



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION - FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2021



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FIRST SESSION - 30TH SITTING - FIRST MEETING

Tuesday, 21 September 2021

Parliament met at 2.12 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker, Mr Jacob Oulanyah, in the Chair.)

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I welcome you to today's sitting. Parliament has organised a four-day general induction seminar for Members of the 11th Parliament, commencing on Monday, 27 September 2021 and continuing on Friday, 1 October 2021; Saturday, 2 October 2021 and Monday, 4 October 2021 starting at 8.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. This is being done to avoid holding these trainings on days when Parliament is sitting.

The venue for the seminar will be on the ground level of the car park, South Wing as well as the conference Hall, Parliament House. The Zoom link will be provided for those Members who will be unable to physically attend and participate in the seminar. Please, note that in line with the recommendations of the Ministry of Health, the Standard Operating Procedures on the COVID-19 pandemic will be strictly enforced.

The objectives of the seminar are:

1. To emphasise the roles and responsibilities of a Member of Parliament as well as the general principles that underpin the role of Parliament, the Executive and the Judiciary.
2. To situate the mandate of a Member of Parliament into the national and international context in readiness for parliamentary work. A detailed programme for the induction seminar will be availed in due course by the Clerk to Parliament.

I urge you all to attend the induction and hope that you will be able to up your knowledge and skills, to serve as effective Members of Parliament.

Honourable members, last week, I gave some guidance on how we are going to proceed, more specially with business that the 10th Parliament was not able to complete and also, some matters that have already been acted upon by the President after the expiry date of the term of Parliament and also the President.

Some discussions have come up - mainly when I tried to look through those discussions - because the people who conducted the discussions, including some Members of Parliament, did not address themselves to the specific aspects that I covered in my ruling. In the case of Members of Parliament, they should have been the ones guiding the public on the substance of what my communication was about. However, some of them chose to do the other way. That is human conduct and you cannot regulate every aspect of human life.

As I said, the subject of that debate has now come back to Parliament. On the 26 August 2021, the President wrote a letter to the Speaker of Parliament, which letter I received today. I am under duty to read it to you just for purposes of record because I had taken a decision on matters of this nature before. The letter reads:

“26th August 2021,

To the Rt hon. Jacob Oulanyah, Speaker of Parliament of Uganda, Kampala.

The National Social Security Fund (Amendment) Act, 2019.

I received the National Social Security Fund (Amendment) Act, 2019 for assent. However, following numerous appeals from the workers and trade unions, who are the contributors to the Fund, I held several meetings with their leaders; technical people from ministries of Finance, Gender and the National Social Security Fund.

It has been agreed that the Bill should be returned to Parliament for reconsideration of the provisions listed below:

1) *Clause 1: Commencement. The clause should be amended so that the Act comes into force on the date of its publication in the Gazette, except for section 24 (A), which shall come into force on a day to be appointed by the statutory instrument on the advice of the board. Under sub-clause 24(A)(5), the minister is required to prescribe by statutory instrument the terms and conditions and procedures for assessing mid-term benefits. The above requires consulting the board and other stakeholders. The said process is likely to be lengthy and yet, there is need to implement other proposed amendments immediately.*

2) *Substitution of sub-clause 2(A)(2). The above clause should be substituted and a new sub-clause 2(A) inserted in the Principal Act, to the effects that “A*

member who is 45 years and above, and has contributed to the fund for at least 10 years, is eligible to mid-term access of up to 20 per cent of his or her accrued benefits.”

The justification for this amendment is that allowing mid-term access for all members, who are 45 years and above, or those who have saved for 10 years, increases the total number of the members eligible to access mid-term, which will be unsustainable for the Fund.

3) *Deletion of sub-clause 24(A)(3) and (4). The above clauses should be deleted as allowing a member with disability who ceases to be employed for a period not less than one year to withdraw 75 per cent of their benefits would put the savers at a great risk of poverty in old age.*

In addition, allowing a member who is 45 years of age and above, who has ceased to be employed for a period of not less than three years to be eligible to mid-term access for a sum not exceeding 40 per cent of his or her accrued benefits, will erode members’ savings, which would be most required after retirement.

Besides, this provision will place the Fund under financial distress.

4) *Supervision of the Fund*

Sometime back, I wrote to the former Speaker of Parliament about the need for the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to supervise the Fund as opposed to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development or both. The problem with splitting the supervisory role is that apart from delaying decision making, it will create room for corruption.

It is also evident that the Fund has grown its portfolio under the supervision of Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Supervision should remain with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

5) *Board directors*

The amendment proposes that the Managing Director should be an ex-officio member of the board with no right to vote. The Managing Director is responsible for the day to day running of the Fund and advises the board not only on policy matters but on almost all issues pertaining to the Fund.

He/she should have a right to vote, as has been the practice.

*Yoweri K. Museveni
President”*

That was received today. Ordinarily, on reading of this letter, there would be a day set aside for the minister responsible – it could be on the same day – to move a reconsideration motion, which would then be sent to the committee for appropriate action.

However, in line with my guidance, which I gave earlier, this will not be possible. I have read the President’s letter for the record and for purposes of guiding the committee that will be handling this matter when the time comes.

This matter is no longer with this Parliament; it cannot be with this Parliament. This Parliament cannot handle the referral or the reconsideration of this Bill.

As I guided last time, a fresh Bill will be introduced. Hopefully, some of the concerns of the President will be incorporated in the new Bill that will come to Parliament, in order to save time.

When this Bill comes back to Parliament, I will use my prerogative not to allow the committee responsible to take the 45 days to handle this Bill because this matter had been handled, completed and sent to the President.

The key issues for discussion are only those, which the President has returned. Otherwise, Parliament had already agreed on what should be done. I will give less time so that this matter comes back to Parliament and we discuss it.

This will apply to all other important Bills that affect the lives of people directly and also those that try to facilitate them like the Succession Amendment Bill, which has also suffered the same fate. They should be brought in this way and each time they come, we shall give guidance appropriately on what time they will need to deal with these matters.

Committees, please, when these matters come to you, handle them with expediency.

There was also a motion proposed by hon. Medard Ssegona, Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee (Central Government). I had a discussion with him this morning. The motion, which was for a resolution of Parliament to reconsider the resolutions adopting the Auditor-General’s observations and recommendations on the reports up to 30 June 2020, which were not discussed and presented to the committees on local Government accounts, public operations or other bodies or organisations established by an Act of Parliament.

This motion also ceases to exist for purposes of handling of Parliament because the subject matter of the discussion had been closed and therefore, expired with the last Parliament.

Honourable members, it has come to my attention – please, take this seriously – we made a commitment to the people of this country that we would be serious and we would avoid certain things that would bring the image of this institution in disrepute. It has come to my attention that some Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of Government are making arrangements with our committees and financing them to do certain work.

If you want your mandate, authority and independence eroded, let somebody else, other than Parliament, finance your activities. He who pays the piper, calls the tune.

This is a trend that is dangerous for this institution. I am calling upon all MDAs of Government to cease forthwith from these dealings, which will end up undermining

the independence of this institution. This communication should be made in writing and copied to all persons to whom this particular guidance or directive is given.

This is the first directive I am giving in my entire history as Deputy Speaker and Speaker. No ministry, no agency of Government and no department of Government shall finance the activities of committees of Parliament. Doing so will end up undermining the independence and authority of this institution. *(Applause)*

Chairpersons, Vice Chairpersons, Members and clerks to committees, this is directed to you. Let us have this independence that we sing about. This is the easiest way to erode it if you have people secretly financing your activities. It has happened and that is why I am talking about it. I hope it ends there.

Honourable members, now that I have guests in the gallery today whose reason for joining us is known, I will alter the Order Paper and bring item 4 forward for our discussion and then deal with item 3 later.

There were Members who had raised some urgent matters - Should we deal with these urgent matters after item 4? Let us deal with item 4 first and we deal with urgent matters; and then we conclude – *(Interjection)* Are you now the Chair? *(Laughter)*

Hon. Cecilia Ogwal is saying communication from the chair. She wants to seize this – *(Interjection)*– You mean from communication from the Chair, okay. We will deal with the procedural matter first.

MR NIWAGABA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your elaborate guidance. I will only dwell on one aspect; your Ruling of 16 September 2021 that tends to do away with the entire concept of reinstatement of lapsed businesses.

I am rising under rule 57(1)(a) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, seeking your leave for me to give oral notice under rule 57(1)(c) that I intend to bring a substantive motion under rule 87 to vary your ruling, especially in respect to

the business that had not gone to the extent of Article 91(5-7) of the Constitution so that the business that was still pending in committees can be reinstated at that level, in terms of rule 235(2), so that the committees can proceed with that business at that stage.

So, my two points of procedure, Mr Speaker, are, one, to seek your leave and, two, to consider it as a matter of public importance so that you allow me to present that substantive motion tomorrow and it be placed on the Order Paper.

If you grant me leave, Mr Speaker, allow me to step out and go and draft the motion. I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, that particular motion would be in violation of rule 235 (4), which says that all those matters you are talking about should have been introduced at the second sitting of the first session of Parliament. You did not do so and, so, it lapsed. *(Mr Niwagaba rose.)* No, no, no. Please, honourable, you have raised a procedural point; I am now ruling. Do you want to rule jointly with me on this matter? *(Laughter)*

Because we did not do it, it lapsed. It is as simple as that. All these legal matters you are bringing are like trying to revive something which has long gone with the wind. It is gone.

So, let us just reintroduce these things properly, like I have just guided. This one has just come out – the NSSF (Amendment) Bill; they are trying to bring it back. I said: “No, no, no; bring it normally and we start.” There is no harm.

If there is a matter – for example, I have said that in the case of Bills that were already before a committee and were not finalised and lapsed by the operation of our Rules of Procedure, when they come, I will give guidance, case by case: how far had the committee gone with this matter?

So, when I am making my reference to the committee, I will take that into account so that the committee can expedite, based on the

resources and material they already have from the research done by the previous committee. If it is helpful, they adopt and proceed. If it is not, then they start from scratch. I will be giving guidance on a case-by-case basis.

I will also be giving guidance that the essential rule in 235(1) should be maintained. I will be seeking an amendment to that. What does rule 235(1) say? *“(1) A Bill, petition, motion or other business before the House or a committee during a term of Parliament lapses upon dissolution of Parliament.”*

There is no exception. Parliament must be able to clean up its House. When its time comes to go, it goes with its Bills and proposals so that when a new Parliament comes, they start on a clean slate.

I will be recommending this to the House for adoption. All these exceptions are creating the kind of confusion we are now swimming in. Thank you.

MS OGWAL: Thank you. Clarification on the communication from the Chair –

THE SPEAKER: But, how do you seek clarification, honourable?

MS OGWAL: Clarification on communication from the Chair?

THE SPEAKER: Yes, honourable member from Dokolo?

MS OGWAL: Mr Speaker, I thank you for the very elaborate clarification you have given us on businesses that have lapsed. The first one, Mr Speaker, which I would like to raise, is concerning the Government agencies facilitating Members of Parliament. That can be done directly or indirectly.

In a direct way, I want to bring to the attention of the House - if it can be allowed or not – that they can arrange a meeting, conference or seminar in a hotel or a retreat for two or three days. In that situation, how do we handle? That is the first point which I want to find out.

