



PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

THIRD SESSION - THIRD MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 3 APRIL 2024



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

THIRD SESSION - 20TH SITTING - THIRD MEETING

Wednesday, 3 April 2024

Parliament met at 2.16 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS

The oaths were administered to:

1. Ms Sarah Aguti

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Sarah Aguti, I welcome you to the 11th Parliament of Uganda. Congratulations on being elected as the Woman Member of Parliament for Dokolo District.

You know how our sister, *Imat Cecilia Ogwal*, was performing. We expect you to raise the bar to her level. We shall be here to support you in every way.

I would like to hand over to you a copy of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and a copy of our own Bible in this Parliament, which are the Rules of Procedure, that you must read and ensure you understand, to follow and contribute to the proceedings of the House very well.

Congratulations once again. You can take your seat on this side. *(Applause)*

2. Dr Kenneth Omona

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Welcome back, Hon. Dr Kenneth Omona, to the Parliament of Uganda. Once a Member of Parliament, always a Member of Parliament; we are a family.

Congratulations upon catching the eye of the appointing authority as the Minister of State, Office of the Prime Minister (Northern Uganda). I know you might be having many copies of the Constitution, but let me give you one more together with a copy of our Rules of Procedure to help you in executing your mandate.

Once again, congratulations and we look forward to sharing a lot with you.

3. Mr Balaam Barugahara

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Balaam Barugahara, congratulations upon catching the eye of the appointing authority and welcome to the Parliament of Uganda; the 11th Parliament to be specific.

I know you have been following up on most of the issues. I have been your good follower, but here, we go by the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure. They will help you so much in executing your mandate and we look forward to sharing more with you on the Floor. Congratulations once again and wish you all the best.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, can I have order in the House?

4. Mr David Ochwa

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ochwa David, welcome back to the Parliament of Uganda. Once a Member, always a Member of this fraternity. I know you might have kept your copy of the Constitution very well, but I have a new one for you here and the updated Rules of Procedure to help you in the execution of your work. Congratulations! *(Applause)* Next item -

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let us have order. The administration of oaths has ended. I want to congratulate the new colleagues who have taken the oaths, but I also congratulate the honourable ministers whose mandate was renewed and those who were elevated. *(Applause)* We look forward to continuing engaging with you, specifically my two brothers who were elevated; Hon. Oboth Oboth and Hon. Lokeris. *(Applause)*

For the new Members of Parliament who have come in, who are not ministers - the Government Chief Whip, and the Opposition Chief Whip, you have up to Tuesday to ensure that you designate these Members to committees so that they can catch up with the rest as far as the processing the Budget of the country is concerned.

Honourable colleagues, later on, I will be amending the Order Paper slightly because yesterday, we had an issue on which very many Members raised different points, and we agreed that the Attorney-General would meet the Members from the regions of Acholi, Lango, and Teso, to discuss matters concerning payments for war claims. I need the Attorney-General to give us a brief statement on the outcome of that meeting so that we know indeed whether progress was made and how best they can be supported.

Honourable colleagues, also, as you might have already read or heard in the news, this Parliament, through a private Member, introduced and passed the Anti-Homosexuality Act, 2023 which most of you honourable

members stood up for and supported in line with the aspirations of Ugandans.

The constitutionality of this Act was challenged in the Constitutional Court and today the decision was delivered. The Court found no fault in the procedure though there are some sections of the law, which the court nullified, but as a leadership of Parliament, we are happy with the outcome of the process. *(Applause)*

We thank the Attorney-General, the legal team from Parliament, honourable colleagues and Ugandans in general, and the Judiciary for not interfering with the work of Parliament and for allowing us to execute our mandate as given to us by the people of Uganda.

Honourable colleagues, we have done our part, and I believe this is not an issue on which Members start coming up to discuss. We have done our part. The courts have done their part. We can leave it at that for now. We do not need to add anything. We need to give time to the Attorney-General - we are celebrating on our side, but the Attorney-General needs to internalise and see whether even the nullified sections can be reinstated or whether he is satisfied as our lead lawyer for the country.

With those statements - I think it would be prudent for the new Members - we give them a minute each to at least say something. I will start with Hon. Balaam Barugahara. *(Applause)* Honourable minister, we have a time limit so use only two minutes.

2.44

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (YOUTH AND CHILDREN AFFAIRS)

(Mr Balaam Barugahara): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. Here before you is a full minister - *(Laughter)* - sitting on the front bench courtesy of Gen. Museveni Kaguta Yoweri, approved by the Parliament Appointments Committee, and recommended by Ugandans. *(Laughter)*

Before I became a Member, a small brief about me. I am the Vice Chairman of the Patriotic

League of Uganda (PLU), which is a civic organisation; a non-partisan and transparent organisation, which advocates for fairness in society.

I thank the Parliament of Uganda, for giving me this opportunity. I will work and serve my country and my President, and I will respect the Constitution of Uganda.

When I appeared before the Appointments Committee, the Speaker requested me to speak to His Excellency to ensure National Unity Platform (NUP) supporters are released. The President, in his voice and video, said, "Give me the list." I requested the National Unity Platform to avail me with the list - hope the Leader of the Opposition is here - I am yet to get it and Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of order? Honourable colleagues, the Hon. Barugahara Balaam that I studied with and who I know, cannot fail to respond to anything. Let us not feel as if we are protecting him. Let the Leader of the Opposition bring his point of order and we see.

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you, Mr Speaker – *(Interjection)*– Mr Speaker, I request that you protect me from excited honourable colleagues.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please honourable colleagues – yes, Leader of the Opposition.

MR SSENYONYI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. First, it is important that as Parliament, we orient our new honourable colleagues on our modus operandi - on how we operate, raise points of order and the like.

More importantly, the point of order that I am standing up on is that we discussed in this very Parliament, issues of missing persons, some people who disappeared, and there are those who are in jail irregularly, some missing persons for whom the Prime Minister of Uganda acknowledged are in the hands of the State like John Bosco Kibalama.

We tabled that list here in Parliament. We gave it to the Attorney-General. The court is processing many of these matters and we have asked that they be released on bail because this is not prosecution, but persecution.

(Text expunged.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ssenyonyi, you know the language we use in this Parliament. Even when you disagree with a person, language is like "a novice". A Member of Parliament is a Member of Parliament. Therefore, Hon. Ssenyonyi, do the needful. You are a gentleman. There is a language we do not use here.

MR SSENYONYI: Mr Speaker, as a lawyer and somebody who knows English, the word "novice" means somebody new to a profession. Hon. Balaam Barugahara is a new minister. So, the word "novice" is not derogatory in any way except for people who we need to teach English.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, do you see how we start with problems? It is how we behave. Leader of the Opposition, I know that you would be insulted if I called you a novice. Hon. Balaam Barugahara is a minister and now fully-fledged *Ex-officio* Member of this House because he has been sworn in. I am a very patient man and I know you are a gentleman. Please, let us use –

MR SSENYONYI: Mr Speaker, you asked me to speak. Please protect me from these excited honourable colleagues.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are protected.

MR SSENYONYI: I hope I am. In this Parliament, we keep learning and I am glad to even teach honourable colleagues some English. When you Google the meaning of the word "novice", for those that have smartphones and some data, definition number one; "A person new in a job or situation." Hon. Balaam Barugahara is new as a minister, so, there is nothing wrong with calling him a novice as a minister. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Clerk, I hereby direct you to expunge the submission of Hon. Ssenyonyi.

Hon. Balaam, please continue.

MR BARUGAHARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. During the Appointments Committee sitting, I was given a task as a person who believes in fairness, with my background as a patriot, to speak to the President, who is the appointing authority, to stand surety for the young men who are detained and have not yet been on trial. The President accepted to pardon most of those who do not have cases of murder. He said that security and intelligence forces should expedite the ongoing investigations.

Therefore, I request my brother, Hon. Joel Ssenyonyi, to give me the list. I will do that for you, Hon. Joel, and make sure that the President acts on this issue. Thank you for the opportunity. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Dr Kenneth Omona, do you have anything you would like to say?

2.53

THE MINISTER OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER (NORTHERN UGANDA) (Dr Kenneth Omona): Mr Speaker, I am glad once again, to join you and both sides of the House in the service of our country. It has been a long time since I was in this House. I left after the Ninth Parliament, went and had some other tours of duty, but I am finally back here in the House today. *(Applause)*

I am very happy to join you again and I pray that God supports and helps all of us in this House, and reminds us of our duties to continue serving together for the good of our country. Thank you very much and God bless you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Dr Omona and welcome back. Yes, Hon. Sarah Aguti.

2.54

MS SARAH AGUTI (UPC, Woman Representative, Dokolo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank you for welcoming me into this House. The people of Dokolo have sent you greetings. I would like to thank our party, UPC, for standing with me. *(Applause)*

I would like to thank our party president and other MPs who stood with me together with my voters of Dokolo who put their trust in me. I will represent them well.

Secondly, the people of Dokolo are fine except that they have a problem; the fishermen in Dokolo are dying in the lake. I would like this House to help me and we talk more about it. I thank you.

2.56

MR DAVID OCHWA (NRM, Agule County, Pallisa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am an old broom in the House. I was in the Ninth Parliament with Dr Omona. I believe that what I have observed here; the decorum of Parliament and the quality of debate, must be maintained.

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the people of Agule for supporting me –*(Interjections)*– not necessarily the court. *(Laughter)* I was fully voted by the people of Agule as a strong NRM MP. That is why I am here. *(Applause)* We are lawmakers and I believe you are aware of the Constitution. As a remedy to any outcome in an election, one has to go to court. I hope you have had the opportunity to read the Constitution –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. David Ochwa, for guidance – because you might have forgotten a few issues. For example, when the Speaker is talking, you have to sit – and you talked about decorum. *(Laughter)*

MR OCHWA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Number two, you do not access a microphone without the permission of the Speaker. But number three, you do not respond to all those who are not on record. Otherwise, our *Hansard* is going to

look bad. Someone will read and say: “Whom was he responding to?” We only record the ones on the microphone. Therefore, do not start responding to people who are trying to divert you. Remain focused on your speech. You can resume.

MR OCHWA: Mr Speaker, thank you for that guidance. I will take it upon myself to follow it up. Honourable colleagues, we are back here to work for the country. Thank you for accepting and receiving us. May God bless you. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. We have another colleague who has joined the Cabinet, but he has been our colleague. I do not know if you would like to say anything, Gen. Mbadi.

Last night, at the vigil of Gen. David Muhoozi’s mum, Gen. Muhoozi told us that they have been calling him “former CDF”. Now, he believes that with Gen. Mbadi coming in, that title will be passed over to him as the former CDF. *(Laughter)*

Gen. Mbadi, if you have anything to say – you have always been our colleague - now, you have to come here in suits. He has been coming here in uniform. *(Laughter)*

2.58

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (Trade) (Gen. Wilson Mbadi): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. First of all, I would like to thank the President for appointing me as a minister. That is why you see I am in this attire now. *(Laughter)*

Secondly, I would like to thank the Members of Parliament, especially members of the Appointments Committee, for approving my appointment. *(Applause)*

I look forward to working with Parliament to execute my duties of promoting competitiveness in trade and exports. *(Applause)*

Once again, so help me God. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, Gen. Mbadi has been given a docket, but from the feedback I am getting from Members, he has been one of the most popular Members of the committee on trade. Members used to tell me that he would leave behind his armoured car and escorts and move with them in a bus, despite him being a CDF. When he was a member, he was that humble. *(Applause)*

So, honourable member, we hope you will be interacting with your colleagues. You know the hard questions they have been asking, sometimes with answers and sometimes without answers. We are sure you are one of those people who will help us to progress very well. Congratulations, once again.

Honourable colleagues, in the VIP Gallery this afternoon, we have Hon. Fred Ebil, a former Member of Parliament for Kole County and current Secretary-General of Uganda People’s Congress. He has come to witness the administration of oaths to Hon. Sarah Aguti, the Dakolo Woman Member of Parliament. Please, join me in welcoming him. *(Applause)*

Honourable colleagues, also in the public gallery this afternoon, we have lecturers and student leaders, from Uganda Martyrs University, Nkozi, Mawokota County South in Mpigi District, led by Sr Joe Martin. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Yusuf Nsibambi and Hon. Teddy Nambooze. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

Further, honourable colleagues, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation from the National Federation of Entertainment Promoters. They are here to witness the administration of oaths to Hon. Balaam Barugahara, the Minister of State for Youth and Children Affairs. Please, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

In the public gallery, we also have a delegation from West Moyo County in Moyo District. The delegation includes:

1. Mr Williams Anyama, the LC V Chairman, Moyo District;
2. Rev. Fr Grace Waigo, the Chairperson Moyo Municipality Advocacy Taskforce – they are advocating for a municipality and even have a taskforce; *(Laughter)*
3. Mr Charles Anyama, Senior Assistant Town Clerk, Moyo Town Council; and
4. Hon. Gladys Letaru, a councillor at Moyo Town Council.

They are represented by Hon. Tom Alero and Hon. Joyce Kaducu. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please, join me in welcoming them, once again. *(Applause)*

Honourable colleagues, in the interest of time, I will handle matters of national importance tomorrow. I will invoke Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure tomorrow, to focus on matters of national importance. This is so that we can go to issues – oh! Sorry. Yesterday I called Hon. Lilian Aber. So, let us hear from Hon. Nyamutoro and Hon. Florence Nambozo. *(Applause)*

Thank you for the reminder, honourable colleagues.

