



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIFTH SESSION - THIRD MEETING

TUESDAY, 17 MARCH 2026



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

FIFTH SESSION - 3RD SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Tuesday, 17 March 2026

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

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I want to welcome you to this afternoon's Sitting. In the last Sitting, we had a number of outstanding issues that were raised by Members.

However, I have not yet got any feedback from the ministries. Once I receive their response on what Members raised, I will accordingly place it on the Order Paper. So, do not say that your issues have been washed off.

Last Thursday, when we sat in this House, we had a debate on the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

The debate was done, and we were left with harmonisation on matters that were contentious, and that was on Clause 9 of the Bill. This morning, we had the harmonisation meeting, and we accordingly harmonised. We are ready to proceed with that effect.

Leader of the Opposition, Thursday may be Eid, and you are supposed to present the Alternative Policy Statement. So, in the circumstance that

it may be a public holiday, what do we do? Can we agree that you will first send the report to the committee, then on Tuesday, you will formally lay it on Table, for those Members to start working?

Honourable members, on rather a sad note, one of us, Hon. Enos Asiimwe of Kabula County, is currently nursing injuries sustained under very unfortunate incidents that happened last weekend. Let us keep praying for him for fast recovery. May the good Lord heal him fast. Find time and check on a colleague.

Once again, I want to welcome all of you to this Sitting. Over the weekend, I heard a lot of sentiments out there. People were calling us ignorant – that we are ignorant; that is why we were not passing the law. One thing I want to tell the people who were sending messages is that we are not ignorant. Whatever we did was for the good of the law.

So, if somebody is idle and they start sending messages that Members are ignorant, please, we are not. Thank you. Yes, LOP?

2.04

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to join you – I have heard you ask us to follow up on a colleague. What transpired is very unfortunate. Maybe we will reach out to him to understand the happenings around that and to commiserate with him.

Madam Speaker, you mentioned in your opening remarks – I was following virtually on my way here, thanks to technology – that there are statements that have been deferred. These are issues we raised, and we expected the Minister for Kampala to speak to us about floods and the Government's commitment to compensate traders. Then, Kiteezi – the commitment by the Government to compensate those people, which has not happened yet.

There was also a statement that we were expecting from the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs about the biometric voter verification kits that we spent billions of shillings on, which did not function. I did not get you clearly, Madam Speaker; is it all those statements? Are there particular ones? Just so we can know what we are to anticipate. We keep loading the Government with more work because that is their responsibility anyway. As they prepare to bring through those statements, with your indulgence, Madam Speaker, I think that the ministers for justice, internal affairs, and the Attorney-General should also help guide this House further. We make laws in this Parliament, but many times these are flouted.

Article 23 of our Constitution provides for protection of personal liberty. Article 24, which was made here even before we came, prohibits cruel and inhumane treatment, but we still see the same continue to happen, Madam Speaker.

The mode of arrest – what the Government calls arrest but is kidnap – continues to happen. We do not understand why these things keep happening. We will not stop talking about them, especially here, because these laws are made here, and this is the space that we have to use.

Madam Speaker, last Thursday, the home of the personal assistant to Hon. Kyagulanyi Ssentamu was raided by UPDF officers. They were in uniform, and one of them identified himself with an identity card as SFC. They were looking for this gentleman; he is called Najja Sheriff but they did not find him there. I am told they were also looking for Hon. Kyagulanyi; obviously, he was not there. They

picked up this gentleman's wife, called Nattabi Fauzia.

That was last Thursday. The little children were left in the home alone; their mother was taken away. Up to now, Madam Speaker, we do not know where this young lady is. This is wrong. You see, we keep telling the Government that if you are interested in anybody in this country, the law is at your expansive availability. Do summon people. However, when you go and pick up people, and you do not take them to gazetted detention facilities, it is a problem, and this cuts across.

Madam Speaker, we were here when one of our colleagues, Hon. Paul Akamba, who belongs to the NRM, was equally abducted. For days, his family and lawyers did not know where he was. This is wrong. Forget that it is happening to NUP. It can happen to anybody else, as it happened to Hon. Paul Akamba.

We must set these standards because the laws are passed here. If you are interested in somebody, summon them. When they fail to show up, that I cannot defend. Even as a lawyer, if somebody is summoned and they do not show up, I will not defend somebody who is picked up when they were summoned, and they did not show up.

If they summon you and you fail to show up, then they will come for you somehow. However, if somebody has not been summoned at all: You go and pick them from their home, and for days nobody knows where they are, lawyers do not know where to start from, family does not know either; it is wrong.

The Government must stop this behaviour. If you are interested in people, summon them properly so they can show up. I hope that the ministers for internal affairs, justice, and the Attorney-General can talk to us, as Parliament. Are these laws irrelevant? Has the Constitution been torpedoed? That means even this Parliament is irrelevant because it passes laws.

Finally, Madam Speaker, this Parliament appropriated funds to the Electoral Commission

for its operations during the just-concluded election. We were here; we quarrelled, and some of us opposed several allocations, but the majority had the day.

We have learned that police officers who guarded presidential candidates have not received their allowances to date. The Deputy IGP appeared before the Public Accounts Committee last week and said, “Yes, I have also learned that those officers have not been given their allowances, but the Electoral Commission is the one in charge.”

Therefore, can we know from the Government – good enough, the Minister of Finance is here; did the Electoral Commission not get all of this money? They delivered on their duty; they should be paid.

If anything, what we see nowadays is that they are being hounded. They are being arrested and some have been dismissed from the police force, specifically those who were guarding Hon. Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu. For what? Doing their job? You do not give them their allowances, which they are entitled to; then you arrest them, and you dismiss them from the force. It is wrong. When people have worked, they need to be paid. That money was passed here, Madam Speaker. I think it is important that we get to understand from the Government what happened. Did somebody take this money?

Madam Speaker, I will allow information from senior counsel. Regarding the alternative ministerial policy statements, we are ready to begin laying them even tomorrow. That is how effective we are as the Opposition. We request that you put us on the Order Paper; tomorrow we shall be here.

THE SPEAKER: That is how effective you have become.

MR SSENYONYI: That is how effective we have always been. I mean, last year we were here, and we laid in good time, Madam Speaker, and the *Hansard* can bear us witness. Even this time round, we are ready, way ahead of time.

THE SPEAKER: Do you have them ready?

MR SSENYONYI: Madam Speaker, kindly put us on the Order Paper tomorrow, we shall be here. We are very ready.

Kindly take the information from counsel.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Attorney-General, he is talking about the arrests of people. Could you repeat what you said briefly about the arrest?

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was emphasising the imperativeness to follow the law in our country. The Attorney-General was walking in; he is very well-schooled in the law. I quoted Article 23 of the Constitution of Uganda, which provides for the protection of personal liberty. I quoted Article 24 of our Constitution, which prohibits cruel and inhumane treatment and so on. However, we continue to see the same happening; people continue to be abducted.

There is a young lady called Fauzia Nattabi; she is the wife to the personal assistant of Hon. Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu. The home of this personal assistant was raided by men in the uniform of the Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF). One of them identified himself as a Special Forces Command Officer with his identity card. They asked where this gentleman was – he is called Najja Sharif Ssenyonjo.