Secondly - I missed a couple of them because I would prefer the Government agencies to use parliamentary premises - I find it difficult for us to hold a meeting in the boardroom of either URA or whatever it is, when we have our humble Conference Hall - unless if it is fully occupied. So, these are the clarifications, Mr Speaker, that I would like to seek.

Lastly – which may not be palatable – these rules are made by us. Is there any way we can suspend a rule – *(Laughter)* because it is our rule? Can the Speaker, with all the powers that he has, suspend the rule and we move – *(Interjection)* – I am asking the Speaker. Please, sit down. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Which rule do you want to suspend?

MS OGWAL: Rule 235, Mr Speaker. After clarifying the preliminary issues I have raised, I am seeking your guidance - because it has given me sleepless nights. If we can make a law; can we amend it, can we suspend it or can we abrogate it?

Mr Speaker, I just want guidance. Thank you.

MR SPEAKER: Abrogation? I am not sure. *(Laughter)* We probably live in a history where such abrogation has taken place. However, it should not be instructive to our proceedings today or in the future. Suspension? We can do. Amendment? We can do. Thank you - because the rules allow suspension of rules.

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, the number of Bills that have - by your ruling now - collapsed is unprecedented in the history of this Parliament, including Bills that were brought here by the Government.

The procedural issue I am raising, Mr Speaker, is that these Bills are sent to the President but after the contribution of his representatives here in Parliament - they are more than 80 and I guess they consult and even report matters to Cabinet – he is returning Bills, one after another. This has never happened in the history of this Parliament. Do we still need ministers

here –(Laughter)– 80 of them? We sit here; we spend money.

Mr Speaker, this Parliament's budget is now almost a billion shillings per day - to sustain the institution. You have ministers, in their dozens, appearing before committees. The Bills are then sent to the President and returned –(Interruption)

MR BAHATI: Thank you, Mr Speaker and hon. Ssemujju for raising that point.

Mr Speaker, is the honourable member in order to insinuate that the President's return of these Bills is a result of members of Cabinet who have not done their work, when actually in most cases – for example, look at the return of the NSSF (Amendment) Bill. The President and Cabinet requested Parliament that the supervision of NSSF should be by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Parliament said it should be the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. The President has returned it.

What is the member now trying to insinuate, when we have actually done our work and done it very well? Is he in order to mislead this House that members of Cabinet are not doing their work, when actually they are?

THE SPEAKER: You know, there are two aspects to this. The first aspect is Bills that were under business that was saved under rule 235 of our Rules of Procedure. That is a different category.

The second category is Bills that were returned by the President, when the Parliament that approved the legislation sent to him lapsed. He is sending the request for a reconsideration to a new Parliament.

I did not hear him talk about the second aspect; whether we still need the Cabinet and its numbers - Of course, I would advise the honourable member to go and consult with the appointing authority on this matter and advise me what the conclusion of their meeting yielded.

On the specific issue of whether it is because of the number of the Cabinet that they are not doing a good job, which is probably why the Bill is delayed, I think we do not want to go into that. May be on this, I would also now rule on the issue raised by hon. Ssemujju on this particular aspect.

Once Bills are brought to this Parliament, they become a property of the House and not anybody else. Should there be any misgiving or delays and lapse of a Bill, it cannot be occasioned on the proposers of the Bill. It can only be occasioned on the people who are processing the Bill for purposes of approval. (Applause) Sitting here and seeing you, honourable members, indicting this House, I feel extremely uncomfortable. So, I will leave it at that. (Member rose_)

Are we going to debate by procedure today, honourable members? Your issue has now lapsed. (Laughter)

MR MPUUGA: Mr Speaker, you are right to be concerned about the plethora of procedural matters arising from your guidance. This is because it invaluablely has far reaching implications to the House and the Executive. In fact, it is a very serious indictment of methods of work because the cost of processing a single Bill is unimaginable.

My concern, coming out of your guidance, of course, which has the consequence of giving fresh interpretation to the rules is that probably, the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline has to revisit the provisions relating to reinstatement of business. I recollect that in the first meeting of the Committee on Business of the House, this matter came up. Indeed, the Speaker directed that a motion be moved by the Government to undertake this very seriously as per the rules but it was not done by the Government, as per that directive of the Speaker.

This probably raises a red flag that the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline knew it, at some stage, to make an arm of the Government to bear the cost of this kind of

lethargic way of undertaking public business. Otherwise, in the circumstances, the shared cost of energy and resources to a private Member to move a Bill at a certain stage and only to be frustrated - Aware that, on the Order Paper as per the rules, the Government business takes priority - Therefore, the private Member has no space to determine when their businesses will come. This puts a lot of weight and burden on private Members moving Bills in this House when priority is, at all times, on the Government business.

I want to put the House on notice that when the Committee on Business is convened to reconsider the Bills, we need to apportion cost on this lethargic way of going about public business to avoid this kind of debate in future, as if we are not alive to duty and that the Government went to sleep, even when the Speaker directed from the Committee on Business that the Government moves a motion to reinstate this business.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, let us put this matter to rest and get down to work. Let the Attorney-General reintroduce the Bills and we assess them on a case by case basis to try and save cost on energies and efforts that have already been made in processing of these Bills so that we give a guided decision on specific Bills and how much time they will take in the committees.

Whether you like it or not, even if everything had been saved, it is still up to the respective committees to take a decision on whether or not to move on with what had already been done in the past. You do not take away that discretion from the committee. So, in essence, we are just trying to clean up but the implication remains the same. Even if the businesses had been probably saved, it would still be up to the current committee to assess them. It is not automatic. It would be up to the current committee to say, “we do not agree on this one and start afresh.”

Why are we behaving as if the last Parliament has sanctioned this Parliament to inherit permanently, without amendment, what it has

done? (*Applause*) Let me not continue with this because I trust the leadership and members of the current committee of the 11th Parliament. They will do the assessment. If they are satisfied, they will come back to Parliament the next day and say “We are ready to go with the second reading of this Bill”. If they are not satisfied, they will say “We want to continue a bit and interrogate this Bill a little further before we can come back to you”.

It should be within the discretion of the chairperson of the committee and its members to own it up. Please, let us leave this issue here and proceed with the business of the day. (*Member rose*) From the Chair, we do not do clarification.

MS KABA HENDA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter that you communicated about on the way committees are going to work with MDAs and other organisations.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has released a schedule for the regional budget conferences and they require the chairpersons of the committees to attend them. They are providing transport and accommodation. I wonder whether that is in contravention of the guidance that you gave.

Even at the time when we are processing Bills and reports, MDAs may want to take Members for a retreat to explain the matters of the Bills that they present so that Members can fully understand and make opinions to the Parliament on a Bill, report or an oversight that they have done.

Mr Speaker, I would like to get more guidance from you on how we should proceed. You should clearly state the time and conditions where the committees will not engage or when the committees would engage. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. This House has a leadership, which is known. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development does not give you authority to go anywhere. I am the one or the Deputy Speaker who does so. If you now have a secret arrangement with the

Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development that you just go without my knowledge, that becomes a big problem.

The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development must write to the Speaker to seek the release of his Members. He should also state in his letter that we are preparing some money for transport, accommodation and whatever else they want to give. It is up to me to assess whether I have the funds to facilitate my chairperson and his or her members from my budget as Parliament, and then I will tell him, "I decline your money. I will facilitate my own Members". That request, however, should be made to the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker. They cannot write to you directly. *(Applause)* That would be bad manners. *(Laughter)*

Honourable members, just follow this procedure. The Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and whoever should write to the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker. We will look at it and give appropriate advice or authorisation appropriately, depending on the content of the letter.

However, what I would like to discourage - and which must stop - is the business of seeing your members in a hotel with some agency of Government - you do not know what is going on- and members are just smiling; probably they are happy. *(Laughter)* Honourable members, let us halt this matter; it is enough.

Let us go on to the next item.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF
PARLIAMENT TO PAY TRIBUTE TO
THE LATE JONAH LWANGA, THE
ARCHBISHOP OF THE UGANDA
ORTHODOX CHURCH

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you are the mover of the motion, please, proceed. However, before you do, let me just do some introductions.

Honourable members, in the VIP gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation from the

Metropolis of the Uganda Orthodox Church. They include the Head of Clergy, caretakers, church leaders and members of the family of the late Archbishop Metropolitan Yonah Lwanga and they are:

1. Archbishop Makarios Tillyrides, leader of the delegation Archbishop of Nairobi, Kenya and caretaker of the Metropolis of Uganda;
2. Bishop Sylvester Kisitu of Gulu and Eastern Uganda;
3. Rev. Fr Paul Mutaasa;
4. Mrs Annet Nalubowa;
5. Mr James Sengendo;
6. Ms Maria Nanono Asiimwe;
7. Rev. Fr Nectarious Kabuye;
8. Rev. Fr Joseph Mutokya;
9. Rev. Fr John Kibuuka Bbosa;
10. Rev. Fr Emmanuel Kiwanuka;
11. Mr Nathan Basajjakilalo;
12. Rev. Fr Christos Mukiibi;
13. Mr Dittan Mayanja Kikabi;
14. Mr Paul Kasirye; and
15. Other members of the delegation.

They are here to observe the proceedings and specifically, the motion that is on the Floor now, which has drawn them to be with us as we debate on one of our own Archbishop who was called by the Lord.

2.55

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Motion for a Resolution of Parliament to pay tribute to the late Jonah Lwanga, the Archbishop of the Uganda Orthodox Church is being moved under Rule 56 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

The motion reads:

"WHEREAS Parliament received, with grief, the sad news of the demise of the Archbishop of the Uganda Orthodox Church, Jonah Lwanga, which occurred on 5 September 2021 in Athens, Greece;

AND WHEREAS Archbishop Jonah Lwanga was the Archbishop of the Orthodox Church of Kampala and Exarch of All Uganda under the Eastern Orthodox Church of Alexandria from 1997 until his death;

AWARE THAT the Archbishop served in other various capacities as Secretary of the Orthodox Mission in Uganda under Archbishop Frumentius of the Archdiocese of Irinoupolis, a deacon, priest and vicar Bishop of Bukoba in Tanzania;

NOTING THAT Archbishop Jonah Lwanga was a spiritual leader of more than 600,000 Ugandans who are Greek Orthodox Christians and it is through his able leadership that the Orthodox faith in Uganda has expanded over the years to consist of about 80 priests and 105 Orthodox communities;

APPRECIATING THAT through Archbishop Jonah Lwanga's efforts and under his omophorion, the Diocese of Gulu was established for the Eastern and Northern Uganda Mission on 26th November 2018;

COGNISANT THAT under Archbishop Jonah Lwanga's stewardship, over 20 medical facilities and a hospital were established in Uganda, as well as an Orthodox Mother's Union to address issues of spiritual and social development of women and their children and to fight poverty, hunger and illiteracy;

RECOGNISING THAT Archbishop Jonah Lwanga was emphatic against all forms of injustice, including human rights violations and was an exemplary spiritual leader who participated in the shaping of the lives of Ugandans and served the Orthodox Church with dedication;

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

- 1. That Parliament collectively conveys its deep condolences to the bereaved family, relatives, friends, the entire Orthodox Church and the people of Uganda for the loss of a distinguished citizen and a*

spiritual leader of Orthodox Church in Uganda; and

- 2. That Parliament takes cognizance of the dedicated service and contribution rendered by the Late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga to the people of Uganda and the world in general."*

I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Is the Motion seconded? Okay, it is seconded by the whole House but for the record, I need to have names from the UPDF on the record. Thank you.