3.04

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (MINERALS) (Ms Phiona Nyamutoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mine is a word of gratitude to His Excellency the President for yet again capitalising on the energies that the young people have to offer when centralised in the development process.

I would also like to thank you, Mr Speaker and the entire leadership of Parliament, for the mentorship and support.

I also extend my gratitude to honourable colleagues for their goodwill.

I pledge that as a representative of the young people, our pace is set and we look forward to seeing how best Uganda can fully utilise its natural resources to fast-track our development. *(Applause)* Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, Hon. Florence Nambozo.

3.05

THE MINISTER OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER (KARAMOJA AFFAIRS) (Ms Florence Nambozo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I, too, join my colleagues in appreciating the President of this nation for adding me the responsibility to take over a region where my sisters have been. I am thankful to my colleagues who have encouraged me.

I would like to assure my colleagues from Karamoja that I am coming as a healing ingredient, not as that which everyone else thinks. *(Applause)* I know that the voice of the people is the voice of God. The President must have seen that I will make a difference and clean up what has happened. I am an individual. I am Florence Wamala Nambozo. I know I am going to do my best to represent the position of God in the region of Karamoja. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item.

STATEMENT BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL ON THE MEETING HELD WITH MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FROM THE ACHOLI, LANGO AND TESO SUBREGIONS ON THE PAYMENT OF WAR-DEBT CLAIMANTS AND BENEFICIARIES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I would like us to focus and finish our Order Paper. Yes, Attorney-General.

3.06

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa Kiwanuka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have sent a copy of this statement to be uploaded. As I was instructed by the House, a meeting was convened today, 3 April 2024 at the Cabinet Secretariat of Parliament, Office of the President, where I presented to the honourable Members of Parliament from the affected

subregions of Acholi, Lango and Teso, a status report on the payments made to the war debt claimants and beneficiaries from Acholi, Lango and Teso Subregions. I have attached a copy of the report that I have shared with colleagues.

Mr Speaker, in summary, I informed the meeting that the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, as of 31 March 2024 –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, just a moment – honourable members, when a colleague is reading a statement, you cannot have clarification. Clarification is sought during debate, not when a statement is being read. Thank you.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: In summary, I informed the meeting that the Ministry of Justice – (*Interruption*)

MR MACHO: (*Text expunged.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Macho, please. Clerk, that was a by-the-way, so we do not need it on the *Hansard*. It should not be captured on the *Hansard*.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, as of 31 March 2024, received a total of Shs 84,000,000,000 from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in the Financial Year 2021/2022 to Financial Year 2023/2024, and has paid out a total sum of Shs 80,454,092,688 to the claimants.

We have shared the list of all the claimants and beneficiaries who have received the payments whether wholly or partially and those that have been verified, but have not received the payments.

Mr Speaker, currently, the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs is proceeding with continued payments of Shs 2,869,638,900 for money that had been bounced because of dormant and closed accounts.

Further, I informed the meeting that the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs continues

to receive data cards from the districts with respect to the claimants or beneficiaries whose information had not yet been submitted to the ministry and with respect to the corrected information. I also informed the meeting that the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs had procured additional data to give to the districts that have requested the same.

At the conclusion of the meeting, it was resolved among others, that the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs writes to the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) this week and offer guidance to them to permit all claimants and beneficiaries that lost cattle, irrespective of whether they went to court or not, to participate in the verification exercise by filing their information on the data cards and submitting the same through the district structures.

Further, it was resolved that additional data cards will be availed to those districts that require additional them to capture the information.

The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs undertook to continue engaging the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on the issue of the closed and dormant accounts of some claimants and beneficiaries.

Furthermore, it was resolved that the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs will create a mailing list of Members of Parliament from the subregions of Acholi, Lango and Teso, through which information relating to the payment of verified claimants and beneficiaries will be shared.

Before I take my seat, Mr Speaker, in the meeting, voices were raised and tempers rose because of this emotive matter. For those colleagues who were offended by my actions, I sincerely apologise. I will continue to work with you tirelessly to get to the bottom of this matter. I beg to submit.

Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the statement as well as the reports on this in soft copy.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Attorney-General. Honourable colleagues, those who were not here yesterday, we agreed with the Prime Minister that for the other regions, which were not considered, she will submit to the Cabinet so that the Attorney-General can be given guidance by Cabinet on how these can be paid – from Busoga, Bukedi, West Nile, Buganda, Sebei, Ankole – yes, the Amin war started from Tanzania via Isingiro, Rakai and that is the one which liberated this country; first phase of liberation. I think Mitooma potentially –(Laughter)- I have said “potentially”.

Honourable colleagues, do we need to open this up? Yesterday, I remember, I told Hon. Ebwalu that he cannot report on behalf of the Attorney-General, but I would like to ask: is this accurate information? Yes, Hon. Ebwalu.

3.13

MR JONATHAN EBWALU (Independent, Soroti West Division, Soroti City): Mr Speaker, I confirm that the meeting indeed took place. When I raised this matter yesterday, it was in respect of the three court cases that we had disposed of in Soroti High Court, where the court ordered the Government to compensate the three different groups. We have over 40,000 verified claimants.

Mr Speaker, the Attorney-General – Attorney-General, do not distract the Speaker. He has to listen to this. The Attorney-General was very clear in that meeting. He said that his office is not concerned with those who went to court or those with court judgements. He said that our lawyers should proceed and seek execution in court.

However, remember that all these cases came because we went to court. The Attorney-General is the custodian of our laws. Now, if the Attorney-General is the one declining to implement court orders, who is going to help us in this country?

Mr Speaker, when we explained that to the Attorney-General, he got up and even told the meeting that even if they did not pay us, what would we do?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Ebwalu, sit. Please listen to the Speaker. The Speaker does not negotiate with a Member. When I say “sit,” please sit and wait. When the Attorney-General was finishing his submission, there was something he said that touched my heart because it showed humility. He admitted that tempers had flared and that he might have made statements, that he felt touched some people, but he apologised. I think that was a building block for progress. We do not want, while on the Floor, to be your word against his because we were not part of the meeting.

I have, however, seen progress. I think we can build on that and not report on the conflict that happened. We can say, “Attorney-General, since you have apologised, can we now find a way of helping these people?” That is the line I am looking at, honourable.

MR EBWALU: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Attorney-General, now that you have apologised, let us now progress. How are you going to help our people? Actually not to help because it is not a favour; how are we going to address the issue of our people who went to court and the court ordered that the Government should compensate them? You are running away from your responsibility, yet these people need to be compensated.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Mr Speaker, we shall come back to the House, request for an appropriation of funds for court awards that have been made against the Government and we shall make the payments. This Government respects court orders, and as I told you, the only thing that I do not have is sufficient funds. As soon as the funds are made available, we shall make the payments.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: For progress purposes, honourable colleagues, this is an issue, which involves money. We are going to be discussing the ministerial policy statements for this budget. I think what is important is to ensure that the committee follows up so that these people are listed among those who should be paid after we appropriate money.

If the Attorney-General has no money, we shall continue accusing him of refusal to pay, but when he has no money. I beg your indulgence, can't we handle this issue - our senior elder Akena, can't we handle this issue during the ministerial policy statement report for the sector?

3.18

MR JIMMY AKENA (UPC, Lira East Division, Lira City): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. It is exactly on that point that I wish to raise a concern and my concern touches the rate that is being budgeted for. At the rate of this repayment, it will be so many years before the Government completes what has already been awarded by the court and verified.

If we continue putting a token towards this compensation, it has no effect. It will take so many years just to meet those obligations. I am now hearing that we want to take on more. What we put in the budget must be realistic. As it is now not really helping. In fact, it creates a lot more problems, but there has to be a sufficient provision to have an impact and for the compensation to make sense. Many of those who have lost animals have also lost their lives while some are passing away every day. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, if the amounts we have been providing - and the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is here - if the amounts we have been providing have been based on the numbers we have been having, can we now acknowledge the other numbers also and provide funding for those numbers?

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs requested Shs 349 billion for this compensation last financial year. We received a budgetary allocation of Shs 80 billion of which we have only received Shs 34 billion at this point. And as Hon. Akena has said, the numbers are still increasing because we are still receiving data cards. By the end of this financial year, the number may even be higher.

As you said, Mr Speaker, as we come to the ministerial policy statement, this matter should be ventilated completely and a decision is made on how we want to proceed with this matter. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Since these are huge sums, I would be of the view that present this issue to the Cabinet on Monday. You can then give us an update after consulting the Cabinet. Honourable colleagues, my concern is - our issue, we need money. The lists are ready. Hon. Auma, are you saying there is something else?

3.20

MS LINDA AUMA (Independent, Woman Representative, Lira): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. There is something that if we do not clarify today, will continue putting the Government to task. I feel so bad because when it comes to this compensation issue, the person who suffers repercussions is the President because it is the President who moves and answers all those questions during campaigns.

As members of the three sub-regions, we want this matter to be put to rest. Right now, we all know that the Government is financially constrained. These were matters that were in court with specified numbers - verified in court.

In 2016, the Attorney-General went and verified a list that is already there. Logically, we must discuss here with a lot of consciousness and sympathy for the Government. If we give an open cheque and say that we must go, whether you have gone to court or not, to fill out the data cards - In Lango, we have 2.5 million people. What if they all go and fill out the data cards? We will be adding more expenses to the Government. Why don't we handle one thing at a time?

I expected that the Attorney-General - even if this was a guidance or directive of the President, the Attorney-General is the legal advisor of this Government; he was supposed to advise the President so that we move gradually, other than putting Government to task, day in and

day out. Those people will need the response. Yet even the Government currently does not have the little money to pay the 140,000 people who have claimed. If this happens in Acholi, Lango and Teso, where will we get this money? We must be honest and come up with a better recommendation. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, I gave this matter 15 minutes on the Order Paper. I want to stick to the Order Paper. We have agreed that the Attorney-General will go to Cabinet on Monday. Next week when we are handling the ministerial policy statement of this sector, this is one of the issues he will first brief us on to guide us. Otherwise, we cannot conclude it here the way we are going. We also agreed, yesterday, that in three weeks, the Prime Minister will present a statement on the Floor on other regions which were not captured. Next item?

LAYING OF PAPERS

(I) THE PETROLEUM FUND SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT ON INFLOWS, OUTFLOWS AND ASSETS OF THE FUND FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Yes, honourable minister?

3.23

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr Amos Lugoloobi): Mr Speaker, I move in accordance with Section 61(1)(b) of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015 as amended, to lay on the Table the Semi-Annual Report on Inflows, Outflows and Assets of the Petroleum Fund for the period ended 31 December 2023. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, this is referred to the Budget Committee as per Section 18 of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) and Rule 173 of our Rules of Procedure, which should be processed and report back within 45 days. Thank you.

(II) THE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND DISPOSAL OF PUBLIC ASSETS (PPDA REGULATIONS) 2023

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, honourable minister.

3.24

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr Amos Lugoloobi): Mr Speaker, I beg for your indulgence because I have several regulations here to lay on the Table, in accordance with the same provisions, and I will start with statutory instrument number -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, things are not brought to the Table, and I am told how much - are they all under Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets (PPDA)?

MR LUGOLOOBI: Yes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: If they are all under PPDA, make one statement that covers all of them. Did you want to mention them one by one?

MR LUGOLOOBI: Yes, because they vary in terms of titles.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Then I would have also captured them well on the Order Paper. We shall separately capture each of them on the Order Paper. Clerk, capture them separately.

MR LUGOLOOBI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The statutory instruments are as follows:

1. Statutory Instrument No.97 of 2023;
2. Statutory Instrument No.96 of 2023;
3. Statutory Instrument No.99 of 2023;
4. Statutory Instrument No.98 of 2023;
5. Statutory Instrument No.100 of 2023;
6. Statutory Instrument No.101 of 2023;
7. Statutory Instrument No.102 of 2023;
8. Statutory Instrument No.103 of 2023;
9. Statutory Instrument No.104 of 2023;

10. Statutory Instrument No.108 of 2023
11. Statutory Instrument No.106 of 2023.

I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. According to section 96, these regulations are for information purposes. Honourable colleagues, we shall put them in the library and you can access them to help you in the execution of your duties.

In the public gallery this afternoon, we have a delegation of Muslim leaders from Mbarara City led by the District Khadhi, Sheikh Mukwaya Abdallah. They include Hajj Rashid – District Chairperson, Mr Abdul Nasser Nsubuga – Public Relations Officer, Mr Siraj Ntutumo – District Secretary, Mr Ssenkayi Murishid – District Lands Chairman, Mrs Nuluat Musoke – Social Affairs; and Mr Uthman Nduhukire – Secretary for Education.

They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Mwine Mpaka and Hon. Ritah Atukwasa. They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. Please join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)* Next item?

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS
TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL
GUIDANCE ON THE PETITION BY
THE UGANDA NATIONAL MUSICIANS
FEDERATION ON AMENDMENTS TO
THE COPYRIGHTS AND NEIGHBOURING
RIGHTS ACT

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Committee chairperson, I know that you know how to do it quickly. We shall capture the whole report on the *Hansard* for the record. For now, do a summary.

3.29

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE (Mr Tonny Ayoo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to present the

report of the Committee on Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance on the petition by the Uganda National Musicians Federation on amendments to the Copyrights and Neighbouring Rights Act, 2006.

Mr Speaker, on 4 October 2023, members of the Uganda National Musicians Federation, through Hon. Phiona Nyamutoro, the National Female Youth Member of Parliament, and now the Minister of State in charge of Minerals in the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, presented a petition, wherein they called for the expedient amendment of the Copyrights and Neighbouring Rights Act, 2006. They justify that the 17-year-old law has become outdated in light of advancements in technology and the emergence of international best practices.