The wife said she was not too sure where he was right then, and they took her. That was last Thursday. They left the little children unattended. Up to now, we do not know where this young lady is. That is what I have been emphasising; it is wrong. I do not know what the Attorney-General is going to explain to us but these issues are problematic, because it can happen to anybody regardless of where you belong.

I have said that if the Government is interested in anybody, please do issue us a summons and say, “Joel Ssenyonyi, we require you tomorrow at this police station, at the Criminal Intelligence and Investigations Directorate

(CIID) Headquarters, at 9.00 a.m.” I will be there at 8:30 a.m. because I am a law-abiding citizen. However, this business of picking up people and then not being able to account for them for days, is wrong. It has to stop, because otherwise it is going to eat up – *(Member timed out.)*

THE SPEAKER: Okay. Honourable Attorney-General, you have heard.

2.14

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have heard. I will confer with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and find out what the issue is.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ssewungu?

2.14

MR JOSEPH SSEWUNGU (NUP, Kalungu West County, Kalungu): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for your communication, but there is a matter I wanted to address again to this House, through you; about fire gutting markets. Yesterday, there was another challenge in Kampala; Katwe Market was gutted by fire. We want to know what exactly is happening. Many people are constructing storeyed buildings in Kampala; do they have water hydrants? How do you deal with this challenge? When we had fire gutting schools, the Ministry of Education and Sports issued many directives on schools having fire extinguishers, and indeed, this solved some problems. However, these people continue to cry out to the Government for help, but we are not getting reliable information from the Government.

Can we know what is happening in Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA)? A lot of markets are catching fire, and people are losing a lot of property and money. What can be done in the instant case? Madam Speaker, as we speak now, owners of these markets are putting their structures back in place. What can KCCA do to control fires? The best solution is to install water hydrants in several locations. We need to get a status report –

THE SPEAKER: You have actually come out with a solution. Now that you are the House that does appropriation, we should budget for that.

MR SSEWUNGU: Madam Speaker, most obliged, but could we get some report about the challenges we are facing? Even Jinja City had the same issue recently. I think it was the Jinja Market.

THE SPEAKER: I refer you to the Committee on Presidential Affairs. The challenges that are affecting KCCA are in that report. If we can address those challenges, we will be able to resolve most of these things. All the same, Government, you need to take note of what Hon. Ssewungu is talking about.

2.16

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will definitely take this up with the ministry for Kampala and ask them to make a report to Parliament.

2.17

DR EUNICE APIO (UPC, Oyam County North, Oyam): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance concerning the devastating windstorm destruction of entire classroom blocks at Ototong Primary School over the weekend of the 14th of March this year.

Madam Speaker, this destruction has left almost 1,300 learners without safe, adequate learning spaces, as the roofs have all been blown off. Our prayer is that the Government, through the Office of the Prime Minister, provide temporary learning spaces, such as tents or tarpaulins, to ensure that learners can continue attending school. We also request about 400 pieces of iron sheets to re-roof the classroom blocks. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Have you got the disaster report from the district?

DR APIO: Yes, Madam Speaker. I will submit it to the Office of the Prime Minister. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Government?

2.16

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will follow up with the honourable member, obtain this report, and ensure it is delivered to the Office of the Prime Minister.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item. Yes?

2.18

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Madam Speaker, I did not want to come back to this issue, but now that the Attorney-General is taking note to follow up with KCCA on the matter that has been raised by Hon. Ssewungu about fires, I wanted to tether this element.

We saw a demolition of part of Owino market – St Balikuddembe Market. KCCA went there – the leadership – and they said “We have arrested those who were participating in the breaking of a part of a building.” A few days later, KCCA went back and they said, “These people did not demolish in a very good way; so, let us finish the demolition.” (*Laughter*) They said, “Let us now raze the entire building,” and so people have been reaching out to us, saying, “Do help us.” I think the minister for Kampala needs to tie that into the report she is going to bring so that we get clarity. There is a lot of confusion.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR SSENYONYI: Madam Speaker, with your permission, allow 30-second information from the Shadow Minister for Kampala and the Kampala Lord Mayor-elect.

MR BALIMWEZO: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I personally visited the site at night before the demolition. The affected people told me that the Owino market master, who represents the Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA), had warned them to vacate, saying they would be evicted.

When I called the Executive Director (ED), her phone was off. I later called the Deputy

Executive Director, who told me they had no arrangements to evict the vendors because they were chasing the illegal street vendors into the gazetted markets. Therefore, they had no reason whatsoever to evict people from the markets. Unfortunately, it was that very night that the demolition took place. It is sad to say that we lost two lives there.

We need a thorough report from the minister. Madam Speaker, it would perhaps be better for you to constitute a committee to investigate the matter, as it is serious. I called the Executive Director, who later told me that she had given a demolition order or permit to the developer. At first, the developer was not known. Everyone was running away from that act.

Madam Speaker, don't you think that we need to constitute a committee of Parliament to investigate that matter?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I am aware that KCCA is appearing before the Public Accounts Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises (PAC-COSASE) tomorrow. Most of those issues must be handled by the chairperson and the committee. I see a number of COSASE committee members here; interrogate KCCA on those matters and report back.

We already have a committee of COSASE handling KCCA, so it will not be good for us to form another committee.

2.22

MR DENES SEKABIRA (NUP, Katikamu County North, Luwero): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have risen on a matter of national importance concerning our health sector. Between 2022 and 2025, the graduate nurses and midwives at the extension level, specifically those progressing from a certificate to a diploma and from a diploma to a bachelor's degree. The government did not allocate funds for their placement and, as a result, waived the placement.

To date, they have not been issued practising licences, and by law, they cannot practice anywhere in this country. I pray that the

Government expedites the coordination among its other organs and releases these licences for these Ugandans.

Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Denes, we are in the budgeting process, and the sectoral committees are sitting. Go to the Committee on Health, bring up that issue, and it will be resolved. Next item.

LAYING OF PAPERS

A) FORENSIC AUDIT REPORT INTO THE ALLEGED MISAPPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF KOLOLO SEED SECONDARY SCHOOL – MARACHA DISTRICT

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, Article 163(3)(a) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and Section 13(1)(a) of the National Audit Act, 2008 mandate the Auditor-General to audit and report on the public accounts of Uganda. Pursuant to Rule 188(4) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, I will invite the Parliamentary Commissioner to lay it on the Table.

2.24

MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table the Forensic Audit Report into the Alleged Misappropriation of Funds for the Construction of Kololo Seed Secondary School – Maracha District.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The report is referred to the relevant committee.

B) REPORT OF THE UGANDA DELEGATION TO THE 54TH COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION (CPA) AFRICA REGIONAL CONFERENCE HELD IN BANJUL, THE GAMBIA, 10TH TO 16TH AUGUST 2025

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, Rule 34 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament requires parliamentary delegations abroad to

report back within 14 days of coming back. Although we have passed the 14 days, Hon. Elijah Okupa is ready to give us a brief.

2.25

MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere): Thank you, Madam Speaker. As you have stated, in compliance with Rule 34(1) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of Uganda, allow me to lay a report of the Uganda delegation to the 54th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Africa Regional Conference held in Banjul, The Gambia, between 10 to 16 of August 2025.