MS NAKADAMA: Mr Speaker, this is the justification for the Resolution of Parliament to pay tribute to the late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga of the Uganda Orthodox Church of the Holy Metropolis of Kampala and Uganda.

His Eminence Archbishop Jonah Lwanga of the Holy Metropolis of Kampala passed on in Athens Greece on 5 September 2021.

The late Archbishop was born to the late George William Kayonjo and Keziah Nabitaka on 18 July 1945 at Anoonya Ddegeya in Luweero District. He did his primary education at Ddegeya after which he joined Bishop Nankyama Senior Secondary School in Namungoona, from 1952 to 1964.

From 1964 to 1968, he commenced his Orthodox clerical formation at the Ecclesiastical School of Crete in Greece. He Joined the University of Athens in 1968 where he obtained a degree in Theology and Philosophy in 1978.

From 1979 to 1981, he served as Secretary to the Orthodox Mission in Uganda.

Lwanga was ordained a Deacon on 01 May 1981 and ordained a Priest in 1982. He was subsequently appointed to Makarios III Orthodox Seminary in Riruta Nairobi where he taught Theology. While there, he was elevated to the status of Archimandrite, a position of authority in the Eastern Orthodox Church ranks.

On 27 January 1992, he was ordained Vicar Bishop of Bukoba in Tanzania.

On 12 May 1997, the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Alexandria and all Africa, elected him as Metropolitan of the Holy Metropolis of Kampala. He was the second Ugandan to hold this position after the death of Archbishop Theodoros Nankyama.

On 27 October 2017, the Metropolitan was elevated to the rank of an Elder by the Holy Synod in Alexandria.

Mr Speaker, we mourn and celebrate the life of a distinguished person who devoted his life in spreading the Gospel of Christianity in Uganda and Central Africa under the Eastern Orthodox Church of Alexandria.

Apart from overseeing the growth of the Orthodox Church in Uganda in which more parishes were opened, churches built, and priests ordained, Archbishop Jonah Lwanga episcopate also emphasised education and empowerment of Ugandans.

In his 24 years of service, he grew the number of Orthodox health facilities to 20, strengthened the Orthodox Mothers' Union as a strategy to address issues of spiritual and social development of women and children and to fight against poverty, hunger and illiteracy.

He also championed the creation of second diocese in Uganda in the Orthodox Diocese of Gulu and Eastern Uganda in 2018.

In 2002, Archbishop Lwanga was one of the pioneers of the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, which fosters unity, health, welfare, democracy and respect for human rights of Ugandans.

As an individual, Archbishop Lwanga was widely appreciated as a passionate crusader of peace, good governance, human rights, national unity, development as well as social, political and economic justice.

Mr Speaker, Archbishop Jonah Lwanga was a visionary leader. His greatest aspiration was to launch the construction of the Uganda Orthodox Cathedral on Luby Hill in Rubaga Division, Kampala. The cathedral's groundbreaking ceremony was presided over by President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, at the launch of the 100th Anniversary celebrations of the Orthodox Church in 2019.

The cathedral is intended to be a replica of the historical Hagia Sophia Cathedral of Istanbul, which is Turkey's greatest tourist attraction.

Mr Speaker, the Orthodox Church in Uganda was founded over 100 years and one of the founders was Obadia Basajjakitalo, a grandfather of Archbishop Lwanga. It is no wonder that his life and legacy has cemented the place of the Orthodox Church in the economic, social and political transformation of Uganda.

On behalf of the Government of Uganda and on my own behalf, I convey our profound condolences to the Orthodox Church in Uganda, Africa, the world, the family, relatives and friends. May the Almighty God grant Archbishop Jonah Lwanga's soul eternal peace. I beg to submit. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The seconder of the motion is hon. Mpuuga Mathias, Leader of the Opposition.

3.07

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Mathias Mpuuga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise with humility to support the motion moved ably by the Rt Hon. Deputy Prime Minister in paying tribute to this gallant son of Uganda, the late Archbishop.

Mr Speaker, this motion is about our humanness. In Masaka Diocese, the Catholic Diocese has the oldest secondary school in Bukalasa Seminary that started about 1893.

At the entry to the cemetery, is a big inscription, not so big but easy to see and written in Latin: "*Memento mori*" (remember you must die).

Therefore, as you enter the cemetery - ordinarily either to pray for the departed or to and bury the dead - we are reminded of the fact that after all we are not immortal. Therefore, we must remember that it is good to be good; that it is fair to be just, and that service to people is service to the will of God.

Mr Speaker, the Archbishop was a human endowed with spiritual power but remained decent and humble with all the immense power he exuded as an Archbishop and a leader of thousands of Christians.

His impact of service did not require him to breathe down the necks of those who respected him as a way of demanding respect which is why all of us speak about him with humility because he lived, he served and departed. I am yet to see an accusing finger pointed at him.

Mr Speaker, you know, this is a very funny country; people do not spare the dead even when they are long gone - either in whispers or in other media, they will really poke at their existence. I can stand here firmly to say there is a lot of warmth about the service and life of this man of God. Therefore, I am humbled to stand before this House to pay tribute to his service to humanity.

He was resolute in defending humanity and human dignity. He even risked his life in defence of human dignity. I wish to join the country in paying contribute to this gallant son of Uganda. His life was humble but complete. His completeness is related to the millions of souls he touched in his humble service.

Mr Speaker, before and after the last election - of course, the most violent in our troubled history - his apocalypse about the future of this country came to pass, which is why, for some reason, we remain a country divided even on the basics of our being as human beings. That we can even debate whether there are human rights and that therefore, they should be respected; that we can even debate the key tenets of our being as leaders of our people -

This honourable gentleman and leader made statements as a senior citizen that would guide the nature, the conduct and the future of this country. Did we listen? If we did listen, then perhaps we listened in bits. That is why we find ourselves still discussing whether we are a nation that is positing in a direction that we all want to be or still debating our existence as a nation.

In his service, we need to learn the fact that religious institutions are not in competition with the Government or any other entity but play a very key role in complementing the role of Government -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable, you have to hold again because we capture both video and audio. I am sure the cameras cannot see you. Sergeant - Okay, proceed honourable.

MR MPUUGA: Mr Speaker, on another day, we would call that malice and sabotage but it is - *(Laughter)* - I was making the point that religious institutions play a very key role in complementing the role of Government. Therefore, Government needs to support them, especially in key sectors like health and education, among others. They need our support.

At this stage, Mr Speaker, the biggest tribute we can offer this man of God is to work on the key issues that touched his being as a person, especially matters relating to human dignity. That at this stage, we are still discussing abuse of power; that in a democracy, we still talk about political prisoners, not people in prison because they committed treason but because they believe in a certain way and therefore, their life is best served while in jail.

We can pay even bigger tribute to his soul if we respect the fact that we are not the same and at no one time shall we believe in the same way as far as political belief is concerned.

Finally, yesterday, I listened in church at Namungoona when one of the priests, in addressing the Vice President who was the chief mourner, reported that some "powerful

people” – he did not place them anywhere but he said they are “powerful” and we know what “power” means in this country, are actually hell-bent on grabbing the church land. They are so courageous. When they noted that the old man was away on treatment, they descended on church land and they were grabbing some of it.

Mr Speaker, probably, this is a rude reawakening. Her Excellency did listen to this. If she did not, Dr Baryomunsi was alive and must have taken note that we cannot pay tribute to this honourable citizen when at his honourable departure, some powerful people have descended on the church land and they are grabbing it because there is nobody to defend it now.

That and more grabbings and chasing away of citizens and denying them of their human rights on the lakes and in the mines without being compensated shall not augur well with his soul. I am very sure he cannot rest when we cannot undo injustice in this land where he was so passionate about justice.

I want to invite the House to join the mover in seconding this motion as a motion about human dignity and about the life of a man who unwaveringly served humanity without colour or creed and without contradiction. I move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Honourable members, the question that I propose for your debate is for a Motion of a resolution of Parliament to pay tribute to the late Jonah Lwanga, the Archbishop of the Uganda Orthodox Church.

1. Particularly, that Parliament collectively conveys its deep condolences to the bereaved family, relatives, friends, the entire Orthodox Church and the people of Uganda, for the loss of a distinguished citizen and a spiritual leader of the Orthodox Church in Uganda.
2. That this Parliament takes cognisance of the dedicated service and contribution

rendered by the late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga to the people of Uganda and the world at large.

That is the motion for your debate and the debate starts now.

3.18

MR THEODORE SSEKIKUBO (NRM, Lwemiyaga County, Sembabule): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Allow me, on behalf of the Uganda Orthodox Church, to thank Parliament for allotting us space in today’s sitting.

When I see through, it is almost the Motion that is the business of today. I would like to thank the Prime Minister for moving this Motion and the Leader of the Opposition, hon. Mathias Mpuuga, for seconding this Motion to pay glowing tribute to His Eminence Metropolitan Jonah Lwanga, the Archbishop of the Uganda Orthodox Church and a son of Uganda born and bred in Luweero, Ddegeya.

He grew up in Luweero and witnessed the atrocities of the war to which he highly contributed the liberation war, particularly when he was of age in the 1980s.

Mr Speaker, His Eminence the Archbishop passed on, on 5th September 2021 in Athens. He had been battling some ailments associated with his services. You may recall that he had had dislocation of the discs. This time when he had gone to Athens to have a medical check-up, his physicians could not let him proceed to Albania where he was destined to go.

As you are aware, he passed on. However, it was not easy to have his body repatriated. The Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria and the whole of Africa did all it could to have the body repatriated. We had attempted to shorten the days but the procedures - the papers – apparently, in Europe, once you die, there is an office of the coroner – not the corona disease – but some judicial officer who must investigate and ascertain the cause of death, especially because of being a high-ranking official.

They eventually booked him on Egypt Air that touched ground last week on Thursday night and the burial took place yesterday. That could be the brief part of it.

However, Mr Speaker, allow me to raise a few issues. I would like to thank the Government from the start – starting with hon. Chris Baryomunsi and the Vice-President, who were ordered to arrange for the return. That is how we attempted to go to Turkish Air but the church said: “No, we will retain him and we shall bring him to Uganda.” They said: “Stay put. We shall bring him back to your country.” That is why they could not allow – the process itself was difficult.

I would like to thank you, Mr Speaker. As soon as it happened, I got in touch with you and you asked about the details and I told you all that was happening. I contacted the Deputy Speaker, too. Thank you for all the effort and assistance you gave.

I would like to thank all Ugandans. The late Archbishop transformed himself from being the leader of the Orthodox Church to being the spirit of the country. (*Applause*) His alertness to the issues affecting this country elevated him and his shoes that he leaves behind are too big to be filled by any of us.

He always spoke out strongly against human rights abuses. He spoke strongly against corruption. I do not want to say it but even when he was being approached in the heat of the campaign, with an envelope, he turned it down and chased those carrying it away. (*Applause*) Yet, he was a man of no much means, in my own assessment.

He was the Archbishop but had only two pairs of shoes – and not new ones: old and flat-heeled pairs. When others thought that he needed more and they donated to him shoes, he would give away those new ones and retain his old ones.