Pursuant to Rule 36 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, the petition was referred to the Committee on Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance for consideration, which concluded the investigation and hereby reports.

Mr Speaker, let me move to general observations on the status of the Bill for the amendment of the Copyrights and Neighbouring Rights Act, 2006.

On 20 July 2022, Hon. Hillary Kiyaga sought leave of the House to introduce a Private Member's Bill entitled, "The Copyright and Neighbouring Rights (Amendment) Bill." The Bill introduces amendments to several provisions of the Act.

It was, however, resolved by Hon. Hillary Kiyaga and the Government to work together, to come up with a holistic amendment to the Act. According to the attorney general's submission to the committee, consultation on the Bill is ongoing:

- (i) The committee urges the Government to consider and expeditiously domesticate the provisions of the different treaties highlighted above that Uganda has ratified.

- (ii) The committee recommends expedient drafting and Tabling of the amendments to the Copyrights and Neighbouring Rights (Amendment) Bill to Parliament by the Government, as the leave was sought in July 2022 and today is 3 April 2024. It is almost two years and the Bill has not seen the light of the day.

Another general observation is the coordination and supervision of the arts and culture sector. The art and culture sector in Uganda is affected by supervision by various ministries and departments across the Government, including the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance. This has affected the realisation of the mandate of the sector due to challenges of coordination and the activities therein.

The committee observes that the management of arts, sports and culture under a single ministry will not only address the challenges of red tape and lack of centralised management, but also boost multiple opportunities for learning, entertainment, leisure, personal growth and improving communication within, while also increasing the revenue base for the sector. We take cases from Kenya and Zambia that have put that sector under one ministry and are doing well.

The committee, therefore, recommends as follows:

- i. The youths, sports, culture and arts sectors should be housed under a single fully-fledged cabinet ministry to make it undertake critical interest in matters affecting young people, which will lead to harnessing opportunities which can convert this largely informal sector into a commercially viable vehicle for job creation, entertainment, education and widening the country's tax base.
- ii. The Government evaluates the viability of a self-regulating privately managed body to license the art industry sector and

actors. This is intended to fully exploit and leverage the potential of the promising arts industry, just like it has been done through the National Council of Sports for the sports sector. The same has also been witnessed elsewhere in Nigeria, India and Korea that have optimally exploited their arts industries.

Mr Speaker, the petitioners had presented 10 issues for consideration in the amendment of the Copyrights and Neighbouring Rights Act, 2006. The committee submits on each of the issues as follows:

- a) The petitioners had sought the revision of charges for the caller ring-back tunes to ensure a fair split of the revenue collected from the call-back tunes in the percentage of 60 per cent to be retained by the artists and 40 per cent to be shared by both the government and the telecommunication companies.

The committee made the following observations on the caller ring-back tune.

- (i) Failure by artistes and content creators to seek and use competent legal advisers and experts during the contract drafting process, which exposes them to manipulation and exploitation.
- (ii) Unfair and inequitable revenue models. The current distribution model allocates very low revenue to the artistes, which is unfair and exploitative, as they own the content. There is a need to have equitable sharing of revenue provided for in the regulation by the statutory instrument to avoid the unfairness and inequitable distribution of revenue.

Mr Speaker, the rest are observations made by the committee, and I ask Members to go through them so that I can attend to recommendations.

However, on observation number eight, the distribution formula provided has no legal provision expressly providing for the distribution of revenue from caller ring-back tunes, especially the remittance of 48 per cent

to the Government, contrary to Article 152(1) of the Constitution, which provides that no tax shall be imposed except under the authority of an Act of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, in consideration of this matter, the committee studied and reviewed the practice in Kenya where, under an amendment vide; “The Copyright (Amendment) Act No. 14 of 2002” was enacted. The Act expressly provides for the rate of distribution, including the premium rate of the service providers at 8.5 per cent, the telecommunication operator at 39.5 per cent and the artiste or owner of the copyrights at not less than –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Procedure?

MS AGNES KUNIHIRA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We have tried to look at our iPads, but we cannot find the report. We are not sure if it is uploaded on our iPads. So, we seek for clarity.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Clerk, can I confirm if the report is uploaded? Is it? The report is uploaded, honourable colleague. Some colleagues have accessed it. I have just ordered a copy for Hon. Balaam because he does not have an iPad. I know he knows this sector very well. I have also asked for copies for Hon. Ochwa and Hon. Sarah.

Clerk, please ensure – I do not know why some Members are saying they have it and others are saying they do not.

Let us go on, honourable colleagues. If I find out that you have failed to access it, I will see a way of mitigating that. Thank you.

MR AYO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Since this is the report of the Committee on ICT and National Guidance, I call upon the Clerk to come to the rescue of the House and ensure that all iPads can access the report.

Mr Speaker, the committee recommends that:

1. The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should amend the Copyright and

Neighbouring Rights Act, 2006, to provide for caller ring-back tunes, and then issue and gazette a statutory instrument under the Act to regulate equitable sharing of revenue for caller ring-back tunes and related content-consuming platforms.

2. The Ministry of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance should ensure that telecommunication companies create a caller ring-back tunes monitoring system for transparency and accountability to the artistes and the sector.
3. Uganda Communications Commission should audit the caller ring-back tunes platforms for copyright infringing content, order and take down and effect compensation for affected rights holders, as well as ensure that telecoms account for non-remunerated downloads.
4. The artists’ associations, including the Uganda National Musicians’ Federation and the Uganda National Musicians’ Association should ensure that artistes receive sufficient legal support in drawing up and managing contracts. The association should have in-house legal teams.
 - (b) Imposition of a copy levy on devices used in the reproduction of copyright-protected works to be shared equally between the Government and holders of copyrights and neighbouring rights registered under the Act

The committee observed that the additional levy on technological devices would negatively impact the drive to enhance technology and have it penetrate all corners of the country. Some of the aspects of the economy that would be grossly affected by a levy on devices include financial inclusion through mobile money and agent banking, which has allowed for financial access to remote parts of Uganda. These financial services have no connection to the reproduction of copyright-protected works, which the artistes seek to protect. This would

be an unintended consequence were the levy to be imposed on devices.

The committee recommends:

- (i) For the amendment of the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act to provide for a private copying levy at the rate that should be determined on software capable of transferring, copying and storing copyright content. The obligation to pay this levy should be a contractual arrangement between the copyright owner and the software proprietor.
- (ii) That the distribution of the revenue to the different categories of rights holders, should be provided for in regulation and may be implemented through respective collecting societies or collective management organisations, following systems agreed to by the concerned parties, but not to be included in the Act.
- (c) Imposition of strict measures against broadcasters who use pirated content because it undermines the intellectual property rights of the artistes, hence causing a negative effect on their livelihood. The petitioners recommended a fine of not less than Shs 5 million, to be paid by a person who is convicted of infringing on the copyrights of an artiste.

Section 46 of the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act provided for what amounts to infringement of copyrights or neighbouring rights.

Mr Speaker, the committee recommends:

- (i) That the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights law should be amended to cater for the development, promotion and protection of intellectual and copyright rights of the value creators of the entertainment industry of Uganda.
- (ii) The Government of Uganda should embrace the digital era and artificial intelligence relating to the protection of the rights of creators in the digital domain by creating a robust online

applications infrastructure to identify online rights infringements, promote, distribute, sell, collect revenue, distribute proceeds to rightful owners, compute and automatically collect the relevant taxes.

- (d) Embracing the digital era relating to the protection of the rights of artistes in the digital domain, fostering innovation in digital content creation and facilitating fair competition for the online use of copyrighted works

The committee observed the need to provide for the continuation of protection of copyright irrespective of any generative artificial intelligence modification as long as the final work does not qualify as derivative works mentioned in the primary copyright holders.

The committee recommends that:

- (i) The relevant institutions, including the Uganda Police Force and the Uganda Registration Services Bureau, ensure the enforcement of criminal measures against circumvention of technology protection.
- (ii) The law is amended for the provision of express liability of internet service providers and telecom for copyright-infringing content.
- (iii) The Registrar of Copyrights is granted powers to issue take down orders, block websites and other measures that can protect online works.
- (e) Adequate capitalisation of Collective Management Organisations (CMOs) in order to empower CMOs to carry out their duties such as licensing, collecting royalties and enforcing the legal framework on the copyrights

The committee observed that whereas the petitioners seek to have adequate capitalisation, no evidence was availed to show how the said provisions of the law have been implemented as a way of raising funds for CMOs.

The committee further observed that CMOs therefore need sufficient legal support to collect royalties from users of the protected works.

The committee recommends that the Uganda Registration Services Bureau should provide CMOs with sufficient legal support in the collection of royalties from the users of protected works.

- (f) Establishment of a clear and transparent structure for CMOs that incorporates a high level of accountability including regular audits and reporting mechanisms to ensure that royalties are distributed fairly and rightfully to the owners

The committee observed that most of the proposals raised by the petitioners regarding CMOs are addressed in the Act. The issue of concern by the petitioners lies more on the enforcement of the provisions of the law rather than the amendment of the law.

The committee recommends that the Registrar of Copyrights ensures compliance with the provision of the law by CMOs. This will enable the provision of fair, equitable, prompt compensation to artistes. It will also enhance accountability to the artistes, thus ensuring acceptance of the entity.

- g) Registration and regulation of all third parties including telecom aggregators who are involved in the distribution and dissemination of the copyrights content

Committee recommendations

- (i) The owners of the copyrighted works should take responsibility for ensuring the protection of their works by avoiding situations of voluntarily uploading their works on public platforms such as YouTube, from which members of the public can easily download such works for further use;
- (j) The Uganda Communications Commission and the Uganda Registration Services Bureau should enforce the law on the registration and regulation of all third parties involved in the distribution and dissemination of copyrighted content.

- (h) Requiring broadcasters to dedicate 90 per cent of their airtime to Uganda music as a way of promoting local content and supporting the development of the industry in the country. Uganda Communications Commission has played a crucial – Mr Speaker, let me go straight to the committee observation.

- (i) The enforceability of the 70 per cent directive may come into question on whether all broadcasters are implementing the directive. This is caused by a lack of adequate monitoring system;
- (ii) The 70 per cent local content is not limited to only music, but rather all content produced by Ugandans including drama, current affairs and news, information programmes, education programmes, children's programmes and sports programmes;
- (iii) The request that 90 per cent of songs should be Ugandan is both unreasonable and impractical, as talent globally is dictated by quality. Ugandan music has to therefore match the quality of the music from elsewhere to receive adequate airplay;
- (iv) The media is governed by consumers' interests as the market is liberalised. Ugandan music should thus appeal to the consumers who control and dictate the market and airplay. The proposal for 90 per cent music airplay will be challenged by the consumers for being unfair and intrusion of their freedom and rights to exercise their choice of content or entertainment;
- (v) Media is based on the target audience and some radio stations play music not common in Uganda including country music, jazz, and rock, thus distributing them on the local content component, with these music genres not locally available and making the proposal impractical;
- (vi) Uganda is a free and liberalised economy, pushing the East African and Pan-African agenda and the push for 90 per cent music airplay contradicts this agenda;
- (vii) Broadcasters do not operate just to entertain. They also have other objectives

such as information and education, which are not necessarily achieved through music. This is also noteworthy that not all broadcasters play music.

The committee recommends that:

- (i) The proposal for 90 per cent music airplay to be given to Ugandan content is rejected as this is untenable and goes against the policy of a free and liberalised economy, as well as the East African and Pan-African agenda;
 - (ii) The Uganda Communication Commission should enforce the regulations on local content.
 - (iii) The Government should deliberately take an interest in local music by improving its quality to compete globally, by putting in place mechanisms to support artistes and musicians to provide better music, including financing of the sector, and improving studios and equipment.
- (i) Encouraging the use of Ugandan models, actors and actresses and artistes in the advertising, promotion, influencing, and endorsement of products by companies in Uganda and developing Uganda publishers, through the imposition of higher charges of publishing licenses for non-Ugandans as a way of empowering the local creative industry, provide employment opportunities for local content and help build a distinct national identity in advertising.

The committee observed that it is the role of the Uganda Communications Commission to regulate advertisements. According to Regulation 27, the Uganda Communications Commission (Content) Regulation 2019, the commission set up standards for advertisement which every operator is obliged to comply with.

The mandate of the commission, however, does not extend to regulating who is to be engaged as a model of a product to be advertised. This lies within the discretion of the company and the product intended to be advertised. Some

of the products have a foreign origin with the models already engaged and the Ugandan dealers or agents in such products may not have the capacity to interfere with the advertisement as set.

It should be further noted that encouraging the use of Uganda artistes as models is not a copyright, neither is it a neighbouring right and therefore is not an issue that can be considered in the amendment of the Copyrights and Neighbouring Rights (Amendment) Bill. It would rather be considered under the policy on national and local content on human capital. Unfortunately, Uganda presently has no local content law in place.

The committee recommends that:

- (i) The above prayer should fall under the Build Uganda and Buy Uganda (BUBU) and implemented in the context of international and regional legal treaties;
 - (ii) Government should expeditiously reintroduce the Local Content Bill to Parliament for enactment into law. This will come a long way in addressing matters related to local content;
 - (iii) The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives should come up with a regulation under an appropriate law to address this issue of advertisement.
- (k) Requiring aggregators of licensed Uganda intellectual property to be domiciled in Uganda as a condition for operating to ease accountability since they will be subjected to the country's legal framework on the copyright law

The committee observed that the creative industry is global in a digitally connected world. Implementation of this proposal, even if placed under the law, may have practical implications and challenges.

