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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL REPORT

THIRD SESSION - SECOND MEETING

THURSDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2023



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

THIRD SESSION - 19TH SITTING - SECOND MEETING

Thursday, 30 November 2023

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

PRAYERS

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

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I welcome you to this afternoon's meeting. As part of our continuous effort to conserve the environment; as we embark on the budgeting process, remember that we have agreed that there is no cutting trees, or burning charcoal.

I urge the Executive to consider a tax incentive to reduce the cost of cooking gas –(Applause)– and support energy efficiency, for us to be able to conserve the environment. Let us put a tax incentive on cooking gas so that everybody is able to afford it.

As we said before, we need to act as an example. I want to hear that Hon. Macho has planted a forest; Prof. Mushemeza has planted trees- people should learn from us as the leaders of this country so that we preach what we are doing. I reiterate my call to you, honourable members, to champion that, as we have always discussed in this House, on environmental protection and conservation; we should be exemplary.

Honourable members, pursuant to Article 156(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995, and Section 25 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015, I will invoke rule 25(1) and vary the Order Paper to accommodate the tabling of the Supplementary Schedule for the Financial Year 2023/2024, by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

The minister is going to lay a supplementary schedule. Once more, I thank you for coming.

Yes, commissioner?

2.04

MR SOLOMON SILWANY (NRM, Bukooli County Central, Bugiri): Madam Speaker, I thank you for your communication especially on the preservation of energy, so that we avoid destroying the environment. However, Government should make a deliberate effort to reduce the prices of electricity. This is because most people may not access gas but we have done rural electrification, and electricity is almost everywhere in most parts of Uganda. If there is a deliberate effort to reduce the cost of electricity, then, people may also use it for cooking, on top of the gas that you have talked about.

This is something that we should ask the Government to commit itself to, on the Floor of Parliament, because we are here to serve and to stand for Ugandans. This will work perfectly if it is done.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The other issue I would like to remind the honourable ministers is that when you have an item to be delivered to a constituency, let it be given to the sitting member of Parliament. *(Applause)* Do not give it to my opponent because I am accountable for it. They are a sitting Member, irrespective of whether the person is on the Opposition side or not. I, kindly request that we respect each other. I have got many complaints from Members. It is not good.

2.06

MS MIDIUS NATUKUNDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Rukungiri): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your communication about protecting the environment, and encouraging us to be champions of environmental protection. I am one of them. I always distribute trees to my constituency, the people of Rukungiri, and I have also planted trees. I advocate for that, and also good farming practices to protect the environment.

However, two weeks ago, in Rukungiri, specifically in Ruhinda Subcounty, National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and Ministry of Water and Environment officials went to the areas in Rwamugoma, Ndere, Kashenyi, and Kabare, and cut down people's trees and gardens, and affected their livelihoods.

Madam Speaker, I am totally in support of the restoration of wetlands. However, the manner in which it was done was not appropriate. People were not informed or sensitised; they did not consider an alternative livelihood for them like compensation.

It is my prayer that the concerned ministries send teams on the ground in Ruhinda Subcounty to assess the damage so that the people affected are compensated where necessary. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Do you want compensation for wetlands?

MS NATUKUNDA: No, I want compensation for the people whose property has been affected and was not in the wetlands. The guidelines

were not properly followed. I totally agree that the wetlands should be restored, but those whose property was not in the wetlands should be compensated. Thank you. *(Members rose)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Are you all responding to the communication? Hon. Aber?

2.08

MS LILLIAN ABER (NRM, Woman Representative, Kitgum): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Issues of the environment are key. We may note that weather changes are real and our farmers are battling with them. We need more advocacies to enlighten our farmers on the current weather changes so that they plant the right crops.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the National Forestry Authority (NFA) for providing us with the trees. They have provided us with the seeds and they connect you to the nurseries in the districts. This has helped in ensuring that we protect our environment. If you did not get trees, write letters. Things cannot find you when you are seated. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, NFA has been providing trees. If you are a lazy Member of Parliament who does not follow up on things to give to your people, that is your problem. National Forestry Authority is doing its work.

2.09

MR GEOFFREY MACHO (Independent, Busia Municipality, Busia): Madam Speaker, in the East African region, Uganda has the highest cost of gas for cooking. Whereas there was a pronouncement by the Government banning the cutting of trees and the selling of charcoal, we are not very prepared. I, therefore, agree with you that the Government should.

I, therefore, agree with you that the Government should reduce taxes, majorly on gas within the country; and put up a special programme to give gas to low-earning families; those that cannot afford it. For example, at Stabex International Limited, 10 kilogrammes of gas in Uganda are

sold at Shs 80,000 and in Kenya, they sell them at Kshs 30; that is a difference of Shs 50,000.

At least, we, on the border, can plead - being cross-border traders - we can get it. What about the people in Kabale, Gulu or Kiryandongo? The cost of gas in this country is very high. Madam Speaker, it is my prayer that the Government reduces it. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, that is why we are saying the cost of gas is high. Now, we are going into the budgeting process; we should be able to have incentives for the cost of gas to reduce. That is that. I do not see anything for debate.

2.11

MR MOSES WALYOMU (Independent, Kagoma County, Jinja): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your communication on the environment and the ways of protecting it.

I thank Hon. Silwany for bringing out the issue of high prices on electricity. However, there is also a problem of people not being connected to this electricity.

THE SPEAKER: First of all, are you connected to electricity before you talk about -

MR WALYOMU: That is why I said there is that problem of not being connected to electricity. The grids are there but people are not connected. Even the connection fee is very high because a rural person is required to pay Shs 700,000. However, some of these people can take the whole year without earning Shs 700,000, Shs 500,000 or even Shs 200,000. Hence, you cannot expect this person to be connected at that cost. Madam Speaker, maybe, we need to urge the minister to reduce the connection fee.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, when you look at what is happening, the Government is producing a lot of electricity and as a result, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development pays for dimmed energy. It would really be prudent, like Hon. Solomon said, for the ministry to come to this House and

tell us when they are connecting electricity to all these areas. *(Applause)* Let the ministry come to this House and tell us when connections will be done. I have seen some poles in some areas, but they have been there for over 20 years. The people even start stealing those poles and use them for firewood.

2.13

MR EDDIE KWIZERA (NRM, Bukimbiri County, Kisoro): Madam Speaker, thank you very much. I thank you for your communication.

I would like to comment on the ambulances that they have been distributing -

THE SPEAKER: Have we moved away from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development?

MR EDDIE KWIZERA: It is an issue that has raised a lot of national concern. I am a member of the Public Accounts Committee. When we were handling the Ministry of Health, we found that there was non-compliance with the ambulance policy. They have now gone ahead to distribute ambulances in total disregard of the ambulance policy, to the extent that there are some areas that are going to receive ambulances when there are no health centres III or even health centres. *(Applause)* How do you give a county two ambulances and avoid giving another an ambulance? We need to know the criteria used. This is because some of these ambulances are given to people who are not Members of Parliament, and yet they are giving to constituencies. We need to know why.

Honourable members - *(Interjections)* - I do not want information. *(Laughter)* If we are going to fight corruption, we should fight corruption. If we are going to talk about corruption, we should talk about corruption. Corruption is where a decision maker does not make an informed decision.

I request, Madam Speaker, if it pleases you, that this list of the ambulances given be presented on the Floor of the House because these are resources allocated by this Parliament.

(Applause) When I went to inquire, I found that these are donations but they are given to who is who - whether they are Members of Parliament or even –*(Dr Rutahigwa Rose_)*

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order.

MR EDDIE KWIZERA: I thank you but I have finished submitting. *(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Doctor, he has finished submitting.

DRRUTAHIGWA: He has finished submitting but this can help us. Madam Speaker, I agree with him, but where he has told us that one constituency got two ambulances, he should let us know which one it is exactly so that -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, no constituency got more than one ambulance.

MR EDDIE KWIZERA: I want to be quoted correctly -

THE SPEAKER: What we can do is ask for the list of the beneficiaries of the ambulances to be laid on the Floor. These ambulances are supposed to go to constituencies; health centres IV. Therefore, we can have that list presented on the Floor.

2.16

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (PRIMARY HEALTH CARE)

(Ms Margaret Muhanga): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank Hon. Kwizera for raising this query. I think if he had come to the launch yesterday, he would have known what criteria were used. First, we looked at population, hard-to-reach areas and many others but most importantly, we did not give an ambulance to two constituencies; not at all. This is because they are all written on the constituencies, so every constituency got one.

