk, put the copies in the library for Members to easily access them. Thank you. [*Hon. Oshabe rose*] Is it on my communication, Hon. Nsamba?

2.30

MR PATRICK OSHABE (NUP, Kassanda County North, Kassanda): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker and thank you for the effort in parliamentary diplomacy, as you communicated.

We have a challenge and it is on how the resolutions we pass in those international fora are adopted here. I remember one time, you promised that we were going to have time to discuss all these international resolutions and the ministers give responses on how we are working with these international obligations and internal resolutions.

Unfortunately, we continuously go and attend these meetings, make resolutions but never have time to discuss them, and how our country is responding to them. I am not sure whether everything that is agreed on internationally is good for our people.

So, we need time, as Parliament, to go through them; including the ACPA, IPU, the Pan-African Parliament and the East African Legislative Assembly. We need a serious discussion about these resolutions that are passed.

Mr Speaker, the Minister of Foreign Affairs needs to update this House on what they are doing about these obligations because some of them are agreements that we need to adopt and ratify. We need that time. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nsamba, that is a very critical point you have raised. We have discussed it here before. When such international conventions and agreements are made and they require certification, they have to be brought here by the minister. So, once the minister has not brought them here, then what it means is that they are still handling the issues at the Cabinet level. We would not like to go into the work of the Executive very much.

However, I am going to consult with the Clerk and our technical people and look into it. Indeed, if it is an international convention and you are a signatory, as a country, but do not bring it here for ratification, what are you doing about all this?

Here, we try to bring resolutions that would need ratification. Otherwise, the rest fall under reports of delegations. However, I am going to follow it up with our technical people, so that we can guide each other on how best to handle this issue.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the only thing I forgot to say, in regard to the Anti-Homosexuality Act, is that there are disjointed responses. For example, I have tried to get a response from about three ambassadors; all of them are giving their own statements because as a Government, we have not come up with one clear statement. We depend on what we hear the President and government officials say. Here, we use our technical officers in Parliament. We wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to give us a

statement to present in Brussels; we ended up crafting our own.

Since it is being raised at especially international level, we need a standardised statement for all our diplomatic missions, so that all of them speak the same language across the board. We found most of the people were even talking about the draft Bill. Some were talking about the one we passed before the President even returned it. Very few knew about the real Act.

When we explained what was in the Act, they said, “No, what we get is different”. So, we really need very clear guidance, especially for diplomatic missions.

2.34

MS FLAVIA NABAGABE (NUP, Woman Representative, Kassanda): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. On the issue of parliamentary diplomacy, which you have articulated very vividly, thank you for that. However, I have a comment about that.

The first thing is I belong to the Inter-Parliamentary Union. I have always battled with the question of where our allegiances lie in the international Parliament. For example, Ugandans belong to different shades of political parties and in every international Parliament, there are different shades of political parties represented.

When you mention here that whenever we go out there on those missions, we are fronting the interests or key diplomatic missions of the country, I struggle to understand the relevance of opposition political members in those particular international parliaments.

The reason I bring this up is that sometimes, I would like to advocate and push for national diplomacy or the national intentions of my country. Sometimes, I get to key issues like human rights, where there is obvious torture and violation of human rights. As an opposition political member, we have discussed this internationally and highlighted issues about Uganda, *vis a vis* human rights violation.

Meanwhile, the people I am with are saying, “Here, we are representing national interests; do not talk about human rights violations”. So, I start asking myself that if we are to represent the different shades that nominated us to those parliamentary platforms, then how do we bring up these critical issues that affect ordinary Ugandans?

Meanwhile, the President also came out clearly and said he does not agree with torture. So, if I am to talk about the examples of people who have been tortured in my country on an international platform, why should I end up being stifled or being told that I cannot be able to talk about any of this on this platform?

That is where I find a challenge in international Parliaments. While I want to appreciate what Uganda has done, I also know that there are many things that are not going right with my party and at that level, I am presenting the different voices of Ugandans in the opposition and I am alone.

What happens if I do not talk about what really bothers them on that international platform? Otherwise, we should then simply say that International Parliaments should be strictly for one political party to always sing praises about what is good. I beg for guidance on that note. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Members, when you have a delegation, before setting off, you should first meet to look at the agenda and the issues and agree on how to handle those issues when you reach abroad. It does not have to be - because we are sending a delegation from the Parliament of Uganda. We are not sending a delegation from political parties in Uganda. That is at a certain level. We send a delegation from the Parliament of Uganda.

The Parliament might be representing different interests but you sit down and agree as a delegation. Members, I do not want to go along that line as we would be really going far. This is delegation per delegation. I think at leadership level, we can discuss this and guide Members.

Hon. Cecilia Ogwal wanted to say something about it.

MS CECILIA OGWAL: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I just want to make clarification based on the statement made by our colleague who spoke before your intervention. This is a matter which I think we need to sit down as a Parliament and talk amongst ourselves and agree.

We carry a different identity when we are outside the country. When we are here, we are Ugandans and we speak like Ugandans. I can decide to speak in Lango now if I want because I am in Uganda. If you say you do not understand, I will say you are stupid. Why do you want me to speak Luganda when you cannot speak Lango because we are speaking in Uganda?

When we are outside there, nobody knows Lango or Luganda so we have to tailor our - I am not asking anybody to applaud what I am saying, I just want you to understand what I am saying. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, the thing is, we all face challenges and I think I am not wrong when I say, so many of you jump into positions without understanding what we are supposed to be doing. If there is anybody - I am a very loud and clear Opposition Member in this country. Everybody else followed my voice, you were all in one stage or another *-(Interruption)* - You were a member of NRM, sit down. Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Basalirwa, stop harassing Hon. Cecilia Ogwal. Conclude, honourable.

MS CECILIA OGWAL: Mr Speaker, we need space in order to understand what we are supposed to do outside the country and this is what I am just pleading for. We need to understand each other. We can still tell the truth that we are all still struggling with democracy. We are all educating ourselves about democracy, but we should not be judged by the same standard, we must understand the benchmark.

We find that even the Americans are failing on that mark. Even those we consider to be mature democrats are failing, so, please, let us not be judged wrongly. When I speak the way I should speak, in a clear manner, it does not mean I am supporting government. I am speaking for Uganda. So, when Uganda was being condemned for not ratifying the Human Rights Charter in the Pan-African Parliament, I had to mobilise my troops to get out so that we can go discuss other things.

We could not stand Uganda being singled out as one of the countries which had not ratified the Human Rights Charter and I am there listening. It is not right. In a way, we really have to know how to deal with our own internal matters internally and how to deal with Ugandan matters outside the country. Mr Speaker, I beg *-(Interruption)* I will accept your order -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Cecilia Ogwal, kindly conclude.

MS CECILIA OGWAL: I will accept her point of order because when she is 70 years old, I will want her to speak my language. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Flavia, it is not Hon. Cecilia Ogwal who allows the point of order. It is the Speaker.

In the public gallery this afternoon, we have pupils and teachers of High Hope Primary School from Mwenge South Constituency, Kyenjojo District. They are represented by Hon. Katalihwa Donald Byabazaire and Hon. Faith Kunihira Philo. Please join me in welcoming them, thank you.

Also in the public gallery this afternoon, we have students and teachers of Mariam High School from Kawempe North Division, Kampala District. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Ssegirinya Muhammad and Hon. Malende Shamim. They have come to observe proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. Thank you.

Also in the public gallery, we have a delegation from Katera Parish, Bukomero sub-county, Kiboga District represented by Hon. Kaaya Christine Nakimwero and Hon. Dr Keefa Kiwanuka. They have come to observe the proceedings of the House. Please join me in welcoming them. Thank you.

2.44

MR RONALD AFIDRA (NRM, Lower Madi County, Madi-Okollo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to join my colleagues in applauding the team that represented this country abroad. The eloquence of all the Members demonstrated to the international world that we have content in this country and indeed, we are legislating for our country very well.

That said, I want to address my mind to your communication in regard to the rampant DNA tests. Mr Speaker, indeed it is true that even in my constituency of Lower Madi, the facts of DNA tests are becoming an issue. Knowing that a child belongs to a father and a mother, now that DNA tests are being highly considered by men, where does this put the women?

As leaders of this country, we know that to secure a child's future, it takes two parents. Some women are looking after children of their men and they do not have any complaint. Why is it that men, including me, are complaining when we are looking after children?

That said, as Parliament, we need to guide this country and our laws are very clear. We have cultural guidance on how families are run and how children are to be brought up. We have constitutional rights that enshrine the family and how families are being managed. Above all, we have the religious beliefs that all of us belong to.

Therefore, the guidance I want to get from the House is, can the country be guided on how the new entrance of DNA tests that have become rampant in this country can help us, as a country, to preserve our integrity, cultural institutions, cultural norms, religious beliefs and uphold our Constitution? Thank you.

2.47

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Related to the DNA tests, there are a number of drugs and tests that are restricted and controlled by the Ministry of Health. Can we add the DNA test to that restricted list so that it is only done on a court order or to solve a problem? We want to protect the mental health of our children and of the men who are now committing suicide. It is not adding value to the economy.

Mr Speaker, I propose that the Ministry of Health adds DNA testing to the restricted list. We acknowledge that it has to be done, but it has to be under guidance – not just with the reason of wanting to break up. There are people in Uganda who are now faking results in order to malign the women and reject the children that they are supposed to care for.

Mr Speaker, we have to do something and the Minister of Health can help us on this matter.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, on the issue of DNA – Rt Hon. Madam Prime Minister, I do not know how much time you think might be sufficient for you, but we would need a statement in the House on how you are going to guide the nation.

Next Tuesday, the Prime Minister will bring a statement and we shall have it debated.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssemujju? Oh sorry, Hon. Ssemujju. The minister wants to say something small.

2.49

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also do not know what is motivating married men to rush for DNA tests. It has become another pandemic. I have discussed -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us have order on this matter. You might find that in this House, we even

have some of them hiding children. *(Laughter)* Some of you, fathers, could also be knowing that you have children somewhere and you are hiding them. So, it is a serious matter. Let us not put a lot of emotions.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Mr Speaker, it is a very serious matter -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, please, let us have order in the House.

DR BARYOMUNSI: It is a very serious matter, which is even resulting in suicides. It has to be addressed.

This morning, I discussed it with the Minister of Health. While for now it might be difficult to prevent or stop anybody from going for a DNA test, part of the concern is the quality of the laboratories and maybe the tests being carried out.

This morning, the Minister of Health and the leadership of the commissioner for laboratories, the Allied Health Professional Council and the Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council held a meeting with the various laboratory owners and managers. An assessment is being carried out to check if these laboratories and clinics are accredited. It could be possible that people are running to clinics and labs, which are not accredited by the Ministry of Health and they could be giving false results.

So, the Minister of Health promised that within two weeks, she will come to Parliament, through the Leader of Government Business, to give a list of laboratories that are accredited and authentic so that we can guide the country on where one can go if they want to carry out a DNA test. I wanted to give that information, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I have already guided on what the Prime Minister is going to do because the biggest challenge is to do with guidance.

However, where is this coming from? I was chatting with Hon. Sarah Opendi: there is a campaign that had been going on called “fear women”. *(Laughter)* It came as a document and then started going – “fear women”. We got some information that there are some groups that brought it up and all that - but all these things are speculations.

We hope the Prime Minister will be able to do a thorough job and we agree on how best we can handle this issue.

2.52

MR IBRAHIM SSEMUJJU (FDC, Kira Municipality, Wakiso): Mr Speaker, thank you. You have briefed us about the recent meetings. I have two issues.

One, Hon. Nabagabe, by our rules here, was appointed by her party to represent the Opposition at IPU. However, I see her here when IPU is going on. Can we be told, as Parliament, what happened to her? Has she refused that assignment?

Two, Mr Speaker, the point that you made about us - and I want to thank Hon. Cecilia Ogwal. When we demand competence, we do not do so because we are against some people. When you have Hon. Cecilia Ogwal to represent you, everybody will be happy. However, when you pick people who are just experienced in milking cows and send them to international organisations – *(Interruption)*

MR DAN ATWIJUKIRE: Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us listen to the honourable colleague.

MR ATWIJUKIRE: Is it in order, Mr Speaker, for a senior member of this House to use a language that demeans people who know a certain activity and tries to present them as incompetent? I need protection, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, go on.

MR ATWIJUKIRE: Is Hon. Ssemujju in order to insinuate that people who know how to milk cows cannot represent this country? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I really want us to be serious on some matters. Delegations of Parliament are formed by Members of Parliament. Whether someone is experienced, whether someone is a teacher or whether someone has been a sweeper, that person went through the same process to come here, as any of us.

If, for example, we were saying that in forming parliamentary delegations, we can go and pick strangers to become part of parliamentary delegations and they go and represent Parliament, it would be understandable. However, if it is a Member of Parliament, I think we can use language that is more acceptable.

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, I did not intend to demean anyone. I am actually commenting on your communication because you said that when you went with Hon. Kateshumbwa, because of his experience, he added value. I would not add the same value. I am just using another language, but saying the same thing that you said, Sir. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssemujju. I did not use - what I said about Hon. Kateshumbwa was on trade matters. We handle different matters. When they are matters to do with medical, I will pick a medical doctor. Any Member of Parliament is competent to handle any matter in the House. So, let us respect each other.

MR SSEMUJJU: I am sorry, Mr Speaker.

The second point I would like to raise, Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: When a member is sorry, honourable colleagues, it is noted on the *Hansard*.

MR SSEMUJJU: Finally, Mr Speaker, we want to be one delegation at international conferences but, when you have tortured and brutalised me here - it is like people who brutalise their spouses. When you appear in public, it will show on your face. In fact, if you take me to an international conference, I may not be smiling like NRM.

So, can I be guided, after torturing us here and then you put us on the same plane to go and represent Uganda; how do you want us to behave when we reach there?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I want to confirm to honourable colleagues that all Members of Parliament we put on delegations are always smiling. And, I also want to confirm that from all sides, you are always lobbying to be put on those delegations- Yes, I want to put it on record that from all sides- Opposition or NRM, Members ask to be put on delegations. For those who do not want to be put on delegations, I will be happy if you create space for others because you would have made my work easy.

However, what I said, which is very critical, Hon. Ssemujju, before you go as colleagues, you always have an agenda; you meet and agree on how to discuss an agenda. I believe the head of the delegation will always agree with you- it does not mean that you go to hide everything, but you go knowing that the Government might be doing something wrong, but what I am doing, am I damaging the country? You differentiate between damaging the Government and damaging the country and that, of course, depends on your own judgement. So far, the delegations I have had, we have not had issues of that nature. Honourable colleagues, matters of national importance - Hon. Muhammad Kato - Oh, let me first allow the Leader of the Opposition- no, I will not handle procedure; you know, now people have known the shortcut. If you want to stand, you say procedure.

2.59

MR JOHN BAPTIST NAMBESHE (NUP, Manjiya County, Bududa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join the colleagues to applaud your team that ably represented us in that international conference and particularly when you made a clarion call on the United Nations Security Council, to consider according to Africa two permanent seats. But it may take ages for Africa to have a nuclear weapon.

Mr Speaker, in your communication, the terror alerts, we had a recent one and they normally come from the conceptual West; the other one of the United States Government, now this time, the United Kingdom terror alert, and more often than not, they predict accurately. Even this one may come to pass.

But it is good that you interacted with the Member of Parliament of the United Kingdom-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, I read the *Hansard*, I did not interact-

MR NAMBESHE: It is good you read the *Hansard* and it helped to let the cat out of the bag, and you got to know that Uganda is working in isolation. There is a serious gap maybe in intelligence- intelligence gathering is one thing but intelligence sharing is another. These particular MPs, castigating Uganda for working in isolation, for not reaching out or cooperating with the superior powers that have always been predicting these threats and this has endangered our citizenry.

Don't you think it would be prudent to require a statement from the relevant line minister to explain why they are working in isolation and failing to move from isolation to cooperation in sharing intelligence?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, do you want to comment on that?

3.02

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, the relevant minister will come here at an appropriate time.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So can we give you Tuesday, Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

MS NABBANJA: Next week.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, very good. Thank you. Honourable, tell me about your privilege that has been violated.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This Parliament passed a law for Members to access mid-term benefits from the Parliamentary Pensions Scheme. And on the 20th of June, one of us presented regulations for Members to be able to access it, but regrettably, a question was not put.

Our technical team is failing to gazette those regulations so that Members access their benefits. We seek guidance from you on how we can move on this matter so that Members can access their benefits. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I think her thinking was in line with mine right away.

Honourable members, as you may recall, on 20 June 2023, Hon. Arinaitwe Rwakajara Katambuka, in line with section 13(A)(4) of the Parliamentary Pensions Act, 2007, laid before Parliament the Parliamentary Pensions Access to Mid-term Benefits Regulations, 2023 for approval. However, no decision was taken by the House signifying the approval.

I, therefore, put the question that the Parliamentary Pensions Access to Mid-term Benefits Regulations, 2023 laid on the Table by Hon. Arinaitwe Rwakajara Katambuka on 20 June 2023 be approved by Parliament.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, in the VIP gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation of staff from the National Assembly of Zambia. They are here on a benchmarking visit to the Parliament of Uganda. They include:

- i) Mr Stephen Chiwota - Principal Clerk

- ii) Mr Julius Kampamba – Deputy Principal Clerk
- iii) Mr Davis Chimbwe – Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.

They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

Also, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have students and teachers of Buzaaya Secondary School from Buzaaya County, Kamuli District. They are represented by Hon. Mugabi Martin Muzale Kisule and Rt Hon. Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga. They have come to observe proceedings of the House. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

3.05

MR MUHAMMED KATO (NRM, Katerera County Rubirizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance regarding the rampant fleecing of Rubirizi vanilla growers by one Savvy Saucy Spicy Trading Co Limited.

Around January 2023, this company obtained green vanilla from my constituency under Rubirizi District Farmers Association.

Several 1000s of kilogrammes of green vanilla have been collected by this company. One kilogramme costs about Shs 4,000. Money up to Shs 448,600,000 has not been paid to the growers under their association.

I have copies of the agreements between the company and the association that have not been honoured by the company.

On the 13th of February, the said company wrote to the association acknowledging the arrears of the same but up to-date, nothing has been cleared.

Mr Speaker, the association has around 400 members in this association. All the children of members of that association are at home because they have been chased away from school for fees. My prayer is that the Rt Hon.

Prime Minister be called upon to intervene in this matter and come to the rescue of the people of Rubirizi District by detailing the market avenues for the produce of farmers who are implementing various programmes. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

3.07

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me direct the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives to go and ascertain the numbers of the members of our community who have been defrauded, make sure that they are paid and report back to this House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, my view would be that instead of reporting back here - because sometimes we clog the Order Paper with very many reports from Government. Please, work with the Members of Parliament from the area. I know you are an action person - can you help these people get paid?

3.08

MR RONALD BALIMWEZO (NUP, Nakawa Division East, Kampala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On Friday, 30 June 2023, at approximately 9.00 p.m., armed thugs raided a mobile money outlet. They shot dead one person and stole Shs 72 million. Luckily enough, when the people heard the bullets, they swung into action; one of them knocked the thug holding a gun; an AKA-47 rifle and he was arrested. The gun was recovered and the police established that the gun was a UPDF property. Also, one of the thugs was a UPDF officer from Kikuba Mutwe Barracks in Kayunga.

There is a rampant involvement of security personnel in armed robberies and murders going on in the country. Therefore, my prayers are that:

1. The Government compensates the victims
2. The Ministers of Defence and Internal Affairs explain the increased involvement of security personnel in such murders.

We are all aware that the majority of the police posts –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, conclude, honourable.

MR BALIMWEZO: Thank you. The majority of the police posts were removed from our constituencies and the Inspector General of Police did not increase the number of policemen on patrols. That is why there is increased insecurity in our various constituencies. So, I wonder why –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, you have already made your prayer.

MR BALIMWEZO: Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

3.11

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): The Minister of Internal Affairs will go and verify this information. The Rt Hon. Speaker has guided that we do not need to clog the Order Paper. We shall get in touch - between you and me - we can even go on the ground.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I did not say that on every matter. This is beyond the constituency; these cases have been in Isingiro and everywhere. The issue of the involvement of armed forces has been - what the Members of Parliament are usually interested in is action on certain matters. I feel like the response to this matter should come on the Floor of the House because it cuts across. Therefore, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, if they could respond to it next week, it would be really good.

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, you have said that you do not want the Order Paper clogged. For almost every matter, the Prime Minister has said, “the minister will come.”

However, the procedural issue I am raising is Gen. Otafiire, the Minister for Internal Affairs, who I think has now turned this ministry into his retirement nest; he never attends these parliamentary sittings. Can the Prime Minister tell us and assure Parliament that *Jajja* Otafiire, who is using the ministry as his retirement will now come here and answer?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, do you have ministers who do not attend the House?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, Gen. Otafiire and Gen. Muhoozi are the members of Cabinet charged with the responsibility of that docket. Remember, we agreed here that we have a rota where ministers will be attending plenary, especially those ministries that have more than one minister. Hence, when you see Gen. Muhoozi here, the ministry is ably represented. (*Interjections*) Gen. Otafiire is an able minister. The other day, he represented Government at a Muslim function; he is very able and strong. (*Laughter*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, every minister is supposed to be attending Parliament as per Rule 114 of our Rules of Procedure, but also as a Member of Parliament. So, let us be patient; they will come and attend.

3.15

MR JOHN MAGOLO (NRM, Bungokho County North, Mbale): Mr Speaker, this Parliament appropriated Shs 22 billion for the Ministry of Health to pay arrears to medical interns and senior house officers in all sites of placement across this country. The interns and senior house officers, for example, in Kiruddu Hospital, Mulago and Mbarara, among others, have been paid their full arrears. However, the interns and senior house officers in Mbale Regional Referral Hospital have not been paid their arrears; the details are hereby attached.

The second and third years whose payment was effected only received two months out of six for the period of January to June 2023. The first-year students received a three months' payment

out of seven for the period of December 2022 to June 2023. The COSECSA fellows in the second and third year are partly paid while their first-year counterparts have not been paid.

The medical personnel in Mbale Regional Referral Hospital are demoralised and hardly doing what is expected of them as they feel discriminated against.

My prayers are that the Ministry of Health should expeditiously pay the arrears of the interns and senior house officers at Mbale Regional Referral Hospital with immediate effect since the money was appropriated by Parliament—*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, honourable.

MR MAGOLO: The minister should report to this House on the action taken. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

3.17

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I expected the Member to start by thanking Government for having started the process of paying interns because it has been an issue in this country. I want to promise that even those interns at Mbale Regional Referral Hospital will be paid.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, the Chairperson, Committee on Health, has notified me that the report on medical interns is ready. Clerk, please, upload it so that Members can go through it. On Thursday, we shall handle it and debate this matter. Hon. Ethel Naluyima.

3.18

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My matter concerns the indiscriminate conversion of Gunda Forest Reserve to settlement and industry.

Mr Speaker, Gunda Forest Reserve is found in Wakiso with 57 hectares and it was gazetted in 1932 and also in 1988. However, it is currently infiltrated. On 23 January 2023, there was a presidential directive to the Prime Minister to give this land for the establishment of a technology demonstration centre under the Directorate of Community and Industrialisation.

There were several correspondences and the latest indicates that this land has been subdivided and given to several individuals. My prayer on this matter is that the Attorney-General should clearly explain what this communique is all about, given that under section 11 of the National Forestry and Tree Planting Act, 2003 states how forest land can be converted to any other use.

I beg to lay the Act and request the Attorney-General to interest himself in section 11 (2)(b) for the given procedure—*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is that all?

MS NALUYIMA: Mr Speaker, my second prayer is, I ask this House to aid Wakiso District Local Government such that it replants this land with trees as per the work plans it has, given that this country is working very hard to have fight the impacts of climate change.

I also want to lay on the Table the following correspondences and documents:

- a) A letter of His Excellency the President directing the Prime Minister on allocation of land for the establishment of a technology demonstration centre.
- b) The Prime Minister's communication to the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development over the same.
- c) The Katabi Council Chairperson's letter to Uganda Land Commission.
- d) The correspondence of the Uganda Land Commission indicating the subdivisions of this forest land by different individuals.

I beg to lay and request this Parliament to intervene in this matter. I thank you. *(Applause)*
[Member: "Point of Information"]

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, a point of information is to aid a Member who is on the Floor and she has already finished her submission.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the letter was written to you. Although she is saying the Attorney-General should explain, it is you who has to implement.

3.22

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I derive my powers from Article 108 of the Constitution, as Leader of Government Business and also as somebody who is mandated to act on presidential directives and any other assignments given to me by the President.

Uganda is becoming an industrialised country so, I request that Parliament waits for us to come here for de-gazetment when we shall bring – We are still corresponding, as stated in the letters. We shall definitely have time to come here and present the matter to the House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, as the Member has said, they have already subdivided the land. I think that is what you need to follow up and know if they have, indeed, subdivided the land and whether people beyond the ones the President directed you to give land – You know, Ugandans take opportunity. They say, "If they can give so and so this forest, I can also get my share." We have many forests around where people are holding titles.

Therefore, it is very important to establish whether:

1. The right procedure is being followed in terms of de-gazetting the forest;
2. Whether, indeed, the land has been subdivided and being shared by members.

Then, you will update the House on that. Otherwise, the rest is your work, which we cannot delve so much into.

Honourable, let us coordinate together and I will also ensure that I follow up with the Prime Minister. Hon. George Didi Bhoka?

3.24

DR GEORGE BHOKA (NRM, Obongi County, Obongi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a point of national importance regarding an unresolved land conflict between Obongi District and Yumbe District.

This land involves the villages of Mureliam, Kali in Kali Parish, Itula subcounty in Obongi District. This is a protracted matter that has been on right from the time Obongi was under Moyo District. Efforts were made by Moyo District Local Government to have this matter resolved and an inter-ministerial committee was set up. Recommendations were set to resolve this border matter but to-date, Government has not taken any action.

Consequently, farmers have been evicted from using this land. There are Government programmes that have been planned by Itula subcounty and the most recent was the land fill under *Development Response to Displacement Impact Project (DRDIP)* that was stopped by security operatives from Yumbe District Local Government.

Mr Speaker, this same land resulted in bloodshed and loss of property.

My prayers are:

1. That the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development expedites the process of resolving this border conflict – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude.

DR BHOKA: That this matter being an inter-ministerial issue, the Office of the Prime Minister interests itself in it.

Last, but not least, because this matter is becoming a security threat, the Ministry of Internal Affairs deploys police at the disputed villages to help the farmers be able to engage in their economic activities.

Finally, if this matter is not urgently resolved, it is going to affect the national housing census. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, that is not a prayer. Honourable colleagues, I do not know why we have these issues. Parliamentary resolutions were very clear on the boundaries of districts when they were being created. I remember we had a very big war on boundaries between Madi-Okollo and Terego and then Moyo and Obongi. I am told the one of Madi-Okollo and Terego are not yet resolved.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

3.27

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, an inter-ministerial committee, headed by myself and involving the Minister of Local Government, the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, the Attorney-General and the Minister of Internal Affairs, has had three consecutive meetings on the boundaries of a number of districts. It is not only about Obongi and Moyo or Madi-Okollo and Terego.

Mr Speaker, we shall handle this matter until it is concluded and report back to this House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I think you need to have periodic interactions with the MPs involved. I could see when they come to our office that they were under a lot of pressure. Utilise your connection with the Prime Minister. You will sort out most of these issues.

3.28

MR JAMES KUBEKETERYA (NRM, Bunya County East, Mayuge): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am raising a matter regarding 43 secondary school headteachers who were

interviewed in 2021. However, up to now, these teachers of seed secondary schools have not been given their appointment letters by the Ministry of Education and Sports, whereas their colleagues - over 100 - were deployed. There are cases in places such as Kitgum, Omoro and Bugiri.

These were caretaker headteachers of these schools for about five to six years. Unfortunately, one of them, after having heard that he was not taken by the ministry, developed high blood pressure and died – His name was Ronald Nabamba from Namungo Seed Secondary School in Mityana.

My prayer is that the Ministry of Education and Sports gives these teachers their appointment letters and deploys them because this is a budget-free issue, which does not require any additional money; money is always there for the headteachers. The issue of saying that they were teachers and they absconded is a matter that the ministry should have handled before they were interviewed.

They should be taken on because there are precedents that some people, who were on the payroll, were interviewed and deployed. The Minister of Education and Sports should intervene. Otherwise, it is likely to be a court matter. Thank you.

3.31

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, Hon. Kubeketerya is the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee on Education and Sports. The Government deploys some of our honourable colleagues to handle some of these things in the committees. Now that he is declaring that he has failed as the Deputy Chairperson, I will help him and handle the matter.

MR KUBEKETERYA: Some information –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, do not access the microphone without my permission. Hon. Kubeketerya has just been appointed as the Deputy Chairperson of the committee. However, we have been

grappling with this matter for some time. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, in fact, you can now see the kind of Deputy Chairperson that you have: he is going to be tough on such issues. That is what it means. *(Laughter)*

You should look into this issue with the Minister of Education and Sports so that we have it sorted out.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am raising a procedural matter on an issue you had assured me that you were going to talk to the President about. We are entering the second year without a substantive Governor of Bank of Uganda. What is very funny is that the same person who is supposed to appoint the Governor is appointing Board members to manage Bank of Uganda without a substantive governor.

Mr Speaker, you gave me assurance that you would talk to the President. The Minister for the Presidency is never here, yet such matters would be handled by the minister.

Therefore, wouldn't it be procedurally right for me to be updated on why, up to now, we do not have the substantive Governor Bank? Is it because Uganda does not have people who qualify for this office or is the President forgetting, but remembering to appoint Board members of Bank of Uganda?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ssewungu, you have requested me to update you. After this session, I will. *(Laughter)* If you had requested me to update the House, I would have given an update. Next item.

LAYING OF PAPERS

A. THE TAX EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD JULY 2022 TO JUNE 2023, FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/2023

3.34

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on Table the Tax Expenditure Report for

the period July 2022 to June 2023, Financial Year 2022/2023.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The report stands referred to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development for further processing.

We have another document for laying. If it is not ready, we can handle it another time.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE HOSTING OF THE CELEBRATIONS OF THE 2ND WORLD KISWAHILI LANGUAGE DAY IN THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

MS NABAGABE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. When I look at the Order Paper, I see that we do not have a very important item there. In the last sitting, honourable minister Peter Ogwang was told to give this House feedback on the issue of the curriculum and learning materials for A' Level. I know that there are some teachers who are already complaining about not knowing how to proceed with the A' Level new curriculum.

The minister was supposed to have presented a statement today but I do not see it on the Order Paper. I also do not see Hon. Peter Ogwang around. Are we proceeding well if we do not have this matter of national importance sorted? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member, first of all, we are proceeding very well. Number two, every item on the Order Paper is equally important. Number three, sometimes we give a timeline and, as presiding officers, we go back and manage the situation – working with the minister.

Therefore, if the minister is not ready, it does not help for us to put an item on the Order Paper and then when we call, the minister says: "I am not ready."

However, we are going to follow it up as an urgent matter.

3.36

THE FIRST DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Ms Rebecca Kadaga): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. *Habari za mchana.* Good afternoon. *Bon après-midi.*

Mr Speaker, before I talk about the Kiswahili issue, allow me to say something very small about the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). You may recall that it was established by two parliamentarians, Mr Frédéric Passy and Mr Randal Cremer. There is now an award for the best performing parliamentarian in the world and I am on the selection committee.

However, last year, there were no nominations from the African group. All the nominations were from Asia, Europe and so on. So, I wanted to request you to ask the chairperson of the African Group in IPU to ensure that Africans nominate African members, so that when I am sitting there and I see some black faces, I will do the needful. *(Applause)* Thank you.