The theme of the conference was “Strengthening democratic governance and resilience in Africa, tackling conflicts, economic shocks and climate risks.”

Madam Speaker, the list of the Members who attended is attached. The resolutions and the recommendations are here in this report.

Allow me to lay the report on the Table.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Elijah. Pursuant to Rule 34(3) of the Rules of Procedure, we will deposit that report in the library. You can get and read it anytime you want. We will schedule a date for a debate later.

C) REPORT OF THE UGANDAN DELEGATION TO THE 68TH COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE (CPC), BRIDGETOWN, BARBADOS, 5TH TO 12TH OCTOBER 2025

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Elijah?

2.28

MR ELIJAH OKUPA (Independent, Kasilo County, Serere): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Again, as per Rule 34(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Uganda, allow me to lay on the Table a report of the Ugandan delegation to the 68th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference – an annual conference – held in Bridgetown, Barbados, between 5 and 12 October 2025. The list of Members who represented the Uganda Parliament is attached.

The theme of the conference was “The Commonwealth; a Global Partner.” The resolutions and recommendations are included in this report.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you for visiting our colleague, a member of the CPA Uganda Branch, at the hospital yesterday. He is also the treasurer of the CPA-Africa Region. Honourable colleagues, when you get time, please check on Hon. Enos Asiimwe at the International Hospital Kampala (IHK). There is an unfortunate incident that happened to him. For Members who have just come in, the Speaker had reported in her communication that he was attacked. We thank God that he is alive and recovering.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Elijah. Pursuant to Rule 34(3) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, we will still deposit this with the parliamentary Library and assign a date for debate to complete it.

D) VALUE FOR MONEY AUDIT REPORT
ON:

I) THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
SOLAR-POWERED WATER SUPPLY
AND IRRIGATION SYSTEMS BY
THE MINISTRY OF WATER AND
ENVIRONMENT

2.30

MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the report of the Auditor-General on the Implementation of Solar-powered Water Supply and Irrigation Systems by the Ministry of Water and Environment.

I beg to lay the report on Table.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Pursuant to Rule 180(3) and (4) of the Rules of Procedure, the report is referred to the Committee on Public Accounts (Central Government).

II) VALUE-FOR-MONEY AUDIT REPORT
ON THE MANAGEMENT OF REMAND
HOMES AND THE REHABILITATION
CENTRE BY THE MINISTRY OF
GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT

THE SPEAKER: Commissioner?

2.32

MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the report of the Auditor-General on the Management of Remand Homes and Rehabilitation Centres by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. I beg to lay the report on the Table.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Pursuant to Rule 180(3) and (4) of the Rules of Procedure, the report is referred to the Public Accounts on Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises (COSASE).

III) THE MONITORING AND
ENFORCEMENT OF NOISE POLLUTION
STANDARDS BY THE NATIONAL
ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY AND SELECTED CITIES

THE SPEAKER: Commissioner?

2.33

MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the report on value-for-money audit on Monitoring and Enforcement of Noise Pollution Standards by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and Selected Cities. I beg to lay the report.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Pursuant to Rule 180(3) and (4) of the Rules of Procedure, the report is referred to the Committee on Public Accounts (Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises) – PAC COSASE.

IV) VALUE-FOR-MONEY AUDIT REPORT
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAND
ADMINISTRATION BY THE MINISTRY
OF LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN
DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE
MINISTRY ZONAL OFFICES

THE SPEAKER: Commissioner?

2.35

MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the Auditor-General's report on the Implementation of Land Administration by the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development Through the Ministry's Zonal Offices. I beg to lay.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Pursuant to Rule 180(3) and (4) of the Rules of Procedure, the report is referred to the Committee on Public Accounts (Central Government).

V) VALUE-FOR-MONEY AUDIT
REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF
THE BUSINESS REGISTRATION
AND LICENSING AND TOURISM
COMPETITIVENESS DEVELOPMENT
INTERVENTIONS UNDER THE
COMPETITIVENESS AND ENTERPRISE
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

THE SPEAKER: Commissioner?

2.36

MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the report on the evaluation of the Business Registration and Licensing and Tourism Competitiveness Development Interventions Under the Competitiveness and Enterprise Development Project. I beg to lay the report on Table.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Referred to the committee on Public Accounts (Central Government).

BILLS
SECOND READING

THE COPYRIGHT AND NEIGHBOURING
RIGHTS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, you recall that last week on Thursday, 12 March 2026, the House stood over the debate on the motion for the second reading of the Bill, pending clarifications of the contentious issues arising out of Clause 9, which is the gist of this Bill.

As I said before, we had clarification on that clause. However, I will allow the debate to continue, and then that clarification will be made when we reach the committee stage.

I want to reiterate this: Nobody should imagine that we did not want to pass the Bill. It is also not prudent for people to sit wherever they sit and start saying we, Members of Parliament, are ignorant; we are not ignorant. We are here to work for the public.

The debate is open. Yes, Hon. Christine? (*Hon. David Kabanda rose*) Yes, point of procedure.

MR DAVID KABANDA: Madam Speaker, thank you so much. You just mentioned in your communication that, yes, indeed, the House debated that report and was supposed to proceed to the committee stage. Are we therefore proceeding well when we say we are going back to the debate rather than going straight to the committee stage?

THE SPEAKER: I said, we are continuing with the debate. Hon. Christine?

2.37

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Madam Speaker, thank you very much. Actually, it is very important that we continue the debate so that the public can see and hear the different thoughts shared.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Christine, is that in the report?

MS KAAAYA: Madam Speaker, I am discussing Clause 9 of the committee report.

THE SPEAKER: I have said that Clause 9 will be discussed at the committee stage.

MS KAAAYA: Yes, Madam Speaker, I was building my submission. I am saying that based on the report, we needed to profile the different stakeholders. For example, when you look at the upcoming and the already established, the report does not bring out the difference in the interests of these two groups and the expiry of the consideration of the different interests.

This did not come out clearly in the report. Where certain interests have an expiry date, this is a consideration for that period of time. I still emphasise that the freedom to decide when something is made public, and the public's freedom to enjoy something produced for the public, are also missing.

To what extent should the public enjoy what you have put forward, particularly once you have made it available? If, as a matter of right, you did not want the public to enjoy it at all, then to what extent should the public be given that freedom to enjoy what you have put on the table? That is still a question from the report. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, the Attorney-General?

2.39

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the honourable member for the question. I will just make this analogy: I manufacture a car for the purpose of selling it. However, because I manufactured it for the public to use, we cannot argue that the public should be able to access that car without paying for it. This copyright is that property; it is what the artist has made. He has made it for the public to use it, but he has made it for the purpose of gaining from it.

This law has provided the instances of how you could use it; if you want to enter into an

agreement with the artiste, you can do so, and the artist could give you time, and there are limits – 20 years, 15 years – all those are provided for in the Act.

The public's right to use the artiste's works is regulated by law. It is not that when they produce the music, you are at liberty to use it for your commercial benefit without them benefitting from it.

Yes, it is provided for. If you want to use it, you can agree with them. If you want to sell it, you can also agree with them on how to do so. We need to look at it this way; this copyright is the property of the artiste and you would like to use it. How do you want to use the property?