Now, to give him some ray of hope; next year, we are rolling out ambulances to each constituency; whether or not you have a health centre III or IV because referrals are required even from villages. For instance, somebody

may need to give birth in the night. It does not have to have a hospital to refer this person. The ambulance is supposed to evacuate very sick people to hospitals. That was the essence.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I got a complaint from Hon. Atkins Katusabe. This morning, he came to my office and he was very bitter that you gave an ambulance to his opponent, who is not even a Member of Parliament. Hon. Katusabe is a very good gentleman. It would have been good for him and he is our *Mukko* on the NRM side.

MS MUHANGA: Madam Speaker, I would like to concede on this one but the minister said that Hon. Kabyanga personally wrote a letter requesting for this ambulance. I think that is why they read his name.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, Hon. Atkins Katusabe was the one raising the issue of the burnt ambulances on the Floor.

Honourable members, we have very important visitors in the public gallery this afternoon. We have a delegation of Christian Women Fellowship members from St Andrews' Nyabikoni Church of Uganda, Kabale District. They are led by Rev. Robert Kabagambe. Where are they? Do you see how smart they are? They are smart courtesy of Hon. David Bahati and Hon. Catheline Ndamira. You are most welcome and you have very religious people. They are also represented by Hon. Kamara. Where is Hon. Kamara? Please, bring back all our Members of Parliament as they are. Do not change them. *(Applause)*

Let Hon. Bahati first greet his people. *(Laughter)*

2.20

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (INDUSTRY) (Mr David Bahati):

Madam Speaker, thank you for appreciating and welcoming the Christian Women Fellowship from St Andrew's, Nyabikoni. We truly appreciate the tour of the House that they have had.

In addition, I rise to support you on the issue of the environment. Honourable members, the issue of the environment is very important. At one stage, we need to spare some time and discuss this matter on how to address environmental issues. *(Applause)*

I would like to offer some information that in addition to planting trees, which we should, we can also plant things that protect the environment but at the same time, enhance our food security. For example, in my home district, I have started promoting Hass avocado. Hass avocado protects the environment, but it is also a very good commercial plant.

The Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries through the Prime Minister, will come to the House and inform us about some of those crops that we can plant to secure the environment, but also to guarantee our food security.

Madam Speaker, in the Eighth Parliament, I moved a motion to pay tribute to Prof. Wangari Maathai, a powerful woman from Kenya who had planted one million trees. During that debate, we agreed as the House, whose resolution is still binding to us, that if you are elected as a Member of Parliament, you should commit to planting 500,000 trees.

If each of the 500 people who are here planted 500,000 trees, we would be talking about 25 million trees. That would save our environment because we know that, for example, forestry alone contributes 40 per cent to the rainfall that we receive.

I would like to say that your communication is timely and very important and your recognition of this group in the gallery is extremely appreciated.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, we need to move because we have time for Members.

2.22

MR MARTIN MUZAALE (NRM, Buzaaya County, Kamuli): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Let me move very fast. Honourable minister,

for us who did not receive ambulances, you steamed the fire for us in our constituencies. Please, make sure by next year, we get these ambulances. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, you are not addressing the minister. *(Laughter)* You do not have the power to order.

MR MUZAALE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. At one time, I brought an issue of “redeemed” energy in this Parliament, where the Government is spending over Shs 400 billion –*(Interjections)*– “Redeemed” energy; that one.

THE SPEAKER: It is called “dimmed”. You can say it in Lusoga. *(Laughter)*

MR MUZAALE: Yes, that is what I have done. It is power that we are not using, but the Government is paying for it. Government is spending a lot of money on this particular item, yet if this money was well utilised, we would be able to connect our people.

Otherwise, we have put a lot of power lines in our villages, but people are not connected. Actually, what is there are illegal connections because the cost of connection is very high.

We are talking about conservation but the truth of the matter is that almost 70 per cent of the people living in Kampala depend on charcoal. However, the cost of charcoal is very high because Government has put a ban.

Government should come up with an alternative. Otherwise, people are not cooking. They have food but they cannot cook. Honourable Minister of Energy, please, come up with an alternative. We have a lot of gas but we are not extracting it. We have a lot of energy and we are paying for it but we are not using it. Thank you.

2.25

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate your communication regarding the use of gas as an alternative source, instead of relying on wood fuel.

As we talk about alternative sources, we have a free source called biogas, which can be used in various homes, if only Ugandans can be empowered. We eat food and it goes out into the pit latrines or wherever, but that is a source of energy, which we are not tapping into.

I remember I visited Tigray, which is now currently in war and it is a smart region because they have promoted biogas. Every home was supported with the system, right from their toilets into the houses and they are now using that as a source of gas energy.

Therefore, I would like to make an appeal to the Executive; this is an alternative source that you can use. It will also help us to end open defecation because somebody will now know that this resource that we are wasting will help us to generate energy. That is something we must look at. *(Laughter)*

Secondly, Madam Speaker, as we talk about planting trees, on the 27th of this month, Umeme warned Ugandans of a possible power outage and declared that December would be a dark month. This was by the Public Relations Officer of Umeme. Can this be clarified?

We have thermal plants. We are paying a lot of money for these thermal plants because we expect that when there are shutdowns, they come in as alternative sources to ensure that there is electricity supply.

Madam Speaker, would it not be right for the Minister of Energy to come and inform this House about this December that is likely to be a dark month, which was already declared by Umeme? Secondly, what can the Government do to help the various Ugandans move away from wood fuel into biogas, which will help us end the open defecation in this country? Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, in the public gallery, we have teachers of Kidiki Primary School from Kamuli District. You are most welcome; they are represented by none other than Hon. Kibalya. Please, stand up. *(Applause)*

Hon. Kibalya is a very active Member of Parliament. For this one, do not even think twice; just bring him back. Thank you, for coming.

2.28

MR PHILIPHS ILUKOL-LOKWANG (NRM, Napore West County, Karenga):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. A clean environment, to me, is good for the health of the nation and reduces the cost of medical treatment. While you advised us to plant these trees, I request the Government agencies and ministries not to compromise that advice.

Being in Karamoja, I planted 19,000 trees but they were burnt by a sport hunter; yet, I was providing a habitat for wild animals. These people burn trees in order to hunt. When I go there to complain, they say, “No; we have got a concession to do this work”.

I request the ministries not to compromise with our environment. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: You went and planted in the wildlife area?

MR LOKWANG-ILUKOL: It is not in the wildlife area but on my land. I planted 19,000 trees and they kept burning them because of their uncontrolled way of clearing the bushes. The fires burned all the trees.

2.30

PROF. ELIJAH MUSHEMEZA (Independent, Sheema County South, Sheema): Thank you, Madam Speaker. You raised very important issues in your communication. These days, some people emphasise political rights, yet socio-economic rights are equally important. *(Applause)*

The issue of environment and natural resource management is a very important socio-economic right. Through my research, I have discovered that many violent conflicts that took place in Africa for the last 20 years are a result of poor management of the environment and natural resources. Therefore, this is a very

important economic right that we need to discuss extensively.

Madam Speaker, as you concluded, you made reference to the nexus between budgeting and the environment. Through you, I would like to appeal to the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development that as we begin the budgeting process, let us look at the last two financial years together with this year and see what we have raised in taxes, grants and loans. If it cannot reach Shs 52 trillion, there is no reason you should bring a budget of Shs 52 trillion.

In other words, it is time for us to have a realistic budget. *(Applause)* When you do not have a realistic budget, then the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development will begin suppressing certain votes and may not release money. That is why Shs 1 billion for roads cannot be released quickly because you do not have the money. That is when we can say that environment is a priority; we are giving it this money, we shall raise it, and we shall release it. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

2.32

MR CHRISTOPHER KOMAKECH (Independent, Aruu County, Pader): Thank you, Madam Speaker. If there is anyone who doubts your conviction on addressing the issues concerning the Uganda we want, then that person should have heard your communication today. Acholi Subregion covers about 11,000 square miles. Of late, it has become a practice. Whoever wants charcoal rushes to Acholi Subregion. These 11,000 square miles was a green cover but we have a desert subregion now.

The issue of putting an incentive on the price of gas – we totally support your suggestion to make sure that we save Acholi Subregion from being deforested and turning it into a desert. Thank you, Madam.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, somebody was talking about NFA - you do not need to wait for NFA to give you seedlings, you can make your own seedlings.

Some of you eat mangoes and throw them and yet, you can plant that mango and get what you can actually plant.