Mr Speaker, this is a brief on the celebration of the second World Kiswahili Language Day in the EAC. It is intended to promote the use of Kiswahili as an official language in Uganda and create awareness about the East African Community.

You may be aware that Article 62 of the Constitution, 1995, stipulates that Kiswahili is the second official language, but we have never actualised it. Article 137 of the Treaty for the EAC states that, “Kiswahili should be the *lingua franca* of the East African Community.”

The East African Legislative Assembly passed many resolutions, urging the Summit to consider amending the Treaty to make this an official language. On 27 February 2021, the Summit declared both Swahili and English.

On 5 November 2021, UNESCO declared 7 July as the World Swahili Day and it should be celebrated throughout the world by all the stakeholders. It has been supported by all the Councils in the EAC and in Kiswahili, it is known as “*Siku ya Kiswahili Duniani*”.

Last year, the celebrations were in Zanzibar. The President of Zanzibar officiated and gave a platform for us to reflect on the role of Kiswahili in the EAC region. At that time, Uganda was given an opportunity to host this year. Therefore, the meeting will take place here in Kampala on 6th and 7th of July 2023.

It will bring together stakeholders, researchers, policymakers, practitioners, teachers, students and ordinary citizens. There will also be recognition awards for those who have been working very hard on the issue of Swahili. So, the benefits are many.

It will bring together all the stakeholders to provide a platform to celebrate and reflect on the role of Kiswahili in the EAC; to sensitise stakeholders on the growing role, importance and opportunities of Kiswahili at the national, regional and global scene; publicise and popularise Kiswahili as an official language of the EAC, and harness the potential various stakeholders to support Kiswahili activities.

We are quite prepared. We have a regional organising committee. We are going to have media briefings, radio talk shows, youth dialogue on Twitter spaces, etcetera.

The theme for this year is “Kiswahili and Multilingualism: Achieving More Together”. We shall have goodwill messages from the leaders and all Heads of States, and different delegations from all the partner states. Mr Speaker, the presentation will be in Kiswahili and translated into English and French. So, this opportunity now for us to listen to those presentations.

We have decided that each country presents something. Therefore, the Republic of Uganda will present on “Living My Life in Kiswahili and Other Languages”. The East African Swahili Commission will present on “Regional Integration: Emerging Multilingualism”. The Republic of Kenya will present on “Kiswahili Multilingualism and Pan Africanism”.

The Republic of Rwanda will present on “Benefits and Challenges of Multilingualism: Theory and Practice”. The United Republic

of Tanzania will present “Kiswahili Language Policy and Planning in a Multi-Lingual Setting. The Republic of Kenya will have a second chance; “Kiswahili: Translation and Interpretation”. The Republic of South Sudan will present on “Conflict, Kiswahili and Multilingualism”.

The United Republic of Tanzania - of course, it has Zanzibar – will also present on “Kiswahili and the Creative Economy: Music in Multiple Languages”. Uganda will have a chance on Kiswahili Language Education and the Republic of Burundi will present on “Development of Kiswahili Through Other Languages”.

Therefore, honourable members, I am inviting you to come to Hotel Africana on 6th and 7th July to attend the symposium and see what is happening so that we can all work together to promote integration in the East African Community. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Kadaga. Honourable members, let us go there in big numbers. At our level here in Parliament, we are discussing mechanisms of putting in place Kiswahili lessons for Members of Parliament. Members, a local language is very important. There is a certain business negotiation I went for somewhere. When we reached there, the Chinese diverted and started speaking in their language.

With the team I had, we could only listen to each other in English so we could not share any secrets. *(Laughter)* They went and banged tables, then after, came back with an agreement. For those of us who could not whisper to each other in English, we could not do anything.

So, it is very important for us to embrace Kiswahili seriously so that we can have a common language. We can also be able to backbite those who will be backbiting us internationally. *(Laughter)* We have our own language.

Honourable members, this is a very clear statement; it is a clarion call. I will pick two

Members; I will pick a Member from a border area who speaks Kiswahili and the Leader of the Opposition.

There is someone whom I wanted to speak to but he has not managed to stand up. I thought he knew Kiswahili; I think he does not know. He is the chairperson of the Forum on East African Community Affairs. *(Laughter)* I need a lady; Hon. Faith Nakut.

3.44

MR GEOFFREY EKANYA (FDC, Tororo North County, Tororo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. *Asante sana. (Laughter)* I thank the First Deputy Prime Minister. Kiswahili or any language is very important. My wife owns a school and we are already teaching Kiswahili there.

The way forward for us, besides the lesson you are proposing - The digital world, including all our phones or the iPads, can translate English into Kiswahili. So, my proposal, going forward, is that we should dedicate one day in a week, when we legislate in Kiswahili. It will make it mandatory for every Member of Parliament to learn Kiswahili, in order to be here to communicate in Kiswahili.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: As long as you allow the Presiding Officer to preside in English, then you speak in Kiswahili. *(Laughter)*

MR EKANYA: Mr Speaker, once we do that, our voters on the ground will ensure that they learn Kiswahili so that they will be able to understand what we communicate. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

3.46

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also wish to thank the Rt Hon. First Deputy Prime Minister for pushing the agenda for Uganda to host. It is an honour for Uganda to host the Celebrations of the 2nd World Kiswahili Language Day in the East African Community. I would like to commend you for the job well done.

Mr Speaker, I would like to remind you that last year, the minister submitted to this House a clear plan on how we can roll out Kiswahili. When she read it, I was happy and hoped that after one year I would be here debating here in Kiswahili.

Now we are celebrating - it appears that the plan has not been rolled out. Can we understand what is required so that Parliament can support that plan? It is a very good plan if implemented and I sure, within a year, Ugandans will be comfortable using Kiswahili. Can I get that update?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let me pick our representative for Pan African Parliament since this is a continental matter. Then, I will conclude with the Leader of the Opposition.

3.47

MR PATRICK OSHABE (NUP, Kassanda County North, Kassanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. At the Pan African Parliament, we are struggling with a matter of language. When you look at the way we do things, in Africa, we only debate in English and French; the continent is split into French and English. We have Anglophone and Francophone. There is a move within the Pan African Parliament to promote our own. English is for the English man and French for the French man.

We have the opportunity of educating our children or promoting Kiswahili in the African continent so that if we are doing negotiations - Mr Speaker, we are talking about the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) - we should negotiate in either or English or French.

Mr Speaker, this is the right cause and I want to thank the Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga for that. Let us move along those lines and adopt Kiswahili because it is the way to go. The Pan African Parliament is looking forward to ensuring that in the continent, we teach and learn how to use Kiswahili since it is the most spoken language across Africa, apart from the colonial master's language. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I had picked Hon. Ariko. We also have our elder; Hon. Wakikona who has played a very critical role.

3.49

MR HERBERT ARIKO (NRM, Soroti East Division, Soroti City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to applaud the Rt Hon. First Deputy Prime Minister for this update. Kiswahili is an important language because it is a critical bridge between the various indigenous communities in the East African subregion.

In many of the small communities and different languages we have in the region, when you attempt to find that other language other than the language of the Whiteman that our people can communicate, you find it is Kiswahili.

It is, therefore, incumbent upon us, as a country, to see how we can encourage, motivate communication and teaching of the Kiswahili language in our schools and institutions so that we are able to pick up and go to a larger extent closer to other nations, for instance; Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and Congo. Even in South Sudan, Kiswahili is much understood and spoken more than in Uganda. I believe we need to promote Kiswahili so that we are able to have a more unified medium of communication.

Hon. Patrick Oshabe has talked about the aspect of communication at the continental level. It is, indeed, interesting to note that as Africans, even when we go to those international fora - we have gone to other - (*Member timed out.*)

3.51

MR DAVID WAKIKONA (NRM, Bushigi County, Bududa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to also thank the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for East African Community Affairs for what she has submitted today. She did so even when she was still a Speaker but our approach was not very proper and now, you would not get people to learn Kiswahili.

Mr Speaker, we are used to Kiswahili. *Muntu kama mimi nilikuwa tengeru nikuwa na kifunza tu sawhili peke yake. (Laughter)* Now, when we are that type -Kiswahili *ndio kiruga tuna wongea kila sawa kila mahali kil kyoto nataka wongea tu swashili eyo ndio Napata kyakula -*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, I would like to be sure you are not talking about the presiding officer. *(Laughter)*

MR WAKIKONA: What I am saying is that when we used to for these conferences and spoke English, people would look away and say “*Sijui wa nessema niniawa*”. Now that we are going to learn it, it is better we put in the effort.

I hope the responsible people will put much effort. Do not force language on people. Those interested should come together. Even when we bring in Kiswahili-speaking people, they will learn the language faster than ourselves. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. members, I have already started learning quietly. There is an application called “Duolingo”. Every morning, it reminds you of very critical words for just five minutes and it monitors your progress. It keeps giving you the words slowly. Then it takes you into sentences. One day, I will come here and preside over only in Swahili. *(Laughter)* Let us conclude with the LOP. Members we still have items where I am going to pick you.

Honourable colleagues, I usually do not want to give double opportunities to people when others have not yet spoken. I have looked for a female Member and I could not find any; I only got Hon. Faith Nakut and that is why I picked her.

3.55

THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me also join colleagues to thank the minister; *Mweshimiwa* First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for East African Community Affairs for this statement and

lobbying aggressively to host Celebrations of the 2nd World Kiswahili Language Day in the East African Community in Uganda.

Article 137 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community which was enacted in 1999 for the East African Legislative Assembly, has a dictate - a serious one - that the member states should develop the Kiswahili language as a lingua franca. I would like to call upon the minister that since now Uganda has an opportunity of hosting this International Day of Kiswahili language, there is a serious concern.

We know very well that the Kiswahili language is the best facilitator of trade. Let me single out one of the member states; Kenya. It would be useful to have at least some knowledge of Kiswahili in order to speak freely in business.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we have the protocol and the Treaty. All these protocols, like the Customs Union, have been signed by the member states but the one-million-dollar concern is the strict adherence by the member states to these protocols and the Treaty. If they are still rejecting goods and services from Uganda –

Kenya is now the largest economy in East and Central Africa and they are the biggest beneficiaries in this region. You will even find businessmen from Kenya in our villages. But even when the protocols that have been signed to remove those restrictions and allow free movement of goods, labour, services and capital are there Ugandan goods – As we talk, South Sudan - In the recent past, Kenya had a flimsy excuse that our maize had aflatoxins, which was not true. The matter was eventually prevailed upon by the Uganda National Bureau of Standards when they conducted a confirmatory laboratory test that found our maize fit for human consumption.

Now that we have an opportunity, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, could you, please, prevail over them to know that Ugandans will not embrace this, language if they are not encouraged to integrate through trade? If Kenya, Rwanda and

Tanzania have closed off and we say that the language is a facilitator of trade, would it be carrying meaning honestly?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude.

MR NAMBESHE: If our people in Uganda and their goods are not allowed to cross, yet the rest of our neighbours are at liberty- Sudanese are here; everyone is here - but when it comes to us reaching out there, it is the complete opposite.

I am reliably informed that Kiswahili which had gained traction in the forces is degenerating. I am yet to find out why –(Interruption)

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. Mr Speaker, I joined the military police as a primary teacher in 1992 but there was no single soldier, of whatever tribe, that could speak any language in the barracks other than Kiswahili.

The warrant officers; the RP of the day hearing you speak in another language in the barracks, would be criminal and you would be subjected to punishment because they were fighting tribalism within the army. However, as we talk, police - I do not know where they train from - do not know Kiswahili. Just do a random sample, Mr Speaker, since you have begun training, and ask those police officers here at Parliament to speak Kiswahili. *Wote hawawezi kuzungumza Kiswahili kabisa. Wagonjwa, hawawezi kuzungumza Kiswahili.*

We need to work on that. This is why Nyerere brought that language to fight sectarianism and tribalism in Tanzania. In fact, Burundi and Tanzania are better than us. Burundi has just learned Kiswahili. We should all embrace the language. I would like to thank you for saying that you are going to give us lessons.

I learned Kiswahili at Kakoba National Teachers' College and the barracks. We were taught from 7.00 a.m. before we could go for other lectures. In the barracks nowadays, it is a different language - Everyone is speaking a different language; Runyankore, Luganda;

everybody speaks his or her own language. That is the information.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssewungu, do you still interact in the barracks?

MR SSEWUNGU: So much, Mr Speaker. The Minister of State for Defence and Veteran Affairs was my boss.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, are you a deserter? This is a potential deserter - (Laughter)

MR SSEWUNGU: That is for another day, Mr Speaker. I will tell you -

MR NAMBESHE: Mr Speaker, as I conclude, let me allow this information.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, no. You are going to be presiding officers indirectly.

MR NAMBESHE: Mr Speaker, I was concluding. Kiswahili is a very important language spoken by over 200 million people. This is why media organisations like BBC, Voice of America and Deutsche Welle broadcast radio programmes in Kiswahili.

Therefore, it is not a language we can ignore. Let us have it embraced by the local populace; there should be meaningful integration. Thank you very much.

MS KADAGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me thank Members for their observations. I welcome the proposal to do some digital arrangements for our consumption and maybe, I will answer the question by Hon. Faith at the same time.

My office has been ready for the last two years to support Parliament. The Rules of Procedure and the Prayers are ready, all in Kiswahili. We sent a text here, but it has not been picked up.

Therefore, I want to direct the Clerk to come to my ministry, in an open ceremony, so that we hand over, officially, the Rules of Procedure,

the Prayer and all the materials. Our plan was that Parliament should be the first port of call. For us, we are ready.

I also want to report that the Judiciary has already started taking Kiswahili lessons, Cabinet takes lessons every Monday for the first hour. So, Hon. Faith, we are on course and I am waiting for your side.

Hon. Nsamba, yes, Kiswahili is now the fourth official language of the SADC, African Union, the UN and EAC. Therefore, let us just move on and do the needful.

However, Hon. Wakikona, *nakushukuru sana. Asante sana*. Thank you for your submissions; you have encouraged Members to be able to speak.

Hon. Nambeshe, the solution will be the Federation because the sovereignty of each country is difficult to enforce. For instance, the Republic of South Sudan are members but they are not part of the Customs Union; they have not yet assented. We have not yet established the revenues committee because some partner states are not willing. Therefore, the ultimate solution is a political federation. I think that will help us to organise ourselves.

On the issue of aflatoxins, we have made some progress but I think we need to advise our farmers on standards so that when they are exporting, they do not fall into these problems. Otherwise, we are on course. Thank you very much.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF
PARLIAMENT TO APPRECIATE HIS
EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA FOR THE
CLEAR AND PRECISE EXPOSITION OF
GOVERNMENT POLICY CONTAINED
IN THE STATE OF THE NATION
ADDRESS TO THE PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA ON
WEDNESDAY, 7 JUNE 2023

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the Rt Hon. Prime Minister on the Order Paper, but there is a communication she wanted to make.

4.00

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, delegation is the only way you can effectively lead and so, Hon. Kateshumbwa is coming to move the motion. (*Interruption*)

MR OSHABE: Mr Speaker, the Prime Minister has over 80 ministers, including one from the Democratic Party. Are we proceeding well for the Prime Minister to show a vote of no confidence in all the ministers and picks a Member, a backbencher, to come and present a motion here – moreover a motion on the President’s speech?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, number one, this is not a statutory motion; it can be moved by any of the Members. However, both the Rt Hon. Prime Minister and Hon. Kateshumbwa had booked. So, we told them to sort themselves out, although the Order Paper had read the “Prime Minister”.

So, I told her for purposes of amending the Order Paper properly, the Member considered moving the motion needs to go on the Floor and explain. So, Clerk, amend the Order Paper to reflect Hon. Kateshumbwa because they reconciled. Hon. Kateshumbwa?

MR KATESHUMBWA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The motion reads:

“WHEREAS Article 101(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 requires the President, at the beginning of each Session, to deliver to Parliament an address on the State-of-the-Nation;

AND WHEREAS His Excellency the President, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, in compliance with the requirements of Article 101(1) of the Constitution, delivered the State-of-the-Nation Address to this Parliament at Kololo Independence Ceremonial Grounds, Kampala on Wednesday, 7 June 2023;

AWARE THAT in his address to the nation, His Excellency the President highlighted key

strategic areas, which the Government will prioritise;

FURTHER AWARE that in his address, His Excellency the President informed the nation that the key strategic priority areas will enable the Government to achieve exemplary fiscal performance, which will result in increased revenue, thereby reducing Uganda's reliance on debt to finance the national budget;

RECOGNISING that the key strategic priority areas identified by His Excellency the President have the potential to increase income, improve quality of life and eradicate poverty at the household level through modernisation of agriculture, industrialisation, improved service delivery and will be the basis for the organisation and delivery of public and private sector interventions for wealth creation, employment generation, planning and budgeting;

COGNISANT of the strategic leadership rendered by His Excellency the President in the formulation of the Government policy, which has laid a strong foundation for the rapid economic growth and socio-economic transformation of Uganda;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by this Parliament as follows:

- i. That Parliament expresses its gratitude to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda for his clear and precise exposition of the State-of-the-Nation Address to the Parliament of the Republic of Uganda on 7 June 2023;*
- ii. That Parliament commits itself to the promotion of the strategic ideas and values propounded by His Excellency the President in his State-of-the-Nation Address." I beg to move.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded? (*Members rose*) It is seconded by Hon. Nyamutoro, Hon. Pius Wakabi, Hon. Emely Kugonza, the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, Member for Hoima, Member for Ntungamo,

Member for Bundibugyo, Hon. Okabe, Hon. Linda Irene – and the whole House.

Honourable member, would you like to speak to the motion?

MR KATESHUMBA: Mr Speaker, in fulfilment of the constitutional requirement, under Article 101 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, the President delivered the State-of-the-Nation Address.

In his address, His Excellency the President laid the foundation for the lawmakers and the country at large, giving the Government's priorities for Financial Year 2023/2024.

In his priorities, His Excellency the President informed Parliament that the economic growth for this year is projected to be at 5.5 per cent in real terms, compared to 4.7 per cent in the last financial year.

Over the next five years, the economy is projected to grow at an average of 6.5 to 7 per cent per year - that is even faster – due to the economic stability as a result of low inflation, establishment of more manufacturing plants, continued implementation of the Parish Development Model, support to the small and medium-scale enterprises through Emyooga, youth, women and other women funds, increased oil and gas sector activities and growth in the regional trade as well as the positive impact of the continued recovery of the economies in the Middle East, Asia, Europe and USA, which are markets for our exports.

Mr Speaker, the President highlighted that by the end of Financial Year 2023/2024, Uganda's GDP is projected to grow to Shs 207 trillion, which is an equivalent of about \$55.17 billion – and that translates to \$156 billion by purchasing power parity terms. This means that the GDP per capita is projected to grow from \$1,096 in the Financial Year 2022/2023 to \$1,186, in Financial Year 2023/2024.

On the issue of inflation, His Excellency the President stated that the prices of domestic goods and services have come down,

compared to last year's. Products such as edible oil, petroleum and cement were the examples given. Food prices remained high due to climate change effects that have caused prolonged drought.

His Excellency the President also highlighted that the issue of climate change is a result of our practices, which we need to manage and that the Government is addressing the issue of climate change as follows:

- i. The ongoing Government investment in small-scale solar-powered irrigation;
- ii. Vigorously enforcing presidential directives on charcoal burning and wetland cultivation;
- iii. Enforcement of the National Environment Act;
- iv. Restoration of degraded wetlands;
- v. Demarcation of wetland boundaries and strengthening awareness and sensitisation campaigns on the conservation of wetlands; and
- vi. Providing alternative livelihoods for people that have been encroaching on wetlands.

Mr Speaker, His Excellency the President has set out the priorities to reduce floods that have ravaged the country in the past, causing significant damage to wetland vegetation, infrastructure, roads, and gardens, and loss of life for humans and animals, including flora and fauna, and disruption of movements and transportation of goods and services, hence affecting the economy – as recently noticed from the damage of Katonga Bridge, which was washed away by floods.

His Excellency the President implored all leaders to enforce interventions to address the problem of floods, which involve the protection of water catchment and the general environment so that they perform their function of storing and releasing water safely, even when there is an increase in rainfall.

He also implored regular maintenance of water bodies and rivers to perform their function of water storage and conveyance, demarcation and protection of lake shores, riverbanks and wetlands to limit encroachment by settlements, construction of water storage facilities, agricultural activities, other developments and strengthening the early warning systems and enforcement of water and environmental laws at all levels.

Further still, His Excellency the President pointed out the strategic need for value addition as a link between agriculture and industry.

The Government registered progress in export revenue of goods and services amounting to \$6.04 billion for the Calendar Year ending 2022, of which, the export of goods merchandise was worth \$4.2 billion. For the last 12 months to February 2023, Uganda exported 5.750-kilogramme bags of coffee worth \$858 million, fish worth \$166.9 million and maize worth \$131 million.

This was possible due to the NRM Government's efforts to grow and diversify the economy. Most importantly, to curb inflation, the Government resisted price controls and subsidies because such measures are not sustainable and introduce distortions in the economy.

The Government's strategy is that anything agricultural, that is not consumed fresh, should be processed industrially so that it is preserved to reach distant markets through value addition. For example, a kilogramme of shredded coffee gives \$1, while the processed into the final product for consumption fetches \$14. A kilogramme of roasted brown coffee in Europe, England, fetches about \$30. The President noted that this suffocation of producers should end.

Domestic revenue in the Financial Year 2022/2023 was estimated at Shs 25.55 trillion, which translates to 13.7 per cent of the GDP. In the Financial Year 2023/2024, the Government will collect Shs 29.67 trillion as domestic revenue. The Government is planning to raise at least 18 per cent of the GDP in the next five

years, as large part of the population joins the money economy.

The industrialisation drives across the country have brought about positive results. There are eight Government-owned industrial parks, which are operational in Namanve, Luzira, Bweyogerere, Soroti, Mbale, Jinja, Mbarara and Kasese. The industrial parks in Karamoja and Koboko will soon commence.

In addition, there are three industrial parks operating under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement. The total number of factories is now 4,008, employing 150,685 Ugandans, largely the youth, who form part of the biggest percentage of our population. This is a reflection of socio-economic transformation.

The President emphasised the Parish Development Model that will accelerate socio-economic growth, where 39 per cent of the households in the non-money economy will be moved to the money economy. This approach will organise and deliver public and private sector interventions for wealth creation and employment generation.

His Excellency the President launched a wealth and jobs creation initiative for those who found it difficult to access financing through banks called “*Emyooga*.” This initiative has been successful in mobilising, especially the youths and women in the informal sector into productive self-employment by increasing their skills, acquiring equipment and accessing affordable capital. As at the end of December 2022, seed capital amounting to Shs 258 billion had been disbursed to 6,714 *Emyooga* SACCOs and Shs 1,000,000 to individual beneficiaries.

His Excellency the President indicated that tourism has had a significant potential for the economy. The sector has registered key achievements. For example, it employs 1.5 million Ugandans along the entire tourism value chain and contributes 6.7 per cent of the GDP.

In the year 2022, Uganda’s national parks hosted 367,869 visitors; leisure and holiday visitors stayed longer and the wildlife populations have increased. These numbers have grown and increased Uganda’s Government’s focus on infrastructure and marketing.

The President stressed that social metamorphosis takes place when societies undergo modernisation. In modernised countries, a small percentage of people are involved in agriculture. A country must be supported to move to value addition and manufacturing. Thus, in order to build a knowledge-based economy using advanced scientific knowledge, the President called upon Members of Parliament support to Kiira Motors to get moving so that the production of automobiles becomes part of the economy.

The President commented on the Anti-Homosexuality Bill and commended the Parliament of Uganda for passing it. He raised the substantive points that should be used to explain Uganda’s position.

His Excellency the President outlined the economic priorities of the Government in the next financial year, which include peace and security of persons and property, effective implementation of PDM and *Emyooga*, acquisition of right-of-way for Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), investing in small-scale solar-powered irrigation to address climate change and food security, constructing transmission lines and power substations, maintenance of both tarmac and murrum roads, development of industrial parks, support medical schools and scientific-based research, expediting the infrastructure of oil and gas, capitalising UDB and UDC and supporting ICT.

In conclusion, let me take this opportunity to thank His Excellency the President, Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni for steering the NRM government to expand the economic base of the country and a strong foundation that has been built for rapid economic growth and socio-economic transformation. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nyamutoro, three minutes.

4.22

MS PHIONA NYAMUTORO (NRM, Youth Representative, Female): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to join my colleague to appreciate the President for the well elaborate State-of-the-Nation-Address. I will speak to a few sectors of concern, especially to the young people of this country that the President highlighted and addressed to the nation.

On the issue of education, the President has time and again, emphasised the need for Uganda to achieve a free education for all, and this has still not been realised. We have a very high literacy rate of 76 per cent. As we speak, we have an enrolment rate of 85 per cent, but still, Uganda is grappling with high school dropouts. The President has always struggled, time and again, calling upon leaders at all levels to join him in this struggle. Therefore, I would like to call upon this Parliament – (*Interjection*) – please, do not distract me. Mr Speaker, I beg to be protected.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us listen to one another. I usually guide colleagues when they are usually on the Floor to focus on what they are saying. This is because when you respond to someone who is not on the *Hansard*, the one, who will look at the *Hansard* in the future will wonder how those were connected. Remember, you are on record and the other person trying to divert you is not on record. So, focus until I allow a person to speak.

MS NYAMUTORO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. On that very issue, leaders should stand up in their respective areas, and ensure that Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Secondary Education (USE) are fulfilled to their core so that Ugandans access free education and envision the President's action.

The President emphasised the need to invest more in ICT research and other science subjects. Whereas we would have this realised, it is

important that as a Parliament, we encourage the Government to invest in early childhood development. This is because most of the UPE and USE schools do not have prerequisites for early childhood development. Probably, this is the genesis of having substandard degree holders today. That is one of the issues that we call upon the Government to take upon and address in bettering the education of Uganda.

The President also recommitted the investment in stadiums as a way of promoting the sports industry. This is one of the industries that is centralised in the development of young people and an alternative to the high unemployment rates we have in the country.

We would like to applaud the President for that and call upon the Attorney-General and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to fast-track the President's directive on working on the copyrights law that has had many in the arts industry endangered and many that are grappling over their right and how best they can earn from their employment.

On the issue of health, the President emphasised the use of radio programmes to speak on the importance of nutrition. Uganda as a country, over time, has had an increase in the lifespan but as we speak, there is silent research that is indicating a decline in our nutritional levels. This is not good for the country. It is very important that nutrition is taken seriously. Right from the prenatal stage, we need to Ugandans that the backbone is agriculture and nutrition can definitely not be any of our problems.

Lastly, the President called upon Ugandans to fight the danger of malaria. Malaria has been one of the diseases claiming many lives of Ugandans and Africa in general. Until today, we still do not have a sustainable to end malaria. I think that is one of the issues that is still taking many lives of young people. As the Ministry of Health is putting in a lot of effort to ensure that malaria is eradicated, it also is incumbent upon us as leaders to continuously sensitise the community about the dangers of malaria.

Although the President did not mention-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, kindly conclude.

MS NYAMUTORO: Yes, Mr Speaker. Although the President did not mention sexual reproductive health and rights, as an advocate of young people, allow me to utilise this opportunity to encourage the Ministry of Health and the Government to invest in sexual reproductive health enrolment in schools across the board to get people enlightened on their different rights to ensure their wellbeing so that we have healthy citizens. I beg to second.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, Hon. Nyamutoro was the official seconder. The rest of you were on the edge. You are simply seconding what she has already seconded. I now open debate. Hon. Byakatonda, Hon. Flavia, *Hajji*, I am seeing Hon. Musana, Hon. Linda Irene, and Hon. Florence. Honourable colleagues, let us first get a procedural matter.

MR OKUPA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The tradition has always been that after the State-of-the-Nation Address, we get a copy of the Budget Speech. Can we be guided procedurally about what could have happened because that would enable us to debate, not just use our memory to remember what we heard on that day?

The procedural matter is whether the rules have changed, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is not provided anywhere in the rules that. You said it was a practice so do not refer to the rules when you clearly said it is a practice. Otherwise, I thought Members had received copies. I have my copy. I got mine by being present at Kololo; I listened to everything, it was also in the media and everywhere. Maybe, formally, we shall arrange copies for you.

RtHon. Prime Minister, ensure that Members get copies of the Address on the State of the Nation

in their pigeon holes. I know the Members know the issues. During the justification, the mover of the motion expounded on most of the issues that were covered. So, we can proceed with the debate, Hon. Okupa; it does not cause any problems. The Leader of the Opposition has given me a notice that he will be presenting a response. So, we are going to have enough time. Hon. Byakatonda?

4.10

DR ABDULHU BYAKATONDA (Independent, Workers Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to second the motion arising out of the speech of the President and the movers.

Mr Speaker, we are trying to fly a rocket and Uganda is now a rocket which is destined to fly. The economy must grow.

On value addition, it is very key. In the region, Tanzania is getting \$353.1 from processing cashew nuts. That is almost half or a quarter of our budget. To do have achieved, Mr Speaker, they regulated the cashew nuts under an Act of the Tanzanian Parliament (2006). We do not have regulations on that. Our cashew nut is moving left and right, being cut into charcoal. This is an area we need to tap into. I think we are on value addition, Mr Speaker, we need regulation and a clear indication that we are moving in that direction.

On macadamia, Kenya is the biggest exporter in the region with 13 per cent and earning a lot of money. Mr Speaker, we need to process these because when we do this, it means that we are adding jobs to our youngsters. Now, we are not employing them because these sectors are not absorbing our people. So, we need to urgently come up with laws to regulate these economies.

On climate change, there is nothing difficult like managing somebody who is hungry. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), an average human being must eat three meals a day but, in the countryside, it is very difficult to even have one meal.

What do we need to do? We need a paradigm shift in technology. For now, we – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I am told there was a second seconder but the motion I have is signed by only one seconder, so I consider the one who signed. I do not consider the one who did not sign.

Honourable colleagues, the motion is very clear. When we are debating, tell us whether you agree the President did a good job or not. In your debate, you need to show that you agree with the mover since our resolution at the end will be a resolution of Parliament to appreciate His Excellency the President. So, in your debate, you either agree or disagree. Then we shall put the question and come out with a resolution. So, let us be clear on this. Hon. Flavia, two minutes each. Is Dr Bukenya around? If he is, he will notify me so that I allow him.

4.33

MS FLAVIA KABAHENDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kyegegwa): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to agree with the mover that we appreciate His Excellency for the State-of-the-Nation Address.

I agree with the President that household incomes and education will drive this country to a middle-income status because no country is better than the status of its education. His Excellency was very particular about the levies schools are charging the parents for various things in the schools and this is deterring students to continue with school.

Mr Speaker, it is not only the levies. When our schools do not have classroom accommodation, enrolment of teachers - half of them are paid by parents - when our schools do not have desks, do not have latrines and one stanza being lined up by all the children at school, then I think as Members of Parliament, we need to take keen interest whether the school environment can afford the students to stay at school and not necessarily the levies.

The other concern is the 39 per cent of households in Uganda who are not in the money economy. Can the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development tell us who these 39 per cent people are? Are they women or men? Where are the houses?

4.36

MS LINDA AUMA (Independent, Woman Representative, Lira): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise in support of the motion on the speech of the President of the Republic of Uganda. I would like to focus strictly on economic empowerment.

Just last week, I launched the PDM but I realised that as Government - even if this is a revolving fund - we have not catered for the uncertainty; the risk management associated with these funds we are giving out, especially insurance yet our target is on the 39 per cent. This means that these are the real poor citizens.

In case of this uncertainty, what measures have we put in place, as a country? Otherwise, the rest are waiting for this money. How will they recover it? Have we insured it or not? We need to think about how we can do it since the grace period is two years.