THE SPEAKER: This is a House; we do not clap, please.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: The copyright law is structured in a way that it is alive to the fact that the artiste would like to sell that product. But how do they sell that product to the public? That is what the law is trying to regulate.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Christine, you also have an option; if you do not want to enjoy the product, you may choose not to, but if you do, you must pay the owner. Do you get it? Hon. Tebandeke?

2.41

MR CHARLES TEBANDEKE (NUP, Bbale County, Kayunga): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I happen to be a gospel artiste. *(Laughter)* I have interacted several times with many upcoming gospel artistes, including pastors who are ministers, over the same issue.

I am not certain whether all stakeholders were sufficiently consulted to incorporate their input into this Bill, yet it is for public consumption.

According to Luke chapter 6 verse 38 – if you can permit me to read it verbatim –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Tebandeke, you are only speculating. There was an advert that was

even paid for by the Parliament of Uganda, inviting everyone to come and share their views.

When you look at the report, it is unfortunate that when they read it, you were not here – it mentioned all the people who came here. If somebody missed out, we cannot go and pick them up from their homes to come and give their views. We will take the views that were given and consider the Bill. We are not going to keep this Bill forever.

Honourable members, I put the question that the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2025, be read the second time.

(Question put and agreed to.)

BILLS COMMITTEE STAGE

THE COPYRIGHT AND NEIGHBOURING RIGHTS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

2.44

Clause 1

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (Mr Stephen Baka): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The committee proposes amendments to Clause 1 as follows:

Clause 1 is amended in paragraph 1(a) as follows:

- (i) In the definition of “broadcasting”, by inserting immediately before the word “wireless”, the word “wire or –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Chairperson, can we stand over Clause 1, in case we get something else to define?

MR BAKA: Thank you.

Clause 2

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Clause 2 stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 2, agreed to.

Clause 3, agreed to.

New Clause

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, we have an insertion of a new clause, immediately after Clause 3.

The Bill is amended by inserting, immediately after Clause 3, the following:

“Insertion of Section 4A in the principal Act.

The principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after Clause 3, the following:

“4A Artificial intelligence work to be protected.

(1) Works generated by an artificial intelligence system shall be eligible for copyright protection if the works:

- a) Has been supervised, directed or substantially modified by a natural person; and
- b) Is original.

(2) A developer or user who intends to develop any work using an artificial intelligence system shall:

- (a) Obtain the consent of the author of the work to be used in training dataset; and
- (b) Maintain publicly accessible records of the general categories and sources of content used in training dataset.

(3) A developer shall implement technical safeguards to prevent the reproduction of training data and shall provide clear usage guidelines to users for the use of artificial intelligence tools;

(4) The minister may, by statutory instrument:

- a) Regulate the use of copyright works in artificial intelligence systems; and
- b) Prescribe the criteria to be applied to works generated using artificial intelligence systems to determine whether the work is original.

The justification, Madam Chairperson, is:

- i) To provide for works which are eligible for copyright protection and the use of copyright material in artificial intelligence systems; and
- ii) To empower the minister to prescribe the criteria to be applied to works generated using artificial intelligence systems to determine whether the work is original.”

I beg to move, Madam Chairperson.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, we propose that the particular insertion be dropped by the House.

Madam Chairperson, AI is a tool used to generate protected work. This Act is not intended to regulate tools. For example, a musician uses an organ, drum, and a long drum. This Act is not about the tools that you use to generate the works; it is about the works themselves.

An AI policy is much wider. The Government is currently working on one on how to regulate and guide people on its use. But to say that we should attach a certain value to how the copyright was made would not be appropriate. We propose that this amendment be dropped.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Baka, what the Attorney-General is saying is correct.

MR BAKA: Do you want to allow debate on this? *(Laughter)* Madam Chairperson, considering that we have made a recommendation –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Do you have any law on AI?

MR BAKA: We have made a recommendation in our report that the Government should pick –

THE CHAIRPERSON: No, I am asking if you have a law that you can refer to on AI or the one you are borrowing from?

MR BAKA: No, we received the –

THE CHAIRPERSON: In the circumstance that you do not have, then just concede.

MR BAKA: Can I make a statement and conclude, and then you rule? I concur with the Attorney-General, for now, that the provisions relating to AI need to be looked into further. We made a recommendation to that effect that the Government should pick interest in AI matters and amend the Copyright Act further. Otherwise, for now, I concede.

Clause 4

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that clause 4 stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 4, agreed to.

Clause 5

THE CHAIRPERSON: Committee chairperson?

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, the committee proposes an amendment to Clause 5, which is Section 13 of the principal Act, in the following terms: Clause 5 is amended in paragraph (b) by substituting for subsection (4), the following:

“(4) A contract of assignment, licence, or transfer to do an act falling within a copyright shall be in writing”.

Justification

For completeness, to harmonise the provision with the headnote by including the assignment and transfer of a contract in the proposed subsection (4). I beg to move.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Yes, Attorney-General?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, we have no objection to that

proposed amendment. The import of it is that if you want to deal with an assignment or a licence on the use of any person's copyright, you can only do so by showing that you have a contract in writing. So, we concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I put the question that Clause 5 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 6

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, in Clause 6, the committee proposes to insert sections 13A and 13B in the principal Act. Therefore, Clause 6 will be amended by substituting the proposed Section 13A, with the following:

"13A. Reversion of economic rights in copyright to the author.

- (1) In a contract of assignment, license or transfer, there is an implied term that the economic rights in a copyright shall revert to the author—
 - (a) upon the termination of the contract of assignment, licence, or transfer;
 - (b) upon the expiry of the term of the contract of assignment, license, or transfer;
 - (c) if the holder of the economic rights in the contract of assignment, licence, or transfer becomes insolvent or bankrupt and can no longer meet the contract obligations to the author;
 - (d) where the contract of assignment, licence, or transfer covers the right of publication, the work goes out of print or becomes unavailable for a reasonable time;
 - (e) five years before the expiry of the duration of the protection of the copyright works under this Act; or
 - (f) for any other reason as may be prescribed by the minister, by statutory instrument.

- (2) The minister may, by statutory instrument, prescribe the procedure for reverting

the assignment, licence or transfer of copyright to the author.

- (b) in section 13B(1) -
 - (i) in the proposed paragraphs (a) and (b), by deleting the word "effective" wherever the word appears in the provision;
 - (ii) in the proposed paragraph (b), by inserting immediately after the word "technological" wherever it appears, with the word "protection".

Justification

- i) The proposed 13A is replaced since the provision as proposed in the Bill, will frustrate freedom of contract and unlawfully deprive copyright owners of the full utilisation of their rights;
- ii) To adopt international best practices that allow the reversion of the rights of an author under specific circumstances;
- iii) To empower authors who have assigned their rights in a copyright work for the life of the copyright prior to the commencement of the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act, to claim back their rights five years before the statutory protection of the rights;
- iv) The amendments proposed in 13B are intended to -
 - a) Delete the word "effective" since the word is redundant and subjective; and
 - b) To insert the word "protection" in order to harmonise the provision with the usage of the word under the World Intellectual Property framework. I beg to move.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, Attorney-General?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, the proposed replacement of clause 13A by the committee will not work in the best interest of the author. The purpose of

the proposal made by the Government is that you cannot have a copyright on any person's works for a period longer than 20 years and five years before that, the owner of the copyright is at liberty to come and take this property back.