We need to embark on a deliberate move to have a greening agenda for this country. Let us keep the country green. If you go to countries, which are a desert, they are green. What about Uganda where it rains all the time? Next item.

LAYING OF PAPERS

SUPPLEMENTARY EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE

THE SPEAKER: Minister of Finance?

2.34

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES) (Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Pursuant to Article 156 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Section 25 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015, and Rule 153(1) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, I beg to lay on Table the Supplementary Expenditure for the Financial Year 2023/2024, Schedule No. 1.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, considering the urgency of the supplementary schedule and the prevailing time constraints, I propose the suspension of Rule 153(3) of the Rules of Procedure to enable a direct referral of the supplementary expenditure to the Committee on Budget, to which all the sectoral chairpersons belong. I give them a week to report back. Thank you. *(Applause)*

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE STATUS OF THE UGANDA NETBALL FEDERATION AND PARTICIPATION OF THE NATIONAL NETBALL TEAM IN INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, you will recall that the matter arose during the sitting on Tuesday. I directed the Minister of Education and Sports to come and give a

statement pursuant to Rule 52(1) of the Rules of Procedure. I see the minister is ready to give us a statement.

Minister, can you give us a statement on what is happening to our girls, Uganda Netball Federation, issues of accountability and issues of governance?

2.36

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (SPORTS)

(Mr Peter Ogwang): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Before I give a statement, allow me to begin by congratulating the Uganda Cricket Cranes for qualifying for its maiden World Cup, which is going to be held in the West Indies and the United States of America. I take the opportunity to congratulate Team Uganda. In Africa, there are only two teams; Uganda and Namibia. Congratulations, Uganda National Cricket Cranes.

Madam Speaker, I wish to submit a response as per your guidance on the matter of the cancellation of the certificate of recognition and the allegation that the National Netball team (She Cranes), failed to participate in the African Netball Championships 2023, currently taking place in Botswana.

Introduction

Uganda Netball Federation was one of the national sports federations that were regulated by the National Council of Sports, until 25 October 2023, when its certificate of recognition was withdrawn by the council/board for non-compliance with the existing legal frameworks on the following grounds;

- a) Failure to abide by the constitutional provision of the Uganda Netball Federation (2012) for the elections of the Executive Committee and failure to follow the correct procedures to amend the constitution of the Uganda Netball Federation contrary to Section 2 of the Certificate of Incorporation issued under the Trustees Incorporation Act, Cap 165.

- b) Failure to resolve the governance and leadership challenges within the Uganda Netball Federation contrary to Section 15(1)(f) of the National Sports Act, 2023.

- c) Failure to disclose sources of funding to the National Council of Sports contrary to Section 22 of the National Sports Act, 2023 and Regulation 16(2) of the National Council of Sports - Statutory Instrument No.38 of 2014.

- d) Failure to inform the National Council of Sports of the several bank accounts held by the Uganda Netball Federation without following due procedures and use of alleged forged and unauthorised documents.

Background

Madam Speaker, I wish to expound on the issues that led to the withdrawal of the certificate of recognition of the Uganda Netball Federation by the National Council of Sports.

Governance and Leadership wrangles:

The Uganda National Netball Federation has had governance and leadership challenges since 2021, which matters were brought to the attention of the National Council of Sports through the office of the then Minister of State for Education and Sports, Hon. Hamson Obua.

The minister guided that the National Council of Sports Board undertakes the mediation efforts to resolve matters within the Ugandan Netball Federation. The mediation efforts took two years until council/board made a resolution to withdraw a certificate of recognition in compliance with the law.

Subsequently, the National Council of Sports/Board assigned the technical committee, which held several mediation meetings with the executive members of the Uganda Netball Federation, players, clubs and Board of Trustees of the Uganda Netball Federation. A copy of the technical committee report adopted by the Council/Board is hereto attached and marked "A".

In addition, I also held mediation meetings with the executive committee, Board of Trustees and players (The She Cranes and the Rock.) The Rock is the male team for the national team of the Uganda Netball Federation. Copies of the minutes are hereto attached and collectively marked "B".

Furthermore, the Minister of Education and Sports, the First Lady, was briefed about the issues with the Uganda Netball Federation. She convened two meetings at State House, Nakasero to try and resolve the issues within the Uganda Netball Federation in vain.

However, in spite of several mediation engagements with the Uganda Netball Federation undertaken by the Ministry of Education and Sports, the governance and leadership challenges within persisted.

Suspension of the President, Uganda Netball Federation:

- i) The persistent governance and leadership issues, coupled with arrest of Hon. Sarah Babirye Kityo on allegations of fraud and obtaining money by false pretence from the members of the public, by the Uganda Police and subsequently remanded to Luzira prisons on the said charges, got the attention of World Netball, the international governing body of netball in the world.
- ii) Consequently, World Netball suspended Hon. Sarah Babirye Kityo in line with the World Netball statutes vide a letter dated 30 May 2023. A copy of the letter of the suspension is hereto attached and marked "C".
- iii) The National Council of Sports published the withdrawal of the certificate of Uganda Netball Federation in the Uganda Gazette in line with Regulation 12(3) of the National Council of Sports Statute Instrument Number 38 of 2014. A copy of the Gazette is hereto attached marked "D".

Withdrawal of the Certificate of Recognition:

Arising from the issues as stated above, the National Council of Sports invited the Executive Committee of the Uganda Netball Federation for a meeting on 24 October 2023 to show cause as to why the certificate of recognition should not be withdrawn for non-compliance with the existing legal framework; as per Section 15 of the National Sports Act, 2023 and Regulation 12 of the National Council of Sports, Statutory Instrument No.38 of 2014.

During the said meeting, the Executive Committee of the Uganda Netball Federation failed to show cause as to why the certificate of recognition should not be withdrawn by the National Council of Sports. A copy of the invitation and minutes are hereto attached marked "E" and "F", respectively.

Following this development, the Council/ Board held a meeting on 25 October 2023 and resolved to withdraw the certificate of recognition of the Uganda Netball Federation for non-compliance. A copy of the minutes of Council is hereto attached and marked "G".

Notification of World Netball:

The National Council of Sports notified World Netball vide a letter dated 25 October 2023 as per Section 15(4) of the National Sports Act, 2023. A copy of the said letter hereto is attached.

In response, the World Netball issued a letter suspending the entire Executive Committee of the Uganda Netball Federation until such a time when fair and democratic elections are held. A copy of the letter of suspension of the Executive is hereto attached.

Normalisation Committee:

The World Netball further wrote to National Council of Sports with guidance that a normalisation committee be established to fast-track a roadmap towards elections.

The committee was established comprising of representatives from specific stakeholders, namely; National Council of Sports, Commonwealth Games Uganda and an athlete, the She Cranes representative. A copy of the said letter is hereto attached.

The normalisation committee was established by the World Netball, as listed below:

1. Mr Moses B. Mwase - Vice President, Commonwealth Games Uganda (Chairman);
2. Ms Leticia Namutebi - Member, Commonwealth Games Uganda Athletes' Commission;
3. Ms Cecilia Anyakoit - National Council of Sports;
4. Ms Proscovia Peace - Athletics Representative, who is the captain of the She Cranes.

The normalisation committee was given six months ending 30 May 2024 and has since held meetings to this effect. A copy of the letter is hereto attached.

The Africa Netball Championship, Botswana:

The normalisation committee in consultation with the World Netball agreed that the She Cranes should not participate in the Africa Netball Championship 2023 in Botswana. Malawi and South Africa withdrew and, therefore, Uganda's participation would have no effect in terms of ranking since Uganda is ranked number one in Africa. Uganda will participate in Wales and England where Uganda can increase on its ranking.

Further to the above, the National Council of Sports had released funds to support Uganda's participation in the said championship and those funds are available with the normalisation committee to facilitate the teams in the forthcoming international ranking tournaments in Wales and England, due to take place in January.

Other tournaments:

- a) International Test Series, 2024 (January, 20th to 28th) During the suspension of Hon. Sarah Babirye Kityo, she illegally signed contracts on behalf of the Uganda Netball Federation with both Wales Netball and England Netball; for Uganda's participation in international matches, scheduled to take place from 8th to 14th January and 20th to 28th January, respectively.

However, upon the realisation by Wales Netball and England Netball that Hon. Sarah Babirye Kityo illegally signed contracts on behalf of the Uganda Netball Federation, they have both requested the normalisation committee to sign new agreements for Uganda's participation, which has been done and the team will adequately participate for the same cause. Honourable members, the team will participate in January.