On education, children are now stunted due to malnutrition and poor upbringing. What future do we have for our future citizens? As a country, our Government schools have land so why don't we push our Government-aided schools to start cultivating crops to feed children in school? This will help parents – (*Member timed out.*)

4.38

MR ERIC MUSANA (Independent, Buyaga East County, Kagadi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to support the motion especially where we see the President addressing an issue that has been very big, but the answer is still pending. This is unemployment.

The President has been training and giving us a lot of information on value addition. There has been a very big issue with infrastructure that would help us achieve value addition.

However, it has been micromanaged because we see little being achieved, yet we have the biggest population that would benefit from this value addition. We are doing very well in agriculture but many of our products are meeting challenges. On value addition, we are doing poorly.

We have a challenge is the budget performance. We are doing a lot of work as a country on the budget cycle but we have a challenge on implementation. Making the budget is okay – *(Member timed out.)*

4.40

MR SIRAJI EZAMA (NRM, Aringa County, Yumbe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the President for the elaborate and comprehensive speech he delivered during the State-of-the-Nation Address. The President categorically stated that for a country to develop, it needs to be industrialised. Developed countries have only 4 per cent of their communities involved in agriculture.

The President made an elaborate speech, which covered very many areas. We want West Nile industrialised so we are able to be employed. We do not have industries in West Nile. Power is not enough in that region yet the population of West Nile is still in Uganda that needs to be involved in the development prospects of Uganda.

In that regard - although, I appreciate the speech delivered by His Excellency the President - we need something done in West Nile so we can develop like other parts of Uganda. Thank you.

4.41

MS FLORENCE NAMBOZO (Independent, Woman Representative, Sironko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to join my colleagues in appreciating the President for the State-of-the-Nation Address.

The President has continuously talked about commercial agriculture and “*ekida kyonka*.” However, look at the extension workers in our districts who are not functional. To manage this, we need to look at how functional

extension workers are, to be able to arrest the challenge of food insecurity. When you look at the eastern region, for example, Bugisu or Sironko where I come from, we are the food basket to the eastern region, but we have a challenge of silos.

We talked about aflatoxins here. The people who sell food across the borders pick it right from the gardens before it is even ready. Therefore, post-harvest handling management is not done in the right way.

Look at the water-stressed areas; right now, we have floods. Why don't we have valley dams so we can make irrigation possible and have deliberate means of not having drought or food insecurity? In areas like Karamoja, Government takes food there, but how sustainable is that?

I have looked at the PDM - Mr Speaker, the people in Bugisu and Bukedi have been featured in the newspapers because of sleeping along the roads in Mbale – *(Member timed out.)*

4.44

MR PIUS WAKABI (NRM, Bugahya County, Hoima): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This year's address by the President was the best in his life – *(Laughter)* - The President was very clear and practical and he looked very fresh and energetic. My prayer is that the President should continue leading this country beyond 2026.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think you are done.

MR WAKABI: Yes, I am done. *(Laughter)*

4.44

MS GORRETH NAMUGGA (NUP, Mawogola County South, Ssembabule): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am responding to the State-of-the- Nation Address and I thank the President for fulfilling his mandate of appearing before the people at that time.

However, when you look at the issue of the implementation of the Parish Development Model in comparison with the budget for this

financial year, where it was indicated that parish chiefs are going to get bicycles so they reach the people, as colleagues may recall, NRM chairpersons were given bicycles to do NRM party activities around the villages, but they were misused to carry water. So, I think that with modernisation around – and comparing the distances that we move – the parish chiefs should get modern means of transport rather than bicycles.

When you look at the issue of each parish chief getting an office, it is very costly for the Government. This is provided for in the next financial year. You are speaking about the rationalisation of Government agencies yet at the same, you are talking about providing more offices for parish chiefs, I think it is not sustainable.

On the rationalisation of agencies and reduction of public expenditure, I think there is a delay in its implementation.

The President did not come out on the issue of corruption. He only blamed the District Internal Security Officers (DISOs) – that it is the DISOs who have held us back on issues of corruption. So, he should deliberately come out to mention that it is the ministers close to him that have frustrated him on the issue of corruption, but not the DISOs.

Lastly, on the issue of the provision of subsidies, the President said that when you give subsidies –(Interruption)

MS AMERO: Madam Speaker, I am tempted to put my sister on a point of order. The day the President was presenting the State-of-the-Nation Address, the whole Opposition was not in the House. I actually acted as the Leader of the Opposition on that day. (Laughter)

Today, I see my sister standing here on the Floor to tell us that “the President was saying this”. Where did she hear what the President was saying? Is she in order to come and begin guessing what was being spoken on the Floor of the House?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member, I have to make a ruling. I have seen the passion, but the problem is that I do not know whether you have raised the point order because you said “you were attempting to”. So, I do not know how I will address an attempt. (Laughter) It is difficult for me to rule on a mere attempt.

If you had risen on a point of order, I would have ruled. Since you only stopped at an attempt, it is very difficult for me. However, next time, join us, honourable colleagues. This is a constitutional mandate – the same way we are going to give the Opposition a chance to make a response.

When you listen to each other, you lose nothing. If the President comes, listen to him. Honourable members, let us not be – Hon. Okupa, do you want to give information?

MR OKUPA: Mr Speaker, thank you very much. I do not want us to be lumped. I am a member of the Opposition and I was in Kololo, for both the State-of-the-Nation Address and the Budget Speech. So, we should not be lumped that it is all the Opposition –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Okupa, you are an independent Member of Parliament; it is on record. I do not know how I will determine whether you are in the Opposition or not. (Laughter)

MR OKUPA: I am.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Kagabo acted as – Honourable members, let us not be diverted. There is a very clear motion. What Hon. Susan Amero made was an appeal. Let us always attend and listen; you lose nothing. Hon. Gorreth, conclude.

MS NAMUGGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your wise ruling. I would like to remind my honourable colleague that I am the Shadow Minister of Science, Innovation and Communication Technology. The theme for the next financial year elaborately talks of monetisation of the economy through the

commercialisation of agriculture, and access to the market – but broadly, digital transformation. So, I implore you to use Zoom like the ministers do, as Rt Hon. Nabbanja said. *(Laughter)*

The last issue is about subsidies. The President said he did not give subsidies on fuel because we would go to bars. I want to remind the President that fuel is not used to go to bars. We use fuel for productivity. Thank you.

4.50

MR GODFREY SAAZI (NUP, Gomba East County, Gomba): Thank you, Mr Speaker. There is nothing to appreciate in the President’s speech – *(Interjections)* – yes, it is my opinion.

I wonder whether we still live in the same Uganda as Mr Museveni. I will take the example of the Parish Development Model which he brought as a success. This programme was introduced in the Financial Year 2021/2022 and he promised Shs 30 million per parish. From Shs 30 million, he said Shs 17 million and it moved from Shs 17 million to Shs 7 million.

Nobody received that money in my constituency. When it came to Financial Year 2022/2023, Mr Speaker, he promised Shs 100 million per parish – *(Interjections)* –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, you will have a chance to respond. There is a point of order.

MR NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I am the Leader of the Government Business of this country. *(Applause)* As I speak, the district where he comes from has received Shs 100 million per parish. *(Applause)* Therefore, is he in order to deceive this country that money has not gone to his constituency?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, let us do it this way. On the issue of the Parish Development Model – for us to be very clear – let us request the Minister of Local Government and the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to table a list of districts and how much they have

received. No, please. Honourable members, are you now telling me what to do? *(Laughter)*

Honourable members, I think we can have a decent debate. You can drive your point home by not using language that evokes emotions so that we can have a good debate. Hon. Saazi, conclude.

MR SAAZI: Mr Speaker, I am not deceiving. This year, they promised Shs 100 million per parish. Yesterday, I got evidence that each SACCO got Shs 57 million, not Shs 100 million – and that money has not yet been withdrawn. It is on the accounts; nobody has gotten money in my constituency.

So, there is nothing to appreciate about this. We should not excite Ugandans; we should be clear. The President just talked, but we did not get anything.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Saazi, the problem is that when you start debating and focusing on an individual, not knowing that you are going to be on the *Hansard*, all of you lose it. Let us sober up.

I have made a clear ruling; the minister should bring evidence here. So, let us wait; it is not a matter of saying “This has been received”. Please, let us wait for the minister to table it here and you to access it. So, go to another point, honourable member, and conclude.

MR SAAZI: I do not support the motion.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, a motion has two sides: you have people who agree and those who do not. So, as a Speaker, I will allow those who agree and those who do not. *(Applause)* I must allow both; that is what a motion and debate is all about.

What I do is very simple: to ensure that I put into consideration the numerical strength of the House. I know who I pick – how many are NRM, how many are independents and how many are Opposition.

4.54

MR ISAIAS SSASAGA (FDC, Budadiri County East, Sironko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. If I had the ability, I would amend the motion because the President talked about floods. You are aware of how the Mt Elgon region has been largely affected by landslides.

In his speech, I expected him to talk about the mitigation measures in the policy which are going to handle the issue of landslides in Sironko, Bududa, Manafwa and the neighbouring districts. He does not mention it completely, much as he dwells on the floods, which are a bit obvious.

He talked about driving poverty out of Uganda and meandered a bit and went to *Emyooga* and the rest. I expected him to mention something from the cooperative perspective on how the cooperative bank will drive out poverty. This is a lasting solution for farmers to get money and support their enterprises.

Lastly, he talked about the Shs 257 billion in science and technology. If you look at the enterprises supported under science and technology, they are 55, but most of them are on issues - *(Member timed out.)*

4.56

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I also add my voice to thank the President for conducting his constitutional mandate in addressing the nation.

Mr Speaker, allow me to comment on the President's address regarding sports. He talked about our bid, together with East African countries to bid for the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON 2027) and went ahead to say, "We will put resources to build stadiums around the country in preparation for this".

Mr Speaker, as a person who comes from Northern Uganda, I see 2027 very close. If we were to look around the stadia which we have - I see Pece and Akii-Bua stadia in Lira, but in most of them, I do not see any potential.

Just scan Namboole Stadium, which is close to us - it has been closed for many years without operation. My fear is that we may go for this bid but Kenya and other East African countries will overpower us - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, on that issue, I can tell you, we are doing all we can; we are monitoring it by all means. We just need two stadia.

We have Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda - and it is the first opportunity we would have as an East African region to host. So we must all support it. I request us to avoid sentiments that can influence the select committee on the other side to say that the Parliament of Uganda was debating it and Members were saying Uganda may not be ready with stadia and all that. Let us give all the support that is needed. By 2027, these two stadia will be ready. We only need to put the pressure on to ensure that the stadia are ready.

4.59

MR MICHEAL TIMUZIGU (NRM, Kajara County, Ntungamo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to support the motion moved by Hon. Kateshumbwa.

The President was very passionate about industrialisation in his State-of-the-Nation Address. He indicated that lack of infrastructure, expensive power and expensive capital are the challenges industrialists face in Uganda. However, there is something he has not been reminded about for many years, and it has never appeared in the State-of-the-Nation Address. There is an issue of technology transfer.

Many countries in Asia developed because they got the technology from Europe and USA. At the moment, even when we have Asians coming here to Uganda, the transfer of technology is not direct. We need to come out and be careful with the way we acquire technology.

Countries are buying technology directly because we have to run; so many countries are far ahead of us. I propose that the

Government of Uganda should think about buying technology directly and share it with indigenous industrialists who can use their own capital. Otherwise, some of them have money but do not have the knowledge. We need the technology so we run very quickly and compete with Kenya, and Congo. Otherwise, very soon, they will go there and we shall not be able to tap into the opportunities there. Thank you.

5.01

MS HARRIET BUSINGE (NRM, Woman Representative, Hoima): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to add my voice to thank His Excellency the President of Uganda for the elaborative speech he delivered in his State-of-the-Nation Address. Though it was a long speech and we were tired, I believe it contained a lot.

The President in his 10-point on education highlighted the issue of accessibility to education. Now that we have his line of thought and action points where he wants us to put emphasis, I request this House - On many occasions, we have let down ourselves, especially during appropriation - because appropriation is purely the agenda of this House.

The President said accessibility to education - We had Bunyoro University in the previous budget but we struggled to convince the Budget Committee of this Parliament to appropriate Shs 2 billion- they gave us Shs 2 billion- to start a university; it is Parliament, not the President who appropriates; it is this House.

This year, we also struggled with the Committee on Education and Sports and the Budget Committee. Out of the Shs 45 billion the task force asked to start the university, they only appropriated Shs 1.9 billion. I believe, sometimes we shoot ourselves; we blame the President yet it is our role. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, I would like to ask you a simple question: did the Government propose money for Bunyoro University and the Budget Committee or sectoral Committee on Education and Sports reallocated it?

MS BUSINGE: Yes, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson of the Committee on Education and Sports? Let me allow a member of the education committee.

5.03

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu): I think we need to correct the Member. As the Committee on Education and Sports, there was nothing in the ministerial policy statement of that nature; what the Member is saying. Actually, we met the Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the Treasury (PS/ST) and Hon. Matia Kasaija and convinced them to raise money for Bunyoro and the Higher Education Students' Financing Board.

The issue of appropriation is not a problem. The challenge came from the Cabinet, not Parliament. Mr Speaker, we are very much interested in that money but we were beaten by the other side, not Parliament.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I do not want it to go on record that the Government gave money for Bunyoro and Parliament removed it. I know the money that was removed. Money for Bunyoro University was never touched. I want that to go on record.

5.04

DR FLORENCE ASIIMWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Masindi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am going to talk about two issues. I stand here to support the motion on the clear and precise exposition of the Government policy contained in the State-of-the-Nation Address to Parliament by His Excellency the President. Indeed, he was very articulate.

One of the issues was the PDM. I have just been in the field. In Masindi for example, Shs 100 million has been received by the parishes. I have just been there and they have given me the data *-(Interjections)-* Members you have to liaise with the CDOs, and production officers. Some of you do not go back to your constituencies to get the data.

The second issue is innovation. As a deputy chairperson of science, technology and innovation, I wish to thank His Excellency for his emphasis on science and innovation. We have just been visiting the universities in Gulu, Lira and Soroti and the scientists are doing great work and these need to be supported. They are producing a lot of prototypes. What we need is to involve the private sector to commercialise some of these prototypes. We are looking at a pathogenic economy. We looked at a number of plants - we went to Gulu University and found out that they are producing a number of medicines, where Dr Ogwang was involved. So sooner or later, if we support - luckily enough -

(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Dr Florence Akiiki, as a PhD holder believes in research and data. Honourable member, conclude.

DR FLORENCE AKIIKI: We need to support the scientists. Members when the universities bring their budget, let us increase money for the innovation fund in order to improve the economy; the rest will be history. Thank you very much. Let us have a procedural point.

MS KABASHARIRA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have been quietly listening to Member's debate and presentation. I have also listened to your guidance on how this motion should be debated. Definitely, we did not get enough orientation to receive this very important motion.

Mr Speaker, you gave us two minutes and I have been listening but there are only two Members who concluded their submission. For this very important motion, each one of us should speak for his or her constituency. Is it procedurally right to give us two minutes to debate this important motion?

Honourable members, better think of the motion I am thinking to bring; to reduce this Parliament so that we can debate properly.

(Laughter)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think Hon. Kabasharira is telling you how the presiding officer is in a dilemma to handle all of you, who want to debate. However, traditionally, we usually have this debate for a whole week to allow more Members to speak.

When debating, your submission must be related to the resolution and the motion. I am seeing many of you coming with your premeditated mind that this is what I have come to speak; whether you prepared it before the motion was tabled or not, it seems you come with a fixed mind.

Honourable members, arising from that, I am going to suspend the debate for now so that you go back to the *Hansard* and see how we have been debating this motion. I will start with Hon. Martin Muzaale tomorrow. I know you are prepared because you have ever debated this. I have already ruled on suspending the motion.

Let us go on to the next item - I do not see the minister - the Attorney-General is around.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF
PARLIAMENT TO INCREASE THE
NUMBER OF JUDGES OF THE HIGH
COURT IN ACCORDANCE WITH
SECTION 13 OF THE JUDICATURE ACT

5.10

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS (Mr Norbert Mao): Mr Speaker, I rise to move a motion which stands in my name on the Order Paper.

WHEREAS, Article 138(b) of the Constitution requires Parliament to prescribe the number of judges of the High Court;

AND WHEREAS, Section 13 of the Judicature Act, Cap. 13 makes provision for;

- a) *the Principal Judge*
- b) *25 judges of the High Court or such a higher number of judges of the High Court*

as may be prescribed by Parliament by a resolution.

RECALLING, that the number of High Court judges was last increased in 2017, from 49 to 83 Judges;

AND WHEREAS the current number of 83 High Court judges, including the Principal Judge has been found to be inadequate;

AND COGNISANT, of the fact that the Cabinet on 9 August 2021, approved the revised judiciary service establishment/structure for judicial officers, among others to increase the number of high court judges from 83 to 151, including the principal judge;

AND WHEREAS, the Cabinet found it necessary to increase the number of judges of the High Court due to;

- a) the increase in population and crime rate leading to high demand for judiciary services and court use.*
- b) acute case backlog, since the High Court has unlimited original jurisdiction in all matters and such appellate and other jurisdiction as may be conferred on it by the Constitution, or the Judicature Act, Cap.13 or any other law.*
- c) the decentralisation of the Court of Appeal to eight regional offices.*
- d) the insufficient number of High Court judges compared to the litigants.*
- e) the steady increase in crime and dispute.*
- f) increased awareness of the population of their legal rights, leading to a more litigious population.*

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by Parliament as follows;

Resolution

That in accordance with Section 13 of the Judicature Act, Cap. 13, Parliament increases

the number of judges of the High Court from 83 to 151, including the principal judge". I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Is the motion seconded? Seconded by Hon. Kafuuzi, the Deputy Attorney-General, Prof. Mushemeza, Hon. Ssenyonyi, Hon. Ssewungu, Hon. Nambeshe, Hon. Okupa, Hon. Pamela, Hon. Florence, Hon. Atima, Hon. Abdullah Kiwanuka who is the shadow internal affairs minister. Hon. Mao, do you want to give a summary justification?

MR MAO: In the Book of Philippians 1:6, it is said, "*He who began a good work in you, will carry it on to completion*". Mr Speaker, you began this good work when you enacted the Administration of the Judiciary Act because of your commitment to ensuring access to justice.

Right now, the High Court only has 83 High Court judges. When you visit the chambers of most judges, you can hardly see them because the heap of files virtually covers their faces. A typical judge has to work even on weekends and public holidays in order to deliver judgments. That is why the intention of Government is to increase access to judicial services. These measures will deal with case backlog that continues to be a source of frustration to many citizens.

Mr Speaker, it is the ultimate goal of Government to ensure that every county will have a magistrate's court and there will be eight circuits of the Court of Appeal.

Later, we shall introduce a Judicature (Amendment) Bill, 2023, which will propose to increase the number of Court of Appeal Justices from 15 to 56, and Supreme Court Justices from 11 to 21.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I wish to inform the House that as we stand today, according to the information from the secretary, Shs 83 trillion is held up in our courts. These are based on trade disputes, construction disputes, money deposited by UNRA due to disputes on compensation, insurance disputes, banking disputes, and intellectual property disputes.

Thousands of acres of land cannot be used because of injunctions based on disputes. There are also civil disputes that tie up trillions of shillings. Family courts have so many cases and these have disabled economic activities.

Mr Speaker, in circumstances where some of our international partners are threatening us, we need to unclog the court system so that this money is released and flows back into the economy.

I urge Members to support this motion because it is simply a continuation of the good work this House has begun to support the Judiciary. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The seconder, Attorney-General, three minutes.

5.17

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Just like the honourable minister has said, Parliament passed the Administration of Judiciary Act. That enabled Government to increase funding to the Judiciary. And because the funding has increased, it is imperative that judicial officers be spread out so that the need for justice is achieved –(Interjection)– yes, the funding is gradually increasing.

As Parliament, at some point, we demand for value for money but we can only achieve that value for money by having enough members on the Bench.

When you know that you can have your matter dealt with within six months rather than 10 years, you will be satisfied knowing that you can go to court and achieve your aims.

It is for that very reason that we are here with this motion that you permit us to increase the number of Judges. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I see many people standing up but again, it is a motion, which many of you really agree with and we have a lot of business to do here. I am trying to see who to pick. Let me pick Hon.

Bosco Okiror, Hon. Abdullah, a lady and an Independent.

5.19

MR BOSCO OKIROR (NRM, Usuk County, Katakwi): I thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. This is a fundamental motion. Surely, one of the cardinal principles in the administration of justice is that justice should not be delayed. The Uganda's population, at the time the Constitution was put in place, was small compared to the population of 50 million that we have today. It is no doubt that it is a necessary thing to do.

However, I have one concern. Most of our criminal matters in this country are handled on a session basis. If we are increasing the number of Judges to more than 180 for the High Court and 50 something for the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court, it is only fair that criminal cases that we have in the country are heard the way we consider the civil cases; let them not be based on sessions.

For most of the cases that we have, you find somebody has been on remand for more than five years yet that person is supposed to serve a sentence of perhaps even four years. You find somebody has been on remand for a very long period; people are languishing in these jails.

Therefore, if we are increasing numbers, it is only fair that we handle those criminal matters - honourable Minister for Justice, a mechanism has got to be adopted on how these are handled on a case by case basis. That is my humble appeal.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Also to have more State Prosecutors appointed, especially for criminal matters because you will find that you have the judges and presiding officers but to get the state prosecutor is a tug of war. We also need to look at that, honourable Minister of Justice.

5.22

MR ABDALLAH KIWANUKA (NUP, Mukono County North, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to support the motion, with amendments though.

On 15 December, before we went for the Christmas break, I raised the matter of national importance regarding the court backlog. The Attorney-General who was here undertook to present an amendment regarding the Magistrate's Courts Act within a period of one month.

I appreciate the challenges regarding backlog in the High Court but these have been caused by the limited jurisdiction in the Magistrate's Courts, which is limited to Shs 50 million.

Mr Speaker, magistrates in Buganda Region are limited to handling cases below Shs 50 million and many of them are seated. I call upon the honourable minister to think about what is happening in the Magistrate's Courts because even a plot of land, which cost Shs 55 million has to go to the High Court.

In Buganda - Wakiso, Buikwe, Mukono - you can hardly find an acre which goes below Shs 200 million. Therefore, I call upon the House to support me in this very motion of the minister, we also amend Section 207 of the Magistrate's Courts Act to increase the monetary value of the Magistrate's Courts to *-(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, you are coming to amend the law. What Hon. Mao is asking for is to adjust the number. This motion is just about the number.

Two, honourable colleagues, you know that a private member cannot move any amendments restricted under Article 93 of the Constitution because it has budgetary implications. Let us handle the motion the way it is but the honourable minister has taken note and I am very sure he will respond to you.

5.25

MS AGNES KUNIHIRA (NRM, Workers Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, I support the motion. However, I would like to bring to the attention of the minister that as he talked about increasing the number of the judges, he should also consider appointing judges to the Industrial Court. There are

currently two judges only, yet when Parliament amended the Labour Disputes (Arbitration and Settlement) Act, 2006, we increased the number of judges to five.

Honourable minister, when you go to that court, you will notice that there is a backlog of around 2,700 cases, yet you always say – as learned friends – that: “Justice delayed is justice denied.”

Therefore, I appeal to you to also consider appointing judges to the Industrial Court. I know that the Industrial Court falls under the labour ministry, but I know judges fall under your ministry. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I now put the question that the Motion for a Resolution of Parliament to increase the number of judges of the High Court, in accordance with Section 13 of the Judicature Act, be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Motion adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Clerk, kindly, extract the resolution and convey it to the minister for him to take the necessary action.

Honourable minister, would you like to thank the Members for this bipartisan support and take the concerns which were raised?

MR MAO: I thank the honourable members. As you know, as an Ex-Officio Member of Parliament, I do not have voting rights; I cannot even vote for my own motion. *(Laughter)* So, I am extremely grateful that Members have given overwhelming support to this.

I note the absurdity of the Shs 50 million limit. I would like to inform you that we actually have a draft Bill that we are processing to allow us remove that absurd limit. This absurd limit does not only apply to those cases in the Magistrates' Courts.

The Attorney-General's Chambers is also overwhelmed with processing any contract that

is from Shs 200 million upwards. In a country where people carry Shs 200 million in polythene bags, the Attorney-General's Chambers is clogged. You saw the Deputy Attorney-General having to rush back to office because local governments, ministries, departments and agencies have to procure things, yet the law says that as long as the value is Shs 200 million and above, the Attorney-General's Chamber has to look at it and approve. So, these limits are choking all of us.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, the Directorate of Public Prosecutions is recruiting. Today, the candidates sat their aptitude tests – the interviews are ongoing. We will have more prosecutors on the ground. We have procured vehicles for them. So, we expect them to be more vigilant.

The other problem we face is with the police. In order to have a 360 degrees' speed, we must also support the police to have the capacity to investigate crime. This is because most of the time, cases are delayed on grounds that investigations are still going on although the policy of Government is that investigations should take place before somebody is charged. By the time you charge somebody, you should have most of the evidence.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us conclude this, honourable colleague.

MR MAO: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. We will abide by your directions.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I have been looking at the Order Paper and noticed that one committee has five reports following each other. That would mean that we need a whole day to discuss issues relating to one committee only. So, I am going to work it out with the Clerk so that we spread the items out in order for items from one committee not to follow each other. It will look much smarter.

I have an accountability committee and other committees – they have three reports. Clerk, I guide that you spread these reports between tomorrow and Thursday. Please, ensure that

every day I have a report from COSASE so that, at least, we can do three reports out of the five, this week; one committee having all these reports is too much.

In the circumstances, Clerk, now call item No. 10. We shall handle COSASE today and then tomorrow, I am going to ensure that the rest are catered for – you have one report and that means that your chances of being covered are higher than that, that has five pending reports.

Hon. Ssewungu?

MR SSEWUNGU: I thank you for that information. The Committee on Government Assurance and Implementation, sometime back submitted over three reports to the Clerk. Some of our reports are being taken over by events. For example, the report about fuel prices, and which is on the Order Paper, was handled in long ago.

I know my neighbour has tabled a number of them. However, I seek your indulgence that we should also be given some priority –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, I am going to consider reports. Honourable colleague, I am handling you tomorrow. Tomorrow, I will handle reports, starting at 2.00 p.m. I want these reports sorted out.

Also, committee chairpersons, when you submit reports to the Clerk, copy us in. For instance, I do not have a copy of that report.

MR SSEWUNGU: Mr Speaker, I am going to do it as fast as possible. However, my last prayer to you is that we revisit the rules. I have requested, several times, for an in-house meeting here, but it has failed to take place, and I hope that with your indulgence, that should be handled.

We had a challenge here: in my Committee on Education and Sports, we were directed to write why we never signed the report. However, the rules give me a right to sign or not to sign. I can refuse to sign deliberately.

I think we should sit, in-house, and handle such matters. These reports deal with numbers – one-third of members have to sign. Members can fail to sign because of some challenges, but there is a new procedure coming in, and you may need to educate us on that.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The presiding officer was very clear: if you have not signed the report, you should explain why. Your reason can be that you do not want to sign.

However, we have come to understand that there are very many Members who never attend committee meetings. So, we are trying to mobilise Members for you. If you are on a committee and you have never signed a single committee report and you want to come and speak on the Floor – if I find that you never attend committee meetings, I cannot give you an opportunity on the Floor. You must participate both in committees and plenary. That is what is fair.

Even during plenary, we are going to be strict. If you miss the mandatory sessions - because we shall be publishing quarterly attendance reports. You have given us money for media and publicity, so, we shall be buying space in the media. For example, we shall show that this quarter, we had this number of sessions and say, for example, that: “Hon. Tayebwa attended two sessions; Hon. Muzaale attended 20 and this honourable member attended none.”

This will enable your people to know whether you represent them or you are never here. Otherwise, most of you run Parliament on radios. You never attend Parliament but you are on radio every day, discussing what happens in Parliament. If you are never here, where do you even get information? We want to be strict on these matters.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (COMMISSIONS, STATUTORY AUTHORITIES AND STATE ENTERPRISES) ON THE REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE UGANDA PRINTING AND PUBLISHING CORPORATION FOR FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

5.34

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (COMMISSIONS, STATUTORY AUTHORITIES AND STATE ENTERPRISES) (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to present the report of the Committee on Public Accounts (Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises) on the Report of the Auditor-General and the financial statements of Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation for the year ended 30 June 2022.

As I commence, Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on, the Table a copy of the report. I also beg to lay on the Table minutes of the committee meetings.

Mr Speaker, with your indulgence, I will be skipping a couple of things that are either generic or otherwise for want of time. The report will be uploaded on the screen in a short while.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, the Clerk will capture the whole report on the *Hansard*. So, you can do a summary.

MR SSENYONYI: Alright. So, I will skip the introduction, background, methodology and I will move to the findings, observations and recommendations.

The first one thereof was misstatement of the investment in a joint venture in Uganda Security Printing Company Limited (USPC). Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation and Government of Uganda, represented by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development signed an agreement with a consortium of German companies to

form Uganda Security Printing Company Limited, for purposes of rehabilitating and revamping UPPC by redesigning, developing, constructing, completing, testing and commissioning an e-passport factory and ID factory. UPPC holds a 51 per cent stake in USPC, which is a security company.

A review of the Statement of Financial Position, as at 30 June 2022, indicated that UPPC investment in the joint venture was reported a cost of Shs 9 billion as valued by 30 June 2020, and did not use the equity method as required by the standard. This implies that the Statement of Financial Position is misstated and misleading to the users of the statements.

The Accounting Officer submitted that Uganda Security Printing Corporation has a different accounting period which ends on December 31 unlike that of UPPC.

I will now move to the recommendations, Mr Speaker. The committee recommends that:

- i) The Accounting Officer should comply fully with IFRS 11 and 12 requirements – those are standards – in regard to valuation of the joint venture investment; and
- ii) USPC should align their accounting period with that of UPPC which is the majority shareholder, to facilitate the proper valuation of the investment and accurate reporting.

The second issue, Mr Speaker, is Understated Tax Liabilities. It was noted that whereas the tax records as per the Uganda Revenue Authority revealed a tax liability amount of Shs 1.6 billion, the financial statements disclosed only Shs 1.1 billion, resulting in a variance of Shs 460 million.

The Accounting Officer submitted to the committee that the variance was because some of the monies were penalties and fines charged by Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) yet UPPC records interests and penalties separately.

As a committee, we observed that URA charges interest on unpaid money. Moreover, most of the money is owed by ministries, departments and agencies, which do not pay on time, and that affects the cash flows of the corporation.

Our recommendation is that the Accounting Officer should put in place mechanisms to ensure that the books of accounts present a fair reflection of the tax liability of the corporation in the subsequent financial years.

Slow Rate of Recovery of Receivables

The Auditor-General noted that debtors worth Shs 3.76 billion have been outstanding for a period ranging between 361 days to 1800 days, contrary to best practice, which requires an entity to institute debt recovery mechanisms that ensure debts are recovered promptly.

Section 7(5) of the UPPC Finance and Accounting Policy Manual, 2020, highlights five collection procedures to be undertaken by the corporation when pursuing debtors and the table there gives details of the age of debts as they ought to be handled.

The Accounting Officer submitted that some of the debts related to transactions undertaken about 10 years back and there was no documentation relating to them that could be traced, making their recovery difficult. UPPC had hired a debt collector with a view to improving this situation. The committee was further informed that UPPC had provided services equivalent to Shs 4.3 billion to various MDAs following their budget cuts due to COVID-19 but there were delays regarding payments from these MDAs.

As a committee, we observed as follows:

- i) The treatment of receivables was not in accordance with IFRS 9 Accounting Standard which requires companies to measure impairment of financial assets, including trade receivables to be recovered within 12 months from the date they fell due.