What this clause is doing is mixing up the consequence of termination with the right for reversion. Therefore, what we are discussing is the right of the author to get their works back after 20 years, and you cannot have a copyright for 40 years. It can only be a maximum of 20 years. You can write another contract but the purpose of this was to ensure that if an author, for example, in year one, entered into a contract for a long period, which was unfair because of the bargaining power, after some time, they can get benefit back of their product.

We propose that this proposal be dropped and Clause 6 stands part of the Bill as proposed by the Government. I submit.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, Hon. Ssewungu?

MRSSEWUNGU: I want the Attorney-General together with the committee chairperson to guide me on this: In copyright law, I compose my song and a certain man wants to buy my album – remember sometime back there was no TikTok or other social media platforms – and this man, for example, Kasiwukira (may his soul rest in peace), bought my music. By that time, I did not have the capacity to record a video out of my music but he has the right over the song – I do not know whether the Attorney-General is following what I am saying; now, it is my song because I composed it but he has been selling my music, paid me and I got my money. But now I am recording a video that I am also going to sell. I want to see how this musician is protected under that direction because he is putting his music on TikTok and/or YouTube, which were not present at that particular time. Now, there are advantages he is using to sell and get money, which were not available by the other person who had bought the copyright by that time. Can you help me get that particular clause?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Ssewungu, first of all, I want you to know the heading of the clause – “Reversal of copyright to an author” – let us discuss according to that. We are looking at when and how you reverse it. Let us be systematic and move as per the clause. Okay? I do not want the work to be distorted on the *Hansard*. Are you conceding to what the Attorney-General has said?

MR BAKA: Yes, what we seek to achieve is to have the reversionary interests of the author protected. If you look at the Attorney-General's contention, you notice that it does not water down that intended purpose; that the reversionary interests of the author are protected. I concede to that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Clause 6 stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 6, agreed to.

Clause 7

MR BAKA: Clause 7 is amended in paragraph (b), in the proposed paragraph (1), by inserting immediately after the word “museum”, the words “for use by a beneficiary person, other than for commercial use.”

The justification is that the amendment will protect the rights owners' interests by limiting access to their works by beneficiary persons, as required in the Marrakesh Treaty, to facilitate access to published works by persons who are blind, visually impaired, or otherwise print disabled.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, the import of the provisions in clause 7, amending Section 14 of the principal Act, is discussing the fair use of works protected by the copyright. The purpose of this provision is to allow the use of copyrights for educational, institutional, and library purposes, not for commercial purposes. When you say, “for use by a beneficiary person other than for commercial use”, you are limiting that to only

the beneficiary person. The beneficiary must be a person who is a beneficiary under a licence, contract, or similar arrangement.

Therefore, we need to protect the rights of the owners and also observe fair use of these products. That is why Clause 14(2) is introduced. We propose that the provision in Clause 7, in relation to amendment Section 14(b)(1) be left to read: “The work is used in an online learning environment by an education institution, library, archive, or museum”, but not for the beneficiary person or for commercial use.

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, the Attorney-General should then explain how you protect access to published works by persons who are blind, visually impaired, or otherwise print disabled. How do you protect them?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Currently, when the Government is dealing with our education institutions, it takes into consideration all the needs of all the persons; even those who are visually impaired, or impaired in any other way, are provided for. Therefore, when you say, “for educational purposes”, it encompasses all the people in the education space.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General, (k) protects what he is talking about.

MR BAKA: Fair enough; I am satisfied.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Read part (k), of the Bill; it protects that.

MR BAKA: I concede. *(Laughter)*

THE CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General, for avoidance of doubt, just restructure your statement on the amendment.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, we propose that Clause 7 of the Bill stands as it is in the Bill currently and that the proposal made by the committee should not be adopted because Clause 14 properly caters for all educational purposes, for which the copyright could be used. I beg to submit.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Clause 7 stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 7, agreed to.

Clause 8

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, the committee proposes amendments to Clause 8, which is an amendment to Sections 14 and 14B in the principal Act, in the following terms:

Clause 8 is amended in the proposed Section 14B (2) by inserting immediately after the word “found”, the words “identified or is unknown.”

The justification is to harmonise the provision with the definition of the phrase “orphan works” in Clause 1 of the Bill.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, yes, we do concede that the proposal as made by the committee widens the scope of orphan works and clarifies it as defined in Clause 1. We concede to the amendment by the committee.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Clause 8 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 8, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9

THE CHAIRPERSON: Clause 9—honourable members, I am in receipt of a letter from one of the Members, Hon. Kabanda, pursuant to Rule 140(4) of the Rules of Procedure, on the amendment of Clause 9. I invite Hon. Kabanda to move his amendment.

MR DAVID KABANDA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson, for allowing me to make some amendments on Clause 9. As you have said, I wrote to you on 9 March 2026, notifying you about my intentions to move an amendment to

Clause 9 of the Bill pursuant to Rule 140(4) of the Rules of Procedure.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Please go ahead.

MR DAVID KABANDA: I was unable to submit to the committee because by the time the Bill was under consideration, I was away on official duty. I beg to move the following amendments to Clause 9 of this Bill.

The first is that Clause 9 be substituted for the following:

“Section 30 of the principal Act is amended by substituting for:

Subsection (1) by the following –

“(1) Where a sound recording or audio-visual fixation published for commercial advertisement purposes, or a reproduction of that sound recording or audio-visual fixation is used directly or indirectly for broadcasting or other communication to the public or is publicly performed, unless otherwise agreed, an equitable remuneration determined by the minister, in consultation with the registrar and relevant stakeholders, for the performer or performers and the producer of the sound recording or audio-visual fixation shall be paid by the user to the author for every use of the work.

(b) by inserting immediately after subsection (1) the following-

i. The remuneration referred to in subsection (1) shall be paid through a payment system established under the National Payments Systems Act.

ii. The registrar shall, for purposes of this section, monitor the use of a sound recording or audio-visual fixation for commercial advertisement purposes or for broadcasting or other communication to the public and send periodical reports to the minister.

iii. The minister may in consultation with the registrar and any relevant stakeholders,

by statutory instrument, prescribe the procedures for collecting, distributing and receiving royalties and other entitlements from use of copyright or neighbouring rights.”

Justification

To streamline the procedure for collection, payment and distribution of royalties to the author.

I beg to amend.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Committee chairperson?

MR BAKA: The committee did not propose any amendment to this clause because the purpose of the clause was to require any person or entity who uses copyrighted materials for commercial purposes to pay a levy. This will enhance revenues for our creatives. It will expand the industry and help to energise and enhance the work of our creatives. That purpose has not been lost in this amendment.

What I have noticed is that the amendment is just streamlining who is going to determine the equitable payments because “equitable” is subjective. Therefore, to avoid the ambiguities around the issue of equitable payments, this amendment clears that. It says “The minister, in consultation with the Registrar-General and stakeholders” – the stakeholders being the creative, through their CMOs.