Furthermore, the host of the tournament will cover all expenses in respect to two tournaments for the She Cranes except for the air tickets and allowances, which will be procured by the Government of Uganda through the National Council of Sports.

Funding disbursed to the Uganda Netball Federation:

The National Council of Sports has disbursed all funds that were appropriated for Uganda Netball Federation for preparations in the World Cup held from 27th July to 7 August 2023, Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 releases to the tune of Shs 910,120,635. A copy of the breakdown is hereto attached marked "L".

In conclusion, I wish to clarify that the withdrawal of the certificate of recognition will not affect the She Cranes since Government is committed to supporting the planned activity through the normalisation committee, as guided by the existing regulations of the World Netball and the National Sports Act, 2023.

The above notwithstanding, the Uganda Netball Federation may re-apply for recognition once the issues that have led to the withdrawal of the certificates of recognition have been addressed.

Government is further committed to streamlining and promoting good governance practices within all recognised National Sports Federations/associations.

I say all this for God and my country. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, allow me to lay on Table the said attachments.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Members, you have heard from the honourable minister. The statement is very clear information. Can I have the FDC whip?

2.49

MR YUSUF NSIBAMBI (FDC, Mawokota County South, Mpigi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am privileged and happy that I am a father of a two-time Olympian. I appreciate the statement by the minister.

However, there is a very big problem, which must be addressed, specifically the issue of politicising sports. Most of the leadership is actually supposed to be NRM. So, they feel that they are bigger or larger than life. They do not address the specific problems of sports and do not involve the stakeholders at all.

Honourable minister, through you – Madam Speaker – that point should be addressed. Otherwise, we have issues of - I am talking as a parent of a two-time Olympian. My daughter went to represent Uganda at the age of 12. We have gone through all this and it is a very big problem.

Most of the administrators are not supposed to be in those particular positions. They have no passion and interest in sports. Worldwide, you must have passion for you to get involved. Sports is an industry. Do not just take it for granted. It is my prayer that that issue is addressed.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I do not think some of these people misbehave because they belong to NRM. It is one's character and not about being in a party. It is about the indiscipline that the person has.

2.51

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank you for prioritising this matter as the first item today. I thank the minister for the statement. I was worried but he has given assurance to us that the She Cranes that have made Uganda proud at the global level will continue participating in other upcoming events.

Madam Speaker, this House passed the new Sports Bill, which was later assented to by His Excellency the President. I hope that the regulations can be fast-tracked and concluded. I do not know when, honourable minister, you will have these regulations presented before the Cabinet so that the new law governs the sports in this country.

We have had issues around the National Council of Sports with the various federations alleging that some disciplines are not being considered as priorities. I hope you can fast-track the regulations so that we can have proper management of the sports in this country.

In addition, Madam Speaker, as a country, we need to focus and be known for something. Let us promote netball – of course, football is doing very well. *(Laughter)* Yes, we love football but at the global level, athletics and netball have been bringing gold to this country. Our girls are doing very well.

So, let us, as a country, be known for something. Let us promote netball and athletics. Yes, football is there but we are not getting there. I hope we shall get there when we host AFCON in this country. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Tonny?

2.53

MR TONNY AYOO (NRM, Kwanja County, Kwanja): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the minister for providing a clear statement that has allayed all the fears we had, that the She Cranes were not going to play.

However, Madam Speaker, I want to get one clarification from the minister. From his statement, I have heard that it was right from the time of the now Government Chief Whip, Hon. Obua, when we started having problems with the President, Uganda Netball Federation, Sarah Kityo. Up to now, it is still dragging on.

Madam Speaker, I want a clarification from the minister on what exactly the problem is. Who is supposed to handle the formation of the federation? If one person is a problem, why does that one person remain there, disturbing the federation? If we can get to that, then, we can sort out the problem, have the federation cleared and given back the certificate of recognition. The netball players are on one side and the management is on the other side, setting confusion and making things difficult.

Honourable minister, this is the area, which I want you to come more clearly on and help us to sort out this problem. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The impunity – honourable minister, the problem is that you are talking to your neighbour. What Hon. Tonny is asking is very simple: before these things come to the public, who is supposed to resolve them? Are some people so untouchable that you even reach the level of cancelling a certificate of a federation? It is about the image of the country. When you just look on and say – it is not personal-to-holder. There are other people. Even Hon. Aber here can be president of the netball federation. *(Laughter)*

2.56

MR GEOFFREY MACHO (Independent, Busia Municipality, Busia): Madam Speaker, I thank the minister -

THE SPEAKER: After Hon. Macho, we will have Dr Acuti, Dr Apio and, then, the Olympian.

MR MACHO: Madam Speaker, I thank you for bringing up this matter. Sports, majorly athletics and netball, have put Uganda on the global map and led many tourists to come because of the brand they have given us.

Hon. Tonny Ayoo has brought a very good matter. What brings a problem – why is it that one person who was the chairperson of a federation has become a matter? Madam Speaker, I believe it might be an issue of character and politics of sports.

My brother, Hon. Peter, I request that, through the National Council of Sports, you use an iron hand to clean the federation. Good enough, the sports Bill has empowered you and the council. Bring sanity in sports so that whenever any message is said about sports in Uganda, it is about a brand.

If it is one person who is bringing the problem; why don't you use the law to remove that person? In Busia, when one tomato is rotting in a basket, they throw it away and other tomatoes are better -

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I do not want us to talk about the character of Sarah because she is not here to defend herself. Let us talk about how this can be reinstated. What has the ministry and the National Council of Sports done? What are we going to do to have the certificate reinstated? She is not here to defend herself.

MR MACHO: Thank you for your guidance, Madam Speaker. Therefore, I pray that National Council of Sports is empowered by the minister to set up a branding committee to brand the Uganda Netball Federation afresh so that we have our certificate back and have our lost image so that the brand we had built in Africa stands.

Since we have the best players, I believe that Uganda shall go to the World Cup. Thank you.

2.58

MR SAMUEL OPIO (Independent, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the honourable minister for that statement.

What came out very strongly was that there were several mediation meetings that took place, even up to the level of the minister, and it failed. It really raises a very pertinent issue itself on how conflict resolution can be handled in sports. There are several methods such as negotiation, mediation, arbitration and litigation.

However, in the sports world - and I pray that in the regulations we consider this – that there is normally a court of sports arbitration. I pray that in our regulations, if we cannot have the court of sports arbitration, at least we have a committee, which is an independent entity that will help to address these conflicts.

By the time the conflict reaches up to that high level, and it cannot be resolved and it damages the image of our country, then it is a very big issue. So, mine is just to comment that in future, to prevent the occurrence of this, we need to ensure that our regulations have a mechanism for arbitration. Mediation is optional. Somebody can choose to accept or refuse, but arbitration has a binding effect on both parties. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable, at the end of the day, you should tell us when you will bring the regulations.

3.00

DR EUNICE APIO (UPC, OYAM County North, Oyam): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the statement, but I would also like to add to the congratulatory message that he passed on to the cranes for qualifying to the World Cup for the first time.

I am happy that we are paying close attention to sports and particularly the netball segment. I would also like to use this opportunity to draw the attention of the House and the country, to the fact that we have other competitions, which the ministry has to take note of.

This is the competition that is being supported by the National Science Olympiad. We have every year, the Science Olympiad Foundation that is struggling to take representatives from secondary schools and from O-level and A-level to fly our flag at international competitions. There is no single coin that has been put aside ever since to support this venture.

Therefore, through you, Madam Speaker, I would like to request the minister to have space within their schedule to meet the stakeholders that are doing this for the country; meet the Uganda National Olympiad foundation, so that we have the best brain flying our flag internationally every year. Thank you very much.

3.01

MS EVERLYN CHEMUTAI (Independent, Woman Representative, Bukwo): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I also want to join colleagues to thank the honourable minister for the statement that he has given us about the netball team. I am of the opinion that the National Council of Sports has to be supportive so that they sort out these issues. One person cannot make us lose the whole team because of personal interests.

Secondly, Madam Speaker, as we look into netball, football and other disciplines, we have ignored the athletes. We have young men and women who have struggled to lift the flag of this country high. Eight years ago, one called Kipsiro Moses brought two gold medals to this country and the President rewarded him. However, to-date he has never received the reward. I know the honourable minister is aware.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Chemutai, that is provided for in the law on rewards.