- ii) MDAs have accumulated arrears to Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation, which has affected the cash flows and operations of the corporation.
- iii) Some of the money owed to UPPC has no adequate documentation backing it up, which makes it difficult to recover. As a committee, we recommend that the Accounting Officer institutes a debt-recovery mechanism for the recovery of all outstanding receivables and report the progress to Parliament within six months after the adoption of this report.

Assessment of Financial Performance

The Accounting Officer informed the committee that UPPC collects most of its money from publishing in the gazette and that in Financial Year 2020/2021, the corporation realised a huge collection of Shs 15.4 billion from the Electoral Commission, owing to the elections that took place in 2021. The corporation printed various items arising from the election, including gazetting of all elected leaders at various levels.

The committee was further informed that 10 per cent of the money earned from the Electoral Commission, that is Shs 1.54 billion, was paid to a commission agent, one of a number of commission agents maintained by the corporation. The committee was informed that the corporation maintains a number of commission agents and the board had resolved to pay such commission agents that bring in work. The committee asked for a copy of this resolution but it was never availed.

We observed as follows

- i. Section 5 of the Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation Act, Cap 330 mandates UPPC to print and publish all Government legislation and documents and provide printing services to parastatals, private organisations and individuals. The Electoral Commission therefore does not have the option of going to any newspaper to gazette; the

law commands the Electoral Commission to gazette only through UPPC. So, one cannot purport to bring business to UPPC from the Electoral Commission and then be paid a huge commission.

- ii. There was no basis for payment of the commission, so, by paying Shs 1.54 billion to a commission agent, the responsible officers at UPPC caused a financial loss to the entity.

Recommendations

- i) The commission agent who received the commission of Shs 1.54 billion should refund it to the corporation within three months from the date of adoption of this report; and
- ii) The staff involved should be investigated by the police with the view of prosecution.

Absence of a Board

It was noted that the corporation did not have a functional Board of Directors during the year under review since the tenure for the previous board had elapsed in October 2021, contrary to Section 6(1) of the Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation Act.

The Minister in charge of the Presidency informed the committee that upon receipt of a dossier from a whistle-blower about corruption at UPPC on 5 July 2021, criminal investigations commenced on 16 August 2021, upon her request. The members of the board were dismissed and some staff interdicted and yet the term of the Board was expiring on 31 October 2022.

The Chairperson of the Board was dismissed on 23 August 2021 and the minister appointed one Mr James Tweheyo, a senior staff in the Office of the President, as the Acting Managing Director because she did not want the absence of a board to hinder operations of the corporation.

During the committee's interaction with the minister, she submitted that she had appointed

a new Board which had been vetted by security agencies and was awaiting consent from the President. The new members appointed by her include:

- i) Mr Joachim Buwembo;
- ii) Mr Sadat Kisuyi;
- iii) Ms Jolly Kamugira Kaguhangire;
- iv) Ms Alice Muhoozi;
- v) Mr Andrew Kibaya;
- vi) Ms Hellen Judith Icumar;
- vii) Mr Jimmy Karugaba; and
- viii) Mr Noah Bukenya.

Observations

1. Since the dismissal of the Board of Directors in August 2021, there was no Board at UPPC for nearly two years, which is in contravention of Section 6 of the UPPC Act that provides that there shall be a Board of Directors. As a result of the absence of the Board, the roles that ought to be played by the Board regarding overseeing the management of the corporation under Section 7 of the Act could not be executed, which adversely affected the performance of UPPC;
2. By failing to appoint the board over a long time, the minister failed to exercise the powers conferred upon her under Section 6(1) of the Act, which obligates her to appoint the board;
3. While the minister has powers to appoint the board under Section 6(1) of the Act, there is no legal basis for her to assume the roles of the board, such as the appointment of staff. For example, on two occasions, the minister appointed the acting managing directors, including the current managing director. She also kept signing off documents including audited financial statements as the board chairperson of UPPC, which was both irregular and illegal; and
4. The absence of the board for long grossly affected the operations of the board, as there was no sufficient supervision of staff.

We recommend that the new board should institute a system of good corporate governance practices at the corporation including instituting board committees, regular meetings, prudent financial and human resource management, among others.

Staffing gaps

A review of the approved staff establishment of UPPC revealed that out of the 120 staff that are required, only 69 were filled, representing 57.5 per cent, thereby leaving a staffing gap of 51 staff representing 42.5 per cent. The accounting officer informed the committee that management had since recruited more staff, one of whom included the Corporation Secretary bringing the total number of staff to 75.

The committee observes that staffing gaps create inefficiencies in the operations of the entity. We recommend that the new board and management commence recruitment and filling of all key positions in the entity and report back to Parliament on the progress within six months after the adoption of this report.

Management of information technology investments in government

7.1 Procurement and use of software IT systems and equipment

During the audit of U UPPC, the following were observed:

1. A total of three IT systems procured at an unknown cost were not cleared by NITA-U as required by the law;
2. Three IT systems where one was acquired at a total cost of Shs 2.4 billion during the period under review, were not recorded in the Assets Register;
3. A total of 35 IT assets acquired at a total of Shs 0.256 billion over the period under review were not accurately recorded in the format as prescribed by the UPPC financial manual, 2020, since the register lacked records of these assets, information regarding asset number, accumulated

<p>depreciation, current year depreciation and location; contrary to Section 12(2) of the UPPC Financial And Accounting Manual; and</p> <p>4. A total of 10 IT assets were traced to the staff or locations as recorded in the Assets Register, which allowed traceability of the assets. However, 25 of these were not entered into the register.</p>	<p>in the Assets Register as provided for in the UPPC Financial Manual; and</p> <p>ii) Management institutes governance structures to effectively manage ICT investments in consultation with other stakeholders.</p>
<p>ICT governance</p> <p>A review of the ICT governance structure of the entity revealed the following:</p> <p>i) There were no specific structures that steer and oversee ICT implementation. In addition, there was no evidence of ICT representation in top management;</p> <p>ii) The entity did not have an approved IT staff structure in place despite ICT prioritisation in NDP III;</p> <p>iii) The internal auditor has never reviewed the various ICT systems including those that produce financial statements nor has he received adequate training to enable them interrogate the system. In addition, internal audit does not have rights to some of these systems;</p> <p>iv) The corporation's ICT policy was in draft form, awaiting approval and the corporation did not have a risk register at the time of the audit;</p> <p>v) There was no business continuity plan contrary to Section 4(6) of the National Information Security Policy of 2014.</p> <p>The accounting officer submitted that management would comply with the requirement to clear with NITA-U and that the asset register had been put in place.</p> <p>The committee recommends as follows:</p> <p>i) Management always seeks clearance from NITA-U regarding ICT equipment and that all ICT assets should be duly recorded</p>	<p>Management of corporation land</p> <p>Valuation of land for contribution to joint venture</p> <p>Regulation 23(1) of the PPDA Disposal of Assets Regulations of 2014 requires procuring and disposing entities to obtain a valuation for public assets before the commencement of disposal proceedings from a competent authority where this is required by law.</p> <p>The Auditor-General noted that one piece of land, measuring 1.778 hectares, was disposed of as the contribution to the joint venture with USPC – that is a security company - at Shs 9 billion, below the chief government valuer's valuation of Shs 10.6 billion, hence causing a financial loss of Shs 1.5 billion to government.</p> <p>The committee was informed that the difference in the value of the land was as a result of the value of land and buildings that had been accounted for using IAS 16 standard to investment property. We have a table there detailing a couple of things. I will move down to the findings.</p> <p>The committee found that UPPC wrote to the chief government valuer on 7 March 2017, requesting for the land belonging to UPPC on plot 8-12 (Airport Road) to be valued. The chief government valuer valued the land at Shs 10.6 billion.</p> <p>Veridos and Giesecke & Devrient – this is a German consortium - instructed two different valuers to value the land. One of the valuers valued this land at Shs 8 billion and another at Shs 10.3 billion.</p> <p>The committee observes that UPPC exchanged the land for shares in USPC at a value below that of the chief government valuer. We</p>

recommend that the accounting officer should always ensure that the value assigned by the chief government valuer is what is followed in all transactions of the corporation's property.

Utilisation of land for delivery of services

It was noted that five of the pieces of land, measuring approximately 1.256 hectares valued at Shs 4.1 billion acquired in 1902, were not fully utilised by the entity at the time of the audit. The accounting officer submitted that management was taking care of the properties and was in the process of refurbishing them, because with the exception of one, all the properties could not be rented. Proposals for the property committee of the board would be made on how to better utilise the properties.

The committee recommends that management should develop a comprehensive utilisation plan for all the land belonging to the corporation and submit the same to Parliament within six months from the date of adoption of this report.

Lack of an approved outsourcing policy framework

It was noted that the corporation receives orders for works, which were sometimes outsourced to other printers. It was, however, noted that the entity does not have an approved outsourcing policy and framework.

The accounting officer submitted that there was always a justification for outsourcing and there was a list of pre-qualified suppliers.

He further submitted that there was no outsourcing unless the job had been assessed. It was established that UPPC did not have capacity to execute the work.

We recommend that management should develop and present to the board for approval an outsourcing policy to guide outsourcing activities within six months from the date of adoption of this report.

Joint venture between UPPC and the German Consortium

- i) The committee found that Government of Uganda through Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation and the Ministry of Finance entered into a joint venture agreement with the German consortium of Veridos GmbH and Giesecke and Devrient;
- ii) The joint venture agreement provided, among other things, that a joint company - the Uganda Security Printing Company Limited - would be formed and the Government of Uganda and the consortium would be shareholders. The security printing factory would be set up by Veridos and Giesecke; and
- iii) USPC was incorporated on 18 October 2018.

We observe as follows:

- i) Veridos and Giesecke were not registered in Uganda at the time of signing the joint venture agreement;
- ii) Veridos and Giesecke & and Devrient are not registered in Uganda. Instead, Veridos Identity Solutions (Uganda SMC) Limited was incorporated on 24 September 2020, nearly two years after the joint venture agreement had been signed. It is a single-member company as seen from its articles and Memorandum of association. The member is Veridos GmbH whose address is in Berlin, Germany;
- iii) The fact that Veridos GmbH and Giesecke were not registered in Uganda was problematic because they were not domesticated yet they are doing business in Uganda; and

The committee recommends that Veridos and Giesecke should regularise and validate their presence in Uganda, and submit a report to Parliament within six months after the adoption of this report.

Conclusion

The UPPC plays a critical role regarding the printing and publishing of Government documents. However, the corporation has suffered a lack of proper corporate governance, which has consequently affected its financial performance and placed a dent onto its ability to execute its mandate. The absence of a board of directors, for a long time, stood out and this resulted into the lack of supervision of staff, something that should never recur.

There is a need for the management of the corporation to take interest in the functioning of the Uganda Security Printing Corporation because of how the two entities are interconnected.

The joint venture entered into with the German consortium should play a central role regarding the revamping of UPPC and the improvement of printing security documents. However, the construction of the factory has stalled, casting doubt on whether the Government can stand to benefit from the joint venture agreement.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, chairman and honourable colleagues. When I read through the report, you notice that is very thorough and you can see the recommendations are fair. No one can go out and say otherwise. Many people say Parliament is harassing them but the recommendations in here are very clear, from my observation.

Honourable members, let us have a quick debate. Members of the committee, please do not stand up.

5.56

PROF. ELIJAH MUSHEMEZA (Independent, Sheema County South, Sheema): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for a good job done. For the last two years I have been in the 11th Parliament, I have observed that there is a problem in the Office of the Attorney-General.

There are agreements that have been signed by government and other entities but when we analyse some of them in our Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry, we notice they are problematic. Is it because of the understaffing the honourable minister pointed out? So, what is the problem?

I want to call upon the Minister of Justice to interest himself in the Office of the Attorney-General because there are things that are done and you wonder whether it is deliberate. Is it defrauding the country? That is my first observation.

The second is: we have seen that in the joint venture that UPPC is a majority shareholder. How can you accept the shareholder with less shares to determine the financial year; that the financial year ends on the 30th, contrary to UPPC which moves with government? How can that happen?

The third observation, which opens our eyes, relates to the commission agent. From the Electoral Commission to UPPC, you want a commission? We know a commission agent is provided for under the law, but you wonder - this is similar to what we observed a few days ago that to transport files from Kampala to Entebbe, you spend Shs 400 million. This is something we have observed in the committee on some of these other entities.

This opens our eyes and I call upon COSASE to scan through other procurements of government, related to commission agents. We may find that government is losing a lot of money. Some of them could be government officers but using other proxies to earn a commission. How can you ask for a commission to move materials for printing from the Electoral Commission to UPPC?

I thank COSASE and call upon you to scan through other entities. We may discover billions of money being lost through commission agents who are not supposed to get this money. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I think this should be very clear, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. There is no way that for a Government entity to do business with another Government entity, it requires a commission agent to arrange the business. Really?

I thought commission agents, who are recognised under Government businesses, are for dealing with the private sector. Getting business under the private sector might require lobbying, but even in Government?

On this one, the Ministry of Finance needs to instruct the PS/ST, who should instruct all accounting officers that this is unacceptable. Government to government and you have commission agents? That is daylight robbery.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, take it up. Shs 5 billion? Hon. Dr Chris Baryomunsi, you are the one who guides the nation. What we have here is UPPC paid a commission agent Shs 5 billion for getting business to do printing under the Electoral Commission.

[Hon. Moses Aleper rose] Let the honourable Minister of ICT and National Guidance first guide the nation. *(Laughter)*

6.00

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson and members of the committee. What you have talked about sounds a bit strange. As you know, the NRM Government promotes a policy of zero tolerance to corruption –*(Interjections)*– yes!

Therefore, we take the report very seriously and this is not a laughing matter. We shall definitely look at these issues and those found culpable should be punished because I also find it strange that between a Government agency and another agency, you can charge that kind of commission. What for?

We support the observations and recommendations of the committee, but we

shall formally respond at the end of the debate, as government.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

6.01

MR MOSES ALEPER (NRM, Chekwii County (Kadam), Nakapiripirit): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also join my other colleague, who thanked COSASE for this elaborate report. I also take this opportunity this time to thank the minister, Hon. Baryomunsi; you are well suited for that job. You always do not go wrong.

My contribution is on the matter of financial and accounting reporting. What is very important in financial and accounting reporting is timeliness and accuracy.

On timeliness, I am sure this report came out after December 2022, as required by law, from the Office of the Auditor-General. Of course, our committee has looked at it and have now outed it. This is normally necessary because these reports are supposed to be used for decision making. If they are out of time, definitely the decision that will be made will become irrelevant.

Likewise, on accuracy, there were some misstatements which were observed by the committee, where there was a misstatement of Shs 450 million. That is something very significant in reporting and such a misstatement will definitely undermine the decisions that will come out of such a report.

What am I saying? It is very necessary for institutions, when they are making reports, to make sure they are accurate. Any misreporting should be very insignificant to something like 0.5 per cent. I implore institutions that are charged with this make sure they make good of that misreporting.

Lastly, I want to say that on the realignment of the financial year, the law is very clear. The practice is very clear, now that the financial year starts 1 July and end on 30 June. That is what actually should be done. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

6.04

MR RICHARD OSEKU (NRM, Kibaale County, Pallisa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the committee for the report presented. However, I have a concern about the findings of the committee on the management of the assets of the cooperation - the land. Whereas the Chief Government Valuer was engaged to value the land and he came up with a value of over Shs 10 billion, the other entities that were engaged by Veridos – even when they were not yet incorporated in the country, at the time – were able to appoint their own independent valuers who valued the land, who gave it a lower value than that of the Chief Government Valuer.

I find it strange that the committee - may be they will clarify it - has not treated this seriously. This is because by going by the lower value that this independent valuer came up with, the Government incurred a loss. I think the committee should have put the emphasis there and put at least a remedy to help Government recover from that loss.

I want to emphasise the point that their finding was that even at that time, these people were not yet incorporated, so, they had no right to take a decision on the property of Government. That is my observation. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Even as an accounting officer, you do not have powers to go below the Government value. You can only go above it, that is, by negotiating a better deal for the Government. If the other one is not satisfied, then, you appeal the valuation of the Chief Government Valuer. If the Chief Government Valuer insists that this is the value, then, that is the value you go with – unless you want to go to court and challenge it.

So, I think what the Hon. Oseku is saying, honourable chairperson, is that someone must answer how they did this and how we can help the Government recover that loss. One can coin an amendment to the recommendation and we adopt it.

6.04

MS JANE PACUTO (NRM, Woman Representative, Pakwach): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I commend the committee for the good report. I would like to comment on their finding on the lack of a board for some time.

Mr Speaker, why I have taken interest in that - let me start by refreshing our minds: what are the roles of a board in any institution? They are: to create and monitor organisational strategic plans; to establish and define the corporate vision, mission and purpose; to evaluate the company practices for business continuity and resilience, and; to ensure legal compliance and stay updated with regulations, among others.

Mr Speaker, I agree with the committee that, with a continuous lack of a board in place, these key roles will not be performed and, therefore, the strategic management of this institution will not in any way be enhanced. Other than the internal audit, which we have heard is also weak, there will be no other body to check the management and operations of the organisation.

So, I support the idea that we should direct the institution to, in the shortest time possible, put in place a board to play these key roles that I have highlighted. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I am looking for those who have not spoken. Hon. Christine Kaaya – I am telling these three to eliminate themselves indirectly. *(Laughter)*

6.08

MS CHRISTINE KAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also commend the committee for coming up with these resolutions. My concern is also about the board. The committee needed to have shown us the number of decisions that were reached at during that period when the board was missing. In most cases, decisions that are taken during the time when there is no board are usually funny, not encompassing and have repercussions.

Probably, the outcome of the valuation, especially of the land, came during that time when there were no people to question it. So, it is very important that the boards are selected on time.

On the issue of the composition - I thought Parliament has a stake in approving these boards. However, when we do not get information about the proposed board members, that jeopardises our role of oversight and monitoring the performance of some of these parastatals.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I request that we also get to know which decisions were made during the parastatal did not have the board. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You know, these days, men are the most endangered –(Laughter)- so, ladies should give us some space. Do you know what we go through when DNA results come or even when you are waiting for the results? (Laughter)

6.01

MR GEOFFREY OKELLO (DP, Nwoya East County, Nwoya): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. Let me also thank the chairperson and members of the committee, for the work they have done.

Mr Speaker, my first issue is a point of clarification that I would like to seek from the chairperson. When he mentioned that many MDAs had accumulated debts with UPPC, he did not mention how much the accumulated debt is. Giving us the figure would help us to figure out the implication of such accumulated debts.

Mr Speaker, unfortunately, this also happened in Financial Year 2020/2021 and we may now be guessing the status of this company. However, there are issues of misleading statements, valuation questions and questions of the signature on the audit report when there was no board.

I thought I would see a recommendation for a forensic audit so that it could help to follow up on specific issues that had been raised by the Attorney-General. It is that audit that the committee could rely on to see which issues to be recommended for further police investigations. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, I want us to be cautious on the issue of a forensic audit. For nearly every issue that has been coming here, Members want us to conclude with a forensic audit. It is very costly – and you do not put that money in the budget.

The same Auditor-General – when we say “forensic audit” – goes to the same entity and says: “Fund it.” This is because he has no money for forensic audits. We increased the money, but we have to be very cautious about insisting on a forensic audit on each and every matter.

If the committee accessed the Auditor-General’s report and the information they have managed to get is very critical and sufficient – and they do not see gaps – and so, there is no need for a forensic audit.

However, if the committee finds that there are gaps – there are issues that they have traced and they cannot find the final destination, in terms of extracting information, then the committee can make a recommendation for a forensic audit to be conducted. Issues like, for example, those on the Bujagali Project - but where a committee feels they managed to get whatever they needed, we cannot be calling for a forensic audit, because such audits are so costly to Government and the Auditor-General is not able to address these matters.

In short, I am saying, we should avoid making decisions, which we know are going to be difficult to implement from the onset.

6.14

MS ASHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join colleagues to thank the committee for a good report.

I am quoting page five, one of the paragraphs says, the chairperson of the board was dismissed on 23 August 2021 and the minister appointed Mr James Tweheyo, a senior staff in the Office of the President, as the acting Managing Director, because she did not want the absence of the board to hinder the operations of the corporation.

In a way the minister determined that the managing director should serve as the board at the same time, which was a very big conflict of interest. She assumed that the roles of the board would be performed by the managing director. So, the managing director at that time did not even have a supervisor but the report continues to say that at one time the minister was signing documents on behalf of the board.

Mr Speaker, this report continues to tell us that later on, the minister appointed a board after a gap of like two years but they do not tell us when exactly that this board was appointed; I mean the one that is headed by Mr Joachim Buwembo. It is important to us that we get to know exactly when this board was appointed because there is likelihood that the board was appointed after this committee had started its work. When you say roughly two years is around the same time. So can we know exactly when the board was appointed?

Secondly, building on what the honourable colleague said, can we inquire into the actions of Mr Buwembo together with those of the minister around that time, so that the minister takes personal responsibility because she assumed the responsibilities of the board around that time?

So, I move that the minister should take responsibility – because when we talk about financial accountability issues that are here, in the years that preceded, the time where there was a lapse of leadership because there was no board is not reflected in this. Can we inquire into that period, and the minister or be held responsible for that time for the errors that were committed during that time? I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just if I may ask Hon. Aisha, just for simple clarification: in a situation where indeed the board is not in place, the minister is going through the process of appointing a board, what would the minister do? What if you were a minister?

MS ASHA KABANDA: Mr Chairperson, the board was suspended on the 16 August 2021 when its lifespan was meant to expire on 31 October 2022. So, it was suspended a year ahead of its expiry and even after the real-time for expiry a new board was not put in place. Even when the minister was supposed to put measures to work as investigations were taking place, two years was too much time for a lapse of governance. So she must take responsibility.

Ordinarily three months three months would be enough for an inquiry because she says she was inquiring into the mismanagement of the board but one would not take two years to make such an inquiry.

6.17

MR DENIS OGUZU (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha): Mr Speaker, maybe just for the information to members, the public standing orders provide that if somebody is interdicted or suspended, it can only be for a maximum of about six months to allow investigations to happen and get concluded. But in this case it exceeded and so, I agree with you that somebody must answer.

One clear issue, which comes from these failures, mismanagements and losses is that there is lack of political leadership and will to deal with all these issues. I cannot imagine that this House will always be dealing with similar cases especially when the committees on accountability report to the House, the same facts. I do not know at what point we expect to learn as a country.

Mr Speaker, I can only decipher that there is intent by a group of people to loot this country and that often is to narrow the availability of resources and the physical space. So, the result is always the government cannot be able to deliver services. For example, we have the

NITA-U law, we have the PPDA laws and these have been bypassed.

Therefore, if indeed there is a political will to deal with these, where are the political leaders who are supposed to ensure these things do not occur? If you look at the joint ventures among these parties, you will realise there was no due diligence. So, you do not know how those people were selected? Was it through a transparent public procurement process? How did they settle on these partners, even when they undervalued our land?

Mr Speaker, I am very worried that this country, if it continues to move at this pace, we may not be able to achieve all the wild dreams we were talking about here - this is supposed to happen. Those will be very wild dreams.

So, arising from the report of the committee, I would like to suggest, Mr Speaker, and invite you that there are a lot of - I still propose that we need to -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, you are accessing a microphone without my permission. Okay, conclude.

MR OGUZU: I would like to pray with you, it seems there is much more than catches the eye this report has revealed. I therefore, plead with you if we have to mobilise domestic resources to serve the citizens - we need to dig deeper into these issues, such that corrective measures can be taken. I propose a forensic audit. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, we have the government investigative agencies; they will look at this report.

6.21

MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this chance. Allow me to add my voice in thanking the committee. To me, this is a very good report that the committee has come out with. I would like to ask the chairperson of the committee - he made

mention of Shs 1.5 billion to the commission agent. Who is this? This money must be recovered. I thought in your investigation, you should come out with this specific officer in charge of doing something, which cannot be easily understood.

Secondly, allow me to also talk about the issue of the board. I would like to join my two colleagues who have mentioned the political leadership of the minister. We know the work of UPPC is very crucial, as far as printing security documents is concerned, and so, for a cooperation to stay for two years, without a board and in the middle somebody is appointed to act on behalf of the board, this has a lot and is very pregnant with so many things, which has not yet been put forward. I expected the Minister to be here to answer some of these issues that are being raised. I would like the minister also to take political responsibility, because in these two years, we lost a lot of money.

Finally, Mr Speaker, on the issue of the government valuer, valuing at 10.5 and then somehow another valuer comes in with a lower rate - I would like to urge this Parliament that this officer who was in charge of this loss be made answerable and refund this money. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Should I start with the minister or the chairperson? Honourable chairperson, please, respond to Members' issues.

MR SSENKYONYI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and thank you, honourable members. When the committee was assessing the issue of valuation, we noticed that Shs 9 billion was a contribution of UPPC to USPC, a company in which it holds 51 per cent shares.

So, Mr Speaker, generally, the committee did not see this as a total loss, because ultimately, it was still within the control of UPPC because it extended it to a company in which it has 51 per cent. Obviously, we would be more worried if it had maybe been - I do not know - maybe sold off to some other person or that kind of thing.

This was a contribution of UPPC because they did not have cash. They said, “we are going to contribute our land into this joint venture that we are forming, in which we have 51 per cent share.” The land is still under the ownership of UPPC because it owns the other company. But the House can still guide us.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable, what the Members are saying is that this land, which gave us 51 per cent shares, if we had gone with the right value, it would have given us maybe 60 per cent share. So, that is the kind of loss the Members are concerned with.

MR SSENYONYI: I certainly agree with Members on that. Number two, decisions taken by the Minister in the absence of the Board - a colleague was asking - these are actually mentioned on page six of the report, one of which was signing financial statements as Board chair, then two, appointing MDs - and I mentioned, including the current MD - because the MD is supposed to be appointed by the Board, but the Minister did the appointment herself. That is why, we recommended somewhere, that the new board should appoint the right office bearers, including the MD.

There was a question about debts with MDAs, I mentioned that on page three of our report, and it is Shs 4.3 billion. So, the ministries owe UPPC Shs 4.3 billion.

Then, there was a question about when the board was appointed. Again, I mentioned on page five, that that was during the inquiry. Incidentally, when we began to inquire into this, and we were putting these questions to the Minister, she quickly went and hurriedly did this. Then the next time, the following week when she was in the committee, she said, “Honourable chair, I have actually appointed the board, they have even been sworn in, here they are.”

So, in a sense, one could say, we pushed the Minister to do the right thing - well it was a little too late, but she eventually did it after we pushed and opened her eyes to do the right thing. But again, there is no harm in holding *-(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable Minister. This is under the Presidency, so I have someone under the Presidency and who is also a boss to the ministers. You see, colleagues, we shall not stop doing our work because ministers are not here. Otherwise, what if they decide to keep dodging, shall we not do what? So, let us do our work.

6.27

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, I want to thank the chairperson, and the committee for the job well done. I have taken note of the recommendations of the committee. The Government is going to study the recommendations and come back to this House in a period of six months to respond - *(Interjection)* - yes, on the actions that would have been taken. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, you know, that one should not bother you. The good thing is, some action is already being taken, as the chairman has said.

However, what is so interesting about reports of the Auditor-General is that these are issues, which have been unearthed by a Government agency. That is what is interesting about it, and our work is to push. I want to thank you, Chairman. You see, some of the issues are already addressed because of the work you have done and because of how the committee has managed to push.

So, to me, if we achieve that, to ensure that at least something is done because of our intervention, however small, I really appreciate it. And then we demand answers through the Treasury Memoranda. Yes, Hon. Chris, you want to give some information.

6.29

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I just wanted to provide information regarding

the process of appointing boards. Usually, the laws, which we pass here, give authority to ministers to appoint boards, which oversee the operations of these agencies. Therefore, the board represents the interests of the minister.

However, we have standing guidelines, as Cabinet, that once the board is vacant, the minister writes to all ministers to propose names; they propose, and the minister will shortlist and then the names are sent to the security department of Government to be vetted.

Once they have been cleared by security, you prepare a Cabinet Paper and send it to the Cabinet Secretariat. Then, depending on the business of the Cabinet, they will schedule it on the Order Paper of the Cabinet.

So, sometimes, the delays are not occasioned by the Minister, but say by ISO, which vets or even the Cabinet Secretariat –*(Interjection)*– yes, I am not answering for the minister in this case, I am just giving information about the process we go through - that, yes, the minister may delay the process, but sometimes the delays can be occasioned by some of those processes.

So, I just want Members to understand because Hon. Kaaya had raised a question as to whether names should come to Parliament or not. I thought we should know the process that we go through.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I now put the question that the report of the Committee on COSASE on the Report of the Auditor-General, on the Financial Statements of Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation, for the year ended 30 June 2020 to be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You see, honourable colleagues, when you have an amendment, you move, you do not comment but you commented; you gave your wishes but you never moved that we adopt any amendment, and so, my hands were tied.

Honourable colleagues, we need an action-taken report, and a Treasury Memoranda within six months as provided for under the law. The House is adjourned to tomorrow at 2 o'clock.

(The House rose at 6.31 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday 5 July 2023 at 2.00 p.m.)



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

THIRD SESSION - 7TH SITTING - FIRST MEETING

Tuesday, 4 July 2023

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

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to Order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. I have been performing one of our duties at the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries conference where we had our joint Parliamentary Assembly with the European Union Parliament. I was accompanied by honourable colleagues who were designated; Hon. Bashir Kazibwe, Hon. Cecilia Ogwal, Hon. Dr Opio, Hon. Ssekikubo, Hon. Kibalya and others.

I just wanted to inform you about this because as Parliament, we decided to take parliamentary diplomacy a notch higher. We have found very many countries take it seriously because parliamentary diplomacy is anchored on state diplomacy. Rt Hon. Prime Minister and ministers, the questions you are answering from the diplomats, ministers and other countries come from the parliaments. Therefore, as Members of Parliament, using our own connections, if we got the chance to know Members of Parliament anywhere in the world, it is very important that we carry our

national interests at heart and explain to them the issues affecting our country, especially when we have an onslaught on some of the most critical issues.

I want to applaud you, honourable members. I have travelled with many of you. Whenever we reach those Parliaments and engagements, we never have issues of Opposition and NRM. We are Ugandans. *(Applause)*

I want to appreciate the way Hon. Cecilia Ogwal explained issues to do with the Anti-Homosexuality Act. Hon. Dr Opio also did an excellent job.

We also had very important topics. We were lucky to have had Hon. Kateshumbwa on trade matters. We utilised his experience as a former President of the World Customs Union. He is one of the most respected people in Brussels. While moving there, everyone told us we have a jewel. I really felt proud. The only problem was that in some cases, he would be given a red carpet instead of me – *(Laughter)* – I said a coup might be happening far away from home.

However, these are very critical issues. For example, I read the *Hansard* of the UK Parliament and came to discover where the issue of the travel advisory from the UK is coming from. It was raised by one of the Members of Parliament to the minister in charge of Africa affairs. The Member said, "Has the Government of Uganda reached out to us for support in addressing this issue? Have we equally advised our people about the terrorism situation?"

The minister promised saying, “Honourable colleague, I am going to update our people on travel to Uganda.” You can see how it came about. It came from a Member of Parliament. Therefore, it is very critical that all of us remain alert. I want to thank you for the support, which you have managed to give us, honourable colleagues.

The second issue I want to comment about is the current DNA tests *—(Laughter)—* I do not know whether some of you have fallen victim; that is an issue, which you swallow alone. We have counsellors in Parliament, if you are having such a problem.

