**Wednesday, 8 July 2015**

*Parliament met at 2.09 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.*

*PRAYERS*

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

*The House was called to order.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, today is Prime Minister’s question time, so we should be breaking off at exactly 3 o’clock to handle that business. We have a lot of work today so let us get to business. Thank you. I welcome you to this sitting.

2.11

**MS JESCA ABABIKU (Independent, Woman Representative, Adjumani):** Thank you, Mr Speaker and colleagues. I rise on a matter of national importance.

Yesterday, we received representatives of the former workers of Uganda Railways Corporation in our Public Accounts Committee. These representatives raised pertinent issues regarding their pension, which they have not received for over four months.

I request that Government gives a justification as to why they have stopped paying these people for four months and what strategies they are going to use to rectify the situation. Otherwise, this situation is affecting the livelihoods of these pensioners who have served this country diligently. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable minister, what is happening regarding the payment of pensioners of the Uganda Railways Corporation? They have not been paid for four months.

2.12

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr David Bahati):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am sorry I was interrupted by the honourable member behind me. Yes, it is not right to withhold payments that people have earned. I beg that I come here with a statement on what we are doing tomorrow, as I have to crosscheck the facts.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay, thank you very much.

MOTION FOR THE CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES AND IMPLEMENTATION ON THE STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES IN THE DISTRICTS OF ARUA, ADJUMANI AND YUMBE

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, this is the motion that is before you and I want to propose it again for your debate. The motion is for the adoption of the report of the Committee on Government Assurances and Implementation on the status of implementation of government assurances in the districts of Arua, Adjumani and Yumbe. That is the motion for your debate and debate starts now. Each Member will take three minutes.

2.13

**MR PAUL MWIRU (FDC, Jinja Municipality East, Jinja):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. We have had the benefit to read the report and see the way these pledges are being made. It is apparently becoming an academic exercise that wherever the President goes and people make a request, he grants it. However, the problem comes when it comes to implementation.

Mr Speaker, I am aware, and the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development knows, that there is a National Development Plan and all government programmes are aligned to this plan. The strategic plans of MDAs and work plans must be aligned to the National Development Plan. However, what is apparent is that most of the pledges that the President makes are outside the National Development Plan, the strategic plans and the work plans of ministries. What does this mean? This means that those pledges cannot be implemented because if Government is going to implement any programme, it must be aligned to that.

This means that if there is a National Development Plan for five years, whatever the President wants to pledge must fall within this plan. This makes me wonder, honourable minister. We need to advise the President, otherwise the country is going to lose confidence in the President and yet the President is the fountain of honour, according to our Constitution. All these pledges have now been taken as lies because realistically, they cannot be implemented even if the President so wished. This is because to implement his wishes would mean that we are implementing something different from the National Development Plan.

Mr Speaker, on that basis, I invite honourable colleagues to consider making it categorically clear to the Executive that before any pledge is made, the President should consult with the technical officers within those ministries.

In addition, I propose that it becomes the responsibility of a line minister to ensure that every pledge is captured in the budget of the next financial year. This is because wherever you meet the public and say, “The President said this”, they say, “The President is a liar” and yet the President is the fountain of honour in this country. So, we are denting the image of the leadership in this country.

I want to end by inviting colleagues to encourage Cabinet to ensure that all the pledges made by the President are aligned to the National Development Plan. Thank you.

2.16

**MS JESCA ABABIKU (Independent, Woman Representative, Adjumani):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I have seen the report and gone through it.

First of all, I would like to observe that many of these promises or pledges made tally with the demands of the people. In the case of Adjumani, for example, we have issues to do with tarmacking roads, electricity and water. These, to me, should not only be captured under promises but they are primary demands of the people. Therefore, I concur with the promises of the President because, to me, he first analyses the demands of the people before he makes promises.

My major concern is the duration it takes for the implementation to take off. Issues of electricity and water have taken over 10 years, for example. Can the Government prioritise so that we have a specific duration that is considered when implementing some of these promises or pledges?

Secondly, Mr Speaker, some of these promises and pledges are reflected in our budget but the pain I go through personally is that they remain unfunded priorities. During the budget speeches year in, year out, the public perceives them as priorities that the Government is going to implement. Can the Government tell the country exactly what it can do within a year and what it cannot do, so that when we are reading the budget people get to know that in this year or in such a period of time, these are the things we cannot implement?

I also request that the Government, especially the head of state, communicates regularly to the people to whom pledges have been made. In that way they will understand the progress that has been made by the Government to implement all these things.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, we have budgets, which are passed at local government level and at the centre. Some of the issues can be integrated. If it is difficult for some of these promises to be implemented by the President, let the Government see how to harmonise and how some of these pledges can be integrated in the local government budgets. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

2.19

**MS LILLY ADONG (NRM, Woman Representative, Nwoya):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the Committee of Government Assurances for bringing this report on the pledges that have been made by the President and Government to the districts mentioned.

Mr Speaker, I would like this House to know that even as politicians, sometimes people write letters to us and by merely receiving the letter, they take it that you have promised to give them what they have asked for. I think our President may also be held at ransom because people write letters to him when he comes to the districts and immediately you give him the letter, they start following up and asking, “When is he implementing?” Such scenarios may also end up in the government assurances records.

Mr Speaker, I request that Government sets up certain basic facilities, particularly if people are asking for development projects. Each region or district should have certain basic facilities that Government provides so that we stop running after the President. When the President comes, we ask for certain things and being in elective politics, sometimes he is forced to say, “I am going to see” and this is construed as a promise. We are all facing the same thing. I request that we have basic facilities and projects in the districts. Sometimes as politicians we are forced to intervene as individuals when we see our people suffering. Maybe that can be taken care of in the President’s budget.

In addition, I would request the Committee on Government Assurances that some of these promises that have been made be sent back to the districts so that the districts integrate them in their district development plans. Thereafter, they can come up in the planning process and be implemented. Mr Speaker, I beg to submit.

2.22

**MS HUDA OLERU (NRM, Woman Representative, Yumbe):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would also like to thank the committee for this report and thank the President for making these pledges. *(Laughter)*

I am aware that he is making these pledges while considering people’s requests. It is not out of the blue that he goes there and says, “I am going to give you this”. It is after people asking that he commits himself by saying he is going to do it. As the father of the nation, I think he has the right to do so.

I am also happy that after making these pledges, the Government tries to fulfil them. I would like to give you examples in Yumbe District. When the President was in Yumbe, the people requested him to facilitate them in farming. He told them that he was going to give them 100 ox ploughs and oxen and he has done so. I think that is a very good thing and we have to thank him for doing that.

He also promised that our hospital would be renovated and I would like to report that it was this same House that approved the loan for the rehabilitation of Yumbe Hospital. *(Applause)* I think that is a very good thing and we need to thank our President for it.

Despite all these achievements, there are still some challenges; people now want the pledges to be implemented immediately. We are still struggling with those pledges, which have not been implemented, especially tarmacking of the Koboko-Yumbe-Moyo road. Now that the road has gone up to Koboko and from this side we are moving from Gulu to Adjumani, the people of Yumbe think they are hanging. They do not know where they belong and Government has not shown these people any documents that show that their interests have been captured and that in future, this will be implemented.

Therefore, I would like the Government, now that we are in the process of developing a new manifesto, to put some of these things in our manifesto so that even if they are not implemented immediately, we know that this government is still going to be in power and we shall continue to implement them *-(Interruption)*

**MR MWIRU:** Thank you, honourable colleague, for giving way. I would like to seek clarification. When we are passing the budget, we normally provide for presidential donations. Isn’t it true that the President must only pledge within his budget of donations?

**MS OLERU:** What I would like to tell you is that the President is the father of the nation and he can do whatever he wants. *(Laughter)* In addition, the pledges do not only fall within the donations. That is why some of these programmes that I have mentioned as implemented are not within the donations but they have been implemented by the ministries. Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you for the opportunity.

2.25

**MS FLORENCE MUTYABULE (NRM, Woman Representative, Namutumba):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I would like to thank the committee for the report. I have to say that I commend His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda for the pledges he always makes as he does it in good faith.