MS EVERLYN CHEMUTAI: But they have never done it, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: We are waiting for the regulations and then, we shall implement the law. You will budget for it. I am happy you are in this House and you will be able to remind the honourable minister that there was this pledge; the law covers that, on ex-internationals.

MS EVERLYN CHEMUTAI: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

3.03

MR BASIL BATARINGAYA (NRM, Kashari North, Mbarara): Thank you, Madam Speaker. When the river has changed its course and started to flow to Uganda to deliver success, it is important that we maintain that river flowing to Uganda.

It is important that this issue of the Uganda Netball Federation is resolved at its fastest. The Federation being number one in Africa as of today, it may now be easy to take it backwards to the 10th position and so on.

I beg the honourable minister that this issue is given the priority it deserves and resolved so that the river's course that has now started flowing to Uganda to deliver success is not reversed. I beg to submit.

3.04

MS FLORENCE NEBANDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Butaleja): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I want to thank the Honourable Minister of State for Education and Sports for a good report. I am part of the Parliamentary Netball Team and I am very passionate about the sport and I love it.

I am grateful for the comments addressed as a way forward to resolve issues at the National Netball Federation.

I have one question to the minister in charge. What happened to the coach of She Cranes? He has been at the helm of the Netball of She Cranes since October 2021. He recently came

out complaining of having not received salary ever since. He has only received Shs 500 when he went to overtake and support the team when they were in Namibia previously. *(Interjections)* Shs 500,000 is all that he has received but he has not received a formal salary since October 2021. What went wrong? Thank you.

3.05

MS JUDITH ALYEK (NRM, Woman Representative, Kole): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for the report that he has presented, which is very important to us.

Netball is our game. We love it and we promote it every day. The Uganda Federation for Netball - the She Cranes have been doing very well in this country.

Now that there are issues that have come up, they must be resolved immediately, because this is tarnishing our name as Uganda, as Africa and we have been leading internationally.

One more concern that I would like to bring to the attention of the Minister is that we also need to build more talents in primary school and secondary schools because this is what will form the Federation of Netball in this country. We need to build right from the grassroots because I am not seeing this very active in our communities these days. In the schools, I do not see netball being vigorously promoted.

That is my request to the minister so that when he goes back and they are bringing a budget to this Floor of Parliament - we want to promote it, and if there is lack of money, we should come in and then, add more money so that more talents are built in the schools. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

3.07

MS LILIAN ABER (NRM, Woman Representative, Kitgum): Thank you very much, Madam speaker. It is worth noting that the Government has been very supportive with the sports sector. I want to particularly thank you as an advocate for the women who are in sports in this country.

I have listened carefully to the report from the minister. The report is thorough. However, it points out clearly that there is conflict that needs to be resolved. If we do not resolve this conflict between the leadership of the Federation, we are bound to have similar problems in future.

I, therefore, plead with you, Madam Speaker, as a problem solver to convene a meeting between the leadership of the Federation and the technical people. What I see is that one person or a group of people want to show how they are stronger than the others; and this will cost the image of the country.

The issue is not about the funding. Parliament has always been committed. You did note in your speech earlier when you just came to your office that you will support sports and you have been doing it.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, that is my plea to you; to convene a meeting; it is only you who can solve this problem. Otherwise, I am afraid we will be encountering similar problems in the future. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, you have heard what Hon. Aber has said. The Ugandan Netball Federation is serving as an example today. There are very many federations out there, but this is just a case study, where we need better regulatory and effective management in sports.

When you look at the National Sports Act, 2023, which we passed in this House, Section 9 talks about arbitration. In that arbitration, Section 55(2) empowers a minister to appoint the arbitrators in that law.

However, before we got into arbitration, we first need to have streamlined, predictive and managerial administrative issues resolved.

When you hear the minister saying “multiple accounts” and the like, we need those kinds of things managed. We can talk up to the end of the day if we do not resolve that. There are some things that an arbitrator cannot handle especially where there is no transparency.

When somebody does not give you the right information, at the end of the day, you will make a judgment based on hearsay.

I am open to negotiation and discussions with the Federation. We can sit as ladies and see how we to handle this. We will co-opt other people in that meeting and see how to resolve that if the minister so wishes. *(Applause)*

3.11

MR HENRY-MAURICE KIBALYA (NRM Bugabula County South, Kamuli): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I join my colleagues in appreciating the statement of the minister.

The minister I know, Hon. Peter Ogwang, is a very active and serious person in this Parliament. *(Applause)* When Hon. Peter Ogwang was in Economic Monitoring, he went and arrested everybody who had participated in corruption. Therefore, we know the person we are talking about. What he did during that time, people will live to remember.

Madam Speaker, maybe you need to re-energise Hon. Peter Ogwang to move out of the office and sort this. Hon. Peter Ogwang, this thing is beyond the statements they write to you. There is a very serious battle between the Federation and the National Council of Sports. The Secretary-General, on the other side, has his team, and the president, on this side, has her team; that is where the battle is. We shall not move any further when the Secretary-General writes to you what he feels like.

You cannot form an ad hoc committee to last for more than 10 months. They formed a committee that has a lifespan of 12 months, but it is nearly a year now. That means he knows very well that he will not solve the problem in the next few days.

Secondly, when the team failed to go to Botswana, the chairperson of the ad hoc committee said they could not mobilise resources because of wrangles and not because they could not benefit from Botswana. The statement of the minister said they saw it as a tournament, which was not very important

for the She Cranes. However, when he was interviewed, he said that because of the current wrangles, it was hard for them to mobilise resources.

Madam Speaker, we know how you can move and turn things around. I request you, like Hon. Aber said, that you kindly intervene. Otherwise, every day, you will receive statements on the Floor and everyone will bring their own side. At the end of the day, it will be Parliament and Uganda losing.

This is the Uganda Netball Federation; it is not the president or an individual. Revoking a certificate of a full federation and not allowing them to participate in any international tournament is beyond - Madam Speaker, as your Members of Parliament, we request you to pick interest in this, intervene, and have it sorted.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable minister, the revocation of that certificate is a shame to the country. The internal conflicts between the Federations and the National Council of Sports should not cost this country when you are still the minister in that ministry.

I am happy that he has praised you that you did a very good job. Therefore, you should be able to stand up to the task. They are now on counter accusations; today, Kityo has been arrested and she has gone to Luzira and another one will be arrested tomorrow. You need to resolve that issue.

3.14

MR BARNABAS TINKASIIMIRE (NRM, Buyaga West County, Kagadi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The only hope for the poor people is always exploiting their talent. When we see a crisis in a federation that promotes talent, it worries the poor people.

I seek for clarification from the honourable minister who has presented a very good statement; to the standards that we have heard here of statements, this passes as one of the excellent statements.

Is there a mechanism for those who take leadership in these sports federations to be inducted in their respective offices? This is because we have seen these mistakes being made in the sports federations in the past. Remember the late Obua had to go to prison because of the Football Federation. There are very many other things that have been coming up. Therefore, is there a mechanism -

THE SPEAKER: The Football Federation is doing very well.

MR TINKASIIMIRE: Yes, it is now doing very well. Is there a mechanism of inducting these leaders who take up positions of leadership? I was about to ask - it is about the type of values of an elected leader; you know they are elected. There is no interview they sit.

The Football Federation is lucky that qualitatively, when they voted, they voted a man of substance.

THE SPEAKER: Exactly; a *Ssalongo*.
(*Laughter*)

MR TINKASIIMIRE: Even then, when they choose a leader, you are not going to remove him or her undemocratically. Your role as the National Council of Sports is to induct and make sure that what they do is appropriate to promote talent. Even if we intervene when there is still lack of knowledge - We need that mechanism where they will have the right knowledge, right values and skills imparted in these office bearers, who take up the offices.

Indeed, I ask the honourable minister to go down to the primary schools; this is where our poor people live. We want to see many more talents. If you dig up the background of these star performers in Kapchorwa, they live or they lived in grass-thatched houses.

However, because of excelling and developing their talent, you can see them driving V8s, which are supposed to be driven by Members of Parliament, ministers and they are even better than what you drive, honourable minister. This is all because of talent.

Therefore, let us take this matter seriously so that the biggest number of our people, who have this opportunity to develop their talent, can come out of poverty. I beg to submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. As you have heard, you need to go as far as primary schools. I am happy the secondary schools, where some of us are members, have an association; the Uganda Secondary Schools Sports Association. It is doing very well and we are getting talent. Sometimes, you find that some students who are not able to afford, like the Tinkas of today, are able to study for free from secondary up to university because of their talent.