However, I am talking about this issue because I think we need to guide the nation. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you need to come out. From what is going on, innocent children are falling victim. You do not know what your parents were doing or whatever happened but all of a sudden, you see someone saying, “Stop using my name...bring back your national ID; it bears my name. So, I want to go and change it.”

Honourable colleagues, as you know, Ugandans are very sharp. Now, in every corner, you are going to have a DNA laboratory. We want to know how this is regulated. How should it be handled? What are we going to do about these young children that are being chased out of homes and schools?

The boy-child is committing suicide. Men are suffering. At least the mothers know who the father of the child is but the men are in big trouble. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, at least come out, guide the nation on this matter and see how best we can counsel these people - maybe, if there are regulations around it, we should just not leave it.

Also, men out there, by the time you make a test for around 16 children, it means you also have your own issues unless you are a *hajji*. However, you might find out that someone is also looking after your own children somewhere.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I request you to get time. If you want to do it here, we shall give you space. If you want to use the Media Centre, you shall have our support on this issue.

Hon. Sarah Opendi, I want to invite you in my communication to help me lay something on the Table concerning the International Parliament Day.

2.26

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your communication. Before I lay this so that I do not come back on your communication, I want to request colleagues; men, fathers, the boy-child, you should know that you are not even sure whether you belong to that very clan where you are now.

Remember, we held a conference in this country. One of the things that we are proud about *—(Interjections)—*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Sarah, can you do what I have told you to do. *(Laughter)*

MS OPENDI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will come back to that. Every 30th of June, we are supposed to celebrate Parliament Day. In 1889, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) was founded on 30th June and the UN General Assembly, in 2018, declared this day “Parliament Day”.

This year, the day fell on a Friday and we were not sitting. The theme for this year was “Parliaments for the Planet” with emphasis that with climate change, action starts at home.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union, at a meeting I attended which was both virtual and physical, took the opportunity to launch the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its optional Protocol. This handbook for Parliaments No.36 was launched.

Mr Speaker, thank you for this opportunity. The Government adopted CEDAW as a guiding principle in promoting gender equality

and all the necessary legal frameworks are in place. We want to appreciate the Government. We are here because of the 1995 Constitution that provided space for women to participate in politics, and also economic and social spheres.

I beg to lay this book. I was given 10 copies to present to this Parliament and I request Members to read this book. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Can you read the title of the book?

MS OPENDI: Mr Speaker, the title is “*A Handbook for Parliaments No. 36 on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol*”. The last handbook was in 2003. So, this is a revised version. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You will find copies in the library. Clerk, put the copies in the library for Members to easily access them. Thank you. [*Hon. Oshabe rose*] Is it on my communication, Hon. Nsamba?

2.30

MR PATRICK OSHABE (NUP, Kassanda County North, Kassanda): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker and thank you for the effort in parliamentary diplomacy, as you communicated.

We have a challenge and it is on how the resolutions we pass in those international fora are adopted here. I remember one time, you promised that we were going to have time to discuss all these international resolutions and the ministers give responses on how we are working with these international obligations and internal resolutions.

Unfortunately, we continuously go and attend these meetings, make resolutions but never have time to discuss them, and how our country is responding to them. I am not sure whether everything that is agreed on internationally is good for our people.

So, we need time, as Parliament, to go through them; including the ACPA, IPU, the Pan-African Parliament and the East African Legislative Assembly. We need a serious discussion about these resolutions that are passed.

Mr Speaker, the Minister of Foreign Affairs needs to update this House on what they are doing about these obligations because some of them are agreements that we need to adopt and ratify. We need that time. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nsamba, that is a very critical point you have raised. We have discussed it here before. When such international conventions and agreements are made and they require certification, they have to be brought here by the minister. So, once the minister has not brought them here, then what it means is that they are still handling the issues at the Cabinet level. We would not like to go into the work of the Executive very much.

However, I am going to consult with the Clerk and our technical people and look into it. Indeed, if it is an international convention and you are a signatory, as a country, but do not bring it here for ratification, what are you doing about all this?

Here, we try to bring resolutions that would need ratification. Otherwise, the rest fall under reports of delegations. However, I am going to follow it up with our technical people, so that we can guide each other on how best to handle this issue.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the only thing I forgot to say, in regard to the Anti-Homosexuality Act, is that there are disjointed responses. For example, I have tried to get a response from about three ambassadors; all of them are giving their own statements because as a Government, we have not come up with one clear statement. We depend on what we hear the President and government officials say. Here, we use our technical officers in Parliament. We wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to give us a

statement to present in Brussels; we ended up crafting our own.

Since it is being raised at especially international level, we need a standardised statement for all our diplomatic missions, so that all of them speak the same language across the board. We found most of the people were even talking about the draft Bill. Some were talking about the one we passed before the President even returned it. Very few knew about the real Act.

When we explained what was in the Act, they said, “No, what we get is different”. So, we really need very clear guidance, especially for diplomatic missions.

2.34

MS FLAVIA NABAGABE (NUP, Woman Representative, Kassanda): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. On the issue of parliamentary diplomacy, which you have articulated very vividly, thank you for that. However, I have a comment about that.

The first thing is I belong to the Inter-Parliamentary Union. I have always battled with the question of where our allegiances lie in the international Parliament. For example, Ugandans belong to different shades of political parties and in every international Parliament, there are different shades of political parties represented.

When you mention here that whenever we go out there on those missions, we are fronting the interests or key diplomatic missions of the country, I struggle to understand the relevance of opposition political members in those particular international parliaments.

The reason I bring this up is that sometimes, I would like to advocate and push for national diplomacy or the national intentions of my country. Sometimes, I get to key issues like human rights, where there is obvious torture and violation of human rights. As an opposition political member, we have discussed this internationally and highlighted issues about Uganda, *vis a vis* human rights violation.

Meanwhile, the people I am with are saying, “Here, we are representing national interests; do not talk about human rights violations”. So, I start asking myself that if we are to represent the different shades that nominated us to those parliamentary platforms, then how do we bring up these critical issues that affect ordinary Ugandans?

Meanwhile, the President also came out clearly and said he does not agree with torture. So, if I am to talk about the examples of people who have been tortured in my country on an international platform, why should I end up being stifled or being told that I cannot be able to talk about any of this on this platform?

That is where I find a challenge in international Parliaments. While I want to appreciate what Uganda has done, I also know that there are many things that are not going right with my party and at that level, I am presenting the different voices of Ugandans in the opposition and I am alone.

What happens if I do not talk about what really bothers them on that international platform? Otherwise, we should then simply say that International Parliaments should be strictly for one political party to always sing praises about what is good. I beg for guidance on that note. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Members, when you have a delegation, before setting off, you should first meet to look at the agenda and the issues and agree on how to handle those issues when you reach abroad. It does not have to be - because we are sending a delegation from the Parliament of Uganda. We are not sending a delegation from political parties in Uganda. That is at a certain level. We send a delegation from the Parliament of Uganda.

The Parliament might be representing different interests but you sit down and agree as a delegation. Members, I do not want to go along that line as we would be really going far. This is delegation per delegation. I think at leadership level, we can discuss this and guide Members.

Hon. Cecilia Ogwal wanted to say something about it.

MS CECILIA OGWAL: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I just want to make clarification based on the statement made by our colleague who spoke before your intervention. This is a matter which I think we need to sit down as a Parliament and talk amongst ourselves and agree.

We carry a different identity when we are outside the country. When we are here, we are Ugandans and we speak like Ugandans. I can decide to speak in Lango now if I want because I am in Uganda. If you say you do not understand, I will say you are stupid. Why do you want me to speak Luganda when you cannot speak Lango because we are speaking in Uganda?

When we are outside there, nobody knows Lango or Luganda so we have to tailor our - I am not asking anybody to applaud what I am saying, I just want you to understand what I am saying. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, the thing is, we all face challenges and I think I am not wrong when I say, so many of you jump into positions without understanding what we are supposed to be doing. If there is anybody - I am a very loud and clear Opposition Member in this country. Everybody else followed my voice, you were all in one stage or another *-(Interruption)* - You were a member of NRM, sit down. Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Basalirwa, stop harassing Hon. Cecilia Ogwal. Conclude, honourable.

MS CECILIA OGWAL: Mr Speaker, we need space in order to understand what we are supposed to do outside the country and this is what I am just pleading for. We need to understand each other. We can still tell the truth that we are all still struggling with democracy. We are all educating ourselves about democracy, but we should not be judged by the same standard, we must understand the benchmark.

We find that even the Americans are failing on that mark. Even those we consider to be mature democrats are failing, so, please, let us not be judged wrongly. When I speak the way I should speak, in a clear manner, it does not mean I am supporting government. I am speaking for Uganda. So, when Uganda was being condemned for not ratifying the Human Rights Charter in the Pan-African Parliament, I had to mobilise my troops to get out so that we can go discuss other things.

We could not stand Uganda being singled out as one of the countries which had not ratified the Human Rights Charter and I am there listening. It is not right. In a way, we really have to know how to deal with our own internal matters internally and how to deal with Ugandan matters outside the country. Mr Speaker, I beg *-(Interruption)* I will accept your order -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Cecilia Ogwal, kindly conclude.

MS CECILIA OGWAL: I will accept her point of order because when she is 70 years old, I will want her to speak my language. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Flavia, it is not Hon. Cecilia Ogwal who allows the point of order. It is the Speaker.

In the public gallery this afternoon, we have pupils and teachers of High Hope Primary School from Mwenge South Constituency, Kyenjojo District. They are represented by Hon. Katalihwa Donald Byabazaire and Hon. Faith Kunihira Philo. Please join me in welcoming them, thank you.

Also in the public gallery this afternoon, we have students and teachers of Mariam High School from Kawempe North Division, Kampala District. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Ssegirinya Muhammad and Hon. Malende Shamim. They have come to observe proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. Thank you.

Also in the public gallery, we have a delegation from Katera Parish, Bukomero sub-county, Kiboga District represented by Hon. Kaaya Christine Nakimwero and Hon. Dr Keefa Kiwanuka. They have come to observe the proceedings of the House. Please join me in welcoming them. Thank you.

2.44

MR RONALD AFIDRA (NRM, Lower Madi County, Madi-Okollo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to join my colleagues in applauding the team that represented this country abroad. The eloquence of all the Members demonstrated to the international world that we have content in this country and indeed, we are legislating for our country very well.

That said, I want to address my mind to your communication in regard to the rampant DNA tests. Mr Speaker, indeed it is true that even in my constituency of Lower Madi, the facts of DNA tests are becoming an issue. Knowing that a child belongs to a father and a mother, now that DNA tests are being highly considered by men, where does this put the women?

As leaders of this country, we know that to secure a child's future, it takes two parents. Some women are looking after children of their men and they do not have any complaint. Why is it that men, including me, are complaining when we are looking after children?

That said, as Parliament, we need to guide this country and our laws are very clear. We have cultural guidance on how families are run and how children are to be brought up. We have constitutional rights that enshrine the family and how families are being managed. Above all, we have the religious beliefs that all of us belong to.

Therefore, the guidance I want to get from the House is, can the country be guided on how the new entrance of DNA tests that have become rampant in this country can help us, as a country, to preserve our integrity, cultural institutions, cultural norms, religious beliefs and uphold our Constitution? Thank you.

2.47

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Related to the DNA tests, there are a number of drugs and tests that are restricted and controlled by the Ministry of Health. Can we add the DNA test to that restricted list so that it is only done on a court order or to solve a problem? We want to protect the mental health of our children and of the men who are now committing suicide. It is not adding value to the economy.

Mr Speaker, I propose that the Ministry of Health adds DNA testing to the restricted list. We acknowledge that it has to be done, but it has to be under guidance – not just with the reason of wanting to break up. There are people in Uganda who are now faking results in order to malign the women and reject the children that they are supposed to care for.

Mr Speaker, we have to do something and the Minister of Health can help us on this matter.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, on the issue of DNA – Rt Hon. Madam Prime Minister, I do not know how much time you think might be sufficient for you, but we would need a statement in the House on how you are going to guide the nation.

Next Tuesday, the Prime Minister will bring a statement and we shall have it debated.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssemujju? Oh sorry, Hon. Ssemujju. The minister wants to say something small.

2.49

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also do not know what is motivating married men to rush for DNA tests. It has become another pandemic. I have discussed -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us have order on this matter. You might find that in this House, we even

have some of them hiding children. *(Laughter)* Some of you, fathers, could also be knowing that you have children somewhere and you are hiding them. So, it is a serious matter. Let us not put a lot of emotions.

DR BARYOMUNSI: Mr Speaker, it is a very serious matter -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, please, let us have order in the House.

DR BARYOMUNSI: It is a very serious matter, which is even resulting in suicides. It has to be addressed.

This morning, I discussed it with the Minister of Health. While for now it might be difficult to prevent or stop anybody from going for a DNA test, part of the concern is the quality of the laboratories and maybe the tests being carried out.

This morning, the Minister of Health and the leadership of the commissioner for laboratories, the Allied Health Professional Council and the Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council held a meeting with the various laboratory owners and managers. An assessment is being carried out to check if these laboratories and clinics are accredited. It could be possible that people are running to clinics and labs, which are not accredited by the Ministry of Health and they could be giving false results.

So, the Minister of Health promised that within two weeks, she will come to Parliament, through the Leader of Government Business, to give a list of laboratories that are accredited and authentic so that we can guide the country on where one can go if they want to carry out a DNA test. I wanted to give that information, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I have already guided on what the Prime Minister is going to do because the biggest challenge is to do with guidance.

However, where is this coming from? I was chatting with Hon. Sarah Opendi: there is a campaign that had been going on called “fear women”. *(Laughter)* It came as a document and then started going – “fear women”. We got some information that there are some groups that brought it up and all that - but all these things are speculations.

We hope the Prime Minister will be able to do a thorough job and we agree on how best we can handle this issue.

2.52

MR IBRAHIM SSEMUJJU (FDC, Kira Municipality, Wakiso): Mr Speaker, thank you. You have briefed us about the recent meetings. I have two issues.

One, Hon. Nabagabe, by our rules here, was appointed by her party to represent the Opposition at IPU. However, I see her here when IPU is going on. Can we be told, as Parliament, what happened to her? Has she refused that assignment?

Two, Mr Speaker, the point that you made about us - and I want to thank Hon. Cecilia Ogwal. When we demand competence, we do not do so because we are against some people. When you have Hon. Cecilia Ogwal to represent you, everybody will be happy. However, when you pick people who are just experienced in milking cows and send them to international organisations – *(Interruption)*

MR DAN ATWIJUKIRE: Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us listen to the honourable colleague.

MR ATWIJUKIRE: Is it in order, Mr Speaker, for a senior member of this House to use a language that demeans people who know a certain activity and tries to present them as incompetent? I need protection, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, go on.

MR ATWIJUKIRE: Is Hon. Ssemujju in order to insinuate that people who know how to milk cows cannot represent this country? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I really want us to be serious on some matters. Delegations of Parliament are formed by Members of Parliament. Whether someone is experienced, whether someone is a teacher or whether someone has been a sweeper, that person went through the same process to come here, as any of us.

If, for example, we were saying that in forming parliamentary delegations, we can go and pick strangers to become part of parliamentary delegations and they go and represent Parliament, it would be understandable. However, if it is a Member of Parliament, I think we can use language that is more acceptable.

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, I did not intend to demean anyone. I am actually commenting on your communication because you said that when you went with Hon. Kateshumbwa, because of his experience, he added value. I would not add the same value. I am just using another language, but saying the same thing that you said, Sir. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssemujju. I did not use - what I said about Hon. Kateshumbwa was on trade matters. We handle different matters. When they are matters to do with medical, I will pick a medical doctor. Any Member of Parliament is competent to handle any matter in the House. So, let us respect each other.

MR SSEMUJJU: I am sorry, Mr Speaker.

The second point I would like to raise, Mr Speaker -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: When a member is sorry, honourable colleagues, it is noted on the *Hansard*.

MR SSEMUJJU: Finally, Mr Speaker, we want to be one delegation at international conferences but, when you have tortured and brutalised me here - it is like people who brutalise their spouses. When you appear in public, it will show on your face. In fact, if you take me to an international conference, I may not be smiling like NRM.

So, can I be guided, after torturing us here and then you put us on the same plane to go and represent Uganda; how do you want us to behave when we reach there?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I want to confirm to honourable colleagues that all Members of Parliament we put on delegations are always smiling. And, I also want to confirm that from all sides, you are always lobbying to be put on those delegations- Yes, I want to put it on record that from all sides- Opposition or NRM, Members ask to be put on delegations. For those who do not want to be put on delegations, I will be happy if you create space for others because you would have made my work easy.

However, what I said, which is very critical, Hon. Ssemujju, before you go as colleagues, you always have an agenda; you meet and agree on how to discuss an agenda. I believe the head of the delegation will always agree with you- it does not mean that you go to hide everything, but you go knowing that the Government might be doing something wrong, but what I am doing, am I damaging the country? You differentiate between damaging the Government and damaging the country and that, of course, depends on your own judgement. So far, the delegations I have had, we have not had issues of that nature. Honourable colleagues, matters of national importance - Hon. Muhammad Kato - Oh, let me first allow the Leader of the Opposition- no, I will not handle procedure; you know, now people have known the shortcut. If you want to stand, you say procedure.

2.59

MR JOHN BAPTIST NAMBESHE (NUP, Manjiya County, Bududa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join the colleagues to applaud your team that ably represented us in that international conference and particularly when you made a clarion call on the United Nations Security Council, to consider according to Africa two permanent seats. But it may take ages for Africa to have a nuclear weapon.

Mr Speaker, in your communication, the terror alerts, we had a recent one and they normally come from the conceptual West; the other one of the United States Government, now this time, the United Kingdom terror alert, and more often than not, they predict accurately. Even this one may come to pass.

But it is good that you interacted with the Member of Parliament of the United Kingdom-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, I read the *Hansard*, I did not interact-

MR NAMBESHE: It is good you read the *Hansard* and it helped to let the cat out of the bag, and you got to know that Uganda is working in isolation. There is a serious gap maybe in intelligence- intelligence gathering is one thing but intelligence sharing is another. These particular MPs, castigating Uganda for working in isolation, for not reaching out or cooperating with the superior powers that have always been predicting these threats and this has endangered our citizenry.

Don't you think it would be prudent to require a statement from the relevant line minister to explain why they are working in isolation and failing to move from isolation to cooperation in sharing intelligence?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, do you want to comment on that?

3.02

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, the relevant minister will come here at an appropriate time.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So can we give you Tuesday, Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

MS NABBANJA: Next week.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, very good. Thank you. Honourable, tell me about your privilege that has been violated.

MS AISHA KABANDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This Parliament passed a law for Members to access mid-term benefits from the Parliamentary Pensions Scheme. And on the 20th of June, one of us presented regulations for Members to be able to access it, but regrettably, a question was not put.

Our technical team is failing to gazette those regulations so that Members access their benefits. We seek guidance from you on how we can move on this matter so that Members can access their benefits. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I think her thinking was in line with mine right away.

Honourable members, as you may recall, on 20 June 2023, Hon. Arinaitwe Rwakajara Katambuka, in line with section 13(A)(4) of the Parliamentary Pensions Act, 2007, laid before Parliament the Parliamentary Pensions Access to Mid-term Benefits Regulations, 2023 for approval. However, no decision was taken by the House signifying the approval.

I, therefore, put the question that the Parliamentary Pensions Access to Mid-term Benefits Regulations, 2023 laid on the Table by Hon. Arinaitwe Rwakajara Katambuka on 20 June 2023 be approved by Parliament.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, in the VIP gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation of staff from the National Assembly of Zambia. They are here on a benchmarking visit to the Parliament of Uganda. They include:

- i) Mr Stephen Chiwota - Principal Clerk

- ii) Mr Julius Kampamba – Deputy Principal Clerk
- iii) Mr Davis Chimbwe – Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.

They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

Also, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have students and teachers of Buzaaya Secondary School from Buzaaya County, Kamuli District. They are represented by Hon. Mugabi Martin Muzale Kisule and Rt Hon. Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga. They have come to observe proceedings of the House. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

3.05

MR MUHAMMED KATO (NRM, Katerera County Rubirizi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance regarding the rampant fleecing of Rubirizi vanilla growers by one Savvy Saucy Spicy Trading Co Limited.

Around January 2023, this company obtained green vanilla from my constituency under Rubirizi District Farmers Association.

Several 1000s of kilogrammes of green vanilla have been collected by this company. One kilogramme costs about Shs 4,000. Money up to Shs 448,600,000 has not been paid to the growers under their association.

I have copies of the agreements between the company and the association that have not been honoured by the company.

On the 13th of February, the said company wrote to the association acknowledging the arrears of the same but up to-date, nothing has been cleared.

Mr Speaker, the association has around 400 members in this association. All the children of members of that association are at home because they have been chased away from school for fees. My prayer is that the Rt Hon.

Prime Minister be called upon to intervene in this matter and come to the rescue of the people of Rubirizi District by detailing the market avenues for the produce of farmers who are implementing various programmes. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

3.07

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me direct the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives to go and ascertain the numbers of the members of our community who have been defrauded, make sure that they are paid and report back to this House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, my view would be that instead of reporting back here - because sometimes we clog the Order Paper with very many reports from Government. Please, work with the Members of Parliament from the area. I know you are an action person - can you help these people get paid?

3.08

MR RONALD BALIMWEZO (NUP, Nakawa Division East, Kampala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On Friday, 30 June 2023, at approximately 9.00 p.m., armed thugs raided a mobile money outlet. They shot dead one person and stole Shs 72 million. Luckily enough, when the people heard the bullets, they swung into action; one of them knocked the thug holding a gun; an AKA-47 rifle and he was arrested. The gun was recovered and the police established that the gun was a UPDF property. Also, one of the thugs was a UPDF officer from Kikuba Mutwe Barracks in Kayunga.

There is a rampant involvement of security personnel in armed robberies and murders going on in the country. Therefore, my prayers are that:

1. The Government compensates the victims
2. The Ministers of Defence and Internal Affairs explain the increased involvement of security personnel in such murders.

We are all aware that the majority of the police posts –(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, conclude, honourable.

MR BALIMWEZO: Thank you. The majority of the police posts were removed from our constituencies and the Inspector General of Police did not increase the number of policemen on patrols. That is why there is increased insecurity in our various constituencies. So, I wonder why –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, you have already made your prayer.

MR BALIMWEZO: Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

3.11

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): The Minister of Internal Affairs will go and verify this information. The Rt Hon. Speaker has guided that we do not need to clog the Order Paper. We shall get in touch - between you and me - we can even go on the ground.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I did not say that on every matter. This is beyond the constituency; these cases have been in Isingiro and everywhere. The issue of the involvement of armed forces has been - what the Members of Parliament are usually interested in is action on certain matters. I feel like the response to this matter should come on the Floor of the House because it cuts across. Therefore, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, if they could respond to it next week, it would be really good.

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, you have said that you do not want the Order Paper clogged. For almost every matter, the Prime Minister has said, “the minister will come.”

However, the procedural issue I am raising is Gen. Otafiire, the Minister for Internal Affairs, who I think has now turned this ministry into his retirement nest; he never attends these parliamentary sittings. Can the Prime Minister tell us and assure Parliament that *Jajja* Otafiire, who is using the ministry as his retirement will now come here and answer?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, do you have ministers who do not attend the House?

MS NABBANJA: Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues, Gen. Otafiire and Gen. Muhoozi are the members of Cabinet charged with the responsibility of that docket. Remember, we agreed here that we have a rota where ministers will be attending plenary, especially those ministries that have more than one minister. Hence, when you see Gen. Muhoozi here, the ministry is ably represented. *(Interjections)* Gen. Otafiire is an able minister. The other day, he represented Government at a Muslim function; he is very able and strong. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, every minister is supposed to be attending Parliament as per Rule 114 of our Rules of Procedure, but also as a Member of Parliament. So, let us be patient; they will come and attend.

3.15

MR JOHN MAGOLO (NRM, Bungokho County North, Mbale): Mr Speaker, this Parliament appropriated Shs 22 billion for the Ministry of Health to pay arrears to medical interns and senior house officers in all sites of placement across this country. The interns and senior house officers, for example, in Kiruddu Hospital, Mulago and Mbarara, among others, have been paid their full arrears. However, the interns and senior house officers in Mbale Regional Referral Hospital have not been paid their arrears; the details are hereby attached.

The second and third years whose payment was effected only received two months out of six for the period of January to June 2023. The first-year students received a three months' payment

out of seven for the period of December 2022 to June 2023. The COSECSA fellows in the second and third year are partly paid while their first-year counterparts have not been paid.

The medical personnel in Mbale Regional Referral Hospital are demoralised and hardly doing what is expected of them as they feel discriminated against.

My prayers are that the Ministry of Health should expeditiously pay the arrears of the interns and senior house officers at Mbale Regional Referral Hospital with immediate effect since the money was appropriated by Parliament—*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, honourable.

MR MAGOLO: The minister should report to this House on the action taken. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

3.17

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I expected the Member to start by thanking Government for having started the process of paying interns because it has been an issue in this country. I want to promise that even those interns at Mbale Regional Referral Hospital will be paid.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, the Chairperson, Committee on Health, has notified me that the report on medical interns is ready. Clerk, please, upload it so that Members can go through it. On Thursday, we shall handle it and debate this matter. Hon. Ethel Naluyima.

3.18

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My matter concerns the indiscriminate conversion of Gunda Forest Reserve to settlement and industry.

Mr Speaker, Gunda Forest Reserve is found in Wakiso with 57 hectares and it was gazetted in 1932 and also in 1988. However, it is currently infiltrated. On 23 January 2023, there was a presidential directive to the Prime Minister to give this land for the establishment of a technology demonstration centre under the Directorate of Community and Industrialisation.

There were several correspondences and the latest indicates that this land has been subdivided and given to several individuals. My prayer on this matter is that the Attorney-General should clearly explain what this communique is all about, given that under section 11 of the National Forestry and Tree Planting Act, 2003 states how forest land can be converted to any other use.

I beg to lay the Act and request the Attorney-General to interest himself in section 11 (2)(b) for the given procedure—*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is that all?

MS NALUYIMA: Mr Speaker, my second prayer is, I ask this House to aid Wakiso District Local Government such that it replants this land with trees as per the work plans it has, given that this country is working very hard to have fight the impacts of climate change.

I also want to lay on the Table the following correspondences and documents:

- a) A letter of His Excellency the President directing the Prime Minister on allocation of land for the establishment of a technology demonstration centre.
- b) The Prime Minister's communication to the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development over the same.
- c) The Katabi Council Chairperson's letter to Uganda Land Commission.
- d) The correspondence of the Uganda Land Commission indicating the subdivisions of this forest land by different individuals.

I beg to lay and request this Parliament to intervene in this matter. I thank you. (*Applause*)
[Member: "Point of Information"]

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, a point of information is to aid a Member who is on the Floor and she has already finished her submission.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the letter was written to you. Although she is saying the Attorney-General should explain, it is you who has to implement.

3.22

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, I derive my powers from Article 108 of the Constitution, as Leader of Government Business and also as somebody who is mandated to act on presidential directives and any other assignments given to me by the President.

Uganda is becoming an industrialised country so, I request that Parliament waits for us to come here for de-gazetment when we shall bring – We are still corresponding, as stated in the letters. We shall definitely have time to come here and present the matter to the House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, as the Member has said, they have already subdivided the land. I think that is what you need to follow up and know if they have, indeed, subdivided the land and whether people beyond the ones the President directed you to give land – You know, Ugandans take opportunity. They say, "If they can give so and so this forest, I can also get my share." We have many forests around where people are holding titles.

Therefore, it is very important to establish whether:

1. The right procedure is being followed in terms of de-gazetting the forest;
2. Whether, indeed, the land has been subdivided and being shared by members.

Then, you will update the House on that. Otherwise, the rest is your work, which we cannot delve so much into.

Honourable, let us coordinate together and I will also ensure that I follow up with the Prime Minister. Hon. George Didi Bhoka?

3.24

DR GEORGE BHOKA (NRM, Obongi County, Obongi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a point of national importance regarding an unresolved land conflict between Obongi District and Yumbe District.

This land involves the villages of Mureliam, Kali in Kali Parish, Itula subcounty in Obongi District. This is a protracted matter that has been on right from the time Obongi was under Moyo District. Efforts were made by Moyo District Local Government to have this matter resolved and an inter-ministerial committee was set up. Recommendations were set to resolve this border matter but to-date, Government has not taken any action.

Consequently, farmers have been evicted from using this land. There are Government programmes that have been planned by Itula subcounty and the most recent was the land fill under *Development Response to Displacement Impact Project (DRDIP)* that was stopped by security operatives from Yumbe District Local Government.

Mr Speaker, this same land resulted in bloodshed and loss of property.

My prayers are:

1. That the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development expedites the process of resolving this border conflict – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude.

DR BHOKA: That this matter being an inter-ministerial issue, the Office of the Prime Minister interests itself in it.

Last, but not least, because this matter is becoming a security threat, the Ministry of Internal Affairs deploys police at the disputed villages to help the farmers be able to engage in their economic activities.

Finally, if this matter is not urgently resolved, it is going to affect the national housing census. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, that is not a prayer. Honourable colleagues, I do not know why we have these issues. Parliamentary resolutions were very clear on the boundaries of districts when they were being created. I remember we had a very big war on boundaries between Madi-Okollo and Terego and then Moyo and Obongi. I am told the one of Madi-Okollo and Terego are not yet resolved.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

3.27

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, an inter-ministerial committee, headed by myself and involving the Minister of Local Government, the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, the Attorney-General and the Minister of Internal Affairs, has had three consecutive meetings on the boundaries of a number of districts. It is not only about Obongi and Moyo or Madi-Okollo and Terego.

Mr Speaker, we shall handle this matter until it is concluded and report back to this House.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I think you need to have periodic interactions with the MPs involved. I could see when they come to our office that they were under a lot of pressure. Utilise your connection with the Prime Minister. You will sort out most of these issues.

3.28

MR JAMES KUBEKETERYA (NRM, Bunya County East, Mayuge): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am raising a matter regarding 43 secondary school headteachers who were

interviewed in 2021. However, up to now, these teachers of seed secondary schools have not been given their appointment letters by the Ministry of Education and Sports, whereas their colleagues - over 100 - were deployed. There are cases in places such as Kitgum, Omoro and Bugiri.

These were caretaker headteachers of these schools for about five to six years. Unfortunately, one of them, after having heard that he was not taken by the ministry, developed high blood pressure and died – His name was Ronald Nabamba from Namungo Seed Secondary School in Mityana.

My prayer is that the Ministry of Education and Sports gives these teachers their appointment letters and deploys them because this is a budget-free issue, which does not require any additional money; money is always there for the headteachers. The issue of saying that they were teachers and they absconded is a matter that the ministry should have handled before they were interviewed.

They should be taken on because there are precedents that some people, who were on the payroll, were interviewed and deployed. The Minister of Education and Sports should intervene. Otherwise, it is likely to be a court matter. Thank you.

3.31

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, Hon. Kubeketerya is the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee on Education and Sports. The Government deploys some of our honourable colleagues to handle some of these things in the committees. Now that he is declaring that he has failed as the Deputy Chairperson, I will help him and handle the matter.

MR KUBEKETERYA: Some information –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, do not access the microphone without my permission. Hon. Kubeketerya has just been appointed as the Deputy Chairperson of the committee. However, we have been

grappling with this matter for some time. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, in fact, you can now see the kind of Deputy Chairperson that you have: he is going to be tough on such issues. That is what it means. *(Laughter)*

You should look into this issue with the Minister of Education and Sports so that we have it sorted out.

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am raising a procedural matter on an issue you had assured me that you were going to talk to the President about. We are entering the second year without a substantive Governor of Bank of Uganda. What is very funny is that the same person who is supposed to appoint the Governor is appointing Board members to manage Bank of Uganda without a substantive governor.