However, I would like to suggest that before the President comes to visit a constituency or a district, the political leaders concerned should sit and agree on what they would like to ask the President to help them with. As MPs, we have the information because we know what is in the budget and what is in the plan. We should therefore ask for what we think the President can be able to fulfil. Unfortunately, we leave it to the people and whoever wants to talk asks. This is not good.

Even if the President has pledged, let us take on the responsibility, as political leaders, to remind the ministries that are concerned. What does it cost me, an MP, to write to the minister concerned and say that the President pledged this and that? I know the ministry will be able to take it on. I have tried it with Ministry of Local Government and they have actually acted. Let us also play our role as Members of Parliament to remind the concerned ministries.

What about our whips? They always ask us what the President has pledged in our constituencies. Are the whips also playing their role to remind the different ministries about the pledges that the President makes? Therefore, as much as we say that the President is pledging a lot and these pledges are not fulfilled, it is also our responsibility, as political leaders, to remind the concerned ministries. When we do that, it will be 50-50.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, in the Public Gallery this afternoon we have pupils and teachers of Back to Eden Reformation Nursery and Primary School. They are represented by hon. Lulume Bayigga and hon. Dorothy Mpiima, Woman representative for Buikwe. They are here to observe the proceedings. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* You are very welcome.

Honourable members, yesterday a Member left an iPad here charging and was not able to get it. It is with the Sergeant-at-Arms. If it is yours, please go to that office and pick it. Thank you.

2.29

**MR GILBERT OLANYA (Independent, Kilak County, Amuru**)**:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the good report.

Mr Speaker, when the President visits a particular district, people normally present very many requests before him. I feel that it is our role as leaders to guide our communities as to what to ask from the President and what can be done by the district. I normally witness that when the President visits a district, the LCI is invited to welcome him. The LCI will rise up and tell the President that there is no road from this village to that village or there is no borehole from –(*Laughter*)

The President cannot deny these requests and he will rise up and say, “We shall make sure that the roads are worked on”, not knowing that we have various kinds of roads. There are roads that are supposed to be worked on by the district, those by the central government and then by the community. Therefore, we need to guide our people on what they are supposed to ask from the President and what they are not to ask for.

Mr Speaker, from this report, I also observed one key area about scholarships. The report says that the President pledged to provide scholarships to students from those districts mentioned. If the President talks of providing scholarships to science students, it is because he pledged this many years ago. Right now, under the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Government has come up with a programme of the students’ loan scheme and this scheme is strictly considering science students. I feel that it is the work of the minister in charge of education to inform the people that they are providing loans to science students.

When the President pledges to provide scholarships for science students, I feel that those are the pledges that he promised the local people. Let it be the work of the line minister to guide the President because wherever the President goes, he will never turn down anything asked by the people. Let the minister guide the people so that they are aware that if the President talks of roads, there is a particular road that will be worked on. In that way, he can say later that the President’s pledge is fulfilled, so that we move to another area.

Mr Speaker, if we do that, we shall make the President’s work easier, but right now we are complicating his activities. As regards everything that the President talks about, the people will say that he has pledged –(*Member timed out.*)

2.32

**MS SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam):** Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I do not differ so much from the colleague who was holding the Floor.

Mr Speaker, almost all these pledges come as a result of demands from the people. When the people demand, it is very tempting for a politician to say “Yes”. Being a politician, sometimes the President has to agree to the demands of the people.

My issue is that we are leaders at various levels. We have ministers and presidential advisors and I think that before the people come up with a demand, they must first sit down. Even the people at the level of presidential advisors, MPs and all political leaders must first sit down before a demand is presented to the President so that by the time he talks to the people, he already knows which demand he can make a pledge on and which one can wait.

After making the pledge, I think the line ministries should prioritise these pledges. There should be a deliberate effort to make sure that these pledges are listed down and given to the respective ministries so that they can follow up and prioritise, so that we do not see the President pledging and failing to fulfil his pledges. This is very sad for our country.

Another issue that I want to talk about is that when you look at these pledges, most of them are very important. The issue of TIN numbers, for example, was an obstacle to road completion because the beneficiaries could not be compensated. This shows a mismatch and lack of coordination among the ministries. Uganda Revenue Authority, which is under the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, is supposed to give out TIN numbers and it is the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development that is supposed to pay these beneficiaries. However, people are not getting their TIN numbers and yet this is something that can be done in two or three days if ministries work together with the agencies of Government.

Mr Speaker, with these few words, I feel that the President can do very little if at the ministry level and as leaders, we do not come up to help him. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

2.35

**MR PETER LOKII (NRM, Jie County, Kotido):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the members of the committee for the report.

It is true that people make requests and, therefore, the President is obliged, given the fact that he is their representative. I would like to just ask something that other people have already asked: is it possible to have a timeframe? This is because there are pledges that are made but do not seem to get implemented. I want to give an example. In 1991, the President pledged a tarmac road for the people of Karamoja but when -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The whole of Karamoja?

**MR PETER LOKII:** Yes. When they came to Government and the first budget was read, the road plan for 10 years indicated Karamoja. However, during phase I there was an election and when we asked the President, he said, “No, you are in phase II of the 10-year plan.” When phase two was over, we again asked the President what had happened to the road and he said, “You are actually in the next 10-year plan.” The question is: isn’t it possible to provide a timeframe as to when some of these things can be realised?

Mr Speaker, right now we are facing a big crisis as the elite in the northern part of Karamoja have put their leaders under fire. They are asking why there is imbalanced development in Karamoja region. The tarmac road stopped in Moroto and the President says, “I have put tarmac in Karamoja”. We are now asking, “Where is Karamoja; is it Moroto?” Is Karamoja Moroto?

What happens to Kidepo? I have always said that Kidepo is a gold mine where all the people should be given the opportunity to tap into the benefits of tourism? Such benefits will lead to development of tourism infrastructure, meaning that there will be a lot of hotels, handicraft and so on that will change and transform the lives of the people. Now you have stopped in Moroto where there is no national park. The argument is: which one should be a priority? Is it the people or is it the location called Moroto?

I think on the issue of pledges, maybe this House should help Government so that we set a ceiling for what the President should pledge. If in a sub-county the PRDP funds can fix the community roads, why should an LC I chairman have the privilege of asking the President to do that and he says, “Yes”? That sets a wrong precedent among the areas where priorities should be considered highest.

I think it is good to set ceilings and say, if a council is sitting at the district level, let the LC III representatives make their case to their council through their councillors so that those issues are all captured there. So, when the President comes, the district will pick the biggest amongst them all, which is beyond their means and resources. That would make a big difference.

I do not know if the committee has delved into this; what are the chances that a pledge that was made in 1986 to district x has not been fulfilled and in 2001 another pledge was made and fulfilled - *(Member timed out.)*

2.39

**REV PETER BAKALUBA-MUKASA (NRM, Mukono County South, Mukono):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for this report. I also want to thank the President for the pledges he makes and those he will make. What is most important is that the team he moves with records and is able to follow up those pledges.

Hon. Mwiru commented as one who is not yet in government. When you are in government, like our President who is the fountain of honour, you will definitely know that a President is a human being. At times he passes by different areas and he sees a lot of demands and has to make pledges. There is a time I saw a priest giving his request to the President through a prayer. I have also seen a Muslim cleric making a request in a prayer form, asking for bicycles. The President had to respond to these. There are even school children that we see singing and talking about the poverty surrounding them and the President has to pledge. *(Interruption)*

**MS NAMBOOZE:** Mr Speaker, I did not intend to interrupt hon. Bakaluba-Mukasa. I know that the honourable colleague holding the Floor is a reverend and he would have been the right person to know that requests put in prayers are addressed to God the Almighty.

Is the Rev. Peter Bakaluba-Mukasa in order to tell this country through Parliament that when we raise requests in prayers we are addressing President Museveni? Is President Museveni God the Almighty?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You know, as a lawyer when you talk about prayers, they have a different meaning. Even when we present petitions to this House, we make prayers which are not to God.

In this respect, I do not know the prayer that the honourable member for Mukono South was referring to.

**REV BAKALUBA-MUKASA:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for your wise ruling. It is a legal prayer as well. In most of the prayers we have a preamble. You can set a preamble, an exegesis of a prayer, so that -

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

**REV. BAKALUBA-MUKASA:** In such circumstances, you find that our President ends up making pledges. The President normally has a big team following him; I think they should be following up these pledges. It hurts when the President makes a pledge and no one follows it up and yet people are demanding for it. The other time the President came to visit my constituency and we reminded him about a pledge. He disagreed and said it was a different thing all together because he had even forgotten that he had made that pledge. It is because the team from State House does not do its work well in following these up.