He has left no bank account to his name - we have checked - yet he had the means. He did not spend on his family. That is why I stand with you to mourn this great son of Uganda.

The President has reached out to religious leaders – and rightly – with the view of working with them. He has extended a hand. Only that when it came to the Orthodox Church, the Government offered means of transport, but when it was brought – it was the Mitsubishi Sport – he refused to sit in it. It is still there. He said he would not sit in it. He has been driving his old Land Cruiser of 2002. He was a proud man.

When you say you are going to give to leaders, you have to take into account what befits them. Giving the Archbishop a vehicle meant for shopping in the market – he turned it down and said he would not take it. (*Applause*) He was simple but he was very proud. I know wherever he is, he is looking back at this country. Even when his health deteriorated, he did not spare himself.

I remember when we came to Gulu and specifically to Omoro, to install His Grace Sylvester Kisitu as the Bishop of Gulu and Eastern Uganda - I fondly remember your district, Mr Speaker; your chairman, the Woman MP, hon. Catherine Lamwaka and the entire team you sent us. We even had an opportunity to stay there overnight. You have a peaceful district, Mr Speaker. I am happy you represent it well.

Wherever the Archbishop would go, that would be his home. Wherever he set his foot, he would do his best. I still have fond memories of the moments I was with him.

To the politics – at the time when you are about to give up on President Museveni, he somehow surprises you. The way the Archbishop critiqued him openly, telling off everybody who would bother to listen, now the Government said that they were offering him an official burial, which we welcomed. That should be the way to go.

Yesterday, I witnessed the Chief Mourner, the Vice-President, who was in church. We had the Leader of Opposition and hon. Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu and there was peace in the church. (*Applause*) How I wish we would go on to be tolerant to one another. How I wish

we would know that we are, first, Ugandans and, thereafter, you are red and I am yellow but we are all Ugandans working for the good of this country. That should be the spirit.

I know that if we had stopped hon. Kyagulanyi from speaking in the Orthodox Cathedral in Namungoona, probably, the Archbishop would have turned in his coffin. Thank God we overcame that and let it be and the function ended well. *(Applause)*

I would like to thank all those that contributed. The Orthodox Church, where he has been the Archbishop, is the only church that was not introduced in Uganda by missionaries.

The founders such as Spartas Ssebbanja were harassed by the then Colonial Government because they built the first private school at Anonya and therein they taught English.

The then Colonial Government did not want the native Africans to be taught English. They were arrested. Ssebbanja had political agitation and it was the first time the Colonial Government was arresting religious leaders.

He, together with his colleagues, were banished to Karamoja because by then, Karamoja was a form of exile. That is the church I come from, Mr Speaker. I remember you visited us for prayers at Namungoona. I try many times. Sometimes, I am misunderstood by my party, but how else would I behave, as an Orthodox member?

I try. I promise myself that I will keep quiet but when it pricks the eye, that blood flows and I find myself speaking my mind.

In a way, it has helped me to be who I am and a very proud Ugandan, who is an Orthodox member. So Members, here we are.

I want to thank, from the bottom of my heart, the caretaker of the Orthodox Church in Uganda; the Archbishop from Kenya. He is with us. He is called Archbishop Makarios Tillyrides. Bishop *Mzee* Jeronymos from Tanzania and then Bishop Sylvester Kisitu,

who is the Bishop of Gulu and Eastern Uganda and also the fellow clergy.

We were together with Archbishop Kazimba Mugalu, Bishop Ssemogerere, the Chairperson of the Episcopal Conference and the Deputy Mufti of the Muslim community in Uganda.

Mr Speaker, the person we were seeing off was the first Chairman of the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda and the President of the Uganda Joint Christian Council for 12 years.

So, you can imagine. No matter who you are; even if you come from a small group, you can shine. The Orthodox Church is not a major religion in this country but that smallness can make a difference, once you stand on the principles, rise on those principles and defend those principles. Therefore, Members, I urge you to continue with the same.

He had wishes. He was always, as the chairman, the promoter of national dialogue. However, he reached a stage where he gave up on national dialogue and said, "I tell them these things; they do not listen" and kept quiet.

Secondly, his wish always, which you could tell was yearning to see a time when President Museveni would choose his successor. He has gone without realising that.

Yesterday, we were happy that we had the Vice President, hon. Jessica Alupo together with us and she has done so immensely. I was surprised, Mr Speaker, with her skills. She is good; she is a diplomat. *(Applause)* May I assume that this is probably the successor to the President –*(Laughter)*– because she handled this very difficult situation very clearly? She did it well, right from finding compromises. She executed her job very well and I was humbled, I must tell you. I must confess that she was not hard lining; she was not. Let us pray for her.

Lastly, honourable members, even this Parliament was never spared the slap of the archbishop. When we changed the age limit, he stood up to castigate this House that "Again, another bunch of selfish Members". However,

I later pleaded with him that probably there are those who did and those who did not. He said, “No, all that is Parliament. I am at the gate; I am looking forward to this country. All that is Parliament”. So, even this Parliament was never spared.

I am glad that Parliament could not say that motion cannot come here. Thank you for leading the way, Mr Speaker, with tolerance. Thank you, for being there for all mankind and the country. I want, in a special way, to thank the following Members:

1. Her Excellency, Jessica Alupo, who convened all meetings to ensure that we have a befitting send-off. She is not in the House –*(Interjections)*– Oh, I beg your pardon. Your Excellency, I want to thank you. I thought I should go on record –*(Laughter)*– and I also put in a good word for you.

You surprised me with your skills sincerely – and I am saying this from the bottom of my heart. *(Laughter)* Sincerely, you learn to give credit where it is due; we should do that. Where one has excelled, you do that.

2. I want to thank hon. Chris Baryomunsi because he was always the chairperson and in charge of the finances. It was not easy but he did it. He executed his job very well, guiding the Government and us at the church and putting together the function, until when we scored.
3. I want to thank my whip; Hon. Thomas Tayebwa. From the day he heard about it, he said, “I am giving the vehicles of Parliament at the disposal of the Church and we are together in this”.

Indeed, he was there from the first to the last meeting and he was there to welcome the body at Entebbe Airport. I want to thank him before you here on the *Hansard*. *(Applause)*

4. Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka, the Attorney-General, is equally thanked. He is from the *Mpeewo* clan, like the deceased; they both belong to the *Mpeewo* clan. He was there from the word go. Even at the time of receiving the body at Entebbe, he was with us.

I thank him and thank *Ssebo Omukulu Kiggye* of the *Mpeewo* clan for having such sons, who know that at the end of the day, they are sons and belong to that clan.

5. I want to thank Parliament. Mr Speaker, Parliament contributed to this funeral. The Deputy Speaker herself contributed to this funeral and we felt good. I felt good because I belong to this organisation called Parliament.

I did not have the opportunity to work outside the Government. As I was still on probation, I joined Parliament. So, I am glad that in Parliament, I have found a home and whenever you have a problem, there is a place to run to. I also thank all those Ugandans.

6. I must mention His Majesty, the Kabaka of Buganda, the Katikkiro, Mr Charles Peter Mayiga, the former Katikkiro, Mr Joseph Ssemwogerere, all distinguished members who made it to the Orthodox Church in Namungoona and all the faithful, the Fathers and everybody.

Thank you very much. You made us proud because at the time when we thought we were alone, you extended your hand and said, “Fear not; you are with us”. As a church, we are warmed and I would be happy if they could stand for recognition. They all said they have to attend this session to pay tribute.

Members of the Orthodox Church who came around, you can stand up. *(Applause)* So, those are the Ugandans who came all the way here. They thought they should come to pay this tribute. Thank you. May God protect this country.

Most importantly, if it was not for the President, things would not have worked out well. He did his part. *(Applause)* He entrusted it to the Vice President but it was him. That is why from the word go, I said that with all the whips that he had been receiving from the late archbishop, he never held grudges. This is why I said even at a time when I am about to give up on him, he emerges. *(Applause)* That is what troubles me. He did that. He knew the “trouble people” and the troubled church but somehow, he said, “Okay, let us do this”.

I think he also knows that not very soon, at the time when he is down, he will need the whole country. That should be the example to emulate from the deceased, both in life and even where he is.

I thank you, my colleague, hon. Helen Nakimuli. We are only two Orthodox members of Parliament. She was there. With this church, Mr Speaker, I do not know. You either have an Ssekikubo or a Nakimuli. They are both cantankerous. *(Laughter)* I was telling her to join NRM but she said “To hell”. I said “Okay, stay where you are. Let me stay in the NRM”. We are only two but we have a family in this Parliament.

I thank you, Members. You all seconded the motion unanimously. I wish you could look “behind” the deceased to see this happening. Thank you once again. Thank you Ugandans. Thank you President Museveni. Thank you all, who touched our hearts during this time and honourable members who came – hon. Ssekitoleko. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, honourable members. When I was making recognition, I remember I met my former lecturer, Dr Matovu, who is not sitting there. I think he is sitting there. He taught us at Makerere University a long time ago. I thought it would not be good for me to be sitting here while he is seated up in the public gallery and I do not recognise him. *(Applause) (Text expunged)*

3.43

MS HELEN NAKIMULI (NUP, Woman Representative, Kalangala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. His Eminence the Archbishop Makarios of Nairobi, Kenya, His Grace Bishop Kisitu, the Clergy of the Orthodox Church present and honourable members, I am honoured to be the second Orthodox Christian in this House. *(Applause)* For that matter, I invite all of you to join us. It is the best religion you would want to join. *(Laughter)* Yes, because it preaches the truth - nothing but the truth and we all follow it. *(Interjections)* I do not know about others. I only speak for what I know.

Mr Speaker, I join my colleague in thanking you for giving us this opportunity. The Orthodox Church, as the word, “orthodox” is, means traditional and so, we follow what is traditional.

A lot has been said about the late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga and I do not want to be repetitive. A lot of thanks have been given by my colleague and so, I will just say, “thank you.”

He, however, did not thank the Leader of the Opposition. *(Applause)* That is why I also want to say, “thank you, hon. Mathias Mpuuga,” for gracing the occasion. I thank all the Members of Parliament who attended the funeral. We were up even when we were mourning. Thank you, Government.

A lot was done by the late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga. He constructed schools and churches. He did a lot of psychosocial support. As he was leaving this world – a few clips were moving around – he preached peace and love even when he was misunderstood by some people. The Baganda have a saying that a fly that loves you will fall on that wound to remind you to cover it.

This was a gentleman who loved this country. I believe that what was fought for was what he fought for too. He fought for peace and harmony in this country.

He also said he was not sure if he would die before seeing peace and harmony. He has died before seeing peace and harmony in this country because we still see a lot of battering of our people. A lot of killings have been happening in Masaka where despite, security warnings, the killings would happen; indeed, he did not see the peace he preached, prevail.

Archbishop Jonah Lwanga was given a State burial and we thank you for that. However, when the State takes over certain burials especially of a church leader, why are the people concerned about such a person thrown out? For example, some of the believers were not even allowed to see their beloved one. Well, I know we are in a COVID-19 pandemic where we need to keep social distance but the men in uniform were very many and you would wonder whether they do not get infected by COVID-19. The believers were kept far way.