Mr Speaker, you gave me assurance that you would talk to the President. The Minister for the Presidency is never here, yet such matters would be handled by the minister.

Therefore, wouldn't it be procedurally right for me to be updated on why, up to now, we do not have the substantive Governor Bank? Is it because Uganda does not have people who qualify for this office or is the President forgetting, but remembering to appoint Board members of Bank of Uganda?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ssewungu, you have requested me to update you. After this session, I will. *(Laughter)* If you had requested me to update the House, I would have given an update. Next item.

LAYING OF PAPERS

A. THE TAX EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD JULY 2022 TO JUNE 2023, FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/2023

3.34

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on Table the Tax Expenditure Report for

the period July 2022 to June 2023, Financial Year 2022/2023.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The report stands referred to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development for further processing.

We have another document for laying. If it is not ready, we can handle it another time.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE HOSTING OF THE CELEBRATIONS OF THE 2ND WORLD KISWAHILI LANGUAGE DAY IN THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

MS NABAGABE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. When I look at the Order Paper, I see that we do not have a very important item there. In the last sitting, honourable minister Peter Ogwang was told to give this House feedback on the issue of the curriculum and learning materials for A' Level. I know that there are some teachers who are already complaining about not knowing how to proceed with the A' Level new curriculum.

The minister was supposed to have presented a statement today but I do not see it on the Order Paper. I also do not see Hon. Peter Ogwang around. Are we proceeding well if we do not have this matter of national importance sorted? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member, first of all, we are proceeding very well. Number two, every item on the Order Paper is equally important. Number three, sometimes we give a timeline and, as presiding officers, we go back and manage the situation – working with the minister.

Therefore, if the minister is not ready, it does not help for us to put an item on the Order Paper and then when we call, the minister says: "I am not ready."

However, we are going to follow it up as an urgent matter.

3.36

THE FIRST DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (Ms Rebecca Kadaga): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. *Habari za mchana.* Good afternoon. *Bon après-midi.*

Mr Speaker, before I talk about the Kiswahili issue, allow me to say something very small about the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). You may recall that it was established by two parliamentarians, Mr Frédéric Passy and Mr Randal Cremer. There is now an award for the best performing parliamentarian in the world and I am on the selection committee.

However, last year, there were no nominations from the African group. All the nominations were from Asia, Europe and so on. So, I wanted to request you to ask the chairperson of the African Group in IPU to ensure that Africans nominate African members, so that when I am sitting there and I see some black faces, I will do the needful. *(Applause)* Thank you.

Mr Speaker, this is a brief on the celebration of the second World Kiswahili Language Day in the EAC. It is intended to promote the use of Kiswahili as an official language in Uganda and create awareness about the East African Community.

You may be aware that Article 62 of the Constitution, 1995, stipulates that Kiswahili is the second official language, but we have never actualised it. Article 137 of the Treaty for the EAC states that, “Kiswahili should be the *lingua franca* of the East African Community.”

The East African Legislative Assembly passed many resolutions, urging the Summit to consider amending the Treaty to make this an official language. On 27 February 2021, the Summit declared both Swahili and English.

On 5 November 2021, UNESCO declared 7 July as the World Swahili Day and it should be celebrated throughout the world by all the stakeholders. It has been supported by all the Councils in the EAC and in Kiswahili, it is known as “*Siku ya Kiswahili Duniani*”.

Last year, the celebrations were in Zanzibar. The President of Zanzibar officiated and gave a platform for us to reflect on the role of Kiswahili in the EAC region. At that time, Uganda was given an opportunity to host this year. Therefore, the meeting will take place here in Kampala on 6th and 7th of July 2023.

It will bring together stakeholders, researchers, policymakers, practitioners, teachers, students and ordinary citizens. There will also be recognition awards for those who have been working very hard on the issue of Swahili. So, the benefits are many.

It will bring together all the stakeholders to provide a platform to celebrate and reflect on the role of Kiswahili in the EAC; to sensitise stakeholders on the growing role, importance and opportunities of Kiswahili at the national, regional and global scene; publicise and popularise Kiswahili as an official language of the EAC, and harness the potential various stakeholders to support Kiswahili activities.

We are quite prepared. We have a regional organising committee. We are going to have media briefings, radio talk shows, youth dialogue on Twitter spaces, etcetera.

The theme for this year is “Kiswahili and Multilingualism: Achieving More Together”. We shall have goodwill messages from the leaders and all Heads of States, and different delegations from all the partner states. Mr Speaker, the presentation will be in Kiswahili and translated into English and French. So, this opportunity now for us to listen to those presentations.

We have decided that each country presents something. Therefore, the Republic of Uganda will present on “Living My Life in Kiswahili and Other Languages”. The East African Swahili Commission will present on “Regional Integration: Emerging Multilingualism”. The Republic of Kenya will present on “Kiswahili Multilingualism and Pan Africanism”.

The Republic of Rwanda will present on “Benefits and Challenges of Multilingualism: Theory and Practice”. The United Republic

of Tanzania will present “Kiswahili Language Policy and Planning in a Multi-Lingual Setting. The Republic of Kenya will have a second chance; “Kiswahili: Translation and Interpretation”. The Republic of South Sudan will present on “Conflict, Kiswahili and Multilingualism”.

The United Republic of Tanzania - of course, it has Zanzibar – will also present on “Kiswahili and the Creative Economy: Music in Multiple Languages”. Uganda will have a chance on Kiswahili Language Education and the Republic of Burundi will present on “Development of Kiswahili Through Other Languages”.

Therefore, honourable members, I am inviting you to come to Hotel Africana on 6th and 7th July to attend the symposium and see what is happening so that we can all work together to promote integration in the East African Community. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Rt Hon. Kadaga. Honourable members, let us go there in big numbers. At our level here in Parliament, we are discussing mechanisms of putting in place Kiswahili lessons for Members of Parliament. Members, a local language is very important. There is a certain business negotiation I went for somewhere. When we reached there, the Chinese diverted and started speaking in their language.

With the team I had, we could only listen to each other in English so we could not share any secrets. *(Laughter)* They went and banged tables, then after, came back with an agreement. For those of us who could not whisper to each other in English, we could not do anything.

So, it is very important for us to embrace Kiswahili seriously so that we can have a common language. We can also be able to backbite those who will be backbiting us internationally. *(Laughter)* We have our own language.

Honourable members, this is a very clear statement; it is a clarion call. I will pick two

Members; I will pick a Member from a border area who speaks Kiswahili and the Leader of the Opposition.

There is someone whom I wanted to speak to but he has not managed to stand up. I thought he knew Kiswahili; I think he does not know. He is the chairperson of the Forum on East African Community Affairs. *(Laughter)* I need a lady; Hon. Faith Nakut.

3.44

MR GEOFFREY EKANYA (FDC, Tororo North County, Tororo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. *Asante sana. (Laughter)* I thank the First Deputy Prime Minister. Kiswahili or any language is very important. My wife owns a school and we are already teaching Kiswahili there.

The way forward for us, besides the lesson you are proposing - The digital world, including all our phones or the iPads, can translate English into Kiswahili. So, my proposal, going forward, is that we should dedicate one day in a week, when we legislate in Kiswahili. It will make it mandatory for every Member of Parliament to learn Kiswahili, in order to be here to communicate in Kiswahili.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: As long as you allow the Presiding Officer to preside in English, then you speak in Kiswahili. *(Laughter)*

MR EKANYA: Mr Speaker, once we do that, our voters on the ground will ensure that they learn Kiswahili so that they will be able to understand what we communicate. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

3.46

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also wish to thank the Rt Hon. First Deputy Prime Minister for pushing the agenda for Uganda to host. It is an honour for Uganda to host the Celebrations of the 2nd World Kiswahili Language Day in the East African Community. I would like to commend you for the job well done.

Mr Speaker, I would like to remind you that last year, the minister submitted to this House a clear plan on how we can roll out Kiswahili. When she read it, I was happy and hoped that after one year I would be here debating here in Kiswahili.

Now we are celebrating - it appears that the plan has not been rolled out. Can we understand what is required so that Parliament can support that plan? It is a very good plan if implemented and I sure, within a year, Ugandans will be comfortable using Kiswahili. Can I get that update?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let me pick our representative for Pan African Parliament since this is a continental matter. Then, I will conclude with the Leader of the Opposition.

3.47

MR PATRICK OSHABE (NUP, Kassanda County North, Kassanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. At the Pan African Parliament, we are struggling with a matter of language. When you look at the way we do things, in Africa, we only debate in English and French; the continent is split into French and English. We have Anglophone and Francophone. There is a move within the Pan African Parliament to promote our own. English is for the English man and French for the French man.

We have the opportunity of educating our children or promoting Kiswahili in the African continent so that if we are doing negotiations - Mr Speaker, we are talking about the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) - we should negotiate in either or English or French.

Mr Speaker, this is the right cause and I want to thank the Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga for that. Let us move along those lines and adopt Kiswahili because it is the way to go. The Pan African Parliament is looking forward to ensuring that in the continent, we teach and learn how to use Kiswahili since it is the most spoken language across Africa, apart from the colonial master's language. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I had picked Hon. Ariko. We also have our elder; Hon. Wakikona who has played a very critical role.

3.49

MR HERBERT ARIKO (NRM, Soroti East Division, Soroti City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to applaud the Rt Hon. First Deputy Prime Minister for this update. Kiswahili is an important language because it is a critical bridge between the various indigenous communities in the East African subregion.

In many of the small communities and different languages we have in the region, when you attempt to find that other language other than the language of the Whiteman that our people can communicate, you find it is Kiswahili.

It is, therefore, incumbent upon us, as a country, to see how we can encourage, motivate communication and teaching of the Kiswahili language in our schools and institutions so that we are able to pick up and go to a larger extent closer to other nations, for instance; Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and Congo. Even in South Sudan, Kiswahili is much understood and spoken more than in Uganda. I believe we need to promote Kiswahili so that we are able to have a more unified medium of communication.

Hon. Patrick Oshabe has talked about the aspect of communication at the continental level. It is, indeed, interesting to note that as Africans, even when we go to those international fora - we have gone to other - (*Member timed out.*)

3.51

MR DAVID WAKIKONA (NRM, Bushigi County, Bududa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to also thank the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for East African Community Affairs for what she has submitted today. She did so even when she was still a Speaker but our approach was not very proper and now, you would not get people to learn Kiswahili.

Mr Speaker, we are used to Kiswahili. *Muntu kama mimi nilikuwa tengeru nikuwa na kifunza tu sawhili peke yake. (Laughter)* Now, when we are that type -Kiswahili *ndio kiruga tuna wongea kila sawa kila mahali kil kyoto nataka wongea tu swashili eyo ndio Napata kyakula -*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, I would like to be sure you are not talking about the presiding officer. *(Laughter)*

MR WAKIKONA: What I am saying is that when we used to for these conferences and spoke English, people would look away and say “*Sijui wa nessema niniawa*”. Now that we are going to learn it, it is better we put in the effort.

I hope the responsible people will put much effort. Do not force language on people. Those interested should come together. Even when we bring in Kiswahili-speaking people, they will learn the language faster than ourselves. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. members, I have already started learning quietly. There is an application called “Duolingo”. Every morning, it reminds you of very critical words for just five minutes and it monitors your progress. It keeps giving you the words slowly. Then it takes you into sentences. One day, I will come here and preside over only in Swahili. *(Laughter)* Let us conclude with the LOP. Members we still have items where I am going to pick you.

Honourable colleagues, I usually do not want to give double opportunities to people when others have not yet spoken. I have looked for a female Member and I could not find any; I only got Hon. Faith Nakut and that is why I picked her.

3.55

THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me also join colleagues to thank the minister; *Mweshimiwa* First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for East African Community Affairs for this statement and

lobbying aggressively to host Celebrations of the 2nd World Kiswahili Language Day in the East African Community in Uganda.

Article 137 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community which was enacted in 1999 for the East African Legislative Assembly, has a dictate - a serious one - that the member states should develop the Kiswahili language as a lingua franca. I would like to call upon the minister that since now Uganda has an opportunity of hosting this International Day of Kiswahili language, there is a serious concern.

We know very well that the Kiswahili language is the best facilitator of trade. Let me single out one of the member states; Kenya. It would be useful to have at least some knowledge of Kiswahili in order to speak freely in business.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we have the protocol and the Treaty. All these protocols, like the Customs Union, have been signed by the member states but the one-million-dollar concern is the strict adherence by the member states to these protocols and the Treaty. If they are still rejecting goods and services from Uganda –

Kenya is now the largest economy in East and Central Africa and they are the biggest beneficiaries in this region. You will even find businessmen from Kenya in our villages. But even when the protocols that have been signed to remove those restrictions and allow free movement of goods, labour, services and capital are there Ugandan goods – As we talk, South Sudan - In the recent past, Kenya had a flimsy excuse that our maize had aflatoxins, which was not true. The matter was eventually prevailed upon by the Uganda National Bureau of Standards when they conducted a confirmatory laboratory test that found our maize fit for human consumption.

Now that we have an opportunity, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, could you, please, prevail over them to know that Ugandans will not embrace this, language if they are not encouraged to integrate through trade? If Kenya, Rwanda and

Tanzania have closed off and we say that the language is a facilitator of trade, would it be carrying meaning honestly?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude.

MR NAMBESHE: If our people in Uganda and their goods are not allowed to cross, yet the rest of our neighbours are at liberty- Sudanese are here; everyone is here - but when it comes to us reaching out there, it is the complete opposite.

I am reliably informed that Kiswahili which had gained traction in the forces is degenerating. I am yet to find out why –(Interruption)

MR SSEWUNGU: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. Mr Speaker, I joined the military police as a primary teacher in 1992 but there was no single soldier, of whatever tribe, that could speak any language in the barracks other than Kiswahili.

The warrant officers; the RP of the day hearing you speak in another language in the barracks, would be criminal and you would be subjected to punishment because they were fighting tribalism within the army. However, as we talk, police - I do not know where they train from - do not know Kiswahili. Just do a random sample, Mr Speaker, since you have begun training, and ask those police officers here at Parliament to speak Kiswahili. *Wote hawawezi kuzungumza Kiswahili kabisa. Wagonjwa, hawawezi kuzungumza Kiswahili.*

We need to work on that. This is why Nyerere brought that language to fight sectarianism and tribalism in Tanzania. In fact, Burundi and Tanzania are better than us. Burundi has just learned Kiswahili. We should all embrace the language. I would like to thank you for saying that you are going to give us lessons.

I learned Kiswahili at Kakoba National Teachers' College and the barracks. We were taught from 7.00 a.m. before we could go for other lectures. In the barracks nowadays, it is a different language - Everyone is speaking a different language; Runyankore, Luganda;

everybody speaks his or her own language. That is the information.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssewungu, do you still interact in the barracks?

MR SSEWUNGU: So much, Mr Speaker. The Minister of State for Defence and Veteran Affairs was my boss.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, are you a deserter? This is a potential deserter - (Laughter)

MR SSEWUNGU: That is for another day, Mr Speaker. I will tell you -

MR NAMBESHE: Mr Speaker, as I conclude, let me allow this information.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, no. You are going to be presiding officers indirectly.

MR NAMBESHE: Mr Speaker, I was concluding. Kiswahili is a very important language spoken by over 200 million people. This is why media organisations like BBC, Voice of America and Deutsche Welle broadcast radio programmes in Kiswahili.

Therefore, it is not a language we can ignore. Let us have it embraced by the local populace; there should be meaningful integration. Thank you very much.

MS KADAGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me thank Members for their observations. I welcome the proposal to do some digital arrangements for our consumption and maybe, I will answer the question by Hon. Faith at the same time.

My office has been ready for the last two years to support Parliament. The Rules of Procedure and the Prayers are ready, all in Kiswahili. We sent a text here, but it has not been picked up.

Therefore, I want to direct the Clerk to come to my ministry, in an open ceremony, so that we hand over, officially, the Rules of Procedure,

the Prayer and all the materials. Our plan was that Parliament should be the first port of call. For us, we are ready.

I also want to report that the Judiciary has already started taking Kiswahili lessons, Cabinet takes lessons every Monday for the first hour. So, Hon. Faith, we are on course and I am waiting for your side.

Hon. Nsamba, yes, Kiswahili is now the fourth official language of the SADC, African Union, the UN and EAC. Therefore, let us just move on and do the needful.

However, Hon. Wakikona, *nakushukuru sana. Asante sana*. Thank you for your submissions; you have encouraged Members to be able to speak.

Hon. Nambeshe, the solution will be the Federation because the sovereignty of each country is difficult to enforce. For instance, the Republic of South Sudan are members but they are not part of the Customs Union; they have not yet assented. We have not yet established the revenues committee because some partner states are not willing. Therefore, the ultimate solution is a political federation. I think that will help us to organise ourselves.

On the issue of aflatoxins, we have made some progress but I think we need to advise our farmers on standards so that when they are exporting, they do not fall into these problems. Otherwise, we are on course. Thank you very much.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF
PARLIAMENT TO APPRECIATE HIS
EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA FOR THE
CLEAR AND PRECISE EXPOSITION OF
GOVERNMENT POLICY CONTAINED
IN THE STATE OF THE NATION
ADDRESS TO THE PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA ON
WEDNESDAY, 7 JUNE 2023

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the Rt Hon. Prime Minister on the Order Paper, but there is a communication she wanted to make.

4.00

THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Ms Robinah Nabbanja): Mr Speaker, delegation is the only way you can effectively lead and so, Hon. Kateshumbwa is coming to move the motion. (*Interruption*)

MR OSHABE: Mr Speaker, the Prime Minister has over 80 ministers, including one from the Democratic Party. Are we proceeding well for the Prime Minister to show a vote of no confidence in all the ministers and picks a Member, a backbencher, to come and present a motion here – moreover a motion on the President’s speech?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, number one, this is not a statutory motion; it can be moved by any of the Members. However, both the Rt Hon. Prime Minister and Hon. Kateshumbwa had booked. So, we told them to sort themselves out, although the Order Paper had read the “Prime Minister”.

So, I told her for purposes of amending the Order Paper properly, the Member considered moving the motion needs to go on the Floor and explain. So, Clerk, amend the Order Paper to reflect Hon. Kateshumbwa because they reconciled. Hon. Kateshumbwa?

MR KATESHUMBWA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The motion reads:

“WHEREAS Article 101(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 requires the President, at the beginning of each Session, to deliver to Parliament an address on the State-of-the-Nation;

AND WHEREAS His Excellency the President, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, in compliance with the requirements of Article 101(1) of the Constitution, delivered the State-of-the-Nation Address to this Parliament at Kololo Independence Ceremonial Grounds, Kampala on Wednesday, 7 June 2023;

AWARE THAT in his address to the nation, His Excellency the President highlighted key

strategic areas, which the Government will prioritise;

FURTHER AWARE that in his address, His Excellency the President informed the nation that the key strategic priority areas will enable the Government to achieve exemplary fiscal performance, which will result in increased revenue, thereby reducing Uganda's reliance on debt to finance the national budget;

RECOGNISING that the key strategic priority areas identified by His Excellency the President have the potential to increase income, improve quality of life and eradicate poverty at the household level through modernisation of agriculture, industrialisation, improved service delivery and will be the basis for the organisation and delivery of public and private sector interventions for wealth creation, employment generation, planning and budgeting;

COGNISANT of the strategic leadership rendered by His Excellency the President in the formulation of the Government policy, which has laid a strong foundation for the rapid economic growth and socio-economic transformation of Uganda;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by this Parliament as follows:

- i. That Parliament expresses its gratitude to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda for his clear and precise exposition of the State-of-the-Nation Address to the Parliament of the Republic of Uganda on 7 June 2023;*
- ii. That Parliament commits itself to the promotion of the strategic ideas and values propounded by His Excellency the President in his State-of-the-Nation Address." I beg to move.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded? (*Members rose*) It is seconded by Hon. Nyamutoro, Hon. Pius Wakabi, Hon. Emely Kugonza, the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, Member for Hoima, Member for Ntungamo,

Member for Bundibugyo, Hon. Okabe, Hon. Linda Irene – and the whole House.

Honourable member, would you like to speak to the motion?

MR KATESHUMBA: Mr Speaker, in fulfilment of the constitutional requirement, under Article 101 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, the President delivered the State-of-the-Nation Address.

In his address, His Excellency the President laid the foundation for the lawmakers and the country at large, giving the Government's priorities for Financial Year 2023/2024.

In his priorities, His Excellency the President informed Parliament that the economic growth for this year is projected to be at 5.5 per cent in real terms, compared to 4.7 per cent in the last financial year.

Over the next five years, the economy is projected to grow at an average of 6.5 to 7 per cent per year - that is even faster – due to the economic stability as a result of low inflation, establishment of more manufacturing plants, continued implementation of the Parish Development Model, support to the small and medium-scale enterprises through Emyooga, youth, women and other women funds, increased oil and gas sector activities and growth in the regional trade as well as the positive impact of the continued recovery of the economies in the Middle East, Asia, Europe and USA, which are markets for our exports.

Mr Speaker, the President highlighted that by the end of Financial Year 2023/2024, Uganda's GDP is projected to grow to Shs 207 trillion, which is an equivalent of about \$55.17 billion – and that translates to \$156 billion by purchasing power parity terms. This means that the GDP per capita is projected to grow from \$1,096 in the Financial Year 2022/2023 to \$1,186, in Financial Year 2023/2024.

On the issue of inflation, His Excellency the President stated that the prices of domestic goods and services have come down,

compared to last year's. Products such as edible oil, petroleum and cement were the examples given. Food prices remained high due to climate change effects that have caused prolonged drought.

His Excellency the President also highlighted that the issue of climate change is a result of our practices, which we need to manage and that the Government is addressing the issue of climate change as follows:

- i. The ongoing Government investment in small-scale solar-powered irrigation;
- ii. Vigorously enforcing presidential directives on charcoal burning and wetland cultivation;
- iii. Enforcement of the National Environment Act;
- iv. Restoration of degraded wetlands;
- v. Demarcation of wetland boundaries and strengthening awareness and sensitisation campaigns on the conservation of wetlands; and
- vi. Providing alternative livelihoods for people that have been encroaching on wetlands.

Mr Speaker, His Excellency the President has set out the priorities to reduce floods that have ravaged the country in the past, causing significant damage to wetland vegetation, infrastructure, roads, and gardens, and loss of life for humans and animals, including flora and fauna, and disruption of movements and transportation of goods and services, hence affecting the economy – as recently noticed from the damage of Katonga Bridge, which was washed away by floods.

His Excellency the President implored all leaders to enforce interventions to address the problem of floods, which involve the protection of water catchment and the general environment so that they perform their function of storing and releasing water safely, even when there is an increase in rainfall.

He also implored regular maintenance of water bodies and rivers to perform their function of water storage and conveyance, demarcation and protection of lake shores, riverbanks and wetlands to limit encroachment by settlements, construction of water storage facilities, agricultural activities, other developments and strengthening the early warning systems and enforcement of water and environmental laws at all levels.

Further still, His Excellency the President pointed out the strategic need for value addition as a link between agriculture and industry.

The Government registered progress in export revenue of goods and services amounting to \$6.04 billion for the Calendar Year ending 2022, of which, the export of goods merchandise was worth \$4.2 billion. For the last 12 months to February 2023, Uganda exported 5.750-kilogramme bags of coffee worth \$858 million, fish worth \$166.9 million and maize worth \$131 million.

This was possible due to the NRM Government's efforts to grow and diversify the economy. Most importantly, to curb inflation, the Government resisted price controls and subsidies because such measures are not sustainable and introduce distortions in the economy.

The Government's strategy is that anything agricultural, that is not consumed fresh, should be processed industrially so that it is preserved to reach distant markets through value addition. For example, a kilogramme of shredded coffee gives \$1, while the processed into the final product for consumption fetches \$14. A kilogramme of roasted brown coffee in Europe, England, fetches about \$30. The President noted that this suffocation of producers should end.

Domestic revenue in the Financial Year 2022/2023 was estimated at Shs 25.55 trillion, which translates to 13.7 per cent of the GDP. In the Financial Year 2023/2024, the Government will collect Shs 29.67 trillion as domestic revenue. The Government is planning to raise at least 18 per cent of the GDP in the next five

years, as large part of the population joins the money economy.

The industrialisation drives across the country have brought about positive results. There are eight Government-owned industrial parks, which are operational in Namanve, Luzira, Bweyogerere, Soroti, Mbale, Jinja, Mbarara and Kasese. The industrial parks in Karamoja and Koboko will soon commence.

In addition, there are three industrial parks operating under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement. The total number of factories is now 4,008, employing 150,685 Ugandans, largely the youth, who form part of the biggest percentage of our population. This is a reflection of socio-economic transformation.

The President emphasised the Parish Development Model that will accelerate socio-economic growth, where 39 per cent of the households in the non-money economy will be moved to the money economy. This approach will organise and deliver public and private sector interventions for wealth creation and employment generation.

His Excellency the President launched a wealth and jobs creation initiative for those who found it difficult to access financing through banks called “*Emyooga*.” This initiative has been successful in mobilising, especially the youths and women in the informal sector into productive self-employment by increasing their skills, acquiring equipment and accessing affordable capital. As at the end of December 2022, seed capital amounting to Shs 258 billion had been disbursed to 6,714 *Emyooga* SACCOs and Shs 1,000,000 to individual beneficiaries.

His Excellency the President indicated that tourism has had a significant potential for the economy. The sector has registered key achievements. For example, it employs 1.5 million Ugandans along the entire tourism value chain and contributes 6.7 per cent of the GDP.

In the year 2022, Uganda’s national parks hosted 367,869 visitors; leisure and holiday visitors stayed longer and the wildlife populations have increased. These numbers have grown and increased Uganda’s Government’s focus on infrastructure and marketing.

The President stressed that social metamorphosis takes place when societies undergo modernisation. In modernised countries, a small percentage of people are involved in agriculture. A country must be supported to move to value addition and manufacturing. Thus, in order to build a knowledge-based economy using advanced scientific knowledge, the President called upon Members of Parliament support to Kiira Motors to get moving so that the production of automobiles becomes part of the economy.

The President commented on the Anti-Homosexuality Bill and commended the Parliament of Uganda for passing it. He raised the substantive points that should be used to explain Uganda’s position.

His Excellency the President outlined the economic priorities of the Government in the next financial year, which include peace and security of persons and property, effective implementation of PDM and *Emyooga*, acquisition of right-of-way for Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), investing in small-scale solar-powered irrigation to address climate change and food security, constructing transmission lines and power substations, maintenance of both tarmac and murrum roads, development of industrial parks, support medical schools and scientific-based research, expediting the infrastructure of oil and gas, capitalising UDB and UDC and supporting ICT.

In conclusion, let me take this opportunity to thank His Excellency the President, Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni for steering the NRM government to expand the economic base of the country and a strong foundation that has been built for rapid economic growth and socio-economic transformation. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nyamutoro, three minutes.

4.22

MS PHIONA NYAMUTORO (NRM, Youth Representative, Female): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to join my colleague to appreciate the President for the well elaborate State-of-the-Nation-Address. I will speak to a few sectors of concern, especially to the young people of this country that the President highlighted and addressed to the nation.

On the issue of education, the President has time and again, emphasised the need for Uganda to achieve a free education for all, and this has still not been realised. We have a very high literacy rate of 76 per cent. As we speak, we have an enrolment rate of 85 per cent, but still, Uganda is grappling with high school dropouts. The President has always struggled, time and again, calling upon leaders at all levels to join him in this struggle. Therefore, I would like to call upon this Parliament – (*Interjection*) – please, do not distract me. Mr Speaker, I beg to be protected.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us listen to one another. I usually guide colleagues when they are usually on the Floor to focus on what they are saying. This is because when you respond to someone who is not on the *Hansard*, the one, who will look at the *Hansard* in the future will wonder how those were connected. Remember, you are on record and the other person trying to divert you is not on record. So, focus until I allow a person to speak.

MS NYAMUTORO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. On that very issue, leaders should stand up in their respective areas, and ensure that Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Secondary Education (USE) are fulfilled to their core so that Ugandans access free education and envision the President's action.

The President emphasised the need to invest more in ICT research and other science subjects. Whereas we would have this realised, it is

important that as a Parliament, we encourage the Government to invest in early childhood development. This is because most of the UPE and USE schools do not have prerequisites for early childhood development. Probably, this is the genesis of having substandard degree holders today. That is one of the issues that we call upon the Government to take upon and address in bettering the education of Uganda.

The President also recommitted the investment in stadiums as a way of promoting the sports industry. This is one of the industries that is centralised in the development of young people and an alternative to the high unemployment rates we have in the country.

We would like to applaud the President for that and call upon the Attorney-General and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to fast-track the President's directive on working on the copyrights law that has had many in the arts industry endangered and many that are grappling over their right and how best they can earn from their employment.

On the issue of health, the President emphasised the use of radio programmes to speak on the importance of nutrition. Uganda as a country, over time, has had an increase in the lifespan but as we speak, there is silent research that is indicating a decline in our nutritional levels. This is not good for the country. It is very important that nutrition is taken seriously. Right from the prenatal stage, we need to Ugandans that the backbone is agriculture and nutrition can definitely not be any of our problems.

Lastly, the President called upon Ugandans to fight the danger of malaria. Malaria has been one of the diseases claiming many lives of Ugandans and Africa in general. Until today, we still do not have a sustainable to end malaria. I think that is one of the issues that is still taking many lives of young people. As the Ministry of Health is putting in a lot of effort to ensure that malaria is eradicated, it also is incumbent upon us as leaders to continuously sensitise the community about the dangers of malaria.

Although the President did not mention-

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, kindly conclude.

MS NYAMUTORO: Yes, Mr Speaker. Although the President did not mention sexual reproductive health and rights, as an advocate of young people, allow me to utilise this opportunity to encourage the Ministry of Health and the Government to invest in sexual reproductive health enrolment in schools across the board to get people enlightened on their different rights to ensure their wellbeing so that we have healthy citizens. I beg to second.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, Hon. Nyamutoro was the official seconder. The rest of you were on the edge. You are simply seconding what she has already seconded. I now open debate. Hon. Byakatonda, Hon. Flavia, *Hajji*, I am seeing Hon. Musana, Hon. Linda Irene, and Hon. Florence. Honourable colleagues, let us first get a procedural matter.

MR OKUPA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The tradition has always been that after the State-of-the-Nation Address, we get a copy of the Budget Speech. Can we be guided procedurally about what could have happened because that would enable us to debate, not just use our memory to remember what we heard on that day?

The procedural matter is whether the rules have changed, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is not provided anywhere in the rules that. You said it was a practice so do not refer to the rules when you clearly said it is a practice. Otherwise, I thought Members had received copies. I have my copy. I got mine by being present at Kololo; I listened to everything, it was also in the media and everywhere. Maybe, formally, we shall arrange copies for you.

RtHon. Prime Minister, ensure that Members get copies of the Address on the State of the Nation

in their pigeon holes. I know the Members know the issues. During the justification, the mover of the motion expounded on most of the issues that were covered. So, we can proceed with the debate, Hon. Okupa; it does not cause any problems. The Leader of the Opposition has given me a notice that he will be presenting a response. So, we are going to have enough time. Hon. Byakatonda?

4.10

DR ABDULHU BYAKATONDA (Independent, Workers Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to second the motion arising out of the speech of the President and the movers.

Mr Speaker, we are trying to fly a rocket and Uganda is now a rocket which is destined to fly. The economy must grow.

On value addition, it is very key. In the region, Tanzania is getting \$353.1 from processing cashew nuts. That is almost half or a quarter of our budget. To do have achieved, Mr Speaker, they regulated the cashew nuts under an Act of the Tanzanian Parliament (2006). We do not have regulations on that. Our cashew nut is moving left and right, being cut into charcoal. This is an area we need to tap into. I think we are on value addition, Mr Speaker, we need regulation and a clear indication that we are moving in that direction.