The President can even tell someone who lost his cows or has a problem that he will meet him at State House. Labouring to go to State House and entering that building is like going to heaven. There should be a mechanism or a work plan of how we shall proceed when the President makes a pledge.

Otherwise, the President should continue making pledges. We want them. We also make them as Members of Parliament. You can go somewhere, they read a report and you say that you will look into that but the next day they will tell you that you promised us something here. What are you- *(Member timed out)*

2.43

**MR EDDIE KWIZERA (NRM, Bufumbira County East, Kisoro):** Mr Speaker and honourable members, rule 167 is about the functions of government assurances and I place emphasis on promises made in this House. However, I would like to seek some clarification.

Does the President’s proclamation anywhere amount to an assurance? The President can make proclamations, but affordability of the state to implement them becomes a problem. It would be misleading for people to listen to the President, Vice-President, Prime Minister and Members of Parliament or a chairman LC V and RDCs and take whatever they say. That is failure to separate assurances from political games and statements. We should categorise pledges and find out what those segments are.

Secondly, where do we see assurances? Do we have a National Development Plan and are those assurances there? This House adopted a National Development Plan and that is what should actually amount to assurances. If we pass the budget as Parliament and there is a vote to implement certain projects, then that is an assurance. When the President comes to your village and you tell him that you need a million shillings given to every villager, that cannot be an assurance. It should not amount to the business of this House.

The other thing is that there is a Minister for the Presidency. One of the functions of the Minister for the Presidency is to follow up on decisions of the House and what Government has decided to do. Honourable members should be able to use the Minister for the Presidency to make sure that whatever the President undertook or whatever was passed here is implemented or that there is follow up.

Where is the manifesto? Is the manifesto considered as a government assurance? We should look at the state, government and the President. Whatever the President says may not amount to an assurance. Therefore, honourable members –*(Interruption)*

**MR WADRI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to thank my brother, the hon. Eddie Kwizera. This committee in its report has made a very distinct reference to rule 168(2). We are aware that as per our Rules of Procedure, it should be commitments made by either His Excellency the President on the Floor of the House during the Budget Speech or the State of the Nation Address or by his ministers.

What this committee has simply done is to say that they are aware of the limitations of our Rules of Procedure. Having gone on the ground to address their minds to what was agreed upon in our rules and to what was said on the Floor of the House, they also found out that there were these other commitments which were made by His Excellency the President and the ministers.

Do you remember the other time when we brought a similar report from western Uganda? We even sighted one of the commitments attributed to the Rt Hon. Speaker. We said it here on the Floor of the House. What we were advised is that we can capture those so that the sector ministers on receiving this information on the Floor of the House through this report can either own it or not.

We are aware that the President moves with a team of technocrats wherever he goes and they capture all that he says. They are expected to pass on this information to the right minister. That is the reason why we have captured -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable chair, are you now debating, and you are a member of the committee?

**MR WADRI:** No, I am just giving this information to my brother, Mr Speaker. I would like him to be aware of the situation in which this committee was in when it made those observations. Thank you.

**MR KWIZERA:** Thank you for the information. I wish to inform you that we talk about ministers because they do delegated functions. According to our Rules of Procedure, rules 167(1) (a) and 168 (2) which you are quoting, it must be only in this House. Rule 168(2) states: *“For purposes of this rule, an assurance shall mean any undertaking or promise, made by a Minister, Prime Minister, President or Vice President on the Floor of the House”*.

Unless they are translated to mean that you get them from your village in Terego, bring them through the minister here and the minister re-commits Government through this one, it cannot amount to an assurance. I thank you. *(Applause)*

2.49

**MS ROSE AKOL (NRM, Woman Representative, Bukedea):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand to clarify to Members about the ways some of these requests that we make to His Excellency the President or to any other minister when they visit our constituencies can be fulfilled.

It is true that even us as Members of Parliament, when we go and address a community they give us long lists of requests. The next time you go back, they say, “honourable member, you promised us” - that you pledged, and yet the way you addressed their requests was not to the effect that it had become a pledge or that you promised to handle it. This is exactly what goes on out there when the President visits these communities or our districts.

As Members of Parliament, I believe we have a big role to play in this matter. Definitely, when His Excellency the President visits our constituencies or districts, we are normally present as Members of Parliament. We therefore have a duty, because we have a representative role that we play, to pick these assurances or requests by our communities and make them assurances or follow them up with the respective ministries and ensure that these items appear in the budget.

I would like to give an example from Bukedea District. We requested for a gravity flow scheme. I took it upon myself to make sure that I follow it up with the relevant departments and ministries and now what is left is for Parliament to approve a loan that has been identified and provide Bukedea with a gravity flow scheme. This was only a request; it was not even a pledge because the President did not even commit himself. However, because the community had requested for it, it is our duty to make sure that we follow up on such matters.

That is your role as a Member of Parliament; you play a representative role. You have to follow up these issues. It is not the role of the President to follow them up; it is you, the Member of Parliament through his ministers, to do that. Indeed, if it is something that the House should take up, you bring it here and then the Committee on Government Assurances takes up the matter.

Mr Speaker, I just wanted to emphasise that it is also the role of the Member as a representative of that community to follow up on the issues requested by the community and the pledges that the President makes. I thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, our Rules of Procedure actually support what the honourable member for Bukedea has said. Rule 167 (4) has never been implemented because there have been no requests from any Member to the Speaker, that some assurances have been made in the constituencies.

What does the rule say? It says, *“The Speaker shall allot time for members to raise specific Government undertakings and assurances made in their constituencies”*. That is what it is. So, if the Speaker has a catalogue of Members coming to say that this was raised, then a time can be appointed where all those issues can be raised and captured on the record and then they become assurances. Before that, they are not assurances within the meaning of our Rules of Procedure.

Honourable members, in the next four minutes, we will be moving under rule 34 to deal with the Prime Minister’s question time. I am going to ask the chairperson to make some responses so that we can deal with Prime Minister’s question time.

2.54

**THE VICE-CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES (Mr Isaias Ssasaga:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to clarify to the honourable member from Nwoya, who was proposing that the committee reports its findings to the Ministry of Local Government and to the lower local governments for implementation of these assurances. I would like to address your mind to rule 167(1) which specifies the mandate of the Committee on Government Assurances. It clearly states thus:

“*The Government Assurance and Implementation committee shall*- *(a)scrutinize the assurances, promises and undertakings given by any minister, Prime Minister, President, Vice President in the House from time to time...”* Under 168(2), the rules go ahead to categorically state that this should be madeon the Floor of the House. Rule 168(2) says, *“For purposes of this rule, an assurance shall mean any undertaking or promise, made by a Minister, Prime Minister, President, or Vice President on the Floor of the House.”*

I therefore would like to give clarification that the committee has no mandate to take these promises and undertakings for implementation to local government. However, the rules give leeway in 168(1), which says, *“Any withdrawal of an assurance or undertaking shall be made to the committee which shall in turn report to the House*”.

If the President, in his wisdom, discovers that he made a very big pledge or a white elephant promise which he cannot implement, he can address that through rule 168(1) which says, *“Any withdrawal of an assurance or undertaking shall be made to the committee which shall in turn report to the House*”. Therefore, they can say that much as Government promised to undertake this, we are unable and we ask the committee to inform the House that this promise is withdrawn. That is what the rule provides for.

Hon. Kwizera said that the committee should be able to ascertain whether a promise made was a political game or a real promise. It is very difficult to ascertain whether the promise being made by the President or a minister is a political game. The rules are clear; even if a request has been made, as long as a minister or the President commits himself or herself to undertake something or to handle it, that definitely becomes an assurance.

As I close, Mr Speaker, I would like to say that the challenge the committee has faced is largely a mismatch, especially between the technical officers who could be helping the President and the promises which the President makes. I think the technical committee which is helping the President has a problem. It should be carrying all these promises made from wherever the President is and bringing them to the President’s desk so that they are reflected in the subsequent budgets. However, there is that mismatch. The President can forget his promises very fast if there are no reminders. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, thank you very much. Mr Chairman and the committee, I thank you very much for this debate. It has given light and direction. I think suggestions are being made on how we can improve on these issues of Government assurances.