The committee noted that this matter could best be addressed elsewhere and not through inclusion in the amendment of the Copyrights and Neighbouring Rights Law. Domiciling all aggregators can be best achieved if a

requirement is imposed that all aggregators be incorporated as companies, and if it is a foreign aggregator, be registered as a foreign company in Uganda under the Companies Act, 2012.

The committee recommends that all the aggregators should be incorporated as companies and for foreign aggregators, be registered as a foreign company in Uganda under the Companies Act, 2012. This will ensure accountability by the aggregators while also streamlining the supervision of their operations.

7.0. Conclusion

A comprehensive approach to addressing the challenges facing the Ugandan music industry in the digital era will ensure that the country harnesses the opportunities in the industry by improving the livelihood of people in the music industry value chain and also widening the revenue base for the Government.

Modernising the copyright law will enhance enforcement mechanisms, promote local talent, and create a fair and transparent ecosystem in the music industry.

Uganda can therefore foster a thriving and sustainable music industry by addressing the concerns raised, which will not only safeguard the rights and interests of the artistes, but also contribute to the culture and economic development of Uganda. I beg to report.

Mr Speaker, allow me also to lay on the Table the minutes and the copy of the report that the committee used while processing this petition, and allow me to thank the House and thank you for allowing us to present. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Job well done, Hon. Ayoo Tonny. Attorney-General, I mean the simplest is when are we having the Bill? We would solve all these issues.

3.57

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa-Kiwanuka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank Hon. Ayoo and your committee for a very good report. I must say I am very happy.

Mr Speaker, we have consulted widely on the issue of copyrights. We have completed the presentation to the stakeholders. We have completed the Cabinet paper. It is in the Cabinet. The committee has raised some interesting issues, which we did not even address. Now that we know the mind of the committee to which we are bringing the Bill, I think we shall be able to bring this up in Cabinet. We are happy we have received it.

Mr Speaker, what I can tell you is that this Bill has been high on the agenda for the President and the Cabinet and since we filed this, we are just waiting for time. What I can say is I can report back probably next week on what date we have been given on the Cabinet agenda, when we can discuss this copyright Bill, but it is going to be in this House at the earliest. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I appreciate that, Attorney-General, only that you have pushed harder, Prime Minister. I know you participate in getting space for items on the Cabinet paper. We granted a Member leave and we are looking funny, I am sorry to say that the Member now comes and says, "My Bill is ready, put me for first reading."

Hon. Hillary Kiyaga has been patient. Hon. Nyamutoro has been calling me every day about this Bill you have been talking about. I think you need to give us this Bill as early as you can, because now the sectoral committees are finishing their policy statements, so they will have space to handle this Bill. If we could get it quickly, and then we expeditiously handle it and we settle. I do not see the issues here we are going to find ourselves debating.

The main issue will be infringing on rule 80, where we granted the Member leave. Most of the issues are issues, which will infringe

on Rule 80 of our Rules of Procedure, which is against anticipation. That is on the draft Bill that we gave the Member. Maybe before that, I will first allow Hon. Nyamutoro, who presented the petition and now since you are in the Cabinet it can be –

4.00

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (MINERALS) (Ms Phiona Nyamutoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to thank the Committee for Information, Communication Technology and National Guidance, for the well-detailed report.

Mr Speaker, just a word of emphasis, as you have rightly guided. It is very true, as the committee stated, that matters of the industry do not just fast-track development of the sector, but it is centralised on the young people. We are looking at a Uganda that can easily, not just benefit the quality of its artisan sector, but also the quality of the people.

It is also not true, as the committee stated, “that matters in the petition might not necessarily be addressed by amendment, but rather through other issues”. Everything pertaining to the music industry will be well streamlined if the amendment is put in place - the matters of financing, digitalisation, the matters on how these Ugandans can benefit from the sweat of their work.

It is very frustrating to be a victim of underemployment, as we fight towards seeing that the country addresses the big concern of unemployment of young people. These are Ugandans who are stranded on how best they can fruitfully gain from the work that they have put out for years.

I add my voice to support the Attorney-General, now that I am in Cabinet, to ensure that this Bill is brought to the Table as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, how are we going to debate this? Clarification, there is no one on the Floor. So

the rules do not - this is putting the Speaker on the spot. Are these points of emphasis - because rule 80 is tying us down since we granted a Member leave and there is a Bill. These are issues that are more or less – Hon. Kimosho, what is that burning issue? And Hon. Ssolo.

4.02

MR DAN ATWIJUKIRE (NRM, Kazo County, Kazo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Through you, I seek clarification from the Attorney-General on what could be the challenge that they face that delays these Bills. I chair the Committee on Physical Infrastructure, and there are some sensitive Bills. Every time you meet with the ministers, they tell you we are in the process. For example, one, the National Building Review Board.

You see the illegal structures coming up, the method of construction, everyone constructing in their way and we need a fully-fledged law to empower them and help them. You meet with the minister, they promise you next week and nothing is coming through.

I seek clarification through you, from the Attorney-General, on what could be the issues that impede them or affect the speeding up of these Bills so that we do not waste a lot of time to first send a committee that recommends what is expected and then we are in circles. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, do you want to say something about that?

4.04

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Kiryowa-Kiwanuka): Mr Speaker, the Bills that are passed by the Cabinet must have a regulatory impact assessment. It must have the funding that is required for it and the consultations. The worst that can happen is to bring a Bill here and then it is sent away. That is what delays these processes and also, we can only meet once a week and there is all that work. At times, some things lag behind because of that process. I am not sure about the Act you are exactly talking about.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, my short stint in the Cabinet showed me what a minister goes through to bring a Bill. That is why I even sometimes sympathise because the whole process is very – I do not know whether the Government can find a way of reducing that process so that the Attorney-General is given more powers because Cabinet members are Members of Parliament.

I have seen this in other countries, for example, in South Korea, under the Office of the Prime Minister; they have a Directorate in charge of Legislative Research and Drafting because the Prime Minister is the Leader of Government Business in Parliament. You find that there are scattered forces all trying to make Bills. Therefore, this research helps to coordinate and put together Bills. By the time you reach the Attorney-General, the process is already tedious and coming towards the end.

The challenge we have here, honourable colleagues, is that we can only ask about Bills that were provided for on the Legislative Agenda submitted by the Government. Therefore, before we ask the minister where this Bill is, we need to check which legislative agenda they provided when the State of the Nation Address was being read. Usually when the President does not include the Legislative Agenda, then the Prime Minister comes and tables it here. We need to look at that.

For those other Bills, if we feel that they are very urgent, we can get a private Member to bring them. The challenge we have been having on its implementation is that Article 93 of the Constitution restricts you; that you cannot put a charge on the Consolidated Fund. Your Bill again becomes very weak; it will just be a story.

I will have a meeting with the Attorney-General to see how best to handle this. Clerk, let us always extract properly where a committee recommends the need to review this law, we extract it and inform the Attorney-General, Government Chief Whip and Prime Minister, so that action can be taken.

Hon. Kimosho, what you are raising is a critical issue. I am sure, when Hon. Namuganza and her team interact with the committee, they will touch a little bit on that issue.

4.06

MR GEOFFREY KAYEMBA-SOLO (NUP, Bukomansimbi South County, Bukomansimbi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the report. My issue is that the Government should prioritise the creative arts industry.

If it was a priority and front-lined, we would not even be listening to this report. Everything would have been tackled in the Bill and somewhere else. We need this industry to be supported, not through tokens, but in a collective way that everyone with any talent should benefit from it.

My request to the Government is to prioritise this industry. It employs many people, from the uneducated to the most educated. That is all, Mr Speaker.

4.08

DR SAMUEL OPIO (Independent, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would also like to thank the committee for the report. Whereas a number of issues can be addressed by the Bill, some issues can be captured under the “Buy Uganda, Build Uganda” policy.

The committee talked about the petitioners asking for about 90 per cent of the time for airplay and there are challenges in accepting that because of enforceability. However, when you go to Nigerian television, 90 per cent of the entertainment is local. When you go to Indian television, 90 per cent is local. Go to China and even Tanzania.

I would like to make a proposal because when you look at, for example, a song like “*Yo Leng*”, this Government used it for their manifesto. The artiste is now of international reputation.

As the Government, I believe that within the national broadcasters - and we have seen UBC

Radio promoting a lot of local content, we can be able to enforce it. Within the private broadcasters, the Government has many advertisements that are promoted there. There can be provisions for conditions for them to promote local content and give more air time.

I propose that we do not wish it away, but make provision that the Government comes up with arrangements to ensure that local content has adequate airtime within our television and different media houses. Thank you.

4.10

DR GEORGE BHOKA (NRM, Obongi County, Obongi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I add my voice to thank the chairperson and the committee on the report. I would like to speak to one aspect of the report, which was an observation about the lack of effective framework coordination of the arts and cultural aspects.

We have a Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. Our arts and culture sector represents over 60 tribal entities and it can be a huge product for tourism.

I would like to propose that we look into the aspect of coordinating arts and culture, by ensuring that we have a ministry responsible for that and I believe the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is responsible for that.

Possibly, at this point, I need to seek guidance on whether or not we do not have sufficient provision within the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to effectively coordinate art and culture beyond music, dance and drama. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Leader of the Opposition? Honourable colleagues, I will give you opportunities on other reports.

4.11

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Mr Joel Ssenyonyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think we need to help the Attorney-General.

One of the issues he has raised is the financing element that is required, and he is right.

Recently, we saw the Government allocating some billions of shillings to artistes in a certain form. I do not think that we should be reducing these artistes to beggars. We should lay a lot more because if there is money for that, then there should be money to process the Bills and the Certificates of Financial Implications, among others. When you reduce them to being beggars and give them some money, they will consume it and it will be done. However, when there is a law that protects their trade, they will benefit from that, including their children, even when they are long gone.

The Attorney-General has said there are challenges within Cabinet. We should not maybe burden him with some of these questions. The Prime Minister is here and should commit to when this can be processed so that people earn from their trade. That way, you do not reduce them to beggars and they will not be disturbing the Government.

Each time there is a function and there is an artiste, they say, "Now give us some money for this." Once they are protected in their trade and they can make money out of that, they will fly on their own. Thank you.

MS NYAMUTORO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thought I should clarify on the LOP's submission about the fund that the Government has given to the artistes.

It is the responsibility of the Government to ensure that its citizens are well taken care of. The artistes that are being mentioned are citizens of Uganda. In a bid for the Government to ensure that there is accessible and affordable credit for citizens, the artistes requested for a fund to facilitate their Savings and Credit Cooperative Organisation.

This has nothing to do with the law that we are proposing. It is okay for the Government of Uganda to support the artistes as citizens. The artistes' SACCO is fully registered. In the meantime, it is a healing way, as we look

forward to a conducive environment that enables them to fully benefit from their work.

I found it misleading for the LOP to mention that the artistes are being paraded as beggars by the Government. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, let this not be an exchange of words. What is important is that all of us are looking for a sustainable way of supporting the arts industry. From the Government and the Opposition, that is what we are saying. We are saying that through the law – protecting their rights and content – we shall be able to achieve more.

Hon. Amos Lugoloobi, did you want to say something? Let the minister come, first, and then we have the Prime Minister.

MR LUGOLOOBI: Mr Speaker, I would like to respond to a colleague who was asking the Government to prioritise the arts and creative industry. I want to provide information that while presenting the strategic direction for the National Development Plan IV (NDP IV) in the Cabinet, His Excellency the President added this sector to the priority list. So, henceforth, this is now a priority sector in the Government.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, you know that the Cabinet minutes remain secret until you formally present them here. (*Laughter*) Therefore, the Member did not know because he is not privy to the proceedings of the Cabinet.

Let us have the committee chairperson and then the Prime Minister gives the commitment and we conclude.

MR AYOO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank colleagues for their support. In our recommendations, we talked of other issues raised here that do not qualify to be included in the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act, while also proposing looking at the Local Content Act, under Buy Uganda Build Uganda (BUBU).

So, I would like to allay the fear of the Female National Youth Member of Parliament, who is a minister, that we are not against this, but we are proposing to arrange them in the right place so that implementation is easy.

On the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, when we were interfacing with them, we realised that the sector of culture and arts reached a point where they got stuck on where to go. The ministry would say that some of these issues are supposed to be handled by the Uganda Registration Services Bureau, under the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and others are supposed to be handled by the Uganda Communications Commission, under the Ministry of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance. Therefore, we thought the Government must look into this coordination so that the sector is supported.

Finally, I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that we should provide the necessary laws to support the sector of information technology (IT) because we can get a lot out of it, from the talents of young people.

However, as the Government is providing funds for *Emyooga*, various categories of people were provided for – the produce dealers and so on. The categories also included the artistes and musicians whom the Government provided funds for, under their SACCOs. So, I think this is not parading them as beggars, but the Government is just extending the programme which is nationwide to all categories of people, including musicians, leaders and journalists.

Mr Speaker, I wanted to give that correction and also thank the minister, now that the Cabinet is considering giving priority to arts and culture and that it will be supported with finance and the necessary laws for the young people to thrive. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, we should be cautious that it is not Parliament recommending that more ministries be created. We can observe – even for what we observe, they go and look at it. However, when you recommend, they must

come back and report, yet we are the ones who have been saying that ministries and ministers are many. It is a thin line, but we should always play it safe. It can be a clear observation, but not a recommendation that “you must do it”.