On macadamia, Kenya is the biggest exporter in the region with 13 per cent and earning a lot of money. Mr Speaker, we need to process these because when we do this, it means that we are adding jobs to our youngsters. Now, we are not employing them because these sectors are not absorbing our people. So, we need to urgently come up with laws to regulate these economies.

On climate change, there is nothing difficult like managing somebody who is hungry. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), an average human being must eat three meals a day but, in the countryside, it is very difficult to even have one meal.

What do we need to do? We need a paradigm shift in technology. For now, we – (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I am told there was a second seconder but the motion I have is signed by only one seconder, so I consider the one who signed. I do not consider the one who did not sign.

Honourable colleagues, the motion is very clear. When we are debating, tell us whether you agree the President did a good job or not. In your debate, you need to show that you agree with the mover since our resolution at the end will be a resolution of Parliament to appreciate His Excellency the President. So, in your debate, you either agree or disagree. Then we shall put the question and come out with a resolution. So, let us be clear on this. Hon. Flavia, two minutes each. Is Dr Bukenya around? If he is, he will notify me so that I allow him.

4.33

MS FLAVIA KABAHENDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Kyegegwa): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to agree with the mover that we appreciate His Excellency for the State-of-the-Nation Address.

I agree with the President that household incomes and education will drive this country to a middle-income status because no country is better than the status of its education. His Excellency was very particular about the levies schools are charging the parents for various things in the schools and this is deterring students to continue with school.

Mr Speaker, it is not only the levies. When our schools do not have classroom accommodation, enrolment of teachers - half of them are paid by parents - when our schools do not have desks, do not have latrines and one stanza being lined up by all the children at school, then I think as Members of Parliament, we need to take keen interest whether the school environment can afford the students to stay at school and not necessarily the levies.

The other concern is the 39 per cent of households in Uganda who are not in the money economy. Can the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development tell us who these 39 per cent people are? Are they women or men? Where are the houses?

4.36

MS LINDA AUMA (Independent, Woman Representative, Lira): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise in support of the motion on the speech of the President of the Republic of Uganda. I would like to focus strictly on economic empowerment.

Just last week, I launched the PDM but I realised that as Government - even if this is a revolving fund - we have not catered for the uncertainty; the risk management associated with these funds we are giving out, especially insurance yet our target is on the 39 per cent. This means that these are the real poor citizens.

In case of this uncertainty, what measures have we put in place, as a country? Otherwise, the rest are waiting for this money. How will they recover it? Have we insured it or not? We need to think about how we can do it since the grace period is two years.

On education, children are now stunted due to malnutrition and poor upbringing. What future do we have for our future citizens? As a country, our Government schools have land so why don't we push our Government-aided schools to start cultivating crops to feed children in school? This will help parents – (*Member timed out.*)

4.38

MR ERIC MUSANA (Independent, Buyaga East County, Kagadi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to support the motion especially where we see the President addressing an issue that has been very big, but the answer is still pending. This is unemployment.

The President has been training and giving us a lot of information on value addition. There has been a very big issue with infrastructure that would help us achieve value addition.

However, it has been micromanaged because we see little being achieved, yet we have the biggest population that would benefit from this value addition. We are doing very well in agriculture but many of our products are meeting challenges. On value addition, we are doing poorly.

We have a challenge is the budget performance. We are doing a lot of work as a country on the budget cycle but we have a challenge on implementation. Making the budget is okay – *(Member timed out.)*

4.40

MR SIRAJI EZAMA (NRM, Aringa County, Yumbe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to thank the President for the elaborate and comprehensive speech he delivered during the State-of-the-Nation Address. The President categorically stated that for a country to develop, it needs to be industrialised. Developed countries have only 4 per cent of their communities involved in agriculture.

The President made an elaborate speech, which covered very many areas. We want West Nile industrialised so we are able to be employed. We do not have industries in West Nile. Power is not enough in that region yet the population of West Nile is still in Uganda that needs to be involved in the development prospects of Uganda.

In that regard - although, I appreciate the speech delivered by His Excellency the President - we need something done in West Nile so we can develop like other parts of Uganda. Thank you.

4.41

MS FLORENCE NAMBOZO (Independent, Woman Representative, Sironko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to join my colleagues in appreciating the President for the State-of-the-Nation Address.

The President has continuously talked about commercial agriculture and “*ekida kyonka*.” However, look at the extension workers in our districts who are not functional. To manage this, we need to look at how functional

extension workers are, to be able to arrest the challenge of food insecurity. When you look at the eastern region, for example, Bugisu or Sironko where I come from, we are the food basket to the eastern region, but we have a challenge of silos.

We talked about aflatoxins here. The people who sell food across the borders pick it right from the gardens before it is even ready. Therefore, post-harvest handling management is not done in the right way.

Look at the water-stressed areas; right now, we have floods. Why don't we have valley dams so we can make irrigation possible and have deliberate means of not having drought or food insecurity? In areas like Karamoja, Government takes food there, but how sustainable is that?

I have looked at the PDM - Mr Speaker, the people in Bugisu and Bukedi have been featured in the newspapers because of sleeping along the roads in Mbale – *(Member timed out.)*

4.44

MR PIUS WAKABI (NRM, Bugahya County, Hoima): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This year's address by the President was the best in his life – *(Laughter)* - The President was very clear and practical and he looked very fresh and energetic. My prayer is that the President should continue leading this country beyond 2026.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think you are done.

MR WAKABI: Yes, I am done. *(Laughter)*

4.44

MS GORRETH NAMUGGA (NUP, Mawogola County South, Ssembabule): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am responding to the State-of-the- Nation Address and I thank the President for fulfilling his mandate of appearing before the people at that time.

However, when you look at the issue of the implementation of the Parish Development Model in comparison with the budget for this

financial year, where it was indicated that parish chiefs are going to get bicycles so they reach the people, as colleagues may recall, NRM chairpersons were given bicycles to do NRM party activities around the villages, but they were misused to carry water. So, I think that with modernisation around – and comparing the distances that we move – the parish chiefs should get modern means of transport rather than bicycles.

When you look at the issue of each parish chief getting an office, it is very costly for the Government. This is provided for in the next financial year. You are speaking about the rationalisation of Government agencies yet at the same, you are talking about providing more offices for parish chiefs, I think it is not sustainable.

On the rationalisation of agencies and reduction of public expenditure, I think there is a delay in its implementation.

The President did not come out on the issue of corruption. He only blamed the District Internal Security Officers (DISOs) – that it is the DISOs who have held us back on issues of corruption. So, he should deliberately come out to mention that it is the ministers close to him that have frustrated him on the issue of corruption, but not the DISOs.

Lastly, on the issue of the provision of subsidies, the President said that when you give subsidies –(Interruption)

MS AMERO: Madam Speaker, I am tempted to put my sister on a point of order. The day the President was presenting the State-of-the-Nation Address, the whole Opposition was not in the House. I actually acted as the Leader of the Opposition on that day. (Laughter)

Today, I see my sister standing here on the Floor to tell us that “the President was saying this”. Where did she hear what the President was saying? Is she in order to come and begin guessing what was being spoken on the Floor of the House?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable member, I have to make a ruling. I have seen the passion, but the problem is that I do not know whether you have raised the point order because you said “you were attempting to”. So, I do not know how I will address an attempt. (Laughter) It is difficult for me to rule on a mere attempt.

If you had risen on a point of order, I would have ruled. Since you only stopped at an attempt, it is very difficult for me. However, next time, join us, honourable colleagues. This is a constitutional mandate – the same way we are going to give the Opposition a chance to make a response.

When you listen to each other, you lose nothing. If the President comes, listen to him. Honourable members, let us not be – Hon. Okupa, do you want to give information?

MR OKUPA: Mr Speaker, thank you very much. I do not want us to be lumped. I am a member of the Opposition and I was in Kololo, for both the State-of-the-Nation Address and the Budget Speech. So, we should not be lumped that it is all the Opposition –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Okupa, you are an independent Member of Parliament; it is on record. I do not know how I will determine whether you are in the Opposition or not. (Laughter)

MR OKUPA: I am.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Kagabo acted as – Honourable members, let us not be diverted. There is a very clear motion. What Hon. Susan Amero made was an appeal. Let us always attend and listen; you lose nothing. Hon. Gorreth, conclude.

MS NAMUGGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your wise ruling. I would like to remind my honourable colleague that I am the Shadow Minister of Science, Innovation and Communication Technology. The theme for the next financial year elaborately talks of monetisation of the economy through the

commercialisation of agriculture, and access to the market – but broadly, digital transformation. So, I implore you to use Zoom like the ministers do, as Rt Hon. Nabbanja said. *(Laughter)*

The last issue is about subsidies. The President said he did not give subsidies on fuel because we would go to bars. I want to remind the President that fuel is not used to go to bars. We use fuel for productivity. Thank you.

4.50

MR GODFREY SAAZI (NUP, Gomba East County, Gomba): Thank you, Mr Speaker. There is nothing to appreciate in the President's speech – *(Interjections)* – yes, it is my opinion.

I wonder whether we still live in the same Uganda as Mr Museveni. I will take the example of the Parish Development Model which he brought as a success. This programme was introduced in the Financial Year 2021/2022 and he promised Shs 30 million per parish. From Shs 30 million, he said Shs 17 million and it moved from Shs 17 million to Shs 7 million.

Nobody received that money in my constituency. When it came to Financial Year 2022/2023, Mr Speaker, he promised Shs 100 million per parish – *(Interjections)* –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, you will have a chance to respond. There is a point of order.

MR NABBANJA: Mr Speaker, I am the Leader of the Government Business of this country. *(Applause)* As I speak, the district where he comes from has received Shs 100 million per parish. *(Applause)* Therefore, is he in order to deceive this country that money has not gone to his constituency?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, let us do it this way. On the issue of the Parish Development Model – for us to be very clear – let us request the Minister of Local Government and the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to table a list of districts and how much they have

received. No, please. Honourable members, are you now telling me what to do? *(Laughter)*

Honourable members, I think we can have a decent debate. You can drive your point home by not using language that evokes emotions so that we can have a good debate. Hon. Saazi, conclude.

MR SAAZI: Mr Speaker, I am not deceiving. This year, they promised Shs 100 million per parish. Yesterday, I got evidence that each SACCO got Shs 57 million, not Shs 100 million – and that money has not yet been withdrawn. It is on the accounts; nobody has gotten money in my constituency.

So, there is nothing to appreciate about this. We should not excite Ugandans; we should be clear. The President just talked, but we did not get anything.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Saazi, the problem is that when you start debating and focusing on an individual, not knowing that you are going to be on the *Hansard*, all of you lose it. Let us sober up.

I have made a clear ruling; the minister should bring evidence here. So, let us wait; it is not a matter of saying “This has been received”. Please, let us wait for the minister to table it here and you to access it. So, go to another point, honourable member, and conclude.

MR SAAZI: I do not support the motion.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, a motion has two sides: you have people who agree and those who do not. So, as a Speaker, I will allow those who agree and those who do not. *(Applause)* I must allow both; that is what a motion and debate is all about.

What I do is very simple: to ensure that I put into consideration the numerical strength of the House. I know who I pick – how many are NRM, how many are independents and how many are Opposition.

4.54

MR ISAIAS SSASAGA (FDC, Budadiri County East, Sironko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. If I had the ability, I would amend the motion because the President talked about floods. You are aware of how the Mt Elgon region has been largely affected by landslides.

In his speech, I expected him to talk about the mitigation measures in the policy which are going to handle the issue of landslides in Sironko, Bududa, Manafwa and the neighbouring districts. He does not mention it completely, much as he dwells on the floods, which are a bit obvious.

He talked about driving poverty out of Uganda and meandered a bit and went to *Emyooga* and the rest. I expected him to mention something from the cooperative perspective on how the cooperative bank will drive out poverty. This is a lasting solution for farmers to get money and support their enterprises.

Lastly, he talked about the Shs 257 billion in science and technology. If you look at the enterprises supported under science and technology, they are 55, but most of them are on issues *-(Member timed out.)*

4.56

MS LUCY AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I also add my voice to thank the President for conducting his constitutional mandate in addressing the nation.

Mr Speaker, allow me to comment on the President's address regarding sports. He talked about our bid, together with East African countries to bid for the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON 2027) and went ahead to say, "We will put resources to build stadiums around the country in preparation for this".

Mr Speaker, as a person who comes from Northern Uganda, I see 2027 very close. If we were to look around the stadia which we have - I see Pece and Akii-Bua stadia in Lira, but in most of them, I do not see any potential.

Just scan Namboole Stadium, which is close to us - it has been closed for many years without operation. My fear is that we may go for this bid but Kenya and other East African countries will overpower us *-(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, on that issue, I can tell you, we are doing all we can; we are monitoring it by all means. We just need two stadia.

We have Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda - and it is the first opportunity we would have as an East African region to host. So we must all support it. I request us to avoid sentiments that can influence the select committee on the other side to say that the Parliament of Uganda was debating it and Members were saying Uganda may not be ready with stadia and all that. Let us give all the support that is needed. By 2027, these two stadia will be ready. We only need to put the pressure on to ensure that the stadia are ready.

4.59

MR MICHEAL TIMUZIGU (NRM, Kajara County, Ntungamo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to support the motion moved by Hon. Kateshumbwa.

The President was very passionate about industrialisation in his State-of-the-Nation Address. He indicated that lack of infrastructure, expensive power and expensive capital are the challenges industrialists face in Uganda. However, there is something he has not been reminded about for many years, and it has never appeared in the State-of-the-Nation Address. There is an issue of technology transfer.

Many countries in Asia developed because they got the technology from Europe and USA. At the moment, even when we have Asians coming here to Uganda, the transfer of technology is not direct. We need to come out and be careful with the way we acquire technology.

Countries are buying technology directly because we have to run; so many countries are far ahead of us. I propose that the

Government of Uganda should think about buying technology directly and share it with indigenous industrialists who can use their own capital. Otherwise, some of them have money but do not have the knowledge. We need the technology so we run very quickly and compete with Kenya, and Congo. Otherwise, very soon, they will go there and we shall not be able to tap into the opportunities there. Thank you.

5.01

MS HARRIET BUSINGE (NRM, Woman Representative, Hoima): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to add my voice to thank His Excellency the President of Uganda for the elaborative speech he delivered in his State-of-the-Nation Address. Though it was a long speech and we were tired, I believe it contained a lot.

The President in his 10-point on education highlighted the issue of accessibility to education. Now that we have his line of thought and action points where he wants us to put emphasis, I request this House - On many occasions, we have let down ourselves, especially during appropriation - because appropriation is purely the agenda of this House.

The President said accessibility to education - We had Bunyoro University in the previous budget but we struggled to convince the Budget Committee of this Parliament to appropriate Shs 2 billion- they gave us Shs 2 billion- to start a university; it is Parliament, not the President who appropriates; it is this House.

This year, we also struggled with the Committee on Education and Sports and the Budget Committee. Out of the Shs 45 billion the task force asked to start the university, they only appropriated Shs 1.9 billion. I believe, sometimes we shoot ourselves; we blame the President yet it is our role. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, I would like to ask you a simple question: did the Government propose money for Bunyoro University and the Budget Committee or sectoral Committee on Education and Sports reallocated it?

MS BUSINGE: Yes, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chairperson of the Committee on Education and Sports? Let me allow a member of the education committee.

5.03

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu): I think we need to correct the Member. As the Committee on Education and Sports, there was nothing in the ministerial policy statement of that nature; what the Member is saying. Actually, we met the Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the Treasury (PS/ST) and Hon. Matia Kasaija and convinced them to raise money for Bunyoro and the Higher Education Students' Financing Board.

The issue of appropriation is not a problem. The challenge came from the Cabinet, not Parliament. Mr Speaker, we are very much interested in that money but we were beaten by the other side, not Parliament.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I do not want it to go on record that the Government gave money for Bunyoro and Parliament removed it. I know the money that was removed. Money for Bunyoro University was never touched. I want that to go on record.

5.04

DR FLORENCE ASIIMWE (NRM, Woman Representative, Masindi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am going to talk about two issues. I stand here to support the motion on the clear and precise exposition of the Government policy contained in the State-of-the-Nation Address to Parliament by His Excellency the President. Indeed, he was very articulate.

One of the issues was the PDM. I have just been in the field. In Masindi for example, Shs 100 million has been received by the parishes. I have just been there and they have given me the data *-(Interjections)-* Members you have to liaise with the CDOs, and production officers. Some of you do not go back to your constituencies to get the data.

The second issue is innovation. As a deputy chairperson of science, technology and innovation, I wish to thank His Excellency for his emphasis on science and innovation. We have just been visiting the universities in Gulu, Lira and Soroti and the scientists are doing great work and these need to be supported. They are producing a lot of prototypes. What we need is to involve the private sector to commercialise some of these prototypes. We are looking at a pathogenic economy. We looked at a number of plants - we went to Gulu University and found out that they are producing a number of medicines, where Dr Ogwang was involved. So sooner or later, if we support - luckily enough -

(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Dr Florence Akiiki, as a PhD holder believes in research and data. Honourable member, conclude.

DR FLORENCE AKIIKI: We need to support the scientists. Members when the universities bring their budget, let us increase money for the innovation fund in order to improve the economy; the rest will be history. Thank you very much. Let us have a procedural point.

MS KABASHARIRA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have been quietly listening to Member's debate and presentation. I have also listened to your guidance on how this motion should be debated. Definitely, we did not get enough orientation to receive this very important motion.

Mr Speaker, you gave us two minutes and I have been listening but there are only two Members who concluded their submission. For this very important motion, each one of us should speak for his or her constituency. Is it procedurally right to give us two minutes to debate this important motion?

Honourable members, better think of the motion I am thinking to bring; to reduce this Parliament so that we can debate properly.

(Laughter)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think Hon. Kabasharira is telling you how the presiding officer is in a dilemma to handle all of you, who want to debate. However, traditionally, we usually have this debate for a whole week to allow more Members to speak.

When debating, your submission must be related to the resolution and the motion. I am seeing many of you coming with your premeditated mind that this is what I have come to speak; whether you prepared it before the motion was tabled or not, it seems you come with a fixed mind.

Honourable members, arising from that, I am going to suspend the debate for now so that you go back to the *Hansard* and see how we have been debating this motion. I will start with Hon. Martin Muzaale tomorrow. I know you are prepared because you have ever debated this. I have already ruled on suspending the motion.

Let us go on to the next item - I do not see the minister - the Attorney-General is around.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF
PARLIAMENT TO INCREASE THE
NUMBER OF JUDGES OF THE HIGH
COURT IN ACCORDANCE WITH
SECTION 13 OF THE JUDICATURE ACT

5.10

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS (Mr Norbert Mao): Mr Speaker, I rise to move a motion which stands in my name on the Order Paper.

WHEREAS, Article 138(b) of the Constitution requires Parliament to prescribe the number of judges of the High Court;

AND WHEREAS, Section 13 of the Judicature Act, Cap. 13 makes provision for;

- a) *the Principal Judge*
- b) *25 judges of the High Court or such a higher number of judges of the High Court*

as may be prescribed by Parliament by a resolution.

RECALLING, that the number of High Court judges was last increased in 2017, from 49 to 83 Judges;

AND WHEREAS the current number of 83 High Court judges, including the Principal Judge has been found to be inadequate;

AND COGNISANT, of the fact that the Cabinet on 9 August 2021, approved the revised judiciary service establishment/structure for judicial officers, among others to increase the number of high court judges from 83 to 151, including the principal judge;

AND WHEREAS, the Cabinet found it necessary to increase the number of judges of the High Court due to;

- a) the increase in population and crime rate leading to high demand for judiciary services and court use.*
- b) acute case backlog, since the High Court has unlimited original jurisdiction in all matters and such appellate and other jurisdiction as may be conferred on it by the Constitution, or the Judicature Act, Cap.13 or any other law.*
- c) the decentralisation of the Court of Appeal to eight regional offices.*
- d) the insufficient number of High Court judges compared to the litigants.*
- e) the steady increase in crime and dispute.*
- f) increased awareness of the population of their legal rights, leading to a more litigious population.*

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by Parliament as follows;

Resolution

That in accordance with Section 13 of the Judicature Act, Cap. 13, Parliament increases

the number of judges of the High Court from 83 to 151, including the principal judge". I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Is the motion seconded? Seconded by Hon. Kafuuzi, the Deputy Attorney-General, Prof. Mushemeza, Hon. Ssenyonyi, Hon. Ssewungu, Hon. Nambeshe, Hon. Okupa, Hon. Pamela, Hon. Florence, Hon. Atima, Hon. Abdullah Kiwanuka who is the shadow internal affairs minister. Hon. Mao, do you want to give a summary justification?

MR MAO: In the Book of Philippians 1:6, it is said, "*He who began a good work in you, will carry it on to completion*". Mr Speaker, you began this good work when you enacted the Administration of the Judiciary Act because of your commitment to ensuring access to justice.

Right now, the High Court only has 83 High Court judges. When you visit the chambers of most judges, you can hardly see them because the heap of files virtually covers their faces. A typical judge has to work even on weekends and public holidays in order to deliver judgments. That is why the intention of Government is to increase access to judicial services. These measures will deal with case backlog that continues to be a source of frustration to many citizens.

Mr Speaker, it is the ultimate goal of Government to ensure that every county will have a magistrate's court and there will be eight circuits of the Court of Appeal.

Later, we shall introduce a Judicature (Amendment) Bill, 2023, which will propose to increase the number of Court of Appeal Justices from 15 to 56, and Supreme Court Justices from 11 to 21.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I wish to inform the House that as we stand today, according to the information from the secretary, Shs 83 trillion is held up in our courts. These are based on trade disputes, construction disputes, money deposited by UNRA due to disputes on compensation, insurance disputes, banking disputes, and intellectual property disputes.

Thousands of acres of land cannot be used because of injunctions based on disputes. There are also civil disputes that tie up trillions of shillings. Family courts have so many cases and these have disabled economic activities.

Mr Speaker, in circumstances where some of our international partners are threatening us, we need to unclog the court system so that this money is released and flows back into the economy.

I urge Members to support this motion because it is simply a continuation of the good work this House has begun to support the Judiciary. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The seconder, Attorney-General, three minutes.

5.17

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Just like the honourable minister has said, Parliament passed the Administration of Judiciary Act. That enabled Government to increase funding to the Judiciary. And because the funding has increased, it is imperative that judicial officers be spread out so that the need for justice is achieved –(Interjection)– yes, the funding is gradually increasing.

As Parliament, at some point, we demand for value for money but we can only achieve that value for money by having enough members on the Bench.

When you know that you can have your matter dealt with within six months rather than 10 years, you will be satisfied knowing that you can go to court and achieve your aims.

It is for that very reason that we are here with this motion that you permit us to increase the number of Judges. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I see many people standing up but again, it is a motion, which many of you really agree with and we have a lot of business to do here. I am trying to see who to pick. Let me pick Hon.

Bosco Okiror, Hon. Abdullah, a lady and an Independent.

5.19

MR BOSCO OKIROR (NRM, Usuk County, Katakwi): I thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. This is a fundamental motion. Surely, one of the cardinal principles in the administration of justice is that justice should not be delayed. The Uganda's population, at the time the Constitution was put in place, was small compared to the population of 50 million that we have today. It is no doubt that it is a necessary thing to do.

However, I have one concern. Most of our criminal matters in this country are handled on a session basis. If we are increasing the number of Judges to more than 180 for the High Court and 50 something for the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court, it is only fair that criminal cases that we have in the country are heard the way we consider the civil cases; let them not be based on sessions.

For most of the cases that we have, you find somebody has been on remand for more than five years yet that person is supposed to serve a sentence of perhaps even four years. You find somebody has been on remand for a very long period; people are languishing in these jails.

Therefore, if we are increasing numbers, it is only fair that we handle those criminal matters - honourable Minister for Justice, a mechanism has got to be adopted on how these are handled on a case by case basis. That is my humble appeal.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Also to have more State Prosecutors appointed, especially for criminal matters because you will find that you have the judges and presiding officers but to get the state prosecutor is a tug of war. We also need to look at that, honourable Minister of Justice.

5.22

MR ABDALLAH KIWANUKA (NUP, Mukono County North, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to support the motion, with amendments though.

On 15 December, before we went for the Christmas break, I raised the matter of national importance regarding the court backlog. The Attorney-General who was here undertook to present an amendment regarding the Magistrate's Courts Act within a period of one month.

I appreciate the challenges regarding backlog in the High Court but these have been caused by the limited jurisdiction in the Magistrate's Courts, which is limited to Shs 50 million.

Mr Speaker, magistrates in Buganda Region are limited to handling cases below Shs 50 million and many of them are seated. I call upon the honourable minister to think about what is happening in the Magistrate's Courts because even a plot of land, which cost Shs 55 million has to go to the High Court.

In Buganda - Wakiso, Buikwe, Mukono - you can hardly find an acre which goes below Shs 200 million. Therefore, I call upon the House to support me in this very motion of the minister, we also amend Section 207 of the Magistrate's Courts Act to increase the monetary value of the Magistrate's Courts to *-(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, you are coming to amend the law. What Hon. Mao is asking for is to adjust the number. This motion is just about the number.

Two, honourable colleagues, you know that a private member cannot move any amendments restricted under Article 93 of the Constitution because it has budgetary implications. Let us handle the motion the way it is but the honourable minister has taken note and I am very sure he will respond to you.

5.25

MS AGNES KUNIHIRA (NRM, Workers Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, I support the motion. However, I would like to bring to the attention of the minister that as he talked about increasing the number of the judges, he should also consider appointing judges to the Industrial Court. There are

currently two judges only, yet when Parliament amended the Labour Disputes (Arbitration and Settlement) Act, 2006, we increased the number of judges to five.

Honourable minister, when you go to that court, you will notice that there is a backlog of around 2,700 cases, yet you always say – as learned friends – that: “Justice delayed is justice denied.”

Therefore, I appeal to you to also consider appointing judges to the Industrial Court. I know that the Industrial Court falls under the labour ministry, but I know judges fall under your ministry. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I now put the question that the Motion for a Resolution of Parliament to increase the number of judges of the High Court, in accordance with Section 13 of the Judicature Act, be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Motion adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Clerk, kindly, extract the resolution and convey it to the minister for him to take the necessary action.

Honourable minister, would you like to thank the Members for this bipartisan support and take the concerns which were raised?

MR MAO: I thank the honourable members. As you know, as an Ex-Officio Member of Parliament, I do not have voting rights; I cannot even vote for my own motion. *(Laughter)* So, I am extremely grateful that Members have given overwhelming support to this.

I note the absurdity of the Shs 50 million limit. I would like to inform you that we actually have a draft Bill that we are processing to allow us remove that absurd limit. This absurd limit does not only apply to those cases in the Magistrates' Courts.

The Attorney-General's Chambers is also overwhelmed with processing any contract that

is from Shs 200 million upwards. In a country where people carry Shs 200 million in polythene bags, the Attorney-General's Chambers is clogged. You saw the Deputy Attorney-General having to rush back to office because local governments, ministries, departments and agencies have to procure things, yet the law says that as long as the value is Shs 200 million and above, the Attorney-General's Chamber has to look at it and approve. So, these limits are choking all of us.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, the Directorate of Public Prosecutions is recruiting. Today, the candidates sat their aptitude tests – the interviews are ongoing. We will have more prosecutors on the ground. We have procured vehicles for them. So, we expect them to be more vigilant.

The other problem we face is with the police. In order to have a 360 degrees' speed, we must also support the police to have the capacity to investigate crime. This is because most of the time, cases are delayed on grounds that investigations are still going on although the policy of Government is that investigations should take place before somebody is charged. By the time you charge somebody, you should have most of the evidence.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us conclude this, honourable colleague.

MR MAO: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. We will abide by your directions.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I have been looking at the Order Paper and noticed that one committee has five reports following each other. That would mean that we need a whole day to discuss issues relating to one committee only. So, I am going to work it out with the Clerk so that we spread the items out in order for items from one committee not to follow each other. It will look much smarter.

I have an accountability committee and other committees – they have three reports. Clerk, I guide that you spread these reports between tomorrow and Thursday. Please, ensure that

every day I have a report from COSASE so that, at least, we can do three reports out of the five, this week; one committee having all these reports is too much.

In the circumstances, Clerk, now call item No. 10. We shall handle COSASE today and then tomorrow, I am going to ensure that the rest are catered for – you have one report and that means that your chances of being covered are higher than that, that has five pending reports.

Hon. Ssewungu?

MR SSEWUNGU: I thank you for that information. The Committee on Government Assurance and Implementation, sometime back submitted over three reports to the Clerk. Some of our reports are being taken over by events. For example, the report about fuel prices, and which is on the Order Paper, was handled in long ago.

I know my neighbour has tabled a number of them. However, I seek your indulgence that we should also be given some priority –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, I am going to consider reports. Honourable colleague, I am handling you tomorrow. Tomorrow, I will handle reports, starting at 2.00 p.m. I want these reports sorted out.

Also, committee chairpersons, when you submit reports to the Clerk, copy us in. For instance, I do not have a copy of that report.

MR SSEWUNGU: Mr Speaker, I am going to do it as fast as possible. However, my last prayer to you is that we revisit the rules. I have requested, several times, for an in-house meeting here, but it has failed to take place, and I hope that with your indulgence, that should be handled.

We had a challenge here: in my Committee on Education and Sports, we were directed to write why we never signed the report. However, the rules give me a right to sign or not to sign. I can refuse to sign deliberately.

I think we should sit, in-house, and handle such matters. These reports deal with numbers – one-third of members have to sign. Members can fail to sign because of some challenges, but there is a new procedure coming in, and you may need to educate us on that.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The presiding officer was very clear: if you have not signed the report, you should explain why. Your reason can be that you do not want to sign.

However, we have come to understand that there are very many Members who never attend committee meetings. So, we are trying to mobilise Members for you. If you are on a committee and you have never signed a single committee report and you want to come and speak on the Floor – if I find that you never attend committee meetings, I cannot give you an opportunity on the Floor. You must participate both in committees and plenary. That is what is fair.

Even during plenary, we are going to be strict. If you miss the mandatory sessions - because we shall be publishing quarterly attendance reports. You have given us money for media and publicity, so, we shall be buying space in the media. For example, we shall show that this quarter, we had this number of sessions and say, for example, that: “Hon. Tayebwa attended two sessions; Hon. Muzaale attended 20 and this honourable member attended none.”

This will enable your people to know whether you represent them or you are never here. Otherwise, most of you run Parliament on radios. You never attend Parliament but you are on radio every day, discussing what happens in Parliament. If you are never here, where do you even get information? We want to be strict on these matters.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (COMMISSIONS, STATUTORY AUTHORITIES AND STATE ENTERPRISES) ON THE REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE UGANDA PRINTING AND PUBLISHING CORPORATION FOR FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

5.34

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (COMMISSIONS, STATUTORY AUTHORITIES AND STATE ENTERPRISES) (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to present the report of the Committee on Public Accounts (Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises) on the Report of the Auditor-General and the financial statements of Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation for the year ended 30 June 2022.

As I commence, Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on, the Table a copy of the report. I also beg to lay on the Table minutes of the committee meetings.

Mr Speaker, with your indulgence, I will be skipping a couple of things that are either generic or otherwise for want of time. The report will be uploaded on the screen in a short while.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, the Clerk will capture the whole report on the *Hansard*. So, you can do a summary.

MR SSENYONYI: Alright. So, I will skip the introduction, background, methodology and I will move to the findings, observations and recommendations.