A process should be instituted where the committee could find out the kind of assurances that are being handled through the budgetary process and which ones remain outstanding. Those that come from the side can then be brought directly to Parliament and debated and those captured in the budget could be handled through the budget process. It is a process. I think we need to improve on this as we go along.

Honourable members, I now put the question to this motion, that the report of the Committee on Government Assurances and Implementation on the status of implementation of Government assurances in the districts of Arua, Adjumani and Yumbe be adopted. I put the question to that motion.

(*Question put and agreed to.)*

*Report adopted.*

PRIME MINISTER’S QUESTION TIME

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, this is the time when we interact with the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister.

2.59

**MS KATUSIIME KYABANJI (NRM, Women Representative, Gomba):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Recently, National Forestry Authority (NFA) launched a campaign to open up boundaries of forests in Gomba, Butambala and Mpigi districts. To my surprise, this launch happened at the district headquarters of Mpigi instead of at Gomba and Butambala districts and the exercise of allocation was full of irregularities.

I have few questions I would like to ask the Prime Minister. I would like to know whether that was a deliberate move by NFA to run away from the mess it caused in Gomba and Butambala when it allocated forests to private developers instead of the communities and also denied the communities the opportunity to manage the forest.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** One question

**MS KYABANJI:** Mr Speaker, this one is important. Please -

3.00

**THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (Dr Ruhakana Rugunda):** Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable member for that question. The question of opening boundaries is a very welcome development. With regard to the allocation of the forest to private developers as opposed to the community, it depends on the issues on the ground. Sometimes you have large chunks of forest without trees and in such situations, the national forest reserve –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Right honourable, can you have forests without trees? *(Laughter)*

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, you have made a good point and I stand corrected. You have forest land without trees or even without forests. In such a situation, you can get capable private tree planters allocated pieces of land for a given duration to grow the trees and forests. However, in certain situations, the community, especially in heavily settled areas, may be called upon to plant the trees *– (Interruption)*

**MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI:** Mr Speaker, the question you have put to the Prime Minister is a technical one and requires factual steps as to what Government is doing other than simply doing intellectual gymnastics. Is he in order not to respond to the question in a concrete way and instead show off his intellectual skills?

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am aware of the provisions of the rules and I have not found anywhere that intellectual engagement is prohibited. *(Laughter)*

**DR RUGUNDA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the very wise ruling on this subject matter. After giving the general principles, then the specificities raised by my sister will be looked at by Government to ensure that the people’s interests are not compromised. *(Laughter)*

3.03

**MS BETTY NAMBOOZE (DP, Mukono Municipality, Mukono):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. For some time, there have been conflicts in Mukono District Council resulting from a demand for accountability by councillors on various projects. Unfortunately, the district council was not able to resolve these issues and the aggrieved councillors went to court. After listening to them, court has now issued an injunction against the district budget, 2015/2016. In essence, Mukono District has been closed because we cannot collect taxes or even spend.

Honourable Prime Minister, the people of Mukono would like to know if Government is aware of this. We would like to know what you are doing to save the situation as far as service delivery, payment of salaries and other essential services, which are supposed to be undertaken by the district, are concerned now that the budget is not in operation.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, hon. Nambooze’s issue, which suggests that the services are paralyzed, will be addressed urgently by the Ministry of Local Government. We want to ensure that a speedy solution is in place so that the services to the *wanainchi* are not in any way compromised.

3.05

**MS LILLY ADONG (NRM, Women Representative, Nwoya**): Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question to the Prime Minister concerns wildlife conflicts. Last year, we had a lengthy debate in this Parliament for two days and we made some recommendations to the Government. The Government made promises that they were going to, among other things, amend the Wildlife Act, to help the people who are living around the national parks.

As I talk now, the elephants are back in full swing disturbing the community. What is Government doing to make sure that the people who are living near the national park also live normal lives like people in other parts of the country? They should be able to look after their children and avoid being killed at night by wild animals. Thank you.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, the policy of Government is to ensure that the population that lives next to national parks benefits from the national parks. If on the other hand in some areas the animals are a menace to the *wanainchi* in the same neighbourhood, then the Ministry of Wildlife should take the necessary measures.

With regard to the commitment by Government, I will need to get an update from the minister responsible. Nevertheless, your concern will be conveyed to the minister responsible to ensure *wanainchi* are protected.

3.07

**MS ANNA MARIA NANKABIRWA (NRM, Women Representative, Kyankwanzi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have a question to the Prime Minister with regard to Article 53 of the Constitution.

A few months ago, the National Bureau of Statics gazetted the results of the census. Article 63 (5) of the Constitution says, “*Subject to clause (1) of this article, the commission shall review the division of Uganda into constituencies within twelve months after the publication of results of a census of the population of Uganda and may as a result re-demarcate the constituencies”*

Mr Speaker, indeed it is true that after the census, many projections were altered. An example is Kyankwanzi District whose projection had been 120,000 people but after the census, the results indicated a population of almost 220,000 people. I would like to now ask the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, what deliberate effort is Government undertaking to reply to the requirement of Article 63 of the Constitution?

**DR RUGUNDA**: Mr Speaker, my sister is raising a question about census results. Yes, provisional census results were announced but the final census results are due to be announced in December. It is on the basis of the final report of the census results that Government can follow up and take action. Therefore, we are waiting for a final report on the census. However, this does not stop Government from proposing and taking measures that may be necessary to improve the running of public affairs in the country, including the issues of constituencies.

3.10

**MR STEPHEN MUKITALE (NRM, Buliisa County, Buliisa):** Thank you, so much, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, in 2010 the President did write to the Prime Minister then about concerns of fraudulent acquisition of land in the Albertine region, Buliisa in particular, because of speculators who were plotting to take locations of the oil related investments. Unfortunately, to date even after a moratorium issued by the President and the letter was copied to the Minister of Lands, we have people now going to UNRA targeting the pipeline areas with deeds and plans claiming to own square miles of land even when the President gave a directive seven years ago.

Mr Prime Minister, my question then is: what is going to be done to make sure that the presidential directive on the revocation of those acquisitions and the systematic demarcation of land is effected to make sure that the planning of this industry does not cause conflict and disfranchisement of the local community – the people who have customarily been on this land including some land for sub counties? We do not want to see the industry operations delayed because of these individual speculators who are already beginning to claim billions of money from those development services *– (Interruption)*

**MR KWIZERA:** Mr Speaker and honourable members, we know the Prime Minister is not multi-skilled and we know we have Cabinet ministers and ministers of state. The Cabinet ministers should be in Cabinet. However, when they are in Cabinet today, the ministers of state should be here to assist the Prime Minister to answer questions, if we are going to receive the right information from the Prime Minister.

Are we procedurally right to burden the Prime Minister when actually most of these sectors do not give the Prime Minister their reports? Therefore, are we proceeding in the right direction? I thank you

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The rule we are proceeding under says “Prime Minister’s question time” and we have a Prime Minister answering questions. Please, proceed.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Actually, the point raised by hon. Mukitale is a very serious point. It is true that a moratorium was declared over acquisition that was taking place in the sensitive Albertine areas by land speculators. It is true that Government has discovered that in spite of that moratorium, some land titles, sometimes involving big chunks of land, have been given out.

Therefore, about two weeks ago, Government put up machinery involving the Minister of Lands and other responsible ministries to investigate this matter and bring it to a speedy end, to ensure that speculations are contained and that the moratorium is enforced.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable members. In the public gallery this afternoon, we have pupils from Emmanuel Primary School, Serere District. They are accompanied by their headmaster. They are represented by hon. Alice Alaso and hon. Ochola Stephen. Please, join me in welcoming them. (*Applause*)

We also have pupils and teachers of Seers Primary School. They are represented by hon. Fredrick Ruhindi and hon. Nabilah Sempala, woman representative for Kampala. They have also come to observe the proceedings. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

3.15

**MS EMMA BOONA (NRM, Woman Representative, Mbarara):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have a question that has to do with agriculture in the country.