MR AYOO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Actually, in our mind, we were looking at it that within the ministries that exist, issues should be reorganised, restructured and put together under one roof, but not creating new ministries. However, we take your guidance and advice for future recommendations. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Deputy Prime Minister?

4.19

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is requesting me to commit, but this is not a one-man’s business. The Attorney-General has already said that we are going to come back here and report; this has to go through consultation.

Therefore, as he said, we will come back here next week, after consulting the Vice-President.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The comment from the Leader of the Opposition is that you are going to put in effort. Don’t you want to do that?

MS NAKADAMA: Mr Speaker, I am going to work with the Attorney-General, together with the Office of the Prime Minister and the secretariat, to see that it is given priority.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well done.

MS NAKADAMA: Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance on the petition by the Uganda National Musicians Federation on amendments to the Copyrights and Neighbouring Rights Act be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: As per Rule 220 of the Rules of Procedure, we need action taken within two months; I think that is appropriate. Since most of it will be provided for in the Bill, I hope we shall already be having it here for processing.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES AND COMMITTEE ON HEALTH ON A MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT URGING THE GOVERNMENT TO PRIORITISE INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES OF MYCOTOXIN CONTAMINATION IN THE COUNTRY

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chairperson, Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, you have 15 minutes. Just see a way of using them.

4.21

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (Ms Janet Okori-Moe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to lay the report of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the Committee on Health on a motion for a resolution of Parliament urging the Government to prioritise interventions to address challenges of mycotoxin contamination in the country. I beg to lay.

In the same vein, I beg to lay the minutes taken while the committee was considering the motion. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, on 18 July 2023, Hon. Martin Ojara Mapenduzi moved a motion for a resolution of Parliament urging the Government to prioritise interventions to address challenges of mycotoxin contamination in Northern Uganda.

Arising out of the debate on the motion, the Speaker referred the motion to the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the Committee on Health for joint consideration and guided that the scope should not be limited to northern Uganda, but cover the entire country.

Mr Speaker, the two committees considered the motion and now I beg to report.

Mycotoxins are toxic secondary metabolites produced by fungi that contaminate food crops, animal feeds and the environment. The common mycotoxins include aflatoxins, fumonisins, ochratoxins, deoxynivalenol/vomitoxin and zearalenone.

The terms of reference for consideration of the motion were;

- (i) To establish the cause of mycotoxin prevalence in the country.
- (ii) To ascertain the magnitude of mycotoxin prevalence in the country.
- (iii) To find out the impact of mycotoxins on human health; the economy; and the environment.
- (iv) To assess the Government interventions aimed at reducing mycotoxin prevalence in the country.

Causes of mycotoxin prevalence in the country

The causes include climatic and environmental factors, inappropriate agronomical practices, poor post-harvest handling of produce, and non-regulated grain trade in the country.

Magnitude of mycotoxin prevalence in the country

The committee established that various studies have been carried out regarding mycotoxins in the country. The studies are well spelt out.

Mr Speaker, I request that since I have only 15 minutes, honourable colleagues, should read, since they are good readers. Let me now go straight to the committee observations and recommendations on page 15 of the report.

Causes of mycotoxin prevalence in the country

The committee observed that:

- (i) Uganda's location astride the equator and climatic conditions make it a conducive environment for the growth and multiplication of mycotoxins.
- (ii) The above causes of mycotoxin prevalence are largely unknown by the general public. What is initially attributed to mycotoxins are poor post-harvest handling practices.
- (iii) The inadequate regulation of the grain trade has resulted in untested grain on the market whose quality may not meet the required standards, including limits on mycotoxin contamination. This was attributed to the inadequate funding to the UNBS to enforce compliance with the standards.
- (iv) Although the Grain Council of Uganda is a non-profit and non-governmental self-regulatory organisation whose objectives include enhancing compliance with grain standards, the council operates without a regulatory mandate to enforce compliance.
- (iv) UNBS majorly enforces grain standards for export, with a limited focus on grain for domestic consumption.

The committees recommend that:

- (i) Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and other responsible ministries and agencies, should create awareness about the existence of mycotoxins in the country and the dangers of contamination of food and water. There are 200 types of mycotoxins and I think as a country, we need to take keen interest in the types.
- (ii) Government, through the Minister of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries and other relevant ministries and agencies, should educate farmers about measures to control mycotoxin contamination in the food chain.

- (iii) Government should also invest in a national silo storage system so as to improve post-service handling practices.
- (iv) The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should provide guidelines on best practices of grain transportation and storage.
- (v) There should be massive and continuous sensitisation of farmers and transporters in appropriate ways of transporting and storage of grains. This should be done by all responsible stakeholders.
- (vi) The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should put in place mechanisms for inspecting and apprehending transporters engaged in inappropriate transportation of grains.
- (vii) The Government, together with the private sector, should find ways of enabling farmers to access equipment to prevent post-harvest contamination by mycotoxins and other contaminants.
- (viii) Government should expedite the establishment of a food regulatory agency to subsequently take over the role of food quality regulation.
- (ix) The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should scale up farmer registration programs across the entire country to ensure traceability and compliance with good agricultural practices.
- (x) Government should put in place a mechanism for national surveillance, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting on compliance with the above standards and recommendations.
- (ii) Aflatoxin is the main contaminant mycotoxin found in cereals and legumes for human consumption as well as animal feeds.
- (iii) The level of exposure by Ugandans to mycotoxins is high since the most affected food types are staple foods which are widely consumed and they contain more than one type of mycotoxin.
- (iv) The level of prevalence varies across districts and regions, as seen from the studies that had earlier on talked about, with some regions recording a high prevalence rate compared to others. The level of prevalence in grains produced by the same household also varies.
- (v) Infants and children are at risk since maize contains the highest level of mycotoxins and is consumed in many schools. Baby food too, contains mycotoxin.
- (vi) Maize and sorghum have the highest level of mycotoxin contamination. One study found that sorghum had the highest amount of mycotoxins, while another found that maize had the highest and these studies were done in all the regions of the country.

The committees recommend that:

- (i) Government, through a multi-sectoral team should design a public information programme aimed at educating the masses about mycotoxin prevalence in the country. The campaign can be implemented through Government and private media houses to reach a large audience.
- (ii) Government through a multi-sectoral team should conduct more research on the prevalence of mycotoxins in the country.

5.3 Impact of mycotoxin contamination on -

5.3.1 Human health

Magnitude of mycotoxin contamination prevalence in the country

The committee observed that:

- (i) The findings on mycotoxin prevalence are largely unknown by the general public.

The most known health effect of aflatoxins is liver cancer. Globally, about 782,200 new cases of liver cancer occur annually, and 83 per cent (648,200) of them occur in less developed countries like Uganda, including the rest of the African countries. Further, 28.2 per cent of the annual global liver cancer cases may be

attributable to aflatoxin exposure, and 40 per cent of these cases occur in Africa.

The committee observed that:

- (i) Whereas aflatoxins have an impact on human health, there is limited information in this regard to:
 - How they can be managed to avoid food poisoning;
 - Their impact on the body's neurological system, reproductive system, and efficacy of drugs.

The committees recommend that:

- (i) Government, through their respective stakeholders, should conduct epidemiological studies to specifically establish aflatoxin exposure in humans and animals;
- (ii) Governments should strengthen the policies for diagnosis, treatment and management of aflatoxin-induced diseases.
- (iii) Governments should fund specific innovations aimed at preventing mycotoxin contamination.
- (iv) It should also develop a national awareness programme on mycotoxins and their impact on health.
- (v) There is a need to establish a food regulatory agency to ensure food quality standards.

Mr Speaker, lastly on Government initiatives aimed at reducing mycotoxin contamination and prevalence, the committees observe as follows:

- (i) Aflatoxin prevalence negatively affects the export markets of Uganda, especially Ugandan cereals, since the importing countries reject Ugandan goods.
- (ii) The cost of treatment or the economic burden of treating and managing the health effects of aflatoxin contamination is high and unaffordable for the average Ugandan.
- (iii) Many traders or dealers have run out of business due to failure to service their debts after rejection of Ugandan grain products by key importing countries.

The recommendations by the committees are as follows:

- (i) Government, through the Ugandan National Bureau of Standards (UNBS), should strengthen the regulatory framework to improve the detection of foods with aflatoxin before export and consumption.
- (ii) Government should carry out a verification exercise of the traders whose goods were rejected with a view of compensating them.

Mr Speaker, the committees were also informed that there is conformity in regional testing standards. The implication is that once a commodity passes the testing criteria in one East African member state, by default, it passes another member state's testing criteria. However, the precedent set by the South Sudan scenario is that commodities are subjected to numerous tests, even after being certified and cleared by UNBS.

The committees observed that the conformity in regional testing standards seems to be only on paper, but not in practice. The committees therefore recommend that:

- (i) There should be continuous engagement with East African Community Governments and their respective ministries and agencies to ensure that these bottlenecks are dealt with so that double and repeated testing of the commodities is eliminated.
- (ii) In the short term, the importing countries should send back to the country of origin any commodity they find or suspect to be contaminated with aflatoxins for subsequent action.
- (iii) In the medium-term and long-term, the East African Community countries should consider setting up one-stop testing centres for aflatoxins in line with what the revenue authorities and immigration agencies of the East African Community countries are doing.

On the environmental impact of mycotoxins, the committees observed that there is limited information about mycotoxin contamination of the environment and ultimately limited awareness. The committees recommend that more research should be carried out about the impact of mycotoxins on the environment with a view of disseminating the findings to the general public and instituting preventive measures against further degradation of the environment.

On Government initiatives aimed at reducing mycotoxin contamination, one on NARO, the committees were informed that the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) has developed anti-aflatoxin technology, that is Aflasafe, which is a biological product for reducing aflatoxin contamination. This product has been tested to be safe and effective for integrated management of aflatoxins in maize, sorghum and groundnut value chains.

The committees observed that:

- (i) There is limited awareness still among the general public and farmers in particular about the existence of the above solutions to mycotoxin contamination in food, crops and animal feeds, purposely because NARO has not started commercial production due to limited funding.
- (ii) Limited funding for NARO is a hindrance to commercial rollout of the anti-mycotoxin innovations.

The committees therefore recommend that:

- (i) NARO, through Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should present detailed cost estimates of the cost of commercialisation rollout and popularisation of anti-mycotoxin technological initiatives.
- (ii) Government should provide adequate resources to support the multiplication and release of aflatoxin-resistant varieties that NARO has produced to farmers in collaboration with the seed producers and distributors.

- (iii) NARO should continue to develop aflatoxin-resistant varieties for all susceptible crops.

On Uganda National Bureau of Standards, the committee observed that the UNBS laboratory provides analytical and certification services, but only to the companies that are exporting to countries where there are aflatoxin regulations. However, the committees noted that there is limited enforcement of these standards locally in the country.

The committees, therefore, recommend that:

- (i) UNBS should strengthen the licensing and inspection of grain dealers and other food traders to ensure compliance.
- (ii) UNBS should also harmonise and enforce the same standards for exported and locally traded foods.
- (iii) Governments should enhance public education on food safety standards.
- (iv) UNBS should ensure that all Ugandan standards conform to international standards for mycotoxin.
- (v) The Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority should implement the Ugandan standard – US EAS 44:2019 and US EAS 2:2017, where the maximum amount of aflatoxin is 10 parts per billion (ppb) for several foods including maize, sorghum, and peanuts; and five milligrams (ppb) for baby foods, by procuring quality maize and subcontracting certified and pre-qualified grain processors. It should be made a mandatory field on the e-procurement system.

On promoting food safety standards in education institutions and the decentralisation of testing and certification centres, the committees observed that whereas UNBS has developed standards for most food products, including grain, access to facilities for measuring the levels of mycotoxins are difficult. They are only available in big laboratories, which are located far from the first-line users - the farmers and the aggregators.

The committees recommend that:

- (i) Government, through UNBS, should develop and avail user-friendly, simple kits for testing levels of mycotoxins in food products. The kits should be of good quality, affordable and durable.
- (ii) The Government through the Ministry of Local Government should equip districts and subcounty offices with testing kits for aflatoxins since no area is safe. The testing can be done by the extension workers, who should also visit aggregation centres to do random sampling of the grain.

Mr Speaker, on the Uganda Warehouse Receipt System Authority (UWRSA), the committees observed that many warehouses are ill-equipped and lack many basic items to properly operationalise them. Equipment such as ICT, quality and analysis kits, including aflatoxin detection kits are lacking in most warehouses.

The committees recommend that Government through the UWRSA should set guidelines for the warehouses which mandate them to purchase aflatoxin testing kits.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries National Strategic Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Aflatoxins (2018/2019-2023/2024)

In 2018, the National Strategic Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Aflatoxins was officially launched by His Excellency, the Vice-President of Uganda. The plan is due for revision this financial year. As part of its implementation, various information, education and communication tools were developed and translated into local languages.

The committees recommend that the National Strategic Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Aflatoxins should be revised and updated in the last quarter of this financial year, taking into account the recommendations contained in this report.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion, management and control of mycotoxin contamination (aflatoxins

that are the most widespread) is a complex challenge which requires coordinated efforts from multiple stakeholders like Government agencies, farmers, researchers, food processors, traders, exporters, transporters, consumers and leaders like us, among others.

The Government should prioritise the implementation of a combination of interventions ranging from improved agricultural practices to regulatory measures and public awareness campaigns. These can significantly reduce the prevalence of aflatoxins, safeguard public health, and promote sustainable agricultural and economic development in Uganda.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for your attention and I thank the two committees for working together to produce this report. I beg to submit. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I take this opportunity to thank the leadership of both committees; that is agriculture and health, for the comprehensive report. As I was reading it, I could tell that it is a report, which the committee put in all their effort backed up by very strong research and recommendations.