Before I get the minister to respond, in the public gallery we have pupils and teachers from Bunakijja Church of Uganda Primary School, Mukono. They are represented by Hon. Hanifa Nabukeera and Hon. Fred Kayondo. Please stand up. You are most welcome and thank you for coming. This is your Parliament and please come again. Please, sit.

We also have teachers and pupils of Kinoni Integrated Primary School, Rwampara District. Members of Parliament from Rwampara stand up. We have Hon. Amos Kankunda, who is the Chairperson, of the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development. He is a diligent person and a good Member of Parliament. Hon. Tusiime is very humble and Hon. Molly Musiime is a lady. Please bring all three back; do not change. Okay, thank you. Would you like to greet your people?

3.21

MRAMOS KANKUNDA (NRM, Rwampara County, Rwampara): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On behalf of my colleagues; Hon. Tusiime and Hon. Molly Asiimwe, we would like to thank our teachers at the great Kinoni Integrated Primary School. I am an OB of that school and when I finished my Primary Seven there, I went to the only school; Ntare School. I appreciate our teachers for coming. It is one of the best schools in the district. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you for coming and producing the legislators that you have.

Honourable Minister of Education and Sports (Sports) –

MR PETER OGWANG: Thank you, Madam Speaker – *(Interjections)* – I need your protection. First of all, I thank the honourable colleagues for raising questions. I will begin by answering Hon. Tinkasiimire's question.

It is true that the National Council of Sports trains and inducts presidents of the respective federations and it is done not once or twice.

It is also true that the Government, under the Uganda Secondary Schools Sports Association, and the Ministry of Education and Sports, with the money you provide as Parliament, continues to promote talent identification and development. It is no wonder that secondary schools; Bukedea Comprehensive Academy and Amus College are going to host the Federation of the East African Secondary Schools competition in eastern Uganda. Madam Speaker, as the director of that school, congratulations. We will have the entire East Africa –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Aber, first clap for my school. *(Applause)*

MR OGWANG: Clap for the Speaker's School. We will have the entire East Africa come to Uganda, specifically Bukedea District. Why are they coming here? It is because of our plan to continue deepening the identification of talents of our children.

According to the National Development Plan, netball is a priority sport and as the Government, according to the statement I have given, the issues affecting netball are discussed.

However, I would like to implore you to allow the Chairperson, Committee on Public Accounts (Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises), to present a report here because this Parliament carried out a thorough investigation into the management or mismanagement of funds in the Uganda Netball Federation.

The problem is that previously, the Government never put a reasonable amount of money into sports, but today, with your support, the Government is earmarking money for this federation. *(Applause)*

The challenge is that when you talk about wrangles in the federation, the law prohibits the Government from direct interference in the day-to-day management of the federation. What should we do when we advance money to you and you do not account for it? When you do not pay the people who are supposed to get the money, what do you expect the minister to do? Should I continue giving you money?

Due to that, the information I have on the subject matter is that the then president, whose certificate was withdrawn, is in police custody as of yesterday. The DPP preferred cases on her and I would like to confirm that she is appearing before the Anti-Corruption Court because of mismanagement of the federation's funds.

What is the way forward? In my statement, I said it is not the National Council of Sports that formed the Normalisation Committee but the International Netball Federation that identified the members to be appointed in line with the National Sports Act, 2023 that we passed in this Parliament.

I repeat, it is not the National Council of Sports. The committee constitutes one person from the Uganda Olympic Committee, the captain of the team representing the players, one person representing the National Council of Sports and the Government, and one person identified by the International Netball Federation. The committee has started work.

It is not true that we have not sent money –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, you said you are already implementing the law without having regulations in place.

MR OGWANG: Yes.

THE SPEAKER: Is that proper?

MR OGWANG: Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: No, just a minute. Attorney-General, can the law be implemented without regulations that operationalise it? Do not tell him what to say. He is talking about law and not politics.

3.26

THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr Jackson Kafuuzi): Madam Speaker, it depends on the provisions in a particular law. Not every law requires regulations, but –

THE SPEAKER: No, this one requires regulations.

MR KAFUUZI: But if any specific law needs to be operationalised by regulation, then so be it.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, this one requires regulations and that is why one of the Members asked when you are bringing the regulations.

MR OGWANG: Madam Speaker, I would like to confirm that the Ministry of Education and Sports has instituted a committee that is working with the Office of the Attorney-General to finalise the regulations. I request that I be given two months to lay these regulations before Parliament.

As I conclude, the issue of arbitration raised by Hon. Opio is true and I am happy, Madam Speaker, that you cited the law. This requires me and it is within the regulation.

Hon. Otukol talked about the provision of science. I would like to confirm that the competition is there. I picked this as I addressed children of Ntare School and I am taking it up as the Minister of State for Education and Sports (Sports). I request Parliament to support us when we come here to ask for budget support.

It is true, Madam Speaker, you have answered Hon. Chemutai's question about the rewards. The law is there. I thank our brothers and sisters from Sebei for making us proud.

On the issue of the national coach for the She Cranes; this is part of the problem. The federations are the ones that enter into contracts with the respective coaches. The role of the Government is to facilitate the federation. I do not go into paying money to the coaches. It is the federation that pays.

Therefore, if the coach was not paid, it is the federation that failed because of their internal challenges. That is one of the issues we have.

The other one is the issue of the conflicts to be resolved. The blessing we have is that we have the sports law. These conflicts will be resolved using the current sports law. I would like to request us to implement the law as it is. As a ministry, we are following the law.

Netball is bigger than any individual and we will not allow netball to fail as a sport in this country. We will continue to correct people who want to personalise netball and turn it into a personal entity for purposes of using it to enrich themselves, to mismanage and stop our children from continuing with the game of netball.

As of now, I thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving us this opportunity to give a statement on the issues which were raised. I repeat, in my concluding remarks, that the Uganda Netball Federation may re-apply for recognition once the issues that have led to the withdrawal of the certificate of recognition have been addressed.

Government is further committed to streamlining and promoting governance practices in all the recognised national sports federations. To those who are listening to us, please sort out your internal issues and then reapply. I am happy that the normalisation committee is undertaking that and we will have netball back on track sooner than later. Thank you for listening to me.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT ON THE PETITION ON
MID-TERM ACCESS OF NSSF BENEFITS

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, petitions are an avenue for citizens to engage Parliament on issues that affect them with specific prayers.

The House passed the National Social Security Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2021 in November 2021 and amended Section 24 to provide for mid-term access for eligible savers. The report that we are set to receive today is in relation to the petition regarding mid-term access.

I, therefore, request the chairperson to come and present a summary of her report because we need to give time for Members to raise their issues. Honourable ministers, do not go away, you need to answer Members' issues.

3.32

**THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE
ON GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT (Ms Flavia Kabahenda):**

Madam Speaker, this is the report of the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development on the petition on the mid-term access for NSSF savings.

The committee looked at the petition and engaged a number of institutions around it, NSSF inclusive. Allow me to lay on the Table a file containing the minutes and the report. Allow me to also lay a copy of the Human Resources Policy Manual from NSSF, which answered some of the questions that the petitioner put across. Allow me further to lay the communication strategy that involves the appeals system and the complaints' strategy for NSSF. I beg to lay.

In accordance with Rule 30(6) of the Rules of Procedure, you referred a petition on the mid-term access of NSSF benefits to the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development for consideration and reporting back to the House.

The petitioner, Mr Simon Peter Aleper, referred to as the petitioner, was a 46-year-old person with contributions in NSSF of 84 months and he had been jobless since December 2021. The petitioner avers that the petition was brought in his capacity as a saver and member of NSSF and also as a whistle-blower on the mismanagement of the fund. It is the petitioner's claim that there are a large number of savers who had been deprived from seeking mid-term access to their NSSF benefits due to a wrong application of the recently passed NSSF (Amendment) Act, 2021.

The petitioner accuses NSSF Fund of having "sneaked a clause which bars many savers from accessing their midterm benefits." In this regard, the petitioner avers that the law intended to allow access to mid-term benefits to a person who had saved with the fund for 120 months and not to a person who had made contributions to the fund for 120 months.

The petitioner is also aggrieved by the procedure and technicalities that are involved when a person seeks mid-term access to their benefits. He specifically stated that employees of NSSF connive with employers to avoid remitting their employees' contributions to the NSSF Fund and that the whistle blowers who raise such issues with the fund administration are not assisted.