I represent Mbarara District and in our sub counties, we do not have agriculture and veterinary staff. This is as a result of the past when we reorganised NAADS I and NAADS II. As I speak now, we have some diseases that have attacked our Irish potatoes and coffee and the point of reference for the average citizen is a sub county as the first centre for administration.

My question then is: when are we having recruitment of veterinary and agricultural officers so that we have our agriculture revamped and revitalised for the country’s food security and export? Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, if it is about recruiting the officers at the sub country level, if they are absent we will find out the reasons why they have not been recruited. If it is because of money, then we will give an explanation as to when they will be recruited.

3.17

**MR IDDI ISABIRYE (NRM, Bunya County South, Mayuge):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, 59 districts in Uganda have not received bicycles for LC I chairpersons. May I know from the Prime Minister when these districts will receive the bicycles?

**DR RUGUNDA**: Mr Speaker, this is obviously a popular question for very understandable reasons. The information I have from the Minister of Local Government is that he is looking for money to make sure that the districts that have not received the bicycles will be able to do so. Therefore, as soon as this money is found, the bicycles will be purchased.

3.18

**MR JAMES MBAHINBA (NRM, Kasese Municipality, Kasese):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question to the Prime Minister is about the floods that are devastating Kasese. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, in 2013 we were hit by floods and every year between May and July, we are hit by floods. I would like to be very specific; we have been hit by floods from River Nyamwamba, which goes through Kasese Municipality.

A lot of Government infrastructure has been destroyed like hospitals, schools and bridges. I see your ministers in Kasese every time we are hit, but the question I am asking is: what plans do you have for us as the people of Kasese?

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, *Ndungu* Mbahimba is rising a very valid issue. I have visited these devastated areas of Kasese together with him and I have held meetings with the technical officers and political leaders on the issue of the floods. At the moment, a lot of work by the Ministry of Works and Transport is going on to ensure that we prepare for the floods, and additional measures are also being taken by other departments.

So, in a nutshell, Government is fully aware of this problem and it is doing whatever it can to deal with it. Government will continue to work with the local leadership to ensure that the devastation that is expected is mitigated as much as possible.

3.20

**MS ROSEMARY NYAKIKONGORO (Independent, Woman Representative, Sheema):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister is about the young doctors who graduated a fewyears ago and have been on the streets for so long. Some of them thought they had got employment opportunities in Trinidad and Tobago but Government has put a halt to that and yet they cannot all be employed in government hospitals and health centres. They are frustrated. How are you going to address that issue given the fact that there is a lot of unemployment in Uganda?

**DR RUGUNDA:** MrSpeaker, again this matter has been discussed a number of times in this august House. It is true that there was a halt on the exodus of Ugandan health professionals to Trinidad and Tobago. The original objective had been to focus on doctors who were not employed by Government or even the missionary hospitals. However, when the actual recruitment came, it swept the best that we had even in government hospitals and so Government halted it. I see no problem at all in doctors that are not employed seeking employment in the region or beyond as we expand our facilities to absorb more doctors.

3.21

**MS FRANCA AKELLO (FDC, Woman Representative, Agago):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, I hear that elections of interest groups like people with disabilities, workers and all the others are due to take place with nominations kicking off on 27th of this month. However, there are no signs of activity although it is now 19 days to the nominations.

The Electoral Commission has not communicated anything to the public. There are no activities taking place including the issuing of guidelines. Given the fact that we are under a multiparty system of governance, we are confused and do not know what is happening. Can you inform this Parliament and the country at large what is happening as far as the preparations to this effect are concerned?

**DR RUGUNDA:** MrSpeaker, my sister knows that the Electoral Commission issued a roadmap some time ago and it is being pursued. It is up to the people interested in playing specific roles, either as candidates or as mobilisers in different interest groups, to play their roles and to make inquiries as they may wish. Otherwise, the Electoral Commission issued a roadmap for elections for the coming year.

3.23

**MR MICHAEL MAWANDA (NRM, Igara County East, Bushenyi):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Rt. hon. Prime Minister, last year Government stampeded Parliament with a loan request for financing SACCOs in our rural areas. The House had actually refused to approve that loan, but we were convinced that it was going to do much for our SACCOs in the rural areas. The Minister even promised to come to Parliament and update us on the progress. However, up to now we have not seen any activity taking place and we are wondering what has happened to this loan for SACCOs.

**DR RUGUNDA:** MrSpeaker, I will ask the Minister of Finance to make a statement on the matter.

3.24

**MR JACOB WANGOLO (NRM, Bunyole County West, Butaleja):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Prime Minister, in early June we were hit by hailstones in Busolwe Town Council and we lost two people who left widows and children. Three cars were also damaged and 20houses were brought down. Many people also lost properties in their shops and two churches and a mosque were brought down. As I speak, 20 people are in hospital with hands and legs broken.

However, up to now, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, we have not received any official communication from your ministry in terms of assessing the situation. For those who lost their gardens, their neighbours are harvesting and they are yet to begin a new season. I do not know how you will assess all the damage the people of Busolwe in Butaleja District experienced. I would like to hear from you so that I can inform my people effectively. Thank you.

**DR RUGUNDA:** MrSpeaker, the honourable member is right; Busolwe and a few other areas of the country have been hit by floods and other related climatic change effects. Ideally, what should have happened is that our team would go and inspect, mobilise resources and then provide. However, there has been a problem of resources. Nevertheless, I will ensure that if they have not come to assess the damage, late as it may be, they quickly do so, so that this can be ascertained and an appropriate response made. Thank you.

3.26

**MS SARAH NYIRABASHITSI (NRM, Woman Representative, Kisoro):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Government has of recent been recruiting cadet officers in the Police force. We have had very many police officers, especially the constables, who have upgraded and are now degree holders. However, when it comes to recruitment of cadet officers, they are not allowed to apply and there is nothing that they consider them for.

I do not know what plans Government has to consider these police officers who have been in this force and have upgraded their education levels. This is important because according to the Public Service Standing Orders, seniority is also considered. I do not why you do not consider them so that they are able to compete with others. Thank you.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, this is a known problem. With increased education opportunities, many people including policemen and women have gone and improved their education. When they get their degrees, it takes time to absorb them to higher levels. The Police are fully aware and it has a mechanism to gradually absorb them to the ranks that they now qualify for after getting the higher qualifications.

3.28

**MR JOHN KEN-LUKYAMUZI (CP, Rubaga Division South, Kampala):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I require a calculated answer to this question from the Prime Minister. Much as President Museveni has been promoted to head the peace mission in Burundi, there are still lingering international questions about that status.

Mr Prime Minister, I am reliably informed, and take it from me very seriously, that the UPDF has already been deployed in Burundi without Parliament sanctioning it, in open defiance of Article 20 (10)(d) as well as Article 2(4) of the UN Charter to which Uganda subscribes.

In very serious terms, Mr Prime Minister, it is on record that during the Sixth Parliament, you defied those provisions of the law when you deployed forces in the DR Congo without Parliament’s approval. *(Laughter)* I put it to you that you even do not have an answer –*(Laughter)–* You are in trouble! Are we in Burundi or not? Tell us the truth and a very serious answer. *(Laughter)*

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, my colleague says that there are lingering doubts about the region asking President Museveni to use his wide experience and seniority in the region to play a role in being the mediator in Burundi. There is no doubt about that; this is a decision taken by the Summit, so there is certainty that he has been given that responsibility.

Secondly, it does not in any way surprise us because for many years, President Museveni was the chairman of the peace efforts by the region to pacify Burundi. Therefore, it is only logical that he should continue to play that role.

With regards to the UPDF troops, I do not have any specific information on the matter. So if there is any specific information, Government will share it with this august House.

3.31

**MR HASSAN FUNGAROO (FDC, Obongi County, Moyo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the programme called Operation Wealth Creation is turning out to be operation poverty creation especially in Obongi. The activities involved thereunder, for example the supply of materials for planting like the cassava stems, has brought to Obongi rotten stems that cannot germinate. Definitely, with that Government cannot create wealth when they are supplying rotten planting materials to people; you are instead creating poverty.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the predecessor programme to Operation Wealth Creation also brought in cassava that has resulted into rotten cassava tubers underground. Right now, the people of Obongi, including those in the surrounding areas, are complaining of cassava rotting in the ground. With this supply of rotten materials, do we really foresee this programme resulting into wealth creation? Why don’t we promote the local planting materials that the people have been using before? Already, district farm institutes are not working; how can you help us? Thank you.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, planting materials are perishable and so if five per cent or so of the planting materials are spoilt, it does not come as a surprise. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Operation Wealth Creation is having a very positive impact in the country. In fact, the cry was for more planting materials and that is why Government is going to make more money available to ensure more planting materials are available.