I beg that when it comes to a burial like this, the people are given a chance. Some of them called me from home saying, “We cannot bury our person because we have been sent away.” Well, there was less space but they would have been allowed in, one by one.

They said he only had two pairs of shoes and he gave out the rest he was given. Can we emulate this man? As we speak, I have about 60 pairs of shoes. I am learning from him and by next month, I will have only 40 pairs. *(Laughter)* I want to learn from him slowly and process by process. *(Interjections)* Mr Speaker, I beg for protection.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, can we have some order to allow the honourable member proceed?

MS NAKIMULI: Thank you. I would like to finalise by saying that while we are very few in this country, we have a voice and it has been heard. It is my humble prayer, therefore, that what Archbishop Jonah Lwanga yearned for is worked upon.

It is true he was given a State burial but believe you me, the late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga

I knew, if he would get up from that casket, would chase away all these people. He would say, “What are you doing here?”

If we want him to rest in peace, let us do what he fought for in this country; let us have peace. That way, he will rest in peace and we shall know that the people who gave him the State burial are not hypocrites. We do not want hypocrisy. If this country settles, if we have peaceful elections, if we have no murders in this country and if we have peaceful change of power, this gentleman will rest in peace. I thank you, Mr Speaker. I pray that the soul of the deceased rests in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, the debate is going to get interesting.

3.50

MS JANE BAINOMUGISHA (NRM, Woman Representative, Ibanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to second the Motion for paying tribute to the Metropolitan Jonah Lwanga. He was a very devoted person, hardworking and he had accepted God to use him. We thank God for him because he was committed to whatever he was doing and he was a man of his word.

I am a Catholic but I feel I should say these words about this great man of God. I thank the Government for giving him a State burial that he deserved. We continue praying and thanking God as He allowed him to come on earth and He is the one - the Almighty God - who has taken him. We pray that the Almighty God may grant him eternal peace. Thank you.

3.52

MS BETTY AWOR (NRM, Woman Representative, Apac): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is how we shall remember Archbishop Jonah Lwanga. He was a pillar and the head of the Orthodox Church. We will remember him as a developmental leader; he built churches. He focused on the development of women and youth. He was a father; he served the poor and the weak.

Mr Speaker, Jonah Lwanga was brave. He spoke his mind and did not mind the repercussions.

President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni is a very tolerant leader. He gave freedom to the churches to exist. We thank him for recognising the Archbishop. He honoured him and accorded him a state burial. May his soul rest in peace. I thank you.

3.54

MS MARGRET RWABUSHAIJA (NRM, Workers' Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Through you, I would like to thank the Prime Minister for moving this motion on behalf of Government.

I also stand here to celebrate the life of a great man who was strong-willed and yet, full of humility. I was watching people on TV - let me say that we attended burial on television but I was able to hear from those who gave testimonies. Some of them have been mentioned - he did not own land, nor have a house. He did not even have a vehicle, nor did he have enough of the shoes - as hon. Ssekikubo has told us.

That means that as far as he was concerned, he invested in Heaven and distanced himself from the earthly wealth. As a believer, I know that because he did not invest in the earthly or worldly things, I believe that he is with the Lord his God. And May his soul rest in eternal peace. I thank you.

3.55

MR ABUBAKER KAWALYA (NUP, Rubaga Division North, Kampala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will start by appreciating the mover of the motion. It is in Rubaga Division North where the fallen hero - the late - was performing his duties.

As a leader of this constituency, we have lost a father and a spiritual father who always gave us words of wisdom. I am one of the young leaders who got the opportunity to always exchange some kind words with him.

As Members of Parliament, we have a duty to perform certain duties and one of them is during the construction of the Munaku Road that goes to the National Housing and Construction Corporation. The Orthodox Church under his leadership offered KCCA land for the construction of the road with an agreement that they were supposed to compensate. However, the deceased died when KCCA had not fulfilled that promise.

Therefore, this goes to the Minister of Kampala, he or she has a duty to make sure that this agreement is fulfilled. I speak this as the Shadow Minister for Kampala and at the same time, the area Member of Parliament for Rubaga Division North.

His administration constructed for us a fully-fledged Hospital, which is one of the best hospitals in Uganda. When you go to Namungoona Orthodox Hospital, they have doctors and good machines.

As the people of Rubaga, we are convinced of the works of our fallen hero. Indeed, we have lost someone who always thought about humanity.

Mr Speaker, under his administration still, the late offered land for community policing. The security of Namungoona and the neighbouring areas has improved.

There is one time - sorry Mr Speaker, I beg for some more time as the area Member of Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: No, I have not controlled your time; you have just played with the microphone. *(Laughter)* but I am going to, immediately after you.

MR KAWALYA: He is remembered due to the actions of police of violating human rights. There was a time when he warned the IGP that he was going to chase them from Namungoona - where they were operating from - since police were beating up people and arresting them without cause. Therefore, in our area, police had no choice other than doing the right thing as far as matters of human rights are concerned.

Mr Speaker, the late has died when the construction of the cathedral of the Orthodox Church was underway. Therefore, the Government should clearly come up before this House and commit itself that the construction of the church is going to be worked on. I expected it in this Motion but I have not heard it. Therefore, I beg the mover of the Motion together with other members of the House - because we all know the role of the late as far as this matter is concerned.

However, we all know that right now, it is not going to be very easy. Therefore, as Parliament, we need to come up with a motion so that the cathedral is worked on as it was expected before.

I beg to move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, with a few exceptions that I will be announcing towards the end, I am going to give each of you two minutes so that we can share the time. I will make exceptions towards the end.

I will start with my first exception to the leader of the team that went for this burial sent by Government, hon. Baryomunsi. I will give you time which is more than two minutes. You can use the two minutes but you can add. That is one of the exceptions and then we come back to the honourable members.

4.01

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to support the motion moved by the Rt Hon. Prime Minister as we pay tribute to our fallen religious leader.

I convey my condolences to the members of the family, the Orthodox Church and indeed Ugandans because the Archbishop was a leader for all of us in the country.

Mr Speaker, there was a Government committee chaired by H.E the Vice President and she delegated me to be the link between the

Government side and the church as well as the family. We had a number of meetings because as you know, the Archbishop died in Athens, Greece and it took about two weeks for the body to get back into the country. Therefore, we had a series of meetings.

I just want to clarify one thing before I give my few comments; we worked together with the church and the family and there was no issue. In addition, yesterday we laid to rest the Archbishop and the prayers were held inside the church.

It is not true that security officers chased anybody from Namungoona. One, we agreed on the need to observe SOPs and public health preventive measures in light of COVID-19. Two, it is a tradition of the church that they hold the prayers inside and majority of the mourners who turned up were outside. Therefore, you cannot attribute the mourners being outside to the security that was there. I wanted to clarify that as somebody who was involved in the arrangements.

Mr Speaker, the Government of Uganda appreciates the work done by the Archbishop Lwanga and the other leaders. The Government appreciates the work of the Orthodox Church in Uganda in terms of evangelization and spiritual nourishment of the people of Uganda; but also the development work that has been championed by the Orthodox Church and indeed, the other religious institutions.

No insinuations should be made on the floor of this House that NRM Government treated Archbishop Lwanga as the lesser of the religious leaders. The Government treats all the religious leaders equally and indeed, we thank H.E the President who authorized an official burial for Archbishop Lwanga because of his great contribution in this country.

In addition, the Government met all the burial and funeral expense in accordance to the budget that was presented by the church. We funded it 100 per cent as presented. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, it is the NRM Government that has restored respect for religious institutions. The NRM Government believes in freedom of worship, freedom of expression and even freedom after expression.

True, the Archbishop was very strong and would give pieces of advice to Government and all of us and the Government respected his views, like other views from other religious leaders and other senior leaders in this country because all of us appreciate that NRM Government is a tolerant Government; a Government which tolerates views from across the country.

In addition, it is not true, like somebody commented, that it is President Yoweri Museveni to choose a successor. The successor will be chosen in accordance to the Constitution of Uganda which has very clear provisions. *(Applause)* The Constitution says, it is the people of Uganda, through a free and fair democratic process, to choose who leads the country from the level of the President down to the level of an LC chairperson. That is the democracy that we have.

Indeed, like the Leader of the Opposition said, he acknowledges in Uganda we discuss anything ranging from human rights and politics. The democracy we have ushered in facilitates discussion of every issue and any issue in this country and, therefore, we salute the work done by Archbishop Lwanga.

He has completed his earthly assignments; we do appreciate the great work. I have more than once prayed in the Orthodox Church at the invitation of hon. Ssekikubo and my perception is that the Orthodox Church is not a cantankerous church. It is a church which preaches tolerance, peace, humility, loyalty to authority and all those virtues and we appreciate the good work and the image of the Orthodox Church in Uganda.

Mr Speaker, the Government of Uganda works and continues to work with all faith-based institutions. Through budgeting, we appropriate money to faith-based institutions, especially in areas of health; Government

extends subventions to support faith-based health facilities. Most of the schools that we run as Government are founded on the basis of faith; Christian, Islam and other forms of faith. There is that cordial partnership between Government and religious institutions well knowing that in our history, we had a time when there was a lot of friction between Government and religious institutions. That should not happen again.

I come from an area which borders DRC. I can state without fear of contradiction here that there is a time when, in our neighbouring country, when priests would baptize children, they would be arrested. Therefore, we have had situations and countries where there is real friction but here, the NRM believes in working together with the religious institutions and all actors to promote transformation of the country.

Lastly, the issue of grabbing the church land was raised by hon. Ssekikubo in church yesterday. We had not been made aware as Government. However, after the service, I got in touch with the police and the other Government machinery to check. The assurance I would want to give the Orthodox Church is that the church land will not be grabbed by anybody. *(Applause)*

The Government machinery is already activated to find out who it could be - if it is true that somebody is trying to grab the land - and to halt that process. Yes, we have a challenge of land management in Uganda, especially in the central part of this country occasioned by our history. That is why you have heard voices from Government that we shall be bringing reforms in this House to address the question of land tenure and management in this country, especially where we have dual ownership and where these kinds of irregularities and evictions and grabbing occur in this country.

We would like to thank the Orthodox Church and its leadership because we have worked with them very closely in the trying period of two weeks. Particularly, we want to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs because at one point, it had to involve the two Governments,

through the ministries of foreign affairs, to engage each other to facilitate the bringing back of the body. We thank Her Excellency, the Vice-President, who was giving us direction as the Government.

We also thank the President for supporting this process and according Archbishop Lwanga an official burial. Let us pay tribute and pray that the good Lord receives and grants him eternal rest. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much.

4.02

MR ROBERT SSEKITOLEKO (NUP, Bamunanika County, Luweero): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I represent the people of Bamunanika, where the late Jonah Lwanga was born. Allow me to state that the demise of the late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga will cause a dent, especially in the education field, where he had been spearheading the development of special schools.

I would like to mention that he spearheaded the development of a school in Kibirizi-Nkokonjeru, where there was a gap. He was also very fundamental and built Bumbu Primary School in Kikyusa. He further played the same role at Vumba Trading Centre, where he expected that the Orthodox Church could be seen when someone comes and sees something of that nature within that area.