The other one was on how the payments will be done through a system that is well known to us – through the banks – such that you do not just go to a radio station or an entity and you are given money in a bag. The money should go through a system that is established.

Therefore, I concur with the amendment; it does not change the substance of the clause. So, as a committee, we are okay with it.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Attorney-General?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Upon receipt of your notification of this amendment, we did have a chance to consider it and even discussed with the stakeholders who were available. We have no objection to this amendment.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I put the question that Clause 9 be amended as proposed by Hon. Kabanda, agreed to by the chairperson of the committee, and confirmed by the Attorney-General.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 9, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 10, agreed to.

Clause 11

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, for Clause 11, the committee proposes amendments –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Before you go to Clause 11, let me, first, introduce our guests, who are up there. We have:

1. Edrisah Kenzo Musuuza;
2. Sheebah Karungi;
3. Pius Pallaso Mayanja;
4. Joseph Mayanja – Chameleone;
5. Moses Ssali;
6. Martin Muhumuza;
7. Michael Kalumba;
8. Lilian Mbabazi;
9. Lord Fred Sebatta;
10. Alex Lokuten;
11. Cindy Sanyu;
12. Daniel Kazibwe (Ragga Dee);
13. Pastor Wilson Bugembe – where is the pastor?
14. Martin Musoke;
15. Joanita Kawalya;
16. Matthew Nabwiiso;
17. Nathan Magoola;
18. Richard Kasendwa;
19. Anne Kansiime;
20. Annet Nandujja;
21. Asha Naava Zziwa;

22. Malcolm Ssewanyana;
23. Raymond Kaiza;
24. Richard Mugisha;
25. Shine Nyonyoozi;
26. Edward Okuni;
27. Sulaiman Lwanga;
28. Halima Namakula;
29. Mzee Idi Masaba;
30. Ronald Mayinja;
31. Charles Musoke;
32. Mahmood Habib Kyeyune;
33. Rhoan Nkalubo;
34. Edris Lubega;
35. Jane Kyakyimwa;
36. Ezra Agaba;
37. Exodus;
38. Wesly King;
39. Emrice;
40. Bruno K;
41. Abia Komugisha;
42. Farouk Ssendijja;
43. Raa Muyinda;
44. Fanta Busoga;
45. Kikabi Vicent; and
46. Kironde VD.

You are all welcome. Join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

We also have our own; Hon. Dr Hilderman, Hon. *Obangina* – Hon. Balaam and Hon. Chairman Orone. *(Laughter)* We also have Hon. Kayemba-Ssolo. *(Laughter)* You are all most welcome, and thank you for coming. *(Applause)* We also have Hon. Silo. *(Laughter)*

Honourable members, in the VIP Gallery, we have:

1. Hon. Margaret Etilu, Woman Member of Parliament-elect for Amuria District;
2. Hon. Emmanuel Baira, Bulambuli County MP-elect;
3. Hon. Agnes Khainza, Bududa District Woman MP-elect; and
4. Hon. Godfrey Wanyoto, Budadri West County MP-elect.

You are all most welcome, and thank you for coming. *(Applause)*

Clause 11

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, Clause 11 is an insertion of section 39A in the principal Act.

Clause 11 is amended in the proposed Section 39A -

(a) in Subsection (2),
(i) By substituting for paragraph (a), the following-

“(a) author, thirty per cent (30 per cent);

(ii) by inserting immediately after paragraph (a), the following -

“performer, thirty per cent (30 per cent);”

(b) By inserting immediately after subsection (2), the following new subsections:

“(i) The remuneration to be paid under subsection (2) shall be computed on the net revenue earned by the person exploiting the works of the author or a performer as a caller ring-back tone, after payment of any applicable taxes.

(ii) A contract for exploiting the works of the author or performer as a caller ring-back tone in existence before the commencement of this Act, shall continue in existence as if the same were made under this Act, except that the remuneration under the contract shall be the rate prescribed under subsection (2).”

Justification:

- i) To assign the author and performer separate entitlements since each has individual rights in the copyright over caller ring-back tones;
- ii) To extend the validity of contracts for caller ring-back tones and require the payment of rates prescribed under the Bill; and
- iii) To specify for clarity that the remuneration is based on the net revenue after tax. I beg to move.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Yes, Attorney-General?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We have no objection, principally, to the amendment, as it aligns with the Government’s policy to protect the creatives in the industry.

In line with the proposed amendment to Clause 9, we propose that the remuneration made under Clause 11, be paid through the payment system provided for under the National Payment Systems (NPA) Act.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Of course, consequential amendment.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Therefore, I am proposing that, consequent to the amendment in Clause 9, we amend Clause 11 to include that the payments made under this clause shall be made through the National Payment System as prescribed under the National Payment Systems Act. I beg to submit.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I put the question that Clause 9 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 9, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 11, as amended, agreed to

Clause 12, agreed to.

Clause 13, agreed to.

Clause 14, agreed to.

Clause 15, agreed to.

Clause 16, agreed to.

Clause 17

THE CHAIRPERSON: Clause 17 – Yes, committee chairperson?

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, Clause 17 is the insertion of Section 49A in the principal Act. Clause 17 is amended, in the proposed Section 49A, by substituting for subsection (4), the following:

“(4) The registrar shall not issue an order or notice for blocking, taking down or obstructing infringement content unless the owner of the copyright proves that an infringement of copyright works has occurred as required in Section 45.”

Justification

- i) To harmonise the proposed subsection (4) with Section 45 of the principal Act, which describes an infringement of copyright and neighbouring rights, is deemed to take place;
- ii) The certificate of ownership is not proof of infringement since it does not contain the copyright alleged to have been infringed upon; and
- iii) The proposed subsection (4) is amended since it has the effect of introducing mandatory registration of copyright works in contravention of the provisions of Section 3(1) and (2) of the principal Act and principles prescribed under the World Intellectual Property Organisation framework, which grants blanket protection to any copyright works without any formalities such as registration.

I beg to move, Madam Chairperson.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, we do appreciate the spirit that the committee raises here. However, a clear reading of the entire Clause 49 shows that there is a process that one must undertake before taking down of the works is concerned. However, I am concerned with the reading which says, “The registrar shall not issue an order or notice blocking, taking down, or obstructing of an infringing content unless the owner of the copyright proves that an infringement of the copyright works has occurred as required by Section 45.”

Madam Chairperson, the exercise of copyright activity is not necessarily one that should go

to court. Because if the owner of the works comes and says, “That person is using my work without my permission,” the registrar should be at liberty to take that down. However, if we start talking about proof, then we are saying we have to first go to court, how long is it going to take in court, etc? After all, the person who has put up the works, if they have a valid claim over those rights, can still have them enforced.

Therefore, I propose that the amendment proposed here places an onerous task on the owner of the copyright to prove infringement, yet all they need to say is that “I did not authorise you to use my works.” The provision, as we have it here, covers that.

I propose that the proposed amendment be dropped, and Clause 17 of the Bill does stand as proposed.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Chairperson?

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, the original Clause 17 requires the registrar to do an obstruction and take down orders, when a copyright owner has presented a certificate of registration. We are saying that it is wrong because we have already rejected a certificate of registration earlier.