With regard to promoting local planting materials, if they are appropriate and available, definitely Government will support such a programme. Also, NAADS can help in promoting the increase and propagation of such planting materials but that is if they are available.

3.33

**MR WILLIAM NZOGHU (FDC, Busongora County North, Kasese):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The NRM, prior to 25 January 1986, had first established its government structures and systems in Kasese, particularly in my sub country, Kyabarungira. In pursuit of that, the President visited that sub county in the last financial year. In appreciation to that sub county, particularly Kabatunda, for having hosted him even before he took power, the President promised to construct Kabatunda Primary School in the last financial year. The question is: where is that pledge?

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, if there is any area where Government has performed very well, construction of classrooms is such an area. So, if the pledge has not yet been implemented, it is just a question of time before it will be implemented. You can get the details from the responsible ministry, Ministry of Education and Sports.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have teachers and pupils of Bright Future Primary School represented by hon. Moses Kasibante and hon. Nabilah Sempala, District Woman Representative for Kampala. They have come to observe the proceedings. Please, join me in welcoming them. Thank you.

3.35

**MR PAUL MWIRU (FDC, Jinja Municipality East, Jinja):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. In 2004, Government of Uganda signed a concession agreement for the construction of a 50MW power plant in Namanve, which says it signed a power purchase agreement under “build, operate and transfer” for 10 years. The agreement expired in 2014 but up to now, Government has not taken over the plant and is still buying power from Jacobson Elektro. Would you wish to give a formal statement to this House about the same? Thank you.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, I will ask the minister responsible for energy to respond to that point.

3.36

**MS BRENDA NABUKENYA (DP, Woman Representative, Luweero):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Prime Minister, my question is in the area of wetlands.

Last year in the budget, there was an amount of money approved to pay the veterans from the Luweero Triangle and specifically Luweero District. Last month, a majority of the veterans were paid Shs 1.5 million when actually they were supposed to be paid Shs 5 million and above. So, I want to know where the balance went to and who took that money that was meant for the veterans.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, it is the commitment of Government to pay the *akasiimo* to the people who were involved in the fight against dictatorial regimes. If part payment has been made, that is a positive thing and if more money remains to be paid, Government will do that. As for the specific details as to when that will happen, we can get that from the ministry responsible.

3.38

**MR ISAIAS SSASAGA (FDC, Budadiri County East, Sironko):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Prime Minister, last financial year, when we were handling the tax Bills, we also handled the business procedures code. I recall we had some clauses in the Bills that touched on the Cooperatives Act. However, the Minister of Finance pleaded with this House to spare those clauses because the Cooperatives Act was in the final stages of being tabled before this House. She also said that the Ministry of Trade and her ministry had finally harmonised their positions.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister, when is the Co-operatives (Amendment) Bill going to be tabled in this House for debate?

**DR RUGUNDA:** The information that I have, Mr Speaker, is that the Co-operatives Bill is due to be discussed by Cabinet and then tabled in this august House.

3.39

**MS ALICE ALASO (FDC, Woman Representative, Serere):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Prime Minister, the people of Teso have a saying that, “*Loican mam epasi.”* Literally translated, it means that a poor man does not get tired. So, if I sound repetitive in asking this question, it is because the question is about the needy people.

The Prime Minister promised this House that Government was going to undertake vaccination to help prevent the spread of Hepatitis B. He also promised this country that there would be an awareness campaign. But as we talk now, eight or so months down the road, nothing is happening.

May I know, from the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister - what else should be told to the poor people who are in desperate need for an intervention from the Government of Uganda?

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, it is also true that this subject of Hepatitis B has been raised and discussed in this august House a number of times.

We very much realise the seriousness of the problem. I did have occasion to tell this august House that Government is in full agreement and is in fact already carrying out a programme of vaccinating health workers and other vulnerable groups. Eventually, as resources become more available, more and more people, especially in areas that are heavily affected, will be brought on board for vaccination. In this year’s budget, Government has made some additional money available to support this programme against Hepatitis B.

Secondly, awareness campaign spearheaded by the Ministry of Health have been going on over the radio. In fact, a major demonstration, through the city of Kampala took place only recently by people concerned about this problem. It was a combination of both the civil society organisations and also Government. Indeed, it is a correct thing because fighting against Hepatitis B requires a combined effort by Government, concerned people and civil society.

In a nutshell, we take Hepatitis B seriously. We have made money available in this coming budget and sensitisation is going on. The vaccination programme too is expanding but only limited by the high cost of the Hepatitis B vaccine.

3.42

**MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga):** Mr Speaker, in May this year, hon. Paul Mwiru raised a matter of national importance to which Cabinet sat and came up with a detailed statement that was presented on the Floor of Parliament by Gen. Aronda Nyakairima. This statement gave full rights to the sitting tenants of the building at plot 60/62, Alidina Road in Jinja Town and to which we all agreed to.

Last weekend, the impostor again began developing this same place and yet Cabinet had given full rights to the sitting tenants. Can we hear from the Prime Minister whether he is aware of this development and if yes, what efforts or actions have been taken to protect the rights of the sitting tenants? I thank you.

**DR RUGUNDA:** I am not aware of the new developments that my brother, hon. Milton Muwuma, is raising. Nevertheless, the Minister responsible for Internal Affairs and the lands minister will be informed to take the necessary measures to ensure that the Government’s decision on the matter is implemented.

3.44

**MS HARRIET NTABAZI (NRM, Woman Representative, Bundibugyo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Prime Minister, last week a team of community members in this country carried television sets to the Parliament and their argument was that the central region had been switched from analogue to digital.

The work of Parliament and Government together with UCC was to sensitise the communities so that they understand why we are shifting from analogue to digital television transmission. My question is: in two minutes, can you sensitise this country *–(Laughter)–* and give the people information as to why we are shifting from analogue to digital transmission, including the benefits we hope to realise? Also, talk about the deadlines and whether it is a national, regional or global programme.

**DR RUGUNDA:** This House is fully aware that my brother, the hon. Nyombi Thembo, the Minister of State for ICT, made a major statement on the subject matter in this very House approximately three or four weeks ago, giving the rationale and details of how Uganda was going about the process of digital migration and benefits of the same.

The decision to migrate from analogue to digital signal distribution was taken several years ago by the International Telecommunications Union and all member countries were supposed to oblige. I am very happy that Uganda has lived up to its international obligations by migrating, starting with Kampala. The process of migration is continuing to the rest of the country as the signal continues to expand.

The main point about digital migration is that we will have better pictures, access to more stations and without any doubt, colleagues in the House should spearhead the mission to bring on board the people of Uganda and let them know about the importance of digital migration.

3.47

**MS ROSE AKOL (NRM, Woman Representative, Bukedea):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Prime Minister, about three or four weeks ago, I read in the *Observer* newspaper and on social media a letter purportedly written by His Excellency the President to the Minister for Local Government. The letter was requesting the minister to expedite the process of establishing new administrative units - these were counties - and among them was Kachumbala County. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, there are people already traversing the new counties with the knowledge that Government and Parliament are soon going to approve these new administrative units.

I would like to know from the Rt Hon. Prime Minister whether soon you will be in position to table these new administrative units for approval by Parliament. Currently, people are moving up and down in these new administrative units with hope that Parliament is about to approve these counties.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, it is true that soon the minister responsible for local government will be coming to this august House to table proposals for some new administrative units at county level.

3.50

**MR MARTIN MUGABI (NRM, Buzaaya County, Kamuli):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, in the last two months we have experienced foreign currency skyrocketing against the local currency. The business community is crying, the consumers are crying and even us. We have not seen any remedy to this problem.

I have seen some countries supporting their state enterprises to do business abroad. Uganda is not doing well; I do not know whether we have a foreign trade policy that can support the business community. As a country, what have we put in place to help the business community on foreign trade?