On the same note, Anoonya Primary and Secondary schools have been giving a clear imagine of hope in regards to education development, where most of our students have benefited from different scholarships, among other benefits. *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

4.14

MR JOEL SSENKYONYI (NUP, Nakawa Division West, Kampala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Since we rarely have her in the House, allow me to recognise the presence of the Vice-President. Hon. Ssekikubo told us that she is the successor.

I would like to join colleagues in paying tribute to an incredible man; a man who spoke his mind. The Bible, which I read, says: "We are the salt of the world". Salt is interesting, Mr Speaker. When you put it in food, it makes the food taste nice. When you put it on a wound, it irritates it.

Therefore, religious leaders are as such or, at least, they are supposed to be as such. They comfort us when we are going through challenges - they encourage us. However, when we goof up, they speak things which, sometimes, annoy us. That is why some people say that religious leaders should not be involved in politics, which I find preposterous because: what is politics?

Somebody once defined politics as the management of societal affairs. We cannot run to religious leaders about everything else and we imagine that when there is brutality going on, when there is persecution and people are being killed simply because they belong to one political party, and not another, that religious leaders should not speak out. I think it is problematic. I would like to salute him for saying "no" to those who kept saying those things, that: "Religious leaders, you only baptise children. Do not talk about politics." *(Applause)* I would like to encourage other religious leaders to do as such.

Mr Speaker, as I conclude, I think this is also a good opportunity to remind the Government that we should think hard about reopening churches, mosques and of course, schools. *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, for some of these issues, when you put them on the record of Parliament, yet, we know the implications and what is required, we do not sound very well. There are assessments to be done. There are threats to be taken care of and there is a committee of the Government that sits to assess the actual level of threats before we go to open these particular institutions.

It may do us well to give them an opportunity to do these assessments. I do not think it is about

the length of time; it is about the threat that is there. Therefore, we might need to be cautious when we deal with some of these matters.

4.17

MR OKIN OJARA (FDC, Chua West County, Kitgum): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This should have been my maiden speech but, maybe, I will say something after my submission.

Let me begin by thanking the Government for the recognition that they have made in the death of the Archbishop of the Orthodox Church. The year 2003 is when I got to learn or work closely with the head of the Orthodox Church. Mr Speaker, you come from northern Uganda and you know we have had a long history of conflict. The contribution of the religious leaders was enormous, under the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative.

At that time, I was the coordinator of that organisation. In that organisation, we have had a permanent representation of the Orthodox Church, appointed by none other than the Archbishop, who has just departed. This indicates, therefore, that this man of God was a peace-loving Ugandan and a man of prominence in terms of peace-building and conflict transformation.

We can only, therefore, remember him well when we go back –(*Member timed out.*)

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR OKIN OJARA: Can I conclude, Mr Speaker?

THE SPEAKER: No, we agreed on two minutes. I will not allow more than that. Pakwach -

4.19

MS JANE PACUTO (NRM, Woman Representative, Pakwach): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. Allow me to join other colleagues here, on behalf of the people of Pakwach, to pay tribute to our fallen hero and leader in this country.

I want to address my mind to the lessons that we have learnt about the life of the late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga. You and I have heard the contributions made by many colleagues here to the fact that he spoke his mind firmly about corruption and he spoke his mind firmly about issues of human rights. We are all leaders and we are Members of Parliament and this is the time to live the legacy of Archbishop Jonah Lwanga, to see to it that, together with other stakeholders in this country, we try as much as possible to work together to see that corruption is nowhere in our country because it retards the life of every Ugandan.

I come from West Nile. As people of West Nile, we have witnessed what it means to say one's right is abused. We had wars; women and young girls were raped. We had times when we would travel and you would not know whether you would reach home alive or not. Therefore, as leaders, we must live the legacy of Archbishop Jonah Lwanga. (*Member timed out.*)

4.21

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join the rest in mourning our beloved spiritual father because of the sacrifices he made. Being a religious leader is not something easy. Many of us could not join the churches to contribute the way the late did. Therefore, I represent my people and I condole with the family and the country because of the great sacrifice.

Regarding his contributions to all of us, to me, he taught us not to keep grudges but to have a forgiving heart. That was why we have never been informed about a will he left promoting grudges. I would like to thank my Government for the support it gave at this trying moment. As leaders, when we critique, we should not promote grudges but look at a legacy of correcting each other and ensure that the country benefits from it.

I am interested in the issue of the vehicle. The late is gone but the church is there. That vehicle was meant to be used. We have been informed that there is a committee, working on

our behalf, that helped in ensuring –(*Member timed out.*)

4.23

MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to second the Motion –

THE SPEAKER: Sorry. I had already picked the Member for Bukonzo West. I am sorry. I will come back to you.

4.23

MR ATKINS KATUSABE (FDC, Bukonzo County West, Kasese): Thank you, Mr Speaker. To the Orthodox community, the Kabaka of Buganda, the family and the clan and to my fellow citizens, I convey my deepest condolences on behalf of the people of Kasese and particularly the people of Bukonzo County West.

The life of a great man; the Archbishop teaches us one thing: how do you want to be remembered? It is not what we did that will define our legacy but what we failed or deliberately decided not to do. There are a lot of people for whom as long as their children can go to school, they can get some money, meet the family bills and they are comfortable.

This is a man that put the country first. When we lost people in Kasese and we were grieving as a community, his song and voice was very clear. When our brothers and sisters in the North were affected by the war, the voice of the Archbishop was heard. Specifically, I want to –(*Member timed out.*)

4.26

MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. On behalf of the young people of this country, I rise to celebrate the life of Archbishop Jonah Lwanga particularly for one reason. That is, his recognition of the young people.

When I read through the works of the late Archbishop, I notice that he constantly and frequently organised youth camps. These youth

camps were opportunities for him to have written messages shared to the young people. His were messages of encouragement to the young people, messages of promoting personal and societal development of the young people and messages of inspiration.

His life teaches us that the mentorship of young people is a critical ingredient for the progress of society. The mentorship of young people must be deliberate, not by accident. Therefore, aspects like the National Youth Service Scheme are very vital for our growth.

If you scan through the delegation that came from the Orthodox Church of Uganda, you will notice that the majority of them are young people.

Mr Speaker –(*Member timed out.*)

4.28

MS AISHA KABANDA (NUP, Woman Representative, Butambala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. There is a saying that when you work very closely with the anthills, before you know it, you are smeared by the soils of the anthill and you look like it.

I had the opportunity to work with Archbishop Jonah Lwanga, when I was the Resident City Commissioner. Little did I know that sooner or later, I was going to speak like he did. I am now happy that I see things the same way he did. (*Applause*)

I am, therefore, motivated by the Members of Parliament sitting on my side like hon. Betty Engola and the honourable member for the disabled. By sitting on our side, sooner or later, they will start to see things the way we see them. (*Applause*)

That said, as we eulogise the senior citizen, we are reminded of the many –(*Interruption*)

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, for accessing the microphone before you are allowed, you are out of order. (*Applause*)

MS KABANDA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. As we eulogise the senior citizen, we are reminded that there are many religious leaders that have decided to keep quiet and watch the extrajudicial killings of our people, the human rights abuse and the corruption amidst us. They have kept quiet, whereas as religious leaders, it would have been within their mandate to speak out. Archbishop Lwanga spoke out and we shall always remember him for that.

If I had the opportunity to speak to him, I would ask him to say “bye bye to Archbishop Lwanga of the Catholic Church, Sheikh Nuhu Muzaata of the Muslim faith”. They spoke for the people and stood with the people through thick and thin. I, therefore, ask the surviving religious leaders to take lessons from these leaders that have stood with the people. We have held them in very high regard, respected them and they have not lost anything.

I plead that they do not understand the law that bars religious leaders from participating in partisan politics to mean that they support the ruling party. The people have lost confidence in many of them. Those that cannot speak out in support of the NRM now speak to us in tongues. They whisper to us and ask us to speak to the public.

We ask them to speak out proudly. We shall remember that they stood with the people, stood for their rights and spoke the right things when the people needed them to speak out.

We salute you, the fallen Archbishop Yonah Lwanga. We pray that God puts you in the right place that you deserve. I thank you, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

4.31

MR IBRAHIM SSEMUJJU (FDC, Kira Municipality, Wakiso): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. On behalf of the people of Kira Municipality, I extend my condolences to the Church, the family and the country and in particular, to hon. Ssekikubo.

Mr Speaker, the first time I met the late Archbishop was 1998, after the passage of the Land Act. The Kabaka of Buganda had gone to the Church to pray because that Act had offended the people of Uganda. The first place he visited was Namungoona, Najjanankumbi and then Kibuli.

Later on, I was touched, not by his theological activities but by the non-theological activities. There are very few people in this country who speak the truth to those in power. Many people will want to take their opportunity to present their personal interests, including - many times - Members of Parliament, by the way.

There was a time here when the Committee on Presidential Affairs went to meet the President over a law, but MPs started pleading. “Can you attend my wedding? Can you be the guest of honour?” *(Laughter)* Yes, they had gone on behalf of the people of Uganda.

I thank the Archbishop for living a very meaningful life that we are here today to celebrate his legacy – *(Member timed out)*

4.33

MS BETTY NALUYIMA (NUP, Woman Representative, Wakiso): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I support the motion and also as Ugandans, we welcome Archbishop Makarios to Uganda. We shall render our support to his service in the Orthodox Church.

Mr Speaker, as we stand here, the late Archbishop stood for key notions - constitutionalism, democracy and human rights. It is bad that we are remembering him yet he is not here to hear the words being said of him.

First of all, I request, through you Mr Speaker, that we start recognising different notable people in this country who have made a mark when they are still alive.

Secondly, back to human rights; I call upon each of us to evaluate ourselves - under Chapter 4 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda - how we are performing as far as each of the rights and freedoms in there are concerned. Are we doing well?

For example, under the right to freedom of access to information; is access to the internet guaranteed? Can we know why social media platforms like Facebook are still banned and people have to manoeuvre around on how to access information through it?

Therefore, I call upon Members – through you, Mr Speaker – to stand firm and restore constitutionalism, which the late stood for, such that Ugandans can be regarded as people who mean what they say. I submit.

4.35

MR STEPHEN KAGWERA (NRM, Burahya County, Kabarole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think it is not a time for us to accuse each other. Actually, it is a time to take lessons.

The first lesson is about tolerance. People want to be tolerated at times when they do not tolerate others. At times, religious leaders are castigated because they at times also take sides, even when those sides are wrong.

So, if you want to be remembered as he is remembered, you shouldn't be only speaking your mind but practising what your mind tells you.

People have talked about corruption. Many people in this country say so many words about corruption. Why then does it still exist? It is because we do not practise what we preach?

Mr Speaker, as I conclude, people talk much about unity in diversity. However, why is it that people are still thinking along tribal lines? Why is it that people are still thinking along religious lines? It is because we say one thing but practise the other? The man of God ought to be remembered forever because he practised what he believed in.

In Ngombe in my constituency, there are so many projects done by the Orthodox Church, which are still going on. Let me hope that what we are talking about now, as a House, is what the country should do. We need to be one; we need to be Ugandans.

4.38

MS LILLIAN ABER (NRM, Woman Representative, Kitgum): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I rise to support the motion to pay tribute to the late Archbishop.

I have not been close to the Archbishop but I was privy to watching him as he was preaching the word of God. I also listened to quite a number of testimonies during the burial because I attended it via television.