With the creatives, once one has a work that they have produced, their rights accrue upon publication of that work, not by registration. Therefore, if you leave here registration as a condition for the registrar to take down the works that have been infringed upon, then you are saying that the creatives must go and register their works, to which we are saying no, they do not have to register their work because as soon as you produce a work, the right accrues and you do not have to register.

Therefore, the only way out is for the rights owner to go and prove that they are the ones who produced that work, not a certificate of registration.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Can I find out: Does one have to register a copyright? (*Members rose*) - No, I am not asking you.

MR BAKA: You can register –

Clause 18, agreed to.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Not that “you can” but “you must” register.

Clause 19

MR BAKA: No, the right –

MR BAKA: In Clause 19, there is a proposal by the committee.

THE CHAIRPERSON: For the right, that is okay.

Clause 19 is amended by deleting paragraph (b).

MR BAKA: There are rights that accrue upon registration but whether I have registered or not, I am the copyright holder.

Justification

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, but as a creative –

i) The proposed subsection (3) is redundant in light of Section 45 of the principal Act which describes when an infringement of copyright and neighbouring rights is deemed to take place.

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, and whether I have registered, or not, I am protected under the law.

ii) The proposed subsection (3) is deleted since it has the effect of introducing mandatory registration of copyright works in contravention of the provisions of Section 3(1) and (2) of the principal Act, and Article 5(2) of the Berne Convention, and Article 20 of the World Intellectual Property Organisation Performances and Phonograms Treaty 1996, which the Bill seeks to domesticate, which prohibits the imposition of formalities on both the enjoyment and enforcement of copyright works.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Order.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, the honourable member is correct that once a creative produces his work, he has a right to that work. However, for one to benefit from the protections provided by the law, they must register. Because they will find it very difficult to tell someone that they are infringing your rights when they did not know they were your works. So, you need to register your rights in order for you to protect yourself under the law.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Baka, there is a right by virtue of creation. However, to protect that right, you must register that creation.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We propose that subclause (3) remains part of the Bill. Subclause (3), as proposed by the Government, is that the adequate evidence referred to in subsection (2) may include a certificate of registration.

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, I have seen flowers from up. The committee was intending to protect the creatives but I have seen the flowers for the Attorney-General, so I concede. *(Laughter)*

Madam Chairperson, the import of this provision is that the moment a creative produces a certificate of registration, that is adequate evidence that they are the owner of that copyright from the copyright registration. This proposal was being made in line with the proposal to amend Clause 16. However, since Clause 16 did not pass, we propose that Clause 3 of the principal Act do stand.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Clause 17 stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 17, agreed to.

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, after what we have agreed upon in the previous clause which was Clause 17, Clause 19 consequently has to remain as it was. Therefore, I concur with the Attorney-General.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Clause 19 stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 19, agreed to.

Clause 20

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, Clause 20 is a substitution of Section 56 of the principal Act.

Clause 20 is amended in the proposed Section 56 in the following terms:

- a) In subsection (1), by substituting for the words “a group of persons”, the words, “any thirty or more people”;
- b) In subsection (2), by inserting immediately after paragraph (a) the following new paragraphs -
“a copy of articles and rules of the collecting society,”
“a copy of the certificate of incorporation as a company limited by guarantee without share capital issued by the registrar of companies;”
- c) by substituting for subsection (3), the following -
“(3) The Registrar shall not register any two collecting societies in respect of the same bundle of rights and category of works.”

Justification

- i) To group the persons as used in the Bill is ambiguous and will force enforcement challenges since it is not certain as to how many people are required to establish a collecting society.
- ii) To harmonise the provision with Section 58 of the Act which requires a collecting society to have 30 people as a minimum.

iii) To require collecting societies to be incorporated by the Registrar of Companies and regulated by the Registrar of Copyright in order to separate the incorporation of collecting societies and the regulation of their operations.

iv) To require collecting societies to be not-for-profit organisations.

v) To restrict the registrar to only register not more than two collecting societies for each bundle of rights.

I beg to move, Madam Chairperson.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The committee proposes to amend Clause 20 by inserting immediately after “a group of persons”, the words, “any 30 or more people” who intend to operate a collecting society.

Madam Chairperson, these bundles of rights are different. You have musicians, artists – you now have new groups called TikTokers, YouTubers, you have bloggers, you have all manner of people. To say that they must be 30 to create a collecting society for a bundle of rights is wrong. This is because that means that if there are only three who do that activity, they cannot be paid.

We are saying that any group of persons who intend to operate will apply and register as long as the registrar shall not register more than one bundle of one group for each bundle of rights. Whether they are five, 10, or 100, that is one bundle of rights. Therefore, that proposal will create a challenge for the artists, especially if we want to write a law which is going to surpass time. Things could change.

Secondly, the provision proposed by the Government is that for you to register, you provide a copy of the constitution specifying the objects of the society as specified in Section 57. To ask them to provide a copy of the articles and rules of the collecting society, a copy of

the certificate of incorporation as a company limited by guarantee without share capital, by the registrar of companies, is duplicity. The moment they are registered and they have their constitution, let us allow them to take the form that they wish to take depending on the circumstances of their business.

Madam Chairperson, I propose that Clause 20 stands as part of the Bill without the amendment proposed by the committee.

I beg to submit.

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, this morning, while interacting with some members of the creatives in our consultation, this matter came up although we did not discuss it thoroughly. I had an opportunity to discuss it further with some of the members. Their ideas seemed to be in line with what the Attorney-General has just said.

Number one, having two collective management organisations in one bundle of rights, for example, for the musicians, if you had Uganda Performing Rights Society (UPRS) and then there is another one, it would be an extra cost to the entities –

THE CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Baka, why do you take so long to –? *(Laughter)* Please-

MR BAKA: The Chairperson is accusing me of taking a long time to finish. *(Laughter)* So the short of it is that the Attorney-General – The proposals are in line with the creatives that we had this morning discussing this matter and I concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question that Clause 20 stands part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 20, agreed to.

Clause 21

THE CHAIRPERSON: Chair?

MR BAKA: Madam Chair, Clause 21: The committee has a proposal to amend Clause 21 in paragraph (a) by inserting immediately after the proposed paragraph (ba), the following: “(bb) in consultation with its members to prescribe fees for accessing copyright works owned by its members”.

Justification

- i) To enable collection societies to set fees for accessing copyright works owned by its members.

THE CHAIRPERSON: The Attorney-General?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, we have no objection to that amendment. It enhances the proprietary rights of the members in those societies. I concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I put the question that Clause 21 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 21, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 22 agreed to.

Clause 23 agreed to.

Clause 24 agreed to.

Clause 25 agreed to.

Clause 26 agreed to.

Clause 27 agreed to.

Clause 28 agreed to.

Clause 29 agreed to.

Clause 30 agreed to.

Clause 31 agreed to.

Title

MR BAKA: In three, in the definition of often works, by inserting immediately after the word “found”, the words “or is unknown”.

Clause 1

THE CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Clause 1

MR BAKA: Thank you, Madam Chair. Clause 1: The committee proposes amendments as follows:

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, we have no objection to that proposed amendment.