The first one thereof was misstatement of the investment in a joint venture in Uganda Security Printing Company Limited (USPC). Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation and Government of Uganda, represented by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development signed an agreement with a consortium of German companies to

form Uganda Security Printing Company Limited, for purposes of rehabilitating and revamping UPPC by redesigning, developing, constructing, completing, testing and commissioning an e-passport factory and ID factory. UPPC holds a 51 per cent stake in USPC, which is a security company.

A review of the Statement of Financial Position, as at 30 June 2022, indicated that UPPC investment in the joint venture was reported a cost of Shs 9 billion as valued by 30 June 2020, and did not use the equity method as required by the standard. This implies that the Statement of Financial Position is misstated and misleading to the users of the statements.

The Accounting Officer submitted that Uganda Security Printing Corporation has a different accounting period which ends on December 31 unlike that of UPPC.

I will now move to the recommendations, Mr Speaker. The committee recommends that:

- i) The Accounting Officer should comply fully with IFRS 11 and 12 requirements – those are standards – in regard to valuation of the joint venture investment; and
- ii) USPC should align their accounting period with that of UPPC which is the majority shareholder, to facilitate the proper valuation of the investment and accurate reporting.

The second issue, Mr Speaker, is Understated Tax Liabilities. It was noted that whereas the tax records as per the Uganda Revenue Authority revealed a tax liability amount of Shs 1.6 billion, the financial statements disclosed only Shs 1.1 billion, resulting in a variance of Shs 460 million.

The Accounting Officer submitted to the committee that the variance was because some of the monies were penalties and fines charged by Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) yet UPPC records interests and penalties separately.

As a committee, we observed that URA charges interest on unpaid money. Moreover, most of the money is owed by ministries, departments and agencies, which do not pay on time, and that affects the cash flows of the corporation.

Our recommendation is that the Accounting Officer should put in place mechanisms to ensure that the books of accounts present a fair reflection of the tax liability of the corporation in the subsequent financial years.

Slow Rate of Recovery of Receivables

The Auditor-General noted that debtors worth Shs 3.76 billion have been outstanding for a period ranging between 361 days to 1800 days, contrary to best practice, which requires an entity to institute debt recovery mechanisms that ensure debts are recovered promptly.

Section 7(5) of the UPPC Finance and Accounting Policy Manual, 2020, highlights five collection procedures to be undertaken by the corporation when pursuing debtors and the table there gives details of the age of debts as they ought to be handled.

The Accounting Officer submitted that some of the debts related to transactions undertaken about 10 years back and there was no documentation relating to them that could be traced, making their recovery difficult. UPPC had hired a debt collector with a view to improving this situation. The committee was further informed that UPPC had provided services equivalent to Shs 4.3 billion to various MDAs following their budget cuts due to COVID-19 but there were delays regarding payments from these MDAs.

As a committee, we observed as follows:

- i) The treatment of receivables was not in accordance with IFRS 9 Accounting Standard which requires companies to measure impairment of financial assets, including trade receivables to be recovered within 12 months from the date they fell due.

- ii) MDAs have accumulated arrears to Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation, which has affected the cash flows and operations of the corporation.
- iii) Some of the money owed to UPPC has no adequate documentation backing it up, which makes it difficult to recover. As a committee, we recommend that the Accounting Officer institutes a debt-recovery mechanism for the recovery of all outstanding receivables and report the progress to Parliament within six months after the adoption of this report.

Assessment of Financial Performance

The Accounting Officer informed the committee that UPPC collects most of its money from publishing in the gazette and that in Financial Year 2020/2021, the corporation realised a huge collection of Shs 15.4 billion from the Electoral Commission, owing to the elections that took place in 2021. The corporation printed various items arising from the election, including gazetting of all elected leaders at various levels.

The committee was further informed that 10 per cent of the money earned from the Electoral Commission, that is Shs 1.54 billion, was paid to a commission agent, one of a number of commission agents maintained by the corporation. The committee was informed that the corporation maintains a number of commission agents and the board had resolved to pay such commission agents that bring in work. The committee asked for a copy of this resolution but it was never availed.

We observed as follows

- i. Section 5 of the Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation Act, Cap 330 mandates UPPC to print and publish all Government legislation and documents and provide printing services to parastatals, private organisations and individuals. The Electoral Commission therefore does not have the option of going to any newspaper to gazette; the

law commands the Electoral Commission to gazette only through UPPC. So, one cannot purport to bring business to UPPC from the Electoral Commission and then be paid a huge commission.

- ii. There was no basis for payment of the commission, so, by paying Shs 1.54 billion to a commission agent, the responsible officers at UPPC caused a financial loss to the entity.

Recommendations

- i) The commission agent who received the commission of Shs 1.54 billion should refund it to the corporation within three months from the date of adoption of this report; and
- ii) The staff involved should be investigated by the police with the view of prosecution.

Absence of a Board

It was noted that the corporation did not have a functional Board of Directors during the year under review since the tenure for the previous board had elapsed in October 2021, contrary to Section 6(1) of the Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation Act.

The Minister in charge of the Presidency informed the committee that upon receipt of a dossier from a whistle-blower about corruption at UPPC on 5 July 2021, criminal investigations commenced on 16 August 2021, upon her request. The members of the board were dismissed and some staff interdicted and yet the term of the Board was expiring on 31 October 2022.

The Chairperson of the Board was dismissed on 23 August 2021 and the minister appointed one Mr James Tweheyo, a senior staff in the Office of the President, as the Acting Managing Director because she did not want the absence of a board to hinder operations of the corporation.

During the committee's interaction with the minister, she submitted that she had appointed

a new Board which had been vetted by security agencies and was awaiting consent from the President. The new members appointed by her include:

- i) Mr Joachim Buwembo;
- ii) Mr Sadat Kisuyi;
- iii) Ms Jolly Kamugira Kaguhangire;
- iv) Ms Alice Muhoozi;
- v) Mr Andrew Kibaya;
- vi) Ms Hellen Judith Icumar;
- vii) Mr Jimmy Karugaba; and
- viii) Mr Noah Bukenya.

Observations

1. Since the dismissal of the Board of Directors in August 2021, there was no Board at UPPC for nearly two years, which is in contravention of Section 6 of the UPPC Act that provides that there shall be a Board of Directors. As a result of the absence of the Board, the roles that ought to be played by the Board regarding overseeing the management of the corporation under Section 7 of the Act could not be executed, which adversely affected the performance of UPPC;
2. By failing to appoint the board over a long time, the minister failed to exercise the powers conferred upon her under Section 6(1) of the Act, which obligates her to appoint the board;
3. While the minister has powers to appoint the board under Section 6(1) of the Act, there is no legal basis for her to assume the roles of the board, such as the appointment of staff. For example, on two occasions, the minister appointed the acting managing directors, including the current managing director. She also kept signing off documents including audited financial statements as the board chairperson of UPPC, which was both irregular and illegal; and
4. The absence of the board for long grossly affected the operations of the board, as there was no sufficient supervision of staff.

We recommend that the new board should institute a system of good corporate governance practices at the corporation including instituting board committees, regular meetings, prudent financial and human resource management, among others.

Staffing gaps

A review of the approved staff establishment of UPPC revealed that out of the 120 staff that are required, only 69 were filled, representing 57.5 per cent, thereby leaving a staffing gap of 51 staff representing 42.5 per cent. The accounting officer informed the committee that management had since recruited more staff, one of whom included the Corporation Secretary bringing the total number of staff to 75.

The committee observes that staffing gaps create inefficiencies in the operations of the entity. We recommend that the new board and management commence recruitment and filling of all key positions in the entity and report back to Parliament on the progress within six months after the adoption of this report.

Management of information technology investments in government

7.1 Procurement and use of software IT systems and equipment

During the audit of U UPPC, the following were observed:

1. A total of three IT systems procured at an unknown cost were not cleared by NITA-U as required by the law;
2. Three IT systems where one was acquired at a total cost of Shs 2.4 billion during the period under review, were not recorded in the Assets Register;
3. A total of 35 IT assets acquired at a total of Shs 0.256 billion over the period under review were not accurately recorded in the format as prescribed by the UPPC financial manual, 2020, since the register lacked records of these assets, information regarding asset number, accumulated

- depreciation, current year depreciation and location; contrary to Section 12(2) of the UPPC Financial And Accounting Manual; and
4. A total of 10 IT assets were traced to the staff or locations as recorded in the Assets Register, which allowed traceability of the assets. However, 25 of these were not entered into the register.
- in the Assets Register as provided for in the UPPC Financial Manual; and
- ii) Management institutes governance structures to effectively manage ICT investments in consultation with other stakeholders.
- Management of corporation land
- Valuation of land for contribution to joint venture
- ICT governance
- A review of the ICT governance structure of the entity revealed the following:
- Regulation 23(1) of the PPDA Disposal of Assets Regulations of 2014 requires procuring and disposing entities to obtain a valuation for public assets before the commencement of disposal proceedings from a competent authority where this is required by law.
- i) There were no specific structures that steer and oversee ICT implementation. In addition, there was no evidence of ICT representation in top management;
- The Auditor-General noted that one piece of land, measuring 1.778 hectares, was disposed of as the contribution to the joint venture with USPC – that is a security company - at Shs 9 billion, below the chief government valuer’s valuation of Shs 10.6 billion, hence causing a financial loss of Shs 1.5 billion to government.
- ii) The entity did not have an approved IT staff structure in place despite ICT prioritisation in NDP III;
- The committee was informed that the difference in the value of the land was as a result of the value of land and buildings that had been accounted for using IAS 16 standard to investment property. We have a table there detailing a couple of things. I will move down to the findings.
- iii) The internal auditor has never reviewed the various ICT systems including those that produce financial statements nor has he received adequate training to enable them interrogate the system. In addition, internal audit does not have rights to some of these systems;
- iv) The corporation’s ICT policy was in draft form, awaiting approval and the corporation did not have a risk register at the time of the audit;
- The committee found that UPPC wrote to the chief government valuer on 7 March 2017, requesting for the land belonging to UPPC on plot 8-12 (Airport Road) to be valued. The chief government valuer valued the land at Shs 10.6 billion.
- v) There was no business continuity plan contrary to Section 4(6) of the National Information Security Policy of 2014.
- The accounting officer submitted that management would comply with the requirement to clear with NITA-U and that the asset register had been put in place.
- Veridos and Giesecke & Devrient – this is a German consortium - instructed two different valuers to value the land. One of the valuers valued this land at Shs 8 billion and another at Shs 10.3 billion.
- The committee recommends as follows:
- i) Management always seeks clearance from NITA-U regarding ICT equipment and that all ICT assets should be duly recorded
- The committee observes that UPPC exchanged the land for shares in USPC at a value below that of the chief government valuer. We

recommend that the accounting officer should always ensure that the value assigned by the chief government valuer is what is followed in all transactions of the corporation's property.

Utilisation of land for delivery of services

It was noted that five of the pieces of land, measuring approximately 1.256 hectares valued at Shs 4.1 billion acquired in 1902, were not fully utilised by the entity at the time of the audit. The accounting officer submitted that management was taking care of the properties and was in the process of refurbishing them, because with the exception of one, all the properties could not be rented. Proposals for the property committee of the board would be made on how to better utilise the properties.

The committee recommends that management should develop a comprehensive utilisation plan for all the land belonging to the corporation and submit the same to Parliament within six months from the date of adoption of this report.

Lack of an approved outsourcing policy framework

It was noted that the corporation receives orders for works, which were sometimes outsourced to other printers. It was, however, noted that the entity does not have an approved outsourcing policy and framework.

The accounting officer submitted that there was always a justification for outsourcing and there was a list of pre-qualified suppliers.

He further submitted that there was no outsourcing unless the job had been assessed. It was established that UPPC did not have capacity to execute the work.

We recommend that management should develop and present to the board for approval an outsourcing policy to guide outsourcing activities within six months from the date of adoption of this report.

Joint venture between UPPC and the German Consortium

- i) The committee found that Government of Uganda through Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation and the Ministry of Finance entered into a joint venture agreement with the German consortium of Veridos GmbH and Giesecke and Devrient;
- ii) The joint venture agreement provided, among other things, that a joint company - the Uganda Security Printing Company Limited - would be formed and the Government of Uganda and the consortium would be shareholders. The security printing factory would be set up by Veridos and Giesecke; and
- iii) USPC was incorporated on 18 October 2018.

We observe as follows:

- i) Veridos and Giesecke were not registered in Uganda at the time of signing the joint venture agreement;
- ii) Veridos and Giesecke & and Devrient are not registered in Uganda. Instead, Veridos Identity Solutions (Uganda SMC) Limited was incorporated on 24 September 2020, nearly two years after the joint venture agreement had been signed. It is a single-member company as seen from its articles and Memorandum of association. The member is Veridos GmbH whose address is in Berlin, Germany;
- iii) The fact that Veridos GmbH and Giesecke were not registered in Uganda was problematic because they were not domesticated yet they are doing business in Uganda; and

The committee recommends that Veridos and Giesecke should regularise and validate their presence in Uganda, and submit a report to Parliament within six months after the adoption of this report.

Conclusion

The UPPC plays a critical role regarding the printing and publishing of Government documents. However, the corporation has suffered a lack of proper corporate governance, which has consequently affected its financial performance and placed a dent onto its ability to execute its mandate. The absence of a board of directors, for a long time, stood out and this resulted into the lack of supervision of staff, something that should never recur.

There is a need for the management of the corporation to take interest in the functioning of the Uganda Security Printing Corporation because of how the two entities are interconnected.

The joint venture entered into with the German consortium should play a central role regarding the revamping of UPPC and the improvement of printing security documents. However, the construction of the factory has stalled, casting doubt on whether the Government can stand to benefit from the joint venture agreement.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, chairman and honourable colleagues. When I read through the report, you notice that is very thorough and you can see the recommendations are fair. No one can go out and say otherwise. Many people say Parliament is harassing them but the recommendations in here are very clear, from my observation.

Honourable members, let us have a quick debate. Members of the committee, please do not stand up.

5.56

PROF. ELIJAH MUSHEMEZA (Independent, Sheema County South, Sheema): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for a good job done. For the last two years I have been in the 11th Parliament, I have observed that there is a problem in the Office of the Attorney-General.

There are agreements that have been signed by government and other entities but when we analyse some of them in our Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry, we notice they are problematic. Is it because of the understaffing the honourable minister pointed out? So, what is the problem?

I want to call upon the Minister of Justice to interest himself in the Office of the Attorney-General because there are things that are done and you wonder whether it is deliberate. Is it defrauding the country? That is my first observation.

The second is: we have seen that in the joint venture that UPPC is a majority shareholder. How can you accept the shareholder with less shares to determine the financial year; that the financial year ends on the 30th, contrary to UPPC which moves with government? How can that happen?

The third observation, which opens our eyes, relates to the commission agent. From the Electoral Commission to UPPC, you want a commission? We know a commission agent is provided for under the law, but you wonder - this is similar to what we observed a few days ago that to transport files from Kampala to Entebbe, you spend Shs 400 million. This is something we have observed in the committee on some of these other entities.

This opens our eyes and I call upon COSASE to scan through other procurements of government, related to commission agents. We may find that government is losing a lot of money. Some of them could be government officers but using other proxies to earn a commission. How can you ask for a commission to move materials for printing from the Electoral Commission to UPPC?

I thank COSASE and call upon you to scan through other entities. We may discover billions of money being lost through commission agents who are not supposed to get this money. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I think this should be very clear, Rt Hon. Prime Minister. There is no way that for a Government entity to do business with another Government entity, it requires a commission agent to arrange the business. Really?

I thought commission agents, who are recognised under Government businesses, are for dealing with the private sector. Getting business under the private sector might require lobbying, but even in Government?

On this one, the Ministry of Finance needs to instruct the PS/ST, who should instruct all accounting officers that this is unacceptable. Government to government and you have commission agents? That is daylight robbery.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, take it up. Shs 5 billion? Hon. Dr Chris Baryomunsi, you are the one who guides the nation. What we have here is UPPC paid a commission agent Shs 5 billion for getting business to do printing under the Electoral Commission.

[Hon. Moses Aleper rose] Let the honourable Minister of ICT and National Guidance first guide the nation. *(Laughter)*

6.00

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson and members of the committee. What you have talked about sounds a bit strange. As you know, the NRM Government promotes a policy of zero tolerance to corruption –*(Interjections)*– yes!

Therefore, we take the report very seriously and this is not a laughing matter. We shall definitely look at these issues and those found culpable should be punished because I also find it strange that between a Government agency and another agency, you can charge that kind of commission. What for?

We support the observations and recommendations of the committee, but we

shall formally respond at the end of the debate, as government.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

6.01

MR MOSES ALEPER (NRM, Chekwii County (Kadam), Nakapiripirit): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also join my other colleague, who thanked COSASE for this elaborate report. I also take this opportunity this time to thank the minister, Hon. Baryomunsi; you are well suited for that job. You always do not go wrong.

My contribution is on the matter of financial and accounting reporting. What is very important in financial and accounting reporting is timeliness and accuracy.

On timeliness, I am sure this report came out after December 2022, as required by law, from the Office of the Auditor-General. Of course, our committee has looked at it and have now outed it. This is normally necessary because these reports are supposed to be used for decision making. If they are out of time, definitely the decision that will be made will become irrelevant.

Likewise, on accuracy, there were some misstatements which were observed by the committee, where there was a misstatement of Shs 450 million. That is something very significant in reporting and such a misstatement will definitely undermine the decisions that will come out of such a report.

What am I saying? It is very necessary for institutions, when they are making reports, to make sure they are accurate. Any misreporting should be very insignificant to something like 0.5 per cent. I implore institutions that are charged with this make sure they make good of that misreporting.

Lastly, I want to say that on the realignment of the financial year, the law is very clear. The practice is very clear, now that the financial year starts 1 July and end on 30 June. That is what actually should be done. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

6.04

MR RICHARD OSEKU (NRM, Kibaale County, Pallisa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the committee for the report presented. However, I have a concern about the findings of the committee on the management of the assets of the cooperation - the land. Whereas the Chief Government Valuer was engaged to value the land and he came up with a value of over Shs 10 billion, the other entities that were engaged by Veridos – even when they were not yet incorporated in the country, at the time – were able to appoint their own independent valuers who valued the land, who gave it a lower value than that of the Chief Government Valuer.

I find it strange that the committee - may be they will clarify it - has not treated this seriously. This is because by going by the lower value that this independent valuer came up with, the Government incurred a loss. I think the committee should have put the emphasis there and put at least a remedy to help Government recover from that loss.

I want to emphasise the point that their finding was that even at that time, these people were not yet incorporated, so, they had no right to take a decision on the property of Government. That is my observation. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Even as an accounting officer, you do not have powers to go below the Government value. You can only go above it, that is, by negotiating a better deal for the Government. If the other one is not satisfied, then, you appeal the valuation of the Chief Government Valuer. If the Chief Government Valuer insists that this is the value, then, that is the value you go with – unless you want to go to court and challenge it.

So, I think what the Hon. Oseku is saying, honourable chairperson, is that someone must answer how they did this and how we can help the Government recover that loss. One can coin an amendment to the recommendation and we adopt it.

6.04

MS JANE PACUTO (NRM, Woman Representative, Pakwach): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I commend the committee for the good report. I would like to comment on their finding on the lack of a board for some time.

Mr Speaker, why I have taken interest in that - let me start by refreshing our minds: what are the roles of a board in any institution? They are: to create and monitor organisational strategic plans; to establish and define the corporate vision, mission and purpose; to evaluate the company practices for business continuity and resilience, and; to ensure legal compliance and stay updated with regulations, among others.

Mr Speaker, I agree with the committee that, with a continuous lack of a board in place, these key roles will not be performed and, therefore, the strategic management of this institution will not in any way be enhanced. Other than the internal audit, which we have heard is also weak, there will be no other body to check the management and operations of the organisation.

So, I support the idea that we should direct the institution to, in the shortest time possible, put in place a board to play these key roles that I have highlighted. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I am looking for those who have not spoken. Hon. Christine Kaaya – I am telling these three to eliminate themselves indirectly. *(Laughter)*

6.08

MS CHRISTINE KAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also commend the committee for coming up with these resolutions. My concern is also about the board. The committee needed to have shown us the number of decisions that were reached at during that period when the board was missing. In most cases, decisions that are taken during the time when there is no board are usually funny, not encompassing and have repercussions.

Probably, the outcome of the valuation, especially of the land, came during that time when there were no people to question it. So, it is very important that the boards are selected on time.

On the issue of the composition - I thought Parliament has a stake in approving these boards. However, when we do not get information about the proposed board members, that jeopardises our role of oversight and monitoring the performance of some of these parastatals.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I request that we also get to know which decisions were made during the parastatal did not have the board. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You know, these days, men are the most endangered –(Laughter)- so, ladies should give us some space. Do you know what we go through when DNA results come or even when you are waiting for the results? (Laughter)

6.01

MR GEOFFREY OKELLO (DP, Nwoya East County, Nwoya): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. Let me also thank the chairperson and members of the committee, for the work they have done.

Mr Speaker, my first issue is a point of clarification that I would like to seek from the chairperson. When he mentioned that many MDAs had accumulated debts with UPPC, he did not mention how much the accumulated debt is. Giving us the figure would help us to figure out the implication of such accumulated debts.

Mr Speaker, unfortunately, this also happened in Financial Year 2020/2021 and we may now be guessing the status of this company. However, there are issues of misleading statements, valuation questions and questions of the signature on the audit report when there was no board.

I thought I would see a recommendation for a forensic audit so that it could help to follow up on specific issues that had been raised by the Attorney-General. It is that audit that the committee could rely on to see which issues to be recommended for further police investigations. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, I want us to be cautious on the issue of a forensic audit. For nearly every issue that has been coming here, Members want us to conclude with a forensic audit. It is very costly – and you do not put that money in the budget.

The same Auditor-General – when we say “forensic audit” – goes to the same entity and says: “Fund it.” This is because he has no money for forensic audits. We increased the money, but we have to be very cautious about insisting on a forensic audit on each and every matter.

If the committee accessed the Auditor-General’s report and the information they have managed to get is very critical and sufficient – and they do not see gaps – and so, there is no need for a forensic audit.

However, if the committee finds that there are gaps – there are issues that they have traced and they cannot find the final destination, in terms of extracting information, then the committee can make a recommendation for a forensic audit to be conducted. Issues like, for example, those on the Bujagali Project - but where a committee feels they managed to get whatever they needed, we cannot be calling for a forensic audit, because such audits are so costly to Government and the Auditor-General is not able to address these matters.

In short, I am saying, we should avoid making decisions, which we know are going to be difficult to implement from the onset.

6.14

MS ASHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join colleagues to thank the committee for a good report.

I am quoting page five, one of the paragraphs says, the chairperson of the board was dismissed on 23 August 2021 and the minister appointed Mr James Tweheyo, a senior staff in the Office of the President, as the acting Managing Director, because she did not want the absence of the board to hinder the operations of the corporation.

In a way the minister determined that the managing director should serve as the board at the same time, which was a very big conflict of interest. She assumed that the roles of the board would be performed by the managing director. So, the managing director at that time did not even have a supervisor but the report continues to say that at one time the minister was signing documents on behalf of the board.

Mr Speaker, this report continues to tell us that later on, the minister appointed a board after a gap of like two years but they do not tell us when exactly that this board was appointed; I mean the one that is headed by Mr Joachim Buwembo. It is important to us that we get to know exactly when this board was appointed because there is likelihood that the board was appointed after this committee had started its work. When you say roughly two years is around the same time. So can we know exactly when the board was appointed?

Secondly, building on what the honourable colleague said, can we inquire into the actions of Mr Buwembo together with those of the minister around that time, so that the minister takes personal responsibility because she assumed the responsibilities of the board around that time?

So, I move that the minister should take responsibility – because when we talk about financial accountability issues that are here, in the years that preceded, the time where there was a lapse of leadership because there was no board is not reflected in this. Can we inquire into that period, and the minister or be held responsible for that time for the errors that were committed during that time? I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just if I may ask Hon. Aisha, just for simple clarification: in a situation where indeed the board is not in place, the minister is going through the process of appointing a board, what would the minister do? What if you were a minister?

MS ASHA KABANDA: Mr Chairperson, the board was suspended on the 16 August 2021 when its lifespan was meant to expire on 31 October 2022. So, it was suspended a year ahead of its expiry and even after the real-time for expiry a new board was not put in place. Even when the minister was supposed to put measures to work as investigations were taking place, two years was too much time for a lapse of governance. So she must take responsibility.

Ordinarily three months three months would be enough for an inquiry because she says she was inquiring into the mismanagement of the board but one would not take two years to make such an inquiry.

6.17

MR DENIS OGUZU (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha): Mr Speaker, maybe just for the information to members, the public standing orders provide that if somebody is interdicted or suspended, it can only be for a maximum of about six months to allow investigations to happen and get concluded. But in this case it exceeded and so, I agree with you that somebody must answer.

One clear issue, which comes from these failures, mismanagements and losses is that there is lack of political leadership and will to deal with all these issues. I cannot imagine that this House will always be dealing with similar cases especially when the committees on accountability report to the House, the same facts. I do not know at what point we expect to learn as a country.

Mr Speaker, I can only decipher that there is intent by a group of people to loot this country and that often is to narrow the availability of resources and the physical space. So, the result is always the government cannot be able to deliver services. For example, we have the

NITA-U law, we have the PPDA laws and these have been bypassed.

Therefore, if indeed there is a political will to deal with these, where are the political leaders who are supposed to ensure these things do not occur? If you look at the joint ventures among these parties, you will realise there was no due diligence. So, you do not know how those people were selected? Was it through a transparent public procurement process? How did they settle on these partners, even when they undervalued our land?

Mr Speaker, I am very worried that this country, if it continues to move at this pace, we may not be able to achieve all the wild dreams we were talking about here - this is supposed to happen. Those will be very wild dreams.

So, arising from the report of the committee, I would like to suggest, Mr Speaker, and invite you that there are a lot of - I still propose that we need to -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, you are accessing a microphone without my permission. Okay, conclude.

MR OGUZU: I would like to pray with you, it seems there is much more than catches the eye this report has revealed. I therefore, plead with you if we have to mobilise domestic resources to serve the citizens - we need to dig deeper into these issues, such that corrective measures can be taken. I propose a forensic audit. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, we have the government investigative agencies; they will look at this report.

6.21

MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this chance. Allow me to add my voice in thanking the committee. To me, this is a very good report that the committee has come out with. I would like to ask the chairperson of the committee - he made

mention of Shs 1.5 billion to the commission agent. Who is this? This money must be recovered. I thought in your investigation, you should come out with this specific officer in charge of doing something, which cannot be easily understood.

Secondly, allow me to also talk about the issue of the board. I would like to join my two colleagues who have mentioned the political leadership of the minister. We know the work of UPPC is very crucial, as far as printing security documents is concerned, and so, for a cooperation to stay for two years, without a board and in the middle somebody is appointed to act on behalf of the board, this has a lot and is very pregnant with so many things, which has not yet been put forward. I expected the Minister to be here to answer some of these issues that are being raised. I would like the minister also to take political responsibility, because in these two years, we lost a lot of money.

Finally, Mr Speaker, on the issue of the government valuer, valuing at 10.5 and then somehow another valuer comes in with a lower rate - I would like to urge this Parliament that this officer who was in charge of this loss be made answerable and refund this money. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Should I start with the minister or the chairperson? Honourable chairperson, please, respond to Members' issues.

MR SSENONYI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and thank you, honourable members. When the committee was assessing the issue of valuation, we noticed that Shs 9 billion was a contribution of UPPC to USPC, a company in which it holds 51 per cent shares.

So, Mr Speaker, generally, the committee did not see this as a total loss, because ultimately, it was still within the control of UPPC because it extended it to a company in which it has 51 per cent. Obviously, we would be more worried if it had maybe been - I do not know - maybe sold off to some other person or that kind of thing.

This was a contribution of UPPC because they did not have cash. They said, “we are going to contribute our land into this joint venture that we are forming, in which we have 51 per cent share.” The land is still under the ownership of UPPC because it owns the other company. But the House can still guide us.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, honourable, what the Members are saying is that this land, which gave us 51 per cent shares, if we had gone with the right value, it would have given us maybe 60 per cent share. So, that is the kind of loss the Members are concerned with.

MR SSENYONYI: I certainly agree with Members on that. Number two, decisions taken by the Minister in the absence of the Board - a colleague was asking - these are actually mentioned on page six of the report, one of which was signing financial statements as Board chair, then two, appointing MDs - and I mentioned, including the current MD - because the MD is supposed to be appointed by the Board, but the Minister did the appointment herself. That is why, we recommended somewhere, that the new board should appoint the right office bearers, including the MD.

There was a question about debts with MDAs, I mentioned that on page three of our report, and it is Shs 4.3 billion. So, the ministries owe UPPC Shs 4.3 billion.

Then, there was a question about when the board was appointed. Again, I mentioned on page five, that that was during the inquiry. Incidentally, when we began to inquire into this, and we were putting these questions to the Minister, she quickly went and hurriedly did this. Then the next time, the following week when she was in the committee, she said, “Honourable chair, I have actually appointed the board, they have even been sworn in, here they are.”

So, in a sense, one could say, we pushed the Minister to do the right thing - well it was a little too late, but she eventually did it after we pushed and opened her eyes to do the right thing. But again, there is no harm in holding *—(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable Minister. This is under the Presidency, so I have someone under the Presidency and who is also a boss to the ministers. You see, colleagues, we shall not stop doing our work because ministers are not here. Otherwise, what if they decide to keep dodging, shall we not do what? So, let us do our work.

6.27

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, I want to thank the chairperson, and the committee for the job well done. I have taken note of the recommendations of the committee. The Government is going to study the recommendations and come back to this House in a period of six months to respond - *(Interjection)* - yes, on the actions that would have been taken. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, you know, that one should not bother you. The good thing is, some action is already being taken, as the chairman has said.

However, what is so interesting about reports of the Auditor-General is that these are issues, which have been unearthed by a Government agency. That is what is interesting about it, and our work is to push. I want to thank you, Chairman. You see, some of the issues are already addressed because of the work you have done and because of how the committee has managed to push.

So, to me, if we achieve that, to ensure that at least something is done because of our intervention, however small, I really appreciate it. And then we demand answers through the Treasury Memoranda. Yes, Hon. Chris, you want to give some information.

6.29

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I just wanted to provide information regarding

the process of appointing boards. Usually, the laws, which we pass here, give authority to ministers to appoint boards, which oversee the operations of these agencies. Therefore, the board represents the interests of the minister.

However, we have standing guidelines, as Cabinet, that once the board is vacant, the minister writes to all ministers to propose names; they propose, and the minister will shortlist and then the names are sent to the security department of Government to be vetted.

Once they have been cleared by security, you prepare a Cabinet Paper and send it to the Cabinet Secretariat. Then, depending on the business of the Cabinet, they will schedule it on the Order Paper of the Cabinet.

So, sometimes, the delays are not occasioned by the Minister, but say by ISO, which vets or even the Cabinet Secretariat –*(Interjection)*– yes, I am not answering for the minister in this case, I am just giving information about the process we go through - that, yes, the minister may delay the process, but sometimes the delays can be occasioned by some of those processes.

So, I just want Members to understand because Hon. Kaaya had raised a question as to whether names should come to Parliament or not. I thought we should know the process that we go through.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I now put the question that the report of the Committee on COSASE on the Report of the Auditor-General, on the Financial Statements of Uganda Printing and Publishing Corporation, for the year ended 30 June 2020 to be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You see, honourable colleagues, when you have an amendment, you move, you do not comment but you commented; you gave your wishes but you never moved that we adopt any amendment, and so, my hands were tied.

Honourable colleagues, we need an action-taken report, and a Treasury Memoranda within six months as provided for under the law. The House is adjourned to tomorrow at 2 o'clock.

(The House rose at 6.31 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday 5 July 2023 at 2.00 p.m.)