Mr Speaker, the role of religious leaders cannot be ignored in shaping our society because they play a very key role. In fact, it is only a religious leader who can rebuke anything happening in society and society will understand. However, a politician might want to politick and just look good, even when the situation is or looks bad.

So, I thank Government of Uganda, specifically the President of the Republic of Uganda, for embracing the right to freedom of worship – (*Applause*)– and the right to freedom of speech.

I was not born around that time but I read content about previous governments, how – (*Interruption*)

MR KAZIBWE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Is the honourable Member in order to insinuate that a person - for that matter, Mr Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the President of this republic - is the one who provides for the right of freedom of worship, yet it is well known that such a right is God-given? Is she in order?

THE SPEAKER: Whether it is God-given, I do not know. All I know is that the people who sat in the Constituent Assembly and made the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda decided that there would be such provisions as freedom of worship. You see, people have a tendency of associating anything that happens under the authority of somebody with that person. So, that is the mistake sometimes we make. I have, however, made myself clear.

MS ABER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. On that very note, I want to pick a lesson from the Archbishop on loving peace. The Archbishop

Jonah Lwanga loved peace. It is on that basis that I caution us politicians: Let us not be the people who instigate violence. Amidst all the things we do, let us embrace peace.

He talked even when he would not agree with Government on many issues. He never said to his believers, "Let us go on the streets." I am totally inspired and I thank the late Archbishop and the followers. I will personally attend prayers in one of the churches. I think hon. Ssekikubo will give me direction. Thank you.

4.41

MS ROSE OBIGAH (NRM, Woman Representative, Terego): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have been persistent. Thank you for giving me this opportunity. The last place I worked before coming to this august House was at the Uganda Joint Christian Council. At that time, it was headed by the Orthodox Church. I have been part of the Orthodox prayers. I was blessed to be close to Archbishop Jonah Lwanga because I was the Programmes Officer for Human Rights and Good Governance. I know his humility and love for everyone. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

4.42

DR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanya-Kabonera Division, Masaka City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I pay tribute to Archbishop Jonah Lwanga. He stood for dignity for all humanity. I had an opportunity to interact with him since I am a part of the clergy and leadership in the politics of this country. The Archbishop respected humanity regardless of tribe, creed and age. Archbishop Jonah Lwanga stood on the side of truth regardless of the risk involved. Many of us, when you measure the risk, you want to shy away. We want to remember him as a hero and champion in this nation.

Finally, I want to suggest to the Orthodox Church in Uganda that they should come up with a fellowship in the name of the late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga. That fellowship should help the young people to emulate the life of the late Archbishop who was a champion and the people who fall in his category so that his legacy will continue in this nation. Rest in

eternal peace, Archbishop Jonah Lwanga.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

4.44

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to support the motion. I am one of the lucky Members who have been moving with the Archbishop during the public Way of the Cross in Kampala for almost the last 20 years under the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda.

His homilies and the talks he would give after our service can never vanish. I pray – and I have always said this on the Floor of Parliament that this country needs a council of elders. When you go to South Africa, you will see Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Once they sit, they advise Government and talk to the President.

These people have no other exit route. They have issues to talk about but there is nobody joining them to talk about issues affecting the country. That is how they come out and when they talk more about what is happening in the country, Dr Chris Baryomunsi will come here to raise several defences, which are not-so-legitimate but they are taken in good faith because that is what he feels.

Whatever Archbishop Jonah Lwanga said, it is because there was no forum where they could address the matters affecting the country. The council of elders, like Archbishop Lwanga – even His Eminence Cardinal Wamala is still there. When you visit him, you hear a lot of sense about the country.

So, Government Chief Whip and Madam Vice President - whom I respect very much – please, go back and talk to the President. I hear you thanking him and jumping in the air. *(Laughter)* We need a council of elders. That one alone will ease the way we run our affairs.

Let me also thank hon. Ssekikubo. Thank you for the work you have done and the *–(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, it is not every day that we lose an Archbishop. If you see the time that I have given for this debate, it is fairly long. I brought this Motion as the first business because of its significance. We need to draw this Motion to a close and also finish the other business that is still pending on the Order Paper. I am now drawing this debate to a close and I am only going to allow Her Excellency, the Vice President to speak. Then, we will see how to close the Motion.

MR SSEMUJJU: Mr Speaker, several colleagues have spoken using the microphones, including the one in front. I did not see the Clerk sanitising the microphones. So, the point of order I am raising is whether it is only the life of one person - the Vice President - that must be protected in this House.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Ssemujju, I have seen the number of people who have used that microphone and I also realised that there is only one Vice President in this House. She is number two in the order of precedence in this country. That makes me number three. If I was to approach that microphone, I am sure I will be quite protected - and yet, I am the third in the order of precedence. Now, what about the second? (*Laughter*) Let us proceed. Your Excellency, wind up the debate.

4.49

THE VICE-PRESIDENT (Maj. (Rtd) Jessica Alupo): I thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the Prime Minister for moving this motion in honour of the late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga of the Orthodox Church.

I would like to join many of you who have spoken in support of the Motion by also mentioning a few kind words in honour of the late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga. For instance, I would like to underscore the fact that the late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga was an embodiment of unity.

Mr Speaker, when we were at the Orthodox Cathedral yesterday, I was amazed at the composition of the mourners. From the messages of the representatives of the Inter-

Religious Council themselves including Bishop Zziwa, Bishop Ssemwogerere and their team, they reiterated the fact that the Archbishop Jonah Lwanga was one of the very first founders of the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda.

Mr Speaker, that means that the late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga was a national character and that the country has lost him and his wise counsel.

I saw religious leaders from across the country in the cathedral and that means that the late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga touched the hearts of all the people of Uganda with his good deeds. Little wonder, therefore, that there were many people who were very difficult to control in light of the SOPs.

Therefore, I would like to strongly support this motion but also urge all Members of the House - now that the Archbishop Jonah Lwanga has left - to emulate him and what he did for our country, particularly the church.

I know hon. Ssekikubo talked much yesterday about how the Archbishop constructed schools, supported health facilities and the church and also the welfare of the women and the children. Archbishop Jonah Lwanga was another very strong crusader in light of ensuring the welfare of his faithful, not just in Namungoona but across the country.

I looked at the presence of the Bishop of the Orthodox of Gulu who came with a delegation and I saw Rev. Fr Christos Mukiibi from Rwanda who represented the two countries. We had the Archbishop of Nyanza Tanzania. Most importantly, we had and we have him in the gallery here; His Eminence Makarios of Nairobi who is now our caretaker. I would like to thank you for your kindness in coming to sit in the gallery and watch us as we honour our Archbishop.

Indeed, as I said yesterday, here in Uganda, we all respect freedom of worship. As Ugandans, we are united even when we know that we do things differently.

I would like to thank the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament. Yesterday, he spoke so well; in such a way that we are of different colours but we must be united if we want to achieve our objective of transforming our country and moving Uganda to a middle income status.

I thank the Members of Parliament who were there yesterday and I would like to thank hon. Ssekikubo for being a member of the committee, which His Excellency the President named immediately when he heard about the demise of the Archbishop, together with Dr Chris Baryomunsi, the Attorney-General Mr Kiwanuka Kiryowa and the Chief Whip, hon. Tayebwa. They worked tirelessly having meetings with the leaders of the church and family members.

I would like to thank the family members for coming here in the gallery and be together with us as we honour Archbishop Jonah Lwanga.

Finally, Mr Speaker, allow me also to thank hon. Ssekikubo for making it public - I did not know that you value me that much. From your own words, I want to thank you for making it public.

May the soul of the Archbishop Jonah Lwanga rest in eternal peace.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Your Excellency, for those very kind words. From the Chair as we draw to the closure of this debate, honourable members, I would like to thank you for the statements you have made supporting the Motion. There has been no disagreement at all on the character, faith and the strength of the person that we are sending off by a Motion paying tribute to him.

There is absolutely no doubt coming from this debate that the late Archbishop was larger than life in what he did, how he gave and how he shepherded the people who fall under his spiritual jurisdiction.

Honourable members, you will never understand a human being properly until you

have visited them in their places of worship. I had the honour of being invited by hon. Ssekikubo to go and be part of the celebration and prayer at the main church of Orthodox Church in Namungoona.

I watched the protocol rules, the traditions in practice and I was greatly inspired by what I saw and what I listened to. That is when I realised that hon. Ssekikubo draws his inspiration from his upbringing in the church. (*Applause*) That also explains the straightforward nature of the Archbishop in whose honour we speak this afternoon. It looks like there is something about that church that shapes people in a certain way.

I say this in honour of the Archbishop; non-violent but frank and honest about what he believed in. Probably, we should take instruction from that. Many of you have made this call that we should take instruction from that. If we do, it will be very easy to make this country a better place for all of us. After all, it is our aspiration that we live in a country that is not only prosperous, that does not only give equal opportunity to all but also demands equal responsibility from all, a country where we all live like free people, a country where we all enjoy our potential until the time the Almighty calls us like he has called the Archbishop.

That is our aspiration; following in the footsteps of the Archbishop. What he stood for, what he spoke for - If we all spoke with that level of honesty, we would go a long way to make this country better.

Honourable members, I now put the question that the Motion for the Resolution of Parliament to pay Tribute to the late Jonah Lwanga, the Archbishop of the Uganda Orthodox Church specifically;

1. That Parliament collectively conveys its deep condolences to the bereaved family, relatives, friends, the entire Orthodox Church and the people of Uganda for the loss of a distinguished citizen and a spiritual leader of the Orthodox Church in Uganda;

2. That this Parliament takes cognizance of the dedicated service and contribution rendered by the Late Archbishop Jonah Lwanga to the people of Uganda and the world at large;

I put the question that the motion should be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Motion adopted.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I had urgent matters - four of them - but when I discussed with the Members who were going to raise these matters, the nature of them is that they can still be raised tomorrow. They are urgent in the way that they can still be raised tomorrow. So, I wanted to clear what is on the Order Paper by dealing with item three; do we agree? Can we deal with item three - another important matter? If the minister is here, we could proceed with that.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER ON STATUS
OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL
RESOURCES IN UGANDA

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. You will leave at the time that you choose to leave but you are welcome to be part of this discussion to honour the Archbishop Jonah Lwanga. Thank you very much.

5.01

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (ENVIRONMENT) (Ms Beatrice Atim Anywar): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity to present to this honourable Parliament the status of the environment and natural resources in Uganda.

Mr Speaker, this statement has been on your iPads for the last two weeks and I am sure you will follow. I intend to summarise some of them but allow me to proceed.

Mr Speaker, this report has been prepared to appraise Parliament on the current state of the environment and natural resources in the

country and the mitigation measures that the ministry is undertaking to stop the degradation of the environment countrywide.

As way of background Cabinet, under minute 14 (CT 2019), directed the Ministry of Water and Environment to prepare and submit to Cabinet a paper on the current state of the environment in the country and the mitigation measures that the ministry is undertaking to stop the degradation of the environment and natural resources.

As you are aware, the Government of Uganda has passed policies and laws and established institutions to support and coordinate the management of environment and natural resources.

Uganda is a signatory to several multilateral environment agreements, including United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Convention on Biodiversity, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands. To date, the environment sector has put in place frameworks to domesticate these conventions.