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, the honourable member is right to raise a concern about the depreciation of the Ugandan shilling. Statements have been made here by the ministers responsible especially the ministers for finance and also in the media that the Uganda shilling, like other currencies, has faced stiff competition from the American dollar, which has been gaining strength.

Secondly, it is a fact that we are importing a lot and exporting little in comparison, therefore this is weakening our shilling. That is why we are saying let us give as much effort to export so that we can be able to earn dollars to be able to support our shilling.

In a nutshell, Government continues to encourage our people to export and even the programme of Operation Wealth Creation is ultimately aimed at encouraging exports through increased agricultural production and agro processing. That will be one way of supporting our shilling.

3.53

**MS THEOPISTA SSENTONGO (NRM, Workers Representative):** Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I have a question to the Prime Minister and this is in regard to the strategy that Government has in place to fight the continuous theft in the Ministry of Public Service in relation to payment of pension to the actual beneficiaries.

I was approached by a former worker of the East African Railways Corporation who up to now has never received a penny of his pension. However, surprisingly, he has found his face in the press three times under different names, claiming that he has so far received Shs 170,000. He has never received a penny and he has given me his identity card indicating when he worked in the East African Community. How do we handle this? This is continuous and I have been moving around the country and I found this problem all over. How will you curb this corruption?

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, the scam in the Ministry of Public Service with regard to pensions is one of the dirtiest that the country has had. We guarantee as a government that the people concerned will get their money. Of course, there have been delays and all sorts of manoeuvres by those who were responsible for stealing the money but Government will ensure that everybody will be able to get their dues in spite of the delay.

Meanwhile, Government through the courts of law, the Auditor-General and other agencies, continues to pursue the culprits to ensure that those that have taken the money will be prosecuted and will pay back as much as we can get from them.

3.55

**DR FRANCIS EPETAIT (FDC, Ngora County, Ngora):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Would the Prime Minister update this House and the country at large about the actual sustainable measures taken to resolve the international border conflicts between Uganda and South Sudan around Moyo, Uganda and the DRC and around West Nile region? We also need an update on how far Government has gone in resolving the dispute that had arisen over the Migingo Island.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, as a matter of policy, Uganda looks at these border challenges as rightly being historical and therefore, Uganda lives with her neighbours to peacefully resolve those issues.

In as far as Uganda and South Sudan are concerned, there are bilateral arrangements to get that matter sorted out. With regard to the DRC and the recent Vurra situation, the two governments are discussing the situation. In regard to Migingo Island, there are studies by experts both from Kenya and Uganda to ascertain the boundaries especially looking at the old colonial map that demarcated Uganda and Kenya.

3.57

**MR WAIRA MAJEGERE (NRM, Bunya East, Mayuge):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The President promised an ambulance to the people of Bunya East Constituency. I have been to the Ministry of Health and they almost think that I am staff there because of the several times that I have been to the ministry. The voters in Bunya East Constituency have seen the President giving out ambulances to some other people selectively. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, my people want a firm and clear answer; when is the ambulance coming? Thank you.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, the people of Bunya should be assured by the fact that they have seen ambulances gradually being given to others and that their turn is getting nearer and nearer. Let me ask my brother to assure the people that the presidential pledge will be met, and it will be met through the Ministry of Health because it is the ministry to implement the presidential pledge on ambulances.

3.58

**MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI (DP, Butambala County, Butambala):** Mr Speaker, recently the Secretary General of NRM was given two lead cars. In this country, there are so many people today who have lead cars, including the Leader of the Opposition here, hon. Kibuule, the Executive Director of KCCA, the Inspector General of Police and the head of prisons. Can we know in this country who is supposed to have a right of way on our roads?

Humble people in this country are being heavily inconvenienced by so many people having lead cars. If a secretary general of a party can have a lead car, then Mathias Nsubuga, hon. Nandala-Mafabi - We have 32 political parties in this country; how many people are we going to give way to on our roads and how will our humble people take that? We want to know how many people in this country are supposed to have lead cars and a right of way so that we end this kind of inconvenience to our people.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, I will ask the Minister responsible for Internal Affairs to make a statement on this very point.

4.00

**MR PETER LOKII (NRM, Jie County, Kotido):** Mr Speaker, we have a situation in Kotido Senior Secondary School. The staff ceiling is supposed to be 42 teachers but only 18 are on the government payroll and 24 have been teaching for the last eight years.

Early this year, there was recruitment by the Education Service Commission. All the 24 applied but not even one was shortlisted. What is going to be the future of secondary education in Kotido District? What is the concrete answer I should take to these teachers because they have vowed to put their tools down and leave the district on 27th July?

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, my first message to the teachers concerned, through my brother, is to reassure them that the matter is being addressed and therefore there is no cause for laying down their tools. Secondly, we will ask the minister responsible for education to give us a more specific plan to ensure that this anomaly of inadequate teaching staff is sorted out. Therefore, we will ask the minister to handle this.

4.01

**MS CECILIA OGWAL (FDC, Woman Representative, Dokolo):** Mr Speaker, I would like to find out from the Rt Hon. Prime Minister whether the Pope is coming to Uganda to visit Ugandans or to visit His Excellency the President.

I am asking this because Parliament needs to be informed. The people of Uganda also need to be informed through us so that all God fearing people can be informed that the Pope is coming and we can put in effort to give a deserving welcome from our country because it is a blessing for the Pope to be here. Can the Rt Hon. Prime Minister tell us whether the Pope is coming to visit the President or the people of Uganda?

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, His Holiness the Pope will be visiting Uganda starting on 27th November this year. Secondly, His Holiness is coming specifically and primarily to be at Namugongo to commemorate the 50th anniversary of canonisation of the Uganda martyrs.

Thirdly, while he is here, obviously the people of Uganda and the people of the region and the world will interact with His Holiness the Pope.

It is true that Government has not been making many statements about the visit of His Holiness the Pope. The main reason is because we would like his programme to be announced by Rome other than Kampala. Nevertheless, Government and the Catholic Church and the Papal Nuncio have been in close contact over His Holiness’ visit. I can assure you that so far the arrangements are fully on course and Parliament will be appropriately informed but we are in close conjunction with Rome.

4.04

**MS KEVINAH TAAKA (FDC, Busia Municipality, Busia):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Sometime last year, fire gutted a market in Busia just along the border of Uganda and Kenya but on the Ugandan side. This market hosts so many people - women, men and the youth - and it destroyed all their property. I want the Prime Minister to tell us how they are going to assist those people because it is coming to a year and nothing has been done.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, Government has been having a programme of rebuilding markets throughout the country. I will ask the minister responsible for local government, who is in charge of this programme, to explain the programme that Government has for the people concerned. When I say I will do so or Government will do so, we have people in this august House who are taking meticulous notes about what we are saying Government will do and who will ensure that these statements, pledges and commitments are effectively followed up.

4.06

**MS FLORENCE NAMAYANJA (DP, Bukoto County East, Masaka):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Recently, the President was in Masaka, specifically in Bukakata in the area of Mazigo, where he commissioned an industrial park to be constructed by the Chinese. In the same location, the same Government has planned to expand the airbase.

Could the Rt Hon. Prime Minister tell Ugandans whether all the arms of Government are planning together, because we are getting confused! We do not know which project is going to do what in the same location. What is the fate of the people utilising the land that is going to be taken over?

Also, as leaders, we have not seen the environmental impact assessment being done and explanation given to us on what plan Government has. Which is which, Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, I must congratulate the people of Masaka for getting an industrial park and getting our Chinese brothers who are coming to invest in the country. That means creation of jobs and that is very positive development. With regard to the environmental impact assessment, the Uganda Investment Authority, the Ministry of Environment and NEMA who handle these matters will ensure that before major structures of that nature are put in place we are environmentally satisfied with them.

With regard to government departments being in conflict, there is no conflict at all. It is possible for the Government to have one plan but because of urgency of some other issues they adjust their plans. Take it that the industrial park is going to be built.

4.08

**MR KRISPUS AYENA (UPC, Oyam County North, Oyam):** Mr Speaker, there is a teething problem in the Lango sub-region and in particular Oyam County. By 1948, the Government decided to partially allow the population – many people covering a whole parish in Ngai in particular – to occupy what was hitherto called a government reserve. Since 1948, people in that parish, actually covering about three parishes who number more than 3,000, have been living on this piece of land. Recently, there have been attempts by government agents to get these people out of this so-called forest reserve.