The petitioner further says that there is need for Parliament to scrutinise investment undertakings of the management of the fund to ensure return on capital of its projects. He also raises a concern that monies are lost in poor investment plans by the fund.

The committee considered the above petition and now reports on findings, observations and recommendations.

The committee makes the following observations based on the prayers of the petitioner:

1. That NSSF savers who had reached 45 years and had saved with the fund for the last 10 years or more be allowed to access

their 20 per cent accrued savings as it was stated before the amendment of 120 months' contribution.

The position of the law in regard to eligibility to access to NSSF mid-term benefits is provided for under Section 20A of the NSSF (Amendment) Act, 2021 which states that:

- (1) *"A member who has made contributions to the fund shall be allowed mid-term access to his or her benefits accrued from the contributions.*
- (2) *A member who is 45 years of age and above and who has made contributions to the fund under Section 7 for at least 10 years is eligible to mid-term access to his or her benefits, of a sum not exceeding 20 per cent of his or her accrued benefits."*

By introducing mid-term access benefits, Parliament intended to create an exception which enables a member who had contributed to the fund for at least 10 years and was 45 years and above, to access his or her benefits while they were still contributing to the fund.

The intention of Parliament is well stated in the Parliament *Hansard* dated 24 November 2021 on pages 14 and 15 where the Rt Hon. Chairperson of the whole House stated that, *"What we are dealing with now is to create another exception because of this COVID-19 pandemic so that those who are still contributing and are continuing to contribute, can have mid-term access to a percentage of what they have kept with the Fund. That is what is being proposed now."*

The Rt Hon. Chairperson and the Attorney-General also distinguished access to mid-term benefits from access to withdrawal benefits that accrue to a member as a result of unemployment. The Attorney-General stated, on page 14, that if the person has been out of employment for a year and he can prove that he has been unemployed for that period, they can apply to withdraw from the fund.

Under Sections 19(1) and 21 of the Act, “A member of the fund is entitled to withdraw benefits if he or she attains the age of 50 years and if he or she has not been employed under a contract of service for a period of one year, immediately preceding his or her claim.”

Therefore, the committee observes that the petitioner’s allegation that: “A certain clause was sneaked to deprive many savers from accessing mid-term benefits” is erroneous, misleading and factually incorrect as illustrated in the *Hansard* of 24 November 2021, as we have quoted above.

The second observation is on the petitioner recommending that the process for accessing savers’ benefits be shortened. The procedure for seeking access to mid-term benefits is provided for under the National Social Security Fund (Mid-Term Access to Benefits) Regulations, 2022.

According to Regulation 5, the procedure is commenced by an application to the Fund, made in the form set out in the Schedule to the Regulations and accompanied with the relevant documents.

Under Regulation 7, the Fund, on receipt of the application, reviews the application and where an applicant qualifies for mid-term access to benefits, the claim shall be expeditiously processed and paid in not later than 45 working days from the date of receipt of the application.

Regulation 7(2) states that the fund can reject an application and state the reasons for the rejection. However, the committee observes that the Fund’s communication strategy was ineffective given that often times, rejected applications do not get timely feedback.

Further, the committee observes that the regulations do not provide for a review of the decisions of the fund management on payment of mid-term benefits and therefore, the contributing members of the fund are not given an opportunity to appeal the decisions of the fund management.

The committee was informed that the fund had a plan to shorten the period of processing the access to benefits to 14 working days, to assist members with ease of access to their benefits.

The third prayer was that the whistle-blowers be facilitated and their documentation handled expeditiously when they make their complaints to National Social Security Fund (NSSF) management.

The committee observes that the petitioner did not support his allegations of NSSF connivance with employers to avoid remitting of contributions to the fund, thus this claim could not be verified.

Further, the petitioner was reluctant to share additional details about the employer in question or in regard to his experience when he visited the fund, thus this claim could also not be interrogated.

However, management informed the committee that it was aware that some employers default on remittances of benefits, while some employees conspire with their employers not to declare NSSF contributions.

Prayer number four was that Parliament scrutinises the nature of investments made by NSSF. The Fund is required, under the law, to ensure proper accountability for money spent on investments and records of assets and liabilities of the Fund.

According to Section 3 of the NSSF (Amendment) Act, the Fund is governed by a stakeholder board of directors appointed by the minister and according to Section 3(1) (d), the board includes: Four representatives of employees nominated by the Federation of Labour Unions and two representatives of employers nominated by the Federation of Employers, the permanent secretaries from the ministry responsible for labour and the ministry responsible for finance and the managing director as an ex-officio member.

Section 30 stipulates that, “*Monies of the Fund shall be invested in such investments as may be*

determined by the Board, in consultation with the minister.”

Section 30(1)(b) mandates, *“The Board to keep and provide proper books of accounts and records in regard to assets and liabilities and to prepare a balance sheet and statement showing details of income, expenditure and all its assets and liabilities every financial year.”*

Section 32(2) requires that *“The balance sheet of the fund is audited by the Auditor-General and upon receipt of a copy of the audited Statement of Account, together with a copy of the audited report on the Statement of Account made by the auditors, the Board shall submit the same to the minister.”*

The Board is further required, under Section 33, to submit to the minister a performance report on the fund not later than six months after the end of each financial year and thereafter, the Board publishes a performance report and a copy of the audited accounts of the fund and the annual statement of account in such manner as the minister may direct.

In addition to the NSSF Act, the fund is supervised by the Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority (URBRA), mandated under Section 5(1)(e) to protect the interests of members of retirement benefits schemes, including the promotion of transparency and accountability.

The Fund is required to make investment decisions in accordance with the Fund’s internal investment policy and the URBRA investment guidelines.

The committee observed that allegations in regard to the investment portfolio of the fund had been effectively handled by the Select Committee on the NSSF, whose report was adopted by the Parliament.

Recommendations

The committee makes the following recommendations:

1. That Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development should first track the post-legislative scrutiny on the NSSF (Amendment) Act, 2022, given that the 31,145 savers who have so far benefited from the mid-term access is still a low number compared to the initial projection that was presented to Parliament.
2. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, and Members of Parliament representing workers should undertake to propose possible amendments to the NSSF (Amendment) Act, 2022.
3. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development should provide quarterly reports on the access to mid-term benefits to Parliament.
4. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development should expand and sensitise the public to create awareness on the eligibility and importance of mid-term access benefits.
5. The Fund should sensitise its members and public about its whistle-blowers policy.
6. The Fund should avail periodical statements of contributions to its members.
7. The Fund should formulate a proper complaint mechanism to enable aggrieved members to seek advice, review, justice and assistance in accessing any benefits accruing to them under the law.
8. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and NSSF should fast-track and implement the resolutions of Parliament in the report of the Select Committee on NSSF and provide an action-taken report to Parliament.

In conclusion, the petitioner raises pertinent issues in regard to savings, welfare and the social protection of workers. It is therefore prudent that possible amendments to the NSSF

(Amendment) Act 2022 and policy measures be considered to bridge the existing gaps in the protection of workers in Uganda.

The NSSF management should enhance the communication strategy of the fund for the benefit of contributors or savers and the public at large.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for the kind listening and I beg to move.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Chairperson of the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development. Honourable members, you have heard the report. It was a petition arising out of Rule 30 where a member had issues to raise in regard to the regulation or the law that we made. We may now open the debate.

3.47

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Madam Speaker, I thank the committee for doing a great job. I have one proposal: to delete recommendation number 6 requiring NSSF to provide periodic statements to members because NSSF already does that on a daily basis. I am a voluntary contributor and I have an app through which I can see my contributions on a daily basis. So, requiring more periodical statements will be asking for what NSSF is already doing. That is my proposal.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I wish all of you could be as brief as Faith.

3.48

MR BARNABAS TINKASIIMIRE (NRM, Buyaga West County, Kagadi): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I have two issues. It seems the petitioner – and the findings of the committee – did not understand the avenue of accessing his contribution. In his petition, he thought that they were denying him access to his mid-term benefits.

I would like the committee to tell us, in their findings, whether they have found a number of such people who are out of employment and want to access their savings. How many

such cases are there? That number was not mentioned. I think it is very important to us and to the public such that one gets to know that when I save and I am out of a job, I have an avenue through which I can access these funds.

The other issue that I want the committee to tell us is about the investment. It is true the law provides that the Board can make investments. In your assessment, are they making business where the money has been invested? Are they making profits? I expected that to come out of your report. If somebody is saying our funds are being invested in businesses which are making losses, then prove them wrong when you do the investigation. Bring it to the House and say, “No, NSSF has a series of investments. They are making so much profit and there are no losses.”