Before I open the debate, I usually request the minister concerned to make clarifications, which help us in the debate. It is always very important. Honourable minister, if you have any?

4.48

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES (ANIMAL INDUSTRY) (Lt Col (Rtd) Bright Rwamirama): Thank you, Mr Speaker. We interacted with the committee and agreed with the recommendations.

However, I would like to inform the House that we have technology to deal with aflatoxins from the garden, to post-harvest handling and storage up to transportation to the markets.

The awareness campaign is still low, but we have prioritised it to make people aware,

especially now that we are targeting lucrative markets, and we have attracted investors here to deal with the grain. On the recommendation of the Food Authority, Cabinet approved creation of the Food Authority to deal with food, veterinary drugs, agricultural chemicals, and it will be regulating food and those veterinary drugs and chemicals. In addition, it will be a fully-fledged authority. We have finished the principles. We shall soon bring the draft Bill to Parliament.

Finally, on the other recommendations, we agree with the committee, and we have shared information as contained in the report. I thank both committees for their input. We shall move together.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The mover –

4.51

MR MARTIN MAPENDUZI (Independent, Bardege-Layibi Division, Gulu City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First, I would like to thank you for allowing the committee to present the report, which I believe has been ably done by the chairperson. I also thank the committee for doing a commendable job. *(Applause)*

As the committee has stated, as a country, we can now see the dangers we are faced with if we do not take action in dealing with this kind of situation we are faced with. From the committee report, you get to understand how grave and challenging the situation is, especially as far as the activities of the farmers are concerned.

I am particularly very happy that among many other recommendations, the committee has recommended the need to have a body that would be mandated to look at the aspect of regulation, especially on the quality of food.

The other issue is the question of how we would be able to trace and know if a farmer has brought to the market contaminated food. Apart from rejecting or impounding it, tracing up to the source is one of the things that the committee has brought out clearly.

Mr Speaker, with this report, it is upon the country, especially the Government, to see how expeditiously we can implement some of the recommendations that have been proposed. When a farmer loses, the country loses. It is even more severe on the citizens who survive on what is brought from the farm.

Finally, with this picture that has been created, especially now that the Government is implementing the Parish Development Model, our people who have accessed this money have put it to good use. How are we going to help them from the effects of mycotoxin contamination when they begin to produce a lot from the investment that the Government has put in?

Therefore, I would like to appreciate the work of the committee, but also call upon those who will be charged with the responsibility of implementing to take this matter seriously. Thank you, Sir.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Mushemeza, Hon. Ameede, Hon. Kayondo, Hon. Ababiku, the Member for Arua and Hon. Melsa. I will give you a chance, honourable colleagues, but let us be quick because we seem – I do not know if there is anyone with a contrary view to what is in the report.

4.54

PROF. ELIJAH MUSHEMEZA (Independent, Sheema County South, Sheema): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I join the others to thank the committee for a good report. I have three issues.

One, the committee identified various causes of mycotoxins and singled out the poor post-harvest handling of produce. I would like to agree with you. You went ahead to observe that we need massive awareness, but the question would be: where would the money come from? I would like to suggest that since we have the Parish Development Model programme going on and one of its pillars – my favourite – is community mobilisation and mindset change, we could look at the literature being used by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social

Development, which is taking the lead, and we improve it so that we can deal with this issue.

The second issue is about your analysis of the impact assessment, which was one of the terms of reference. In impact assessment analysis, we look at the situation before and the situation after. I would have expected you to give some statistics because you zeroed in on liver cancer as one of the effects of these toxins. Ten years ago, what was the situation with cancer cases? Were they more than they are today? What are the other variables – because it cannot only be liver cancer that is the effect of the mycotoxins?

If we single out those variables and look at the situation 10 years ago and today, then, we would be able to say that there is this kind of impact.

Furthermore, I am glad the Cabinet is now looking at certain situations as special cases. When we were dealing with competition and consumer protection, an impression was created that a policy has been taken by the Cabinet that you cannot create an authority. However, I am glad you are looking at this situation as unique and recommending for an authority. Therefore, I request the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General that the Cabinet should not be rigid.

Finally, you recommended research. Indeed, we should invest. Honourable minister, you should request for more funds to carry out more research in these areas for the good of our country. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Ameede?

4.57

MS AGNES AMEEDE (Independent, Woman Representative, Butebo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the committee for the report.

I would like to draw the attention of the minister to the issue of enforcement. While we wait for the food and regulatory safety – that one – I think we still have the structures in place that can enforce the issue of aflatoxins. We have all

the structures in the administrative structures of both public service and security.

However, these people are not doing their work. We have extension workers at subcounty level, but they are not working. Perhaps some of them are even ignorant about the issue of aflatoxins. The last time I was in my constituency, I engaged the community and I asked them if they had heard of aflatoxins and they said they had not. Something is wrong.

In 2022, my Committee on East African Community Affairs was interacting with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and we inquired about this issue. After benchmarking in Kenya – whereas Kenya, nationally, had over 10,000 national inspectors, the commissioner at that time, who attended the committee meeting, talked about only 200 national inspectors in our country. Who is there to enforce agricultural standards in the districts? There is nobody and that is where the policies are going wrong because the extension workers are not empowered – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS AMEEDE: Mr Speaker, just one minute. The other issue I would like to draw the minister's attention to is a cross-cutting issue: the general poor handling of food. Our food, in the markets, is filthy. We could start with the markets that are defined, and in the city, to enforce standards. However, nobody is doing that. I think there are people sleeping on the job. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Kayondo and Hon. Ababiku.

5.00

MR FRED KAYONDO (DP, Mukono County South, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mycotoxin is a silent killer in Uganda. Why? This is because more than 200 mycotoxins are highly carcinogenic. Carcinogenic means they are cancer-causing agents and they are causing a lot of food poisoning.

Mr Speaker, I have confronted many health workers. One sign of food poisoning is diarrhoea. The issue with these mycotoxins is that they require a specific diagnosis and a specific prescription. If you go to the health facility, they will try to treat the diarrhoea. If you are not responding, they will give you Imodium, a drug that stops the flow of the diarrhoea. When the flow is stopped, it has not cured. What happens? You are going to the stage of cancer.

Mr Speaker, I would like to commend the committee for requesting the Government to invest more in research. Mycotoxins are killing our people. There is a lot of cancer developing and the issue is mycotoxins. This is because it has not been given attention.

Mr Speaker, I recommend that the Ministry of Health and the National Medical Stores, as drugs are distributed drugs, also include the specific tests for mycotoxins *—(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Kayondo, conclude.

MR KAYONDO: Secondly, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I said conclude and you went to “secondly”. *(Laughter)*

MR KAYONDO: As I conclude, Mr Speaker, the committee made – I wish I had time to carry out a biochemical lecture here. The committee made a wise observation and recommendation on the post-harvest handling. The reason why our farmers keep their crops for long is simply because of bad seasons and lack of markets for their products. If the Government can intervene and provide a market for the produce, I think it can in one way or the other help in reducing the effects of mycotoxins. I submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Kayondo.

5.02

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I join the

rest in appreciating the work done by the two committees and more so, Hon. Mapenduzi, for having raised this matter.

Mr Speaker, it is openly killing us. I visited the cancer institute and by the time I left, I was feeling feverish. The people affected are regardless of the age brackets. Therefore, my proposal is that we must take immediate actions. I agree with what the honourable minister said, but I strongly believe we can start something without even cash money.

We have Government structures so, why don't we mainstream talking points on this matter through the relevant structures including honourable Members of Parliament like me and you? Our people are dying. Are we going to wait for money to be budgeted?

Mr Speaker, I feel the Prime Minister must start something; she must direct She is the Leader of Government Business. We have the structure from LCI up to our side.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I have just been informed that on the screen, Hon. Kayondo was being displayed as NUP and yet he is DP. Let the *Hansard* capture right record. He is seated between members of NUP, but he is not NUP. I had already picked Member for Arua City, Dr Melsa and Hon. Acibu Agnes.

5.05

MS MOURINE OSORU (NRM, Woman Representative, Arua City): Mr Speaker, thank you for this opportunity. I also want to thank the committee for having presented a wonderful report before this August House. Indeed, the concerns of mycotoxins have become a problem in this country.

Recently, Gulu University, Faculty of Agriculture and Environment, carried out research, especially in areas of Lango and Acholi subregions. They found out that 90 per cent of mycotoxin is found in grains. I think the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) efforts need to be supported even if it means funding UNBS.

Mr Speaker, if UNBS does not carry its mandate of supporting food quality and safety, then we will have problems. I request that the Government should be in position to heavily support UNBS such that it can carry out this mandate.

The Government through production officers of our districts and cities should be able to sensitise the farmers to do at least intercropping such that we overcome some of these challenges.

As the committee suggested that the Government should be putting national awareness programmes in place, since we already have those extension workers, let us could use them to mobilise farmers to encourage them such that they can take good care of their products while harvesting and planting it in order to overcome all these issues of mycotoxins. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Melsa?

5.07

DR MELSA AVAKO (NRM, Woman Representative, Yumbe): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this great opportunity. I also join honourable colleagues to thank the two committees for the comprehensive report. This issue of mycotoxins is a very serious matter because it directly affects lives.

Our honourable colleagues have correctly mentioned that when you visit hospitals, it is so worrying that our citizens are dying of cancer. When I read the research reports, the findings are so worrying. Like she said, findings of the research carried out by Gulu University revealed that 90 per cent trace of this mycotoxin is found in grains. Therefore, I strongly agree with the committee report that we need to strengthen UNBS and the other agencies so that they continue to support the quality of food safety so we save the lives of our people. I thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, when you look at an agency like National Agricultural Research

Organisation (NARO) - I encouraged most of you to visit NARO. When you visit NARO and you see what they are doing, it is a fantastic job.

When we are talking about research, go to NARO and see the job they have done on this issue. The crops they have developed and the systems are very fantastic and. However, you find we are not giving NARO money yet cancer is being spread all over.

I hope when we come to budgeting, entities like NARO that are doing a great job are going to be considered seriously. *(Applause)* We should stand our ground and support the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to fight this. Otherwise, we shall join those who lament and then outside, they will say we are the ones who are appropriate. In fact, committee chairpersons, when we are doing appropriation, let us look at the different recommendations Parliament has made in relation to works of our committee and we say we agreed on this. Is it reflected in our budget? These are some of the questions we should be asking. Otherwise, we make recommendations and fail to provide money and then accuse a minister and the minister is - So we end up - Hon. Acibu and then Hon. Solomon. Is it aflatoxin causing a Member to behave that way?

5.10

MS AGNES ACIBU (NRM, Woman Representative, Nebbi): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I want to add my voice by thanking and appreciating the report that has been presented to us today.

First of all, when we are talking about the effects of aflatoxins, it is really very serious and very challenging. As we talk about the effects of these aflatoxins and mycotoxins, you find it that it is deep in the villages.

You are aware that when it comes to handling our health challenges, today as we talk, it requires a lot of money. Therefore, as we talk about the dangers of aflatoxin and mycotoxin, we need to have a short-term and long-term

solution. I do strongly believe that when we are going to talk about the short-term solution, as a country we have extension workers down there. As politicians, we are there.

Sometimes when we go to the district, we use Government time, which is there in our district. The first thing I think we are going to do to have an immediate effect is to talk to our farmers to understand why most of our people, both young and old are suffering from cancers that cannot easily be explained by any of us. I strongly believe that as a House, when we come to the long term solution, of course, it all goes back to money. If it goes all back to money, what is the size of our—*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Chelangat and then Hon. Nulu.

5.12

MR SOLOMON ALINGA (NRM, Toö County, Bukwo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. First of all, I want to thank very much the committee for the report which is a fair representation of what is happening in the country.

I come from Sebei Subregion which grows maize and that is maize grain. I have been interacting with one of the health officers in my district and they told me that the cases of cancer especially, liver cancer has tripled for the last five years. That means, Mr Speaker, like the committee has said, that these mycotoxins could have been the cause of all those problems that we are facing.

The Government has tried its part and I want to believe that they have constructed some warehouses across the country. Unfortunately, those warehouses in Bukwo have not been completed and their completion date is over. Those warehouses could have been places of checking these things because we could have some testing kits in every warehouse so that the community can utilise those testing kits.

I, therefore, request the relevant authorities to ensure that these warehouses, in which the

Government has injected a lot of money, are completed and used.

Secondly—*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Nulu?

5.14

MR NULU BYAMUKAMA (NRM, Kitagwenda County, Kitagwenda): Thank you, Mr Speaker, sir. I would like to support the committee.

However, farmers have issues and they have real problems. I tried to be a farmer and planted 12 acres of maize. I went down to the container village to look for the pesticide. When I got there, they gave me the best and it was very expensive. When we did the spraying, it attracted all the insects and my 12 acres collapsed. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Because they also wanted the best, they came to feed on the best. *(Laughter)*

MR BYAMUKAMA: Now, we have a problem, I think, with Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) and it goes beyond insects and pesticides.

I went home on Good Friday with the acaricide. I said, okay, let them spray my cows when I am watching. But can you imagine, two of them died? I wondered what this is.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, however much we are talking about other things, we have a problem with UNBS. Honourable minister, you need to try and help Ugandans on this. I am here talking about it because I am a Member of Parliament, but there are so many other farmers there who are getting out of business and it is a very big problem. *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Nulu. Because you lost your 12 acres and two cows, I allowed you to continue after adding yourself time. Hon. Nyakikongoro?