In paragraph (a)(2) in the definition of broadcasting, by inserting immediately before the word “wireless”, the words “wire or”.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question to the amendment.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Chair. We will approve one by one. One definition at a time. Okay?

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Thank you, Madam Chair. In Clause 1, there was a proposed amendment to accessible format, which the committee did not question.

MR BAKA: And in three, Madam Chair, in the definition of sound recording, by inserting immediately after the word “thereof”, the words “whether as stand-alone fixation or incorporated or used in other media after the initial fixation”.

THE CHAIRPERSON: To access what?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Accessible format copy.

MR KIRYOWA: Madam Chairperson, sound recordings as provided in the Bill as proposed by the Government are a distinct category of work protected by the copyright. And, therefore, the addition here distorts that meaning. We propose that the definition of sound recording as proposed by the government Bill do stand as part of the Bill.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Then we have anonymous work. So, the third one is the proposal.

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

MR BAKA: For the third one, the proposal is in the definition of broadcasting by inserting immediately before the word “wireless”, the words “wire or”.

(Question put and agreed to.)

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, we concede to that proposed amendment that “wire or wireless” widens the definition of broadcasting.

MR BAKA: Madam Chair, four. In the definition of circumvent a technological protection measure by inserting the following phrase at the end of the provision, “without the authority of the copyright owner”.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I put the question to the amendment.

THE CHAIRPERSON: The Attorney-General?

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, we cannot possibly write a law to allow anyone to circumvent the law. So even the owner cannot be allowed to circumvent the

THE CHAIRPERSON: Next?

law. Therefore, I propose that the provision as stands in the Bill does remain.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Chair, concede.

MR BAKA: I think the Attorney-General has been quite reasonable.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Do you want to circumvent?

MR BAKA: We cannot allow anyone, including the owners; so, I concede.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. I put the question.

(Question put and agreed to.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Maybe we drop artificial intelligent (AI). AI is consequential.

MR BAKA: Five, by inserting the following definition in their appropriate order in the Bill. AI (artificial intelligent) works, means work generated by an artificial -

THE CHAIRPERSON: Please, drop it.

MR BAKA: Artificial intelligence system through human creative input, direction or supervision.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Drop it; it has collapsed.

MR BAKA: The Attorney-General will come and make a comment on it, then –

THE CHAIRPERSON: It collapses; it is consequential to –

MR BAKA: Consequentially. The next one is “collecting society”. It means an organisation approved and authorised by the registrar of copyright, which has its main object, or one of the main objects, the negotiating for collection and distribution of royalties and a granting of licences in respect of the use of copyright works or neighbouring rights.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Attorney-General?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, the Act itself - the body of the Act - already determines the object of a collecting society. It is in the body itself. Therefore, to define it here like this would conflict with the object already stated in the law. So, I propose that this be dropped.

MR BAKA: No harm, Madam Chair. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Next?

MR BAKA: The provision on artificial intelligence (AI).

THE CHAIRPERSON: Reprographic copying.

MR BAKA: Yes, the provision on AI is dropped in the amendment-In the definition section.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Next definition. Is that all you have?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Madam Chairperson, there was a provision under the definition of derivative works, to include work generated by artificial intelligence. That is also consequential amendment that is going to be dropped. It had been proposed by the committee.

The committee also proposes a provision for training dataset. This means the dataset, including copyright works, used to train an artificial intelligence model system.

This, again is a result of- as per the discussion that we had in respect to AI as a tool, we propose that that provision also be dropped.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

MR BAKA: Madam Chairperson, I missed that page in my report. I have been looking for it, but I could not find it. The import of our definition was to make it clearer; if in the view

of the Attorney-General, the matters are clear, I then have no problem; I drop it.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I put the question that Clause 1 be amended as proposed.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

The Title, agreed to.

MOTION FOR THE HOUSE TO RESUME

THE CHAIRPERSON: Honourable Minister?

3.51

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Madam Chairperson, I beg to move that the House do resume and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto. I beg to move.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I put the question that the House does resume, and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(The House resumed, the Speaker presiding)

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE OF
THE WHOLE HOUSE

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Minister?

3.52

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Madam Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of the whole House has considered “The Copyright and Neighbouring Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2025” and passed it with amendments.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

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

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Minister?

3.52

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the report from the Committee of the whole House be adopted.

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

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

BILLS
THIRD READING

THE COPYRIGHT AND NEIGHBOURING
RIGHTS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Minister?

3.53

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Dr Chris Baryomunsi): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill entitled, “The Copyright and Neighbouring Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2025” be read for the third time and do pass.

THE SPEAKER: I put the question that “The Copyright and Neighbouring Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2025” be read the third time and do pass.

(Question put and agreed to.)

A BILL FOR AN ACT TITLED, “THE COPYRIGHT AND NEIGHBOURING RIGHTS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2026”

THE SPEAKER: Title settled and the Bill passed. You can now say what you want to say. *(Applause)*

3.56

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Madam Speaker, it is one of those times that I get to congratulate the House on passing a Bill. This Bill was incidentally initiated by us on the Opposition side through our Shadow Minister for Arts, the Hon. Hillary Kiyaga, who is part of the committee. *(Applause)* The Government did take over the Bill as the law does allow, and here we are.

Let me say, you know, we pass many Bills here, and normally the problem is implementation. I have seen the artists very excited that the Bill has been passed. We are all excited that the Bill has been passed, but I hope we are not going to have run-ins when it comes to implementation; that is normally the problem. The Bills gather dust, they are not acted upon, and then the excitement ends up fading. I hope we do not get to that point.

That said, the old law of 2006 had regulations of 2010, which came through in 2010. We hope that there will be new regulations to actualise, because now this is an amended Bill, so we cannot rely on the 2010 regulations.

We hope that there will be regulations that will come through to harmonise and actualise some of the things because there was still some petty fogging over some clauses and so on, but the regulations help to remedy that. I hope that they will come through soon enough so that the actualisation of this new law happens.

With your permission, Madam Speaker, kindly allow a 30-second comment from the shadow minister for arts, who was the initial initiator of this Bill. He is also part of the community, with your permission.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, do not take credit for what you have not done.

MR SSENYONYI: No, I have only mentioned that we initiated, and the Government took over.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, please sit down. First of all, I thank all the Members of Parliament for passing this very important law. I also thank you, Hon. Hillary Kiyaga, for the first initiation. I thank the Government for ensuring that the Bill came to the House. I thank, in a very special way, the Attorney-General. I also thank the committee for the good work you have done. I also thank our stakeholders for being here and following up the law.

Hon. David Kabanda, you said I thank you? Okay, I thank Hon. Kabanda and myself. *(Laughter)* In a special way, I thank all the Members of Parliament. One thing I want to tell our good friends there, there was no ill motive in delaying the Bill. Now the Bill has passed, will you continue making noise out there? You can now go and make noise that the Bill has passed, and we are not ignorant.

We have students and teachers from Science High School, Mukono Municipality. You are most welcome. They are here to witness the proceedings. They are represented by Hon. Betty Nambooze and Hon. Hanifa Nabukeera. You are most welcome and thank you for coming.

House adjourned *sine die*.

(The House rose at 3.58 p.m. and adjourned sine die.)