Mr Speaker, as you are aware, the environment and natural resources subsector, under the Ministry of Water and Environment, comprises the following institutions:

- i) Directorate of Environment Affairs
- ii) National Environment Management Authority
- iii) National Forestry Authority
- iv) Uganda National Meteorological Authority
- v) Climate Change Department
- vi) Civil Society Organisations, and
- vii) The private sector organisations.

The other components of the environment and natural resources sector, for example, wildlife, fisheries and minerals, are in other ministries.

The Government established the Policy Committee on Environment, comprising the Office of Prime Minister as chair, Ministry of Water and Environment, Ministry of Lands,

Housing and Urban Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiques, among others, to ensure coordination and harmonisation of environment and natural resources management.

My ministry has also put in place the Water and Environment Sector Working Group, comprising representatives from Uganda Wildlife Authority, Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), development partners, academia and CSOs to specifically ensure coordination and harmonisation of environment and natural resources policies with other sector policies that impact on the environment and natural resources integrity.

The Government has specifically established the Environment Protection Force to ensure the legal regimes governing environment and natural resources management are enforced for compliance

The purpose of this presentation is:

- i) To inform Parliament about the status, trends, key issues and challenges of managing environment and natural resources in Uganda.
- ii) Highlight the critical importance of environment, natural resources to the national development and consequences of mismanaging the environment and natural resources.
- iii) Highlight the interventions my ministry has undertaken to protect and manage environment and natural resources and the achievements so far registered.
- iv) Show the need for sustained political support at all levels towards the restoration and protection of the environment and natural resources.

- v) Highlight the cost of maintaining the status quo without taking remedial actions.
- vi) Seek guidance from Parliament on new approaches to be adopted to save the environment and natural resources in Uganda.

Mr Speaker, what is the status of our environment? What is at stake, honourable colleagues?

As you well know, the environment and natural resources subsector has registered a marked decline over the last 29 years. Since 1990, for example, wetlands declined from 15.6 per cent to 8.4 per cent in 2017, at a rate of 2.2 per cent annually while the forest cover reduced from 24 per cent to nine per cent in 2017 at a rate of 1.4 per cent annually, making Uganda among the most rapidly deforesting nations in the world although by 2019, there has been steady increment to 12.4 per cent.

The grey crowned crane, which is the Ugandan national symbol and heritage, has declined from 100,000 in 1996 to 10,000 in 2016. The habitat of these birds are the wetlands, which are being degraded.

Uganda's water resources are 98 per cent trans-boundary and shared with other 10 countries in the Nile Basin. The amount of water available annually in the country has declined from 66km³ in 2005 to 43km³ by 2012 and is expected to worsen by 2040 with serious impacts on the water needs of the various sectors of the economy.

Mr Speaker, unless the environment and natural resource is sustainably managed, the targets for social and economic transformation as enshrined in Vision 2040, the National Development Plans II and III, the Water and Environment Sector Development Plan, the Green Growth Strategy and the Sustainable Development Goals will not be realised.

The rapid decline in the environment and natural resources has been attributed to a number of drivers, including but not limited

to industrialisation, unplanned urbanisation, deforestation and agriculture. The high population growth at the rate of 3.2 per cent annually and the poverty level also contributed to this decline.

Honourable Colleagues, what is the importance of the environment to national development? As you are already aware, environment and natural resources are prerequisites for social and economic development, where the environment and natural resources sector contributes to 28 per cent towards GDP.

The sector is the largest source of employment with 72 per cent of the labour force engaged in environment and natural resources supported areas, including agriculture and tourism. I refer you for details to annex one, which is attached.

In addition to providing the tangible benefits such as timber, wood, fuel, maintenance of hydropower, medicines, like Covidex of recent, which we are all proud of, water cycle, wildlife and modification of the climate is critical. The ENR, especially forests and wetlands sequester and store large volume of carbon dioxide, which is a major contribution to the global warming.

What will be the consequences of us doing nothing about this?

Mr Speaker, if left unattended to, the damage caused to the environment and natural resources will lead to among others the following:

- i) Increased incidences of permanent flooding along the main telecommunication and transport links, leading to destruction of lives and properties; replacement, relocation, maintenance and re-design of the already established infrastructures at higher cost than earlier on planned. The frequent Bwaise, Zana and Kyambogo floods is a small sign of the worse to come –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you had said you are going to summarise.

MS BEATRICE ANYWAR: Yes, Sir. I will try to do so.

THE SPEAKER: This statement attracts a debate; the longer you take, the less time we have for debate and that is not fair to Members. Honourable members, haven't we read this statement on our iPads? - You have not read it and you want it to be read to you verbatim?

Honourable minister said this statement has been there for two weeks. If the minister goes at this pace, she will take a full hour and we will have to go home. I was hoping that you would give a good summary. For example, to say in 6(i) increased the incidence of permanent flooding, (ii) direct discharge of the volume of waste water and so on, so that you give Members the time to debate. Proceed, honourable minister.

MS BEATRICE ANYWAR: Most obliged, Mr Speaker. As guided, I am sure we have it on iPads but in case, some of us have not read it, you will go back and get more of these details. I was trying to highlight the consequences of us doing nothing in the situation we are in.

However, with the guidance, I refer you to go into details on the points. If we do not do anything about it, there will be –

- i) Increased prevalence of water and air borne diseases
- ii) Release of large volumes of carbon dioxide
- iii) The leading greenhouse gas into the atmosphere and other effects

What have we done as interventions?

The laws are in there and you will read for yourselves. One of the laws that we recently processed in the previous Parliament is the National Climate Change Bill, which I pray sees the light so that it is reinstated because it will help us to implement what we are trying to do.

We have raised the legal status of critical wetland countrywide with the collaboration

between the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and my ministry. We have started on coding all the wetlands in Uganda, as an initial gazette process and the ministry intends to start with about 12 of them and then some of the important sites and 40 critical urban and rural wetlands to be demarcated.

The NEMA, KCCA and local Governments are supposed to be in place and collect all the solid wastes and we have started on that.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, we are implementing the Cabinet Directive 114 (CT2014) on cancellation of land titles issued in the wetlands, as one of the measures to address the problem of wetland degradation. *(Applause)*

We are developing a wetland atlas. We have issued some much earlier but we are going to issue another one to appraise Members with the status quo.

In collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister, my ministry has developed Ministry of Water and Environment Sector Refugee Response Plan to provide safe water, sanitation and wood fuel to both refugees and host communities. Recently, at the end of the previous Parliament, we were able to secure a loan from World Bank, of about \$ 172 million, to help us do a lot of this, including the areas of wildlife not wondering in the communities.

On the enforcement arm, I would like to say that as we speak, we have about 186 Environment Protection Police Unit personnel. However, our need is about 600.

We intend to train the guides to support the enforcement arm and have it more strengthened than it is now.

Achievements

Allow me to elaborate on some of the achievements. We have ensured the integrated and collaborated management of

the environment. Together with Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, local Governments and CSOs, we are implementing 14 integrated catchment management plans in selected environment systems. Over 83,356 hectares of forests have been planted with trees at a survival rate of 70 per cent, raising forest cover from nine per cent to 12.4 per cent. While 102,404 hectares of wetlands and river banks have been restored and we now have 20,500 hectares of wetlands maintained as wetland reserves.

My ministry and Ministry of Local Government have established four functional regional technical support offices providing technical support. This is already in place.

We have also developed guidelines between ministries and the OPM, NEMA and local Government, which are helping us, move forward.

The NEMA and local Government have developed and implemented 12 municipal composing plants under the clean development mechanism to clean the environment yet generate income for urban authorities.

The NEMA has put in place a strategy to manage hazardous waste, where all the waste generated from the oil and gas activities at the waste consolidation sites in the Albertine Graben transported, treated and disposed of at three gazetted waste treatment and disposal facilities in Hoima and Nakasongola District. This is already in place, honourable colleagues.

The NEMA is also monitoring and enforcing the noise pollution control mechanism. A total of six facilities have their music equipments confiscated for violating the regulation, while the rest of the offenders have been handled.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and other line ministries and CSOs developed projects and programs to mobilise additional resources to undertake massive environmental protection and restoration countrywide by CSOs and local governments. Over Shs 43.77 billion has been

spent over the last five years for restoration. We have the programme running. Probably in the near future, such information - which is already documented - will be provided to honourable members. Some might be in your area.

Challenges

We have the following as challenges: continuous encroachment, occupation and issuance of titles in the fragile environment ecosystem and illegal extraction of environmental product, undermining the integrity of the central forest reserves, local forest reserves, wetlands, riverbanks, lake shores and hilly areas.

A higher rate of environmental loss than the level of restoration - for instance, forest loss is 33 times the level of restoration. Wetland loss is 70 times the level of restoration, which makes it hard to achieve the NDP II targets.

We have weak enforcement, monitoring and surveillance mechanisms, as I had indicated earlier but we are working towards beefing it up to 600 officers.

The unclear boundaries of the wetland and forest reserves, lake shores and the complex ownership issues in general has led to challenges. That is one of the things we have handled; demarcating for clarity.

Inadequate resources for compensation in cases where leases are cancelled in order to allow the restoration of vital environment ecosystem services - there are members of the public who had their genuine legal titles in the wetland like in Kigezi and elsewhere and they are willing to give them out to the Government. We needed money to compensate them and then we restore such. The shortage of funds is a challenge. That is why I also stand before you here; it is an issue. You should enable us to move forward.

The high cost of restoration and enforcement of the environment policies and regulations. This is especially for wetland and forest ecosystems to a midterm projection of 10 per cent or 15 per cent as compared to the desired 12 per cent and 18 per cent coverage respectively. This requires

additional Shs 167 billion for the next five years to allow us restore our ecosystem

High levels of silent and open resistance from all categories of people coupled with the disregard for the provisions of the laws with impunity. This is an area, which you and I must come out clearly. It is not the poor; it is us, the highly placed. Therefore, our offices are open to have all these names. We are working around the clock to have a list of those to be named and shamed.

There are a number of litigations challenging enforcement decisions that my ministry and NEMA make by the regulated communities on cases of illegal construction in wetlands and forest reserves. We have huge litigation.

Mr Speaker, you are aware that we have been praying that we get environmental courts that will handle the issues faster to save the environment. People run to courts, we have injunctions but we are then dragged backwards.

The large influx of refugees, for example, in Bidi Bidi camp - these have been impacting on our environment. However, as I said earlier, the arrangement we have with the host community and refugees is we are engaging them to not be destructors but also be the ones saving our environment by planting more trees.

Mr Speaker, on the stakeholder consultation - you will read for yourself. I want to draw your attention to what is next. What do we intend to do -?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, on what is next; it seems with the way you are proceeding we might not be able to have a debate. What I am going to propose now is that we pause it there. We will start on that tomorrow, so that we have a proper debate, when the discussions and recommendations are still fresh.

So, you will proceed from the next steps tomorrow at two o'clock, after I deal with the urgent matters. Are we able to deal with the urgent matters or should we deal with

them tomorrow? I think let us deal with them tomorrow, okay? Have we agreed? You see, there is nobody to respond, honourable member for Adjumani. There is nobody to respond to the issues; so, let us continue with this tomorrow.

House adjourned to tomorrow, two o'clock.

(The House rose at 5.30 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 22 September 2021 at 2.00 p.m.)