5.17

MS ROSEMARY NYAKIKONGORO (NRM, Woman Representative, Sheema):

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the exhaustive report.

Much as we are talking about post-harvest handling, there is an issue of storage which my colleague talked about, but it was not expanded on. We do not have silos in this country. What people have resorted to, because of lack of market and poor market for their produce, especially when they produce a lot and the prices keep on fluctuating, is storing their cereals and seeds using poor, rudimentary methods.

I do not know whether you have heard it. I have heard from my people that they use rat poison. *(Interjection)* It is not a powder; they are like pellets. You can imagine, they put rat poison pellets in sacks of cereals to kill the weevils, as they wait for the market prices to improve. I think there is a big problem. As the ministry has said, they need to look into that, particularly the silos.

Mr Speaker, there is also an issue – I wish we had the minister for information here, because when we talk about the Ministry of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance, I thought these are the people who would be speaking for us. They are allotted minutes on different radio stations. They are the people that are supposed to be feeding the country with such information. Now, if we, the Members of Parliament, take up that responsibility, who will believe in us? The population may ask whether you are becoming the spokesperson of Government.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please conclude.

MS NYAKIKONGORO: What if you have wrong information that you disseminate to the people? I challenge the Minister of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance to liaise with the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to come up with a package so that

they sensitise our people, particularly on post-harvest handling.

There is a table that was demonstrated in the report. I am just worried, particularly when you look at the prevalence of aflatoxins in infant foods. Those figures, I do not know whether they are percentages and what they reflect in terms of negative impact, particularly to our children who feed on these products on a daily basis. As a country, aren't we standing on a time bomb? The cancers that are happening in this country –

We need an interpretation of this table so that we understand whether we are to abandon these products for our children; so that we know what to do. Otherwise, we are killing a big generation of our people where mothers – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Opendi?

5.20

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the report.

This issue of aflatoxins was considered at the East African Community level while I was chairing the EAC Council of Ministers of Health. We discussed this matter and it was agreed upon. Aware that countries do not have specific institutions that monitor the foods that we eat, it was agreed that we establish the National Food and Drug Authority because the food that we eat actually turns into poison.

The National Drug Authority was felt as the most competent body to deal with this matter. Other countries like South Sudan, Burundi, and Rwanda established or incorporated food into one of the activities that the National Drug Authority should implement.

Unfortunately, in this country we went into politics of fighting, wanting to own and handle food alone, between the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries then and the

Ministry of Health. To-date, we have failed to set up the National Food and Drug Authority which is very unfortunate, despite the National Drug Authority having competence in dealing with this matter. It is extremely unfortunate.

Apart from the storage challenges that we are facing, how I wish the Government could support farmers to buy those bags that World Food Programme supplies to farmers. I have seen them. They are actually airtight and no moisture gets into the cereals once they have stored the cereals in those bags. They are called, I think, hermetic bags. I have seen them in some of my –(Member timed out) Mr Speaker, may I conclude?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: But you never lost cows or maize –(Laughter) Okay, conclude.

MS OPENDI: Mr Speaker, aware of the challenge that aflatoxins cause to our population, I want to really – since constructing silos has become too expensive for the Government, let us invest and support farmers with those bags so that once they have harvested and dried, they can put these cereals into those bags.

I want to end by saying that when I went to Adjumani, I found another challenge. While we are talking about aflatoxins, these grinding machines that are grinding maize, groundnuts and all that we are eating today, particles of those machines are actually being consumed by people. There are many people suffering from kidney because of that. Let us also look into that, Mr Speaker.

Ugandans are now lazy; they no longer want to grind or pound the groundnuts. Everybody buys ready-made groundnuts, which is very dangerous. This is the information that I would like to get –(Member timed out.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable colleagues, there are many cases and instances where we live in danger. Following up on this has been difficult.

Recently, I saw a big headline on the *New Vision* that we consume transformer oil in *chapatti*.

Hon. Songa was the deputy chairperson of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. As a committee, we made a report in 2017, which was adopted. When we toured around the country, we found out that people were vandalising transformers to get oil, because it could work for two years. Yes, the people who make *chapatti* said that whereas they use this normal cooking oil for two to three times repeatedly, the transformer oil can be used repeatedly for making *chapatti* for two years.

Our recommendation was that for the transformers brought into this country, they should find a way of locking that part of oil so that one cannot easily extract it. However, I saw the headline the other day on the *New Vision* News Paper and I said that this was something we did in 2017, and we adopted a report here.

Now, we have even started eating private parts in food, something which I saw the other day, and the video is in circulation. (Laughter) We should stop eating this cooked food and start eating grass because the cooked food is becoming a problem.

Yes, Hon. Songa – We are concluding this, honourable colleagues. I will call Hon. Beatrice Anywar and Hon. Christine Kaaya.

5.25

MR LAWRENCE SONGA (NRM, Ora County, Zombo): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

First of all, I thank the committees for the good report. One important thing we need to note is that we need, as a country, to do a mindful food production system and marketing. This is very important so that we can mind about the consumers of the food we are producing. The question is, why are people eating food which have mycotoxins? Most people are smallholder farmers. They produce on a small scale. The question of the market may be there, but some people have nothing to take to the market, yet they still eat food which is already poisoned. Therefore, we need to check our food production system, so that we produce healthy food, while minding about the consumers.

Regarding post-harvest handling, we make a lot of losses as we handle food after harvest. We need good storage systems. We need to double our production through irrigation, so that we do not eat food as a last resort, even if it is infected. We must have surplus healthy food, which we can eat, instead of eating food because we have no alternative. That can only happen if we double our production and have food security; food for home use, food for the market or industries, and also for emergencies, in case there is disaster.

The fungi in mycotoxins thrive very well when there is increase in carbon dioxide. Even on medicine, they write, store in cool and dry place. It does not mean that you should go and put that medicine in water. For food, we need a certain temperature to store healthy food. This is a big challenge which we need to address. When it comes to marketing, the African market has about 1.3 billion people. Within Uganda, we still have people who need food. So, we need to improve the marketing system. Nobody will buy our food if we do not produce healthy food. If we are producing food that is infected, nobody will buy it. We need to check the whole value chain from production, storage, and transportation up to consumption. Thank you very much.

5.28

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (ENVIRONMENT)

(Ms Beatrice Anywar): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committees for the report that we are discussing. However, I also take note that their submission included a big part of it, yet a silent part of it is the environment. I wish that sector was also consulted, probably it would have enriched the report more on the environmental issue.

As it has been alluded to, mycotoxin is a killer in human beings, animals and environment. That has already been established. Aflatoxins, which have caused many effects, would need the intervention of chemical binders to help remove the toxins from the body. These interventions move in a triangle. Whatever interventions we put in place, either from human to animals,

they end up in the environment. That is why, I am happy to belong to a group of global leaders on antimicrobials, and I represent Africa. I am happy that my colleague, the minister of agriculture and I, have been meeting – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Conclude, honourable minister.

MS ANYWAR: The world approach is one health, where we look at all interventions in totality, because it is in a triangle form. It affects the humans, it goes into animals, and ends up also in the environment, and vice versa.

Therefore, the issue which Hon. Kamukama alluded to is that with the effect of climate change, which Hon. Songa referred to, the heat has increased and aflatoxins can now flourish. In the interventions where we use pesticides, all these have become resistant to the normal situation. It has to be dealt with in totality, in one-health approach.

As a country, I beg that we adopt that approach. As an environmentalist, most of the interventions leave out the environment, which is key in supporting these interventions.

I also like the point on silos as alluded to by Hon. Sarah Opendi. As Government, it challenges us to make them available and affordable to the communities. Otherwise, the pesticides in the community, including poison being used, is at its highest. In effect, we cannot approach it in totality if we do not handle it in a triangle form. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Leader of the Opposition –

5.32

MS CHRISTINE KAAYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Kiboga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Like the minister has highlighted, the environmental aspects had to come out clearly because we are at a time when they are emphasising the fork – from the soil forks to the plate or table forks. It is very important that the mycotoxins - it is the climate that

brings this. At the same time, when we get the mycotoxins, they still affect the environment. For example, the soils that are subjected to mycotoxins cannot support germination and the plants cannot have firm stems and roots.

Mr Speaker, this might also be the effect of the seeds. Some time back, the seeds were given late to some Members of parliament and they kept it. After some time, they complained that it did not germinate. The storage of those seeds must have been affected by mycotoxins.

Mr Speaker, the issue of climate change still comes out because the indicator that shows that there is a lot of carbon in some place is the condition – the chairperson of the climate change committee has highlighted – of warm and humid conditions.

We have also visited NARO and they showed us a number of approved technologies, but the dissemination of those technologies is at stake. They are looking to us and the different ministries to help to come up with a plan for dissemination.

Mr Speaker, in the report, they have highlighted that there is also Aflasafe to address the issue of aflatoxin. When you look out for the market of Aflasafe in Uganda, it is not anywhere, yet even USA imports Aflasafe from Africa. The nearest market is in Kenya. If, in Uganda, we have already identified it as a good option, where is it, where is its market and how much is it? Where are the refresher courses to the agricultural extension workers?

The agricultural extension workers are not aware. Even in their messages to the farmers, they do not bring out this. Mr Speaker, we also have to be very careful with the marketing options and the uptake of genetically modified organisms in the quest – because whatever they talk about is that the biological control solutions are good and that they are good for the environment. However, some of the side effects may be dangerous.

I will end by showing my dissatisfaction with the maize enterprise in Uganda. Maize is the

most eaten, but according to the research of the committee, it is the most affected by mycotoxins, at 56 per cent.

Mr Speaker, it is not only affecting crops – I see animal husbandry people smiling – but they also affect hay, forage and the animal feeds. They also affect the value addition – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, is there anything you would like to add?

LT COL (RTD) RWAMIRAMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank Members for their comments, but I would like to make a few clarifications. Who is there to enforce these innovations and agricultural standards? This is a delegated function to extension workers in local governments. If you look at our budget, almost one-third of our budget at the ministry for agriculture goes to these workers.

Mr Speaker, we have a low level of extension workers – I think one honourable member mentioned it – and we have been trying to push the number of extension workers up to 8,000. We are at as low as actually 3,500. We need more extension workers in the field, especially now that we are implementing Parish Development Model.

The general handling of food in the city and markets is very poor. Those of you who take Masaka Road, in Busega, you can see the road is jammed, because they are selling food on the road. For us at the ministry, we set the standards, but the enforcement is still a problem in the city. It is the same with Kalerwe – we shifted them and I thank the city authority for that – but now they have come back on the road. I think this is something that we have to deal with.

Mr Speaker, there was an issue of aflatoxin and mycotoxin. I want to say that people should not imagine that it is only coming from Uganda. Actually, much of it comes in – and this authority will be dealing with both those that are here and those which will be coming in.

Hon. Sarah Opendi, there is no politics. The National Drug Authority is there, fully functioning. However, like Hon. Nulu said, he bought acaricides, the cows became blind and that the pesticide attracted insects, and they wiped out the crops.

Mr Speaker, we commissioned a study of scientists and they recommended that we separate food, veterinary drugs and agricultural chemicals from National Drug Authority. This model is run by very serious countries like Germany and UK, and that is the model that the Cabinet has adopted. Otherwise, the National Drug Authority is functioning, only that it was overloaded. In the wisdom of the scientists, it was found fit that this is separated and the domicile ministry should be the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

Finally, I think there was one concern on NARO innovation. NARO has a lot of innovations. I am happy, Mr Speaker, that you are one of the Members who have visited our research stations in Namulonge. You have seen how we have innovations for aflatoxins. We try to send it out, but we are limited by both human resource and budget constraints. I think we need to up our campaign to make sure that these innovations are adopted. Most importantly, we need to work together rather than working in silos. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the attention.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Committee chairperson, I think the issues have been exhausted.

MS OKORI-MOE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank colleagues for their input in strengthening this committees' report and also in supporting the resolve of our country to address the challenges of aflatoxin.

Most of the issues have been responded to by my minister. I only wanted to respond to honourable professor, who said we only zeroed in on liver cancer as one of the problems caused by aflatoxin. I want to refer you, honourable member, to page 28 of the report and also to tell you that aflatoxin affects even the reproductive system; so you need to take care. *(Laughter)*

Otherwise, I thank you, and all the Members, and also my co-chairperson, Hon. Dr Samuel Acuti and all the members of this committee. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. On top of receiving a response, you received a warning. I now put the question that the report of the sectoral report of the Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and Committee on Health on a motion for a resolution of Parliament urging Government to prioritise interventions to address challenges of mycotoxin contamination in the country to be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Mapenduzi; thank you, chairperson and thank you, honourable colleagues, for these submissions. This is a very critical issue and I hope the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries as he said, these are issues he believes with the recommendations - but also there are issues for the trade's ministry which I hope will be looked into. Let us get an action taken report in three months. Thank you.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE ON A
PETITION ON ALLEGATIONS OF LAND
GRABBING FROM THE COMMUNITY OF
NYAKESI E ZONE, IYOKANGO PARISH,
NYANGOLE SUBCOUNTY IN TORORO
DISTRICT BY MS OWORI SYLVIA
DAMALIE

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is a small report. Chairperson of the committee, go straight to the recommendations.