Can the Prime Minister tell this august House where they hope to re-settle these very many people who are dotted in many places in the Lango sub-region and in particular those who occupy some of this hitherto forest reserve in Oyam North Constituency? Thank you.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, one would need to get all the facts on the ground. I will ask the minister responsible to explain this in the course of the month to this august House so that we can have all the facts on the subject matter as well as the way forward.

4.11

**MR SIMON ALEPER (NRM, Moroto Municipality, Moroto):** Mr Speaker, can the Rt Hon. Prime Minister allay the fears of the citizens of this county that the Uganda Investment Authority is not becoming a land broker or conduit for individuals who buy land from the investment authority under the pretext that it is going to be an industrial park? A case in point is in Ssembabule. The Uganda Investment Authority bought land but sold it to an individual. You have also heard about the confusion in Namanve.

As we talk, there is a lot of tension in Karamoja. The Uganda Investment Authority has bought land in the pretext that it is going to be for an industrial park. However, we have also got clues, which I may share with the Prime Minister later, that there are individuals behind this. Can the Prime Minister allay the fears of this country that Uganda Investment Authority is not becoming a broker for individuals who have the money? Thank you.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Mr Speaker, speculation in land especially by the Uganda Investment Authority would be illegal and it is obviously prohibited. The Uganda Investment Authority is supposed to acquire and assist investors to acquire land for purposes of real projects and real development. If they are going beyond their terms of reference, I would be interested in getting details of this information so that the necessary measures can be taken by the responsible minister.

4.12

**THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Phillip Wafula-Oguttu):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, thank you for answering the questions. I have a few questions and clarifications.

Firstly, why is Government, through the Police, using double standards in the application of the law, specifically on the question of the campaigns which are starting? Supporters of one candidate are allowed on the streets adorned in campaign attire but others are not allowed on the streets. What do you want the others to do if you are not brewing violence?

Secondly, recently we saw in the media that Government invited contractors – people who do business with Government – and indirectly taxed them by way of fundraising from them to build a house for your party. Mr Prime Minister, we think this is political corruption. It is going to increase taxation and the costs of the projects they are doing and also undermine the value or the quality of the work or services they are providing to Government.

Thirdly, sometime back around 2013, the Government approved a scheme under the food security programme in Iganga/Bugiri to grow rice and the loan was taken from a bank. We went and mobilised the peasants who had almost resisted this programme for some time and they approved it. Up to now, Government has kept quiet and peasants are asking us what is going on and we have no answers.

I need your clarification, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, about Mukono. From the information given to us by hon. Nambooze, Mukono has been virtually shut down by court – I think it is a constitutional crisis – over the budget. As a result, Mukono is not able to access funds as a district. I think we need better answers than the ones you gave.

On the question of bicycles, I think these bicycles were given to the sitting LCs I. What I am sure of is that your Government is leaving power in May next year. Is this a government assurance that it will be a debt to the next government or are you going to pay before we come to power? You said that you will look for money; where are you going to look for money when we have already finished the budget for the next one year?

The next one applies to Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE) – the money for the elderly. This was a project started by Government almost five years ago. Some elderly people are getting money while others are not getting. I think it is also a debt because why should some not qualify to get this money and others get it. It was something which you promised to do and I think everybody should get. They should not die without getting it. It should be treated as an assurance and therefore as a debt to them. Rt Hon. Prime Minister, you need to explain something about that.

Lastly, we have elections going on for the interest groups but at the same time we are in the process of having electoral reforms, which reforms you have not brought to the House. You have deliberately refused to bring them here because we think you are sabotaging that element of having a free and fair election. We want assurance from you; when are we going to have these electoral reforms and how will those reforms eventually affect what is already being done?

Finally, to the Minister of Defence - I am happy he has come in. I saw on social media a few days ago that our helicopter was shot down in South Sudan. We would like to know from the Minister of Defence whether this is true or not. I saw the pictures of some remnants of the plane with our flag on it. Thank you very much.

**DR RUGUNDA:** Well, Leader of the Opposition, if I can have your ears. The Minister of Defence, hon.Chripus Kiyonga, arrived from Juba yesterday and he says there is no iota of truth in what you have said, that a Ugandan helicopter was shot in South Sudan.

Secondly, on the issue of electoral reforms, Mr Speaker, some time ago, perhaps more than a month ago, electoral reforms were brought to this august House. The Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs has been doing, in my view, a good job with these proposals by Government. The members of the public have made significant input and we are waiting for the report from this committee. We believe that at the end of the day, that will provide a very good basis for this august House to agree collectively on electoral reforms for this country.

The issue of inviting contractors; I have seen one or two newspapers saying something close to that. It is true the National Resistance Movement has a project to build the Movement House and it had one or two fundraising activities. A number of people participated in these activities. I do not have the list or the details but what I know is that Sudhir, who is reported by the media to have paid Shs 3 billion, which is the highest contribution, is not one of the most famous contractors that I know of. Secondly, Caesar Mulenga, who contributed Shs 500 million, to the best of my knowledge is not one of the contractors. Therefore, this is merely an effort by the NRM to mobilise supporters to ensure that its Movement House is in place.

With regard to double standards, it is the intention of this Government to ensure that elections are free and fair and that all candidates are given appropriate and commensurate considerations in accordance with the law. There is no intention to discriminate against anybody. I have seen some moderations and discussions in the media about one of the candidates but I am glad that his lawyers are interacting with responsible government agencies to ensure that this hitch or hurdle is smoothly sorted out.

The other issues like on Mukono raised by my sister, hon. Nambooze, we have already told you that the Minister for Local Government is going to energetically pursue this matter to ensure that services to the people in Mukono are not compromised or paralysed. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, honourable members. You will notice that I extended the time because there was one Wednesday that we did not have the Prime Minister. Therefore, I thought I should begin getting some time to make up for that. Thank you very much.

MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE ON THE ENTITIES WITH DISCLAIMER OF OPINION

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I already proposed this motion for your debate and the debate starts now. Each member will take three minutes. Let us start. If there is no debate, I can put the question.

**MR NANDALA-MAFABI:** Mr Speaker, I have a procedural issue. We got the reports yesterday and one of the reports has 318 pages and the other has 179 pages. They are all issues of financial matters.

Mr Speaker, I beg your indulgence that we continue analysing them for a few more days and that you may not only allow us three minutes but five to 10 minutes so that we are able to digest them because this is about financial mismanagement. Therefore, I beg for your indulgence that you allow us one or two days. Last night, I tried to read and I stopped on page 47 to sleep –(*Laughter*). Therefore, it may take me about five or seven days to be able to finish. It depends on my –

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, is it the consensus of the House that we further defer debate on this subject and that applies to item No. 6?

**MR KASSIANO WADRI:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Following up from what hon. Nandala-Mafabi has said and bearing in mind that these two reports have some crosscutting issues of financial management matters, is it also possible that when we next convene to consider these reports, we debate them together? It is because some of the issues are similar. When you are talking about mischarge, it is across the board. So, can we do this so that we save time by having two reports debated at a go and then we pronounce ourselves on the recommendations as made in them? That is to secure your guidance, Mr Speaker.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes, that will be proper. Unless there are objections to that, we will adopt that procedure so that it is only in the adoption of the report that we separate them but the debate can be together, if that is the consensus of the members.

**MR MAGYEZI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I totally I agree with that but I would like to make a request through you, Mr Speaker, to the Prime Minister. I have looked at these reports and there are critical issues for sector ministries to respond to. It is important that the line ministries are represent on the day we debate these reports.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**MS ALUM:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Unfortunately, yesterday some of us did not download the report. Around here, we have been trying to look for the report but we cannot see it. Therefore -

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Do you need technical assistance?

**MS ALUM:** Yes.

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is not for the Speaker; technical assistants can sort that out. (*Laughter*) Honourable members, if that is the consensus of the House, debate on the two reports is deferred to Tuesday. We will not handle them tomorrow; we will move them to Tuesday next week when we can have a comprehensive debate on these two reports.

There being no other business on the Order Paper, this House stands adjourned to tomorrow at 2 O’clock.

*(The House rose at 4.28 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 9July 2015 at 2.00 p.m.)*