5.45

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE (Mr Dan Atwijukire): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a report of a petition on allegations of land grabbing from the community of Nyakesi E

Zone Iyokango Parish, Nyangole Subcounty in Tororo District by Ms Owori Sylvia Damalie –

The Petition

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Kimosho, just a minute. Our Muslim brothers and sisters, you are free to sneak out and break the fast. Hon. Kabanda, do not go and Hon. Anywar, you are not part. We still need you here.

The petitioners prayed that Parliament rescues their land from the land grabber. The petitioners alleged that the residents of Nyakesi E Zone, Iyokango Parish, Nyangole Subcounty were living in fear due to continued harassment, intimidation, provocation, and sometimes violent attacks from a one Ms Owori Damalie, her agents, and security personnel.

MR ATWIJUKIRE: Mr Speaker, I am also fasting. I will do the introduction and straight away go to observations. This report has been with us for almost a year because it is March of 2023.

The petitioners further alleged that Ms Owori Sylvia Damalie claimed to be acting on instructions from Operation Wealth Creation.

This is a report of the committee on the petition by residents of Nyakesi E Zone, Iyokango Parish, Nyangole Subcounty on allegations of land grabbing by Ms Owori Sylvia Damalie.

Further, it was alleged that Ms Owori Sylvia Damalie was claiming over 90 acres of land from sections of the community where more than 200 families have lived for decades. She dispersed families, fenced off compounds, gardens, a private school, and a church.

The petition was tabled by Hon. Sarah Opendi, Woman Member of Parliament for Tororo District on 19 May 2022 and referred to the Committee on Physical Infrastructure for consideration and report to the House as per Article 90 of 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and Rules 157 and 189 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

The petitioners further alleged that Ms Owori Sylvia Damalie continues to encroach on the land with armed personnel, and on several occasions, her security guards have beaten up innocent people working in their gardens or picking firewood.

In their petition, the petitioners prayed that Parliament rescues their land from the land grabbers (Appendix 1).

It is further alleged in September 2020, she erected her grandfather's tomb in the compound of Heroes Foundation Primary School.

Further, Rule 187(f) of the Parliament Rules of Procedure provides for the jurisdiction and mandate of the committee, respectively, to cover the sectors of land, housing, urban development, fiscal planning, works, and transport.

The petitioners also alleged that they had tried to seek help from the Government through the offices of the Uganda Police Force, Resident District Commissioner (RDC), courts of law, and the offices of the area local councils, but have not got any permanent assistance to their grievances.

It is again in this background that the committee scrutinised the petition, interacted with relevant stakeholders, and compiled this report that it now presents to this House for consideration and adoption.

The petitioners stated that they have sought legal assistance from certain law firms which have gone ahead to commence legal proceedings against Ms Owori Damalie however, she continues to be unbothered about the petitioners' claims.

Mr Speaker, the methodology is very clear. I beg not to go into it, I will proceed to -

The petitioners alleged that before the arrival of Ms Owori Sylvia Damalie, the community was living in harmony, hence their concern

as to the actual intention of Operation Wealth Creation, which Ms Owori Sylvia Damalie claims to represent, and yet her actions of land grabbing, on the other hand, are depriving the petitioners of their main source of income and livelihood.

The petitioners asserted that a number of meetings have been held by the community since 2018 to March 2022 to resolve the matter or in vain. Hence the petition to Parliament.

The background is clear. I wish to move on –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: To page 14, honourable member. To the findings, observations and recommendations.

MR ATWIJUKIRE: Findings, observations and recommendations

1. The committee observed that there were no any heavy armed security personnel on the land under contention as was alleged by petitioners apart from personal security belonging to Ms Owori Sylvia Damalie at the time when the committee held a meeting with the community.

The committee was informed during the meeting with the community that the heavy armed security personnel that had been deployed earlier by Ms Owori Sylvia Damalie to guard the land under contention had been removed.

The committee recommends that the Government streamlines and sets clear guidelines on the deployment of its security personnel to private individuals/companies.

Further, the Government should ensure that security personnel comply with the law at all times, including when security personnel are deployed for private duties.

2. The committee was informed by Ms Owori Sylvia Damalie that the land under contention (Nyakesi ‘E’ Zone, Iyokango Parish, Nyangole Subcounty) is currently before the Chief Magistrate’s Court in Tororo vide Otedo Emmanuel

(Administrator of the estate of the late *Alfred Wandera Okech v. Sylvia Owori Damalie, Land Suit No.12 of 2022*, hence subjudice.

However, the committee observed that the matter before the Chief Magistrate’s Court holden in Tororo actually refers to customary land situated in Nyakesi ‘E’ Zone, Rubongi Subcounty in Tororo District. (Appendix 4)

On 12 August 2022, the committee sought the advice of the Rt Hon. Speaker of Parliament on the matter, in accordance with Rule 73 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament. The committee was advised that since Mr Emmanuel Otedo is just one of the many petitioners, his interests in court cannot jeopardise the interests and rights of the other petitioners who currently seek Parliament’s intervention.

The committee was consequently advised to proceed with investigations of the allegations contained in the petition, save for concerns of Mr Emmanuel Otedo. The committee, therefore, learnt that the matter is not sub judice.

3. During the committee’s visit to the land under contention, it was shown part of the land that is subject to court proceedings and hence did not venture into any investigations in that part of the land.

The committee was informed that Ms Sylvia Damalie Owori had prior requested for a piece of land in which to construct her ancestral home, to which the clan leadership agreed, but later, turned around and insisted on taking up more land, claiming that it belonged to her late father. This is the land that the petitioners allege that she is grabbing, in order to set up projects under Operation Wealth Creation, which she represents.

The committee recommends that Ms Sylvia Damalie Owori restricts herself to the portion of land that she was given by the Kayoro Katekoko clan leaders in 2018 and makes use of the available lawful avenues prescribed under

the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and the Land Act, Cap 227 to acquire more land in Nyakesei "E" zone, Iyokango Parish, Nyangole Subcounty in Tororo District, if she so wishes.

4. The committee further observed that a portion of land had been fenced off by Ms Sylvia Damalie Owori, although some families still lived within the fence.

The committee recommends that Ms Sylvia Damalie Owori restricts her activities of fencing land to the portion of land that was allocated to her by the Kayoro Katekoko clan leaders and any fencing carried out outside the said land should be demolished.

5. During the committee's visit to the land under contention, it was observed that there were crops on it. However, the committee was informed that crop farming started immediately after the withdrawal of the heavily armed security personnel, which coincided with the presentation of the petition to Parliament in May.

The committee was informed by the petitioners that part of the land that Ms Sylvia Damalie Owori surveyed was part of the land under contention, although she claimed that she had inherited it from her late father and therefore, it was not part of the community land.

The committee was further informed by officials from the Land Board that Ms Sylvia Damalie Owori had not been granted permission to survey the land.

The committee recommends that Ms Sylvia Damalie Owori removes the concrete pillars that she placed on the land under contention.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, the committee decries the ways in which individuals are misusing security personnel for their own selfish purposes through intimidation of the populace. Any disputes, land or otherwise should be left to the responsible authorities to handle. Further, emphasis should be placed

on streamlining of deployments to private individuals or companies.

The Government should also endeavour to sensitise the populace on various land laws, in order to avoid exploitation by unscrupulous persons.

The petition, minutes and attendance of the meetings, and list of members who participated are attached here. I hereby table the report. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker and honourable colleagues. I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, chairman. This is a report of the old committee. You should remain here to answer the questions. I might need the guidance of the Attorney-General after listening to this submission.

MR KIRYOWA KIWANUKA: Mr Speaker, I have had an opportunity to look at this report and it looks like a dispute where some people acknowledge a certain right, but it extends past the limits.

However, I am more concerned with the findings of the committee on pages 9 and 10, where they found that there were criminal cases with respect to this land and they list a barrage of disputes that current exist in court. They subsequently found out that there was no dispute on the same piece of land, but decided that this side has a dispute and the other side has no dispute.

Mr Speaker, debating a report of this nature is not a good idea because you would prejudice the rights of parties who are in court. The committee seems to have been mindful of the fact that the dispute is before court. It would be best for us to get more time to establish whether these matters are in court.

It would be a real slight on the court to say that we know this is a criminal case, but we continue to debate because it does not relate to that. It would be better for us to get more details about these cases, but in my quick view, this dispute is sub judice.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I asked the Attorney-General because it is a matter where the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development wrote and said it is *sub judice*. They started investigations and found that the issues were in court and therefore, could not proceed.

I would also like to have the Speaker's letter because it is not there. They attached all documents, but the Speaker's letter which said it is not *sub judice* is not available.

Honourable colleagues, would it be bad if I proposed, like the Attorney-General has guided, that we first get information? I think it helps. It would be bad for us to sit and discuss a matter which is active in court and clearly offends our own rules, even after being cautioned by the Attorney-General. That is the quickest way of someone going to court and they strike out our report, and we are castigated. *(Hon. Namuganza rose_)*

Honourable minister, is there anything beyond your letter? No, it is not for debate.

6.01

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (LANDS) (Ms Persis Namuganza): I know the law. I have ever informed this House that this matter is in court. Mr Speaker, I take your guidance. The minister, Hon. Judith Nabakooba, was here and re-emphasised that we study this matter after learning that the committee had moved.

The addition I would like to make is that community members petition Parliament over land matters, yet we have our own Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development. We have all the documentation regarding any land in Uganda, its origin, how it came to attain what and which certificate it bears.

So, I am wondering whether it is a new scenario that whenever a petition of land grabbing comes to Parliament, the committee will be going to the ground to investigate, bring a report and it is debated.

Mr Speaker, if I can inform you about the disputes that we have – the Attorney-General knows all of them and if they are to come here through Parliament now, it is like the committee is operating like the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development.

I am wondering, seriously, that is not the way to go because the Government has a well streamlined system. You always refer matters to relevant to ministries. If committee members want to work with the ministries, the ministries are there. We can then come up with actual information about this matter.

I take your guidance and I appeal to my honourable colleagues, not to debate this matter. We have also learnt that some of the petitioners think that Ms Sylvia Owori is going to contest for a position of a Member of Parliament and they are bringing all these allegations. I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Committee chairperson - *(Laughter)*

MR ATWIJUKIRE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I agree with your ruling on scrutinising this matter, but

One, the committee was mindful and sought the guidance of the Speaker who determines which matter is *subjudice* and which one is not. What we need is to put that letter on record.

Two, in response to the honourable minister's issue of reminding us about the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, I would like to tell you that if there is any ministry that has caused terrible horror to the people of this country, is the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development.

It has caused double titling, facilitated fraudsters hence it cannot be the same ministry from which people seek justice. I beg to submit. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Maybe for the comfort of Hon. Namuganza, Rule 30 of our Rules of Procedure gives

discretion to the Speaker to see where they deem the petition can quickly be processed.

In this case, the Speaker preferred to take it to the Committee on Physical Infrastructure. However, my fear, honourable colleagues, is that when we assign you duties, we should be very cautious.

A committee cannot order a demolition. Have we become a court? It is going beyond, but these are things we shall do, especially engaging more. Let me listen to the honourable colleague who presented the petition on behalf of the community.

6.04

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I presented this petition, however, when you read it, the petitioners passed this petition through the area Member of Parliament. I actually met them accidentally in the Speaker's Office.

Hon. Otaala, who brought them, was travelling, leading his Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. Since the petitioners were in the Speaker's Office, he then requested me to present this petition on his behalf.

Therefore, whoever thinks that Hon. Sarah Opendi presented this matter because she is scared of Ms Sylvia Owori – *(Text expunged)* *(Laughter)* I am not scared of opponents.

First, that is the information that I would like to give; it was Hon. Emmanuel Otaala who led the petitioners to the Speaker's Office. My signature is not on this petition. I only came in to present because he was away.

Secondly –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Sarah Opendi, before you go to another matter, your sister, Ms Sylvia Owori, does not have an opportunity of coming on this Floor to explain whether she is a Ugandan or not. *(Laughter)* She said that she is a Ugandan, votes in Uganda and all that. I request that, that part *(Text expunged)* - *(Laughter)*

MS OPENDI: Mr Speaker, these are the facts on the ground, because where this dispute is, her father married her mother who comes from this area and when her grandfather died, since her relatives were not here –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You know the reason I am insisting on that matter.

MS OPENDI: Mr Speaker, allow me to leave that matter and withdraw it, but that is the fact. *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, thank you. That is much better. Clerk, please consider that part which she has withdrawn and remove it from our record.

MS OPENDI: I would like to inform this House that I had to be in the community when the committee came to also understand the challenge. We clearly walked through the land; it was the entire village.

This petition has more than 150 people who were being affected; there were churches and schools. Hon. Nyakikongoro came as a guest of honour, invited by Hon. Emmanuel Otaala to officiate at a fundraising in the church, Iyokango Catholic Church.

Mr Speaker, the committee was mindful and even showed part of the dispute and that is why the issue of Mr Otedo because it is just a part of it, but the majority of the people are not in court.

As guided by the Attorney-General, we will wait until we get further information and then see how to proceed. Otherwise, there are other challenges that have actually emerged, which I cannot go into.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Those ones we shall handle. Let us not go – Thank you.

MS OPENDI: We are representatives of the people, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I know and you played your part. I am sure your people know

that you have played your part. Hon. Opendi, this is a procedure and technical hindrance because I do not want us to sit here, pass a resolution and then you here that we are in court as if we were careless in terms of how we deal –

Attorney-General, kindly help me work with the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to get facts on this matter and we see how best to handle it. No, that was removed from the record.

House adjourned to tomorrow at 2.00 p.m.

(The House rose at 6.11 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 4 April 2024 at 2.00 p.m.)