It also convinces the public that Parliament is up to the task to make sure that their savings are saved, or are safe. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable members, when you look at the report, the number of savers who have actually benefited from the mid-term access currently stands at 31,145, which amounts to 75 per cent of the initial projection by NSSF, which is 41,174. This implies that all the eligible beneficiaries are getting the mid-term access. When you look at the issue of investment, in my observation, some of these matters should have been raised by the petitioner, especially in regard to eligibility and investment decisions.

It is basically about the information gap. There is a desk that should have handled that. I do not think Parliament should really go into these kinds of things.

3.51

MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I thank the chairperson of the committee for the report. I have an observation that after thorough investigation and the report that we debated exhaustively here – whereas it was done in good faith and

to better the management of the fund, the management seems to be a little intimidated on implementing -

THE SPEAKER: Committee chairperson, can you listen? Hon. Henry, stop over-engaging the chairperson.

MR MUWUMA: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I was saying that the management of the fund seems to be somewhat intimidated on implementing some of the recommendations or the decisions that they are supposed to be making. Why am I saying this?

Madam Speaker, I have a voter – I think he should be a petitioner of some sort. Why? He has been out of employment for 10 years, but he has moved severally to the Jinja regional office and to headquarters here but to no avail. He has failed to access help. His children are out of school, he is being thrown out of the house where he is residing and he is sick. He has tried to reach out to the concerned officials, but they have kept telling him: “According to the current law, we cannot help you.”

I do not know, if this man dies, whether the fund will benefit him in the grave. The management should be encouraged that, yes, whereas we recommended better management of the fund, they should not deprive people who are doing badly of the chance to benefit from their fund that they worked for. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

3.54

MS DORCAS ACEN (NRM, Woman Representative, Alebtong): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Allow me to thank *-(Laughter)-* Madam Speaker, Hon. Iddi is looking at me curiously because you asked me a question. Allow me to answer –

THE SPEAKER: No, I was joking. Hon. Iddi, stop looking at the *-(Laughter)*

MS ACEN: Thank you very much for your protection, Madam Speaker. I thank the

chairperson and members of the committee for this report. As part of the team that contributed and saved with NSSF – not just to share my experience, but from what my voters on the ground also share – I want to agree that, indeed, there is a lot of back-and-forth communication and the process of accessing the money is quite lengthy. I had that experience and I have had quite a number of people who have shared a similar experience.

I would like to agree with the committee’s recommendation, especially the one on requiring quarterly reports from NSSF, especially on mid-term access. I would also request the committee to consider broadening that quarterly report to cover all other processes of accessing funds, not just mid-term benefits, but also for those who have already retired and those who have, for example, joined the Government or joined UN and are no longer contributing to the fund. The experience that we get from the ground is not very good. I thank you.

3.55

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for this opportunity. I would like to thank the committee for this very good report. I have one observation.

Madam Speaker, based on the economic condition in which we are, many people have not recovered. Things are very difficult. I have a person who called me yesterday from Adjumani intending to commit suicide. Why? -

THE SPEAKER: When you want to commit suicide, do you announce it? *(Laughter)*

MS ABABIKU: The person had locked herself and the neighbours rescued her. Why? She got a loan and wanted to repay it but there was no money for repaying the loan. The case has been registered at police.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I am of the view that we should, in the next legislation, review the condition of 50 years. Many people are living in abject poverty and have needs. Even

for us, parliamentarians, although we save, we are under pressure. The demands are too high. So, I am proposing that in the next review, let us review the 50 years. Let us also ensure that the processes are considerate. People want to use their money because they do not have any alternatives apart from what they have saved. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The next review will be informed by the proper post-legislative studies. We are going to understand how this legislation that we made is impacting the communities and how best we should make an amendment to fit the situation at hand.

Honourable members, in the public gallery this afternoon, we have teachers of Bufulubi Primary School from Mayuge District. They are represented in Parliament by Hon. Rukia Nakadama Isanga *-(Applause)-* a Prime Minister, Hon. Aggrey Bagiire, Hon. Iddi Isabirye and Hon. Kubeketerya. Please stand up and we see you; very good people from Mayuge. Members, stand up and see your constituents. These are your very good Members.

Hon. Isabirye, speak and then I will ask the Prime Minister to welcome her members.

3.59

MR IDDI ISABIRYE (NRM, Bunya County South, Mayuge): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the committee for the report. However, we do not want to kill the spirit in which we amended this Bill.

We amended the Bill to enable savers to access their funds within the limit of 20 per cent. However, such administrative issues may arise. I appeal to honourable members here that our voters have issues because they are the ones who save but they should not always be tabled in Parliament. Rather, they should be handled administratively. If the Board cannot handle a Bill that we have just amended, we shall have many petitions.

I thank the chairperson for the good report, but this is a caution to us, as Members of

Parliament, since people keep coming to us. We should not come here to present issues that are administrative. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, if you listened to what Hon. Iddi Isabirye has said, one of our roles is to do oversight. We have a sectoral committee to that effect and the NSSF Board. We need to strengthen our oversight to make sure that the Board does what is expected of them. As Parliament, we will also get reports but the day-to-day operations should be handled at the fund.

4.01

MR EMMANUEL ONGIERTHO (FDC, Jonam County, Pakwach): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson for the good report. Initially, I thought we would just adopt the report but what comes out very clearly is the information gap.

What went out about mid-term access excited people, but they did not know that there would be a regulation put in place to ensure that in that access, it has to be like this and that. That point of the regulation is what our people out there could be missing out on.

I can tell you this as a joke. We did something similar for Members of Parliament here. However, the regulation, for instance, barred me. When we were discussing it, I was very happy that I was eventually going to get part of mine. I even walked down there, only to be told that you must have been a Member of Parliament for 10 straight years; this is my seventh -

THE SPEAKER: It even reduced on your take home; what goes to your account. Regarding the issue of information gap, people lack information. The expectation is very high because of the poverty levels. You see the poor people here want money, but they do not have information.

MR ONGIERTHO: Madam Speaker, you have made a good summary. Therefore, let us go out and help our people. I do not know

whether the report will help people out there to know what they should expect.

I agree with my sister, Hon. Faith Nakut, that the report may not be that meaningful to us. The most important thing is to make sure that savers get the information. Whether it is through Parliament, I doubt that it will be effective.

THE SPEAKER: No, the report is meaningful because it tells us what we should do in the next legislation. It also tells us what is expected of us. It is you and I who are supposed to tell the people out there what they should expect; we will not leave it to the minister alone.

4.04

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to welcome our people from Bufulubi in Mayuge; Bufulubi is one of our good schools. It is not very old, but they are doing well. Now that they are here in Parliament, I know that when they go back, they will add to what they have been doing. They might be the best in Mayuge and the whole country. Thank you very much for coming to visit our Parliament. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Still in the public gallery this afternoon, we have church members from St Mark Lukolo Parish, Busoga Diocese, Jinja District, led by Rev. Michael Kyakulaga. *(Applause)* Welcome to the Parliament of Uganda.

This is a God-fearing Parliament and that is why you see that we receive many of you. Hon. Aga Isabirye, stand up and they see you. They are represented by Hon. Aga Isabirye and Hon. Manjeri Kyebakutika. You are most welcome and keep praying for us, as Parliament. *(Applause)*

4.05

MS MARGARET RWEBYAMBU (NRM, Woman Representative, Mbarara): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson for the report, but mostly, the petitioner. This is an eye-opener

and I would like to speak on behalf of the widows out there who are suffering over the NSSF money of their late spouses.

First of all, it is a very terrible experience to secure letters of administration for a widow. In addition, after –

THE SPEAKER: This is a reminder that it is not NSSF that gives letters of administration.

MS RWEBYAMBU: Yes, I am coming to that, Madam Speaker. After securing the letters of administration, you now come back to tussle with the NSSF fund. The children of most widows cannot go back to school yet the money that their spouses worked very hard to save is seated in the fund.

I request everyone here to ensure that we do what the report requires us to do so that people are able to access that hard-earned and saved money and it saves our people in this country. Thank you.

4.07

DR CHARLES AYUME (NRM, Koboko Municipality, Koboko): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Mine is more of a caution. I am a bit worried that our life expectancy keeps on increasing. We are at 64 years and in the next 10 to 15 years; we should be at 75 or 80 years.

We need to approach midterm access with a lot of caution. Aren't there other avenues in which the Government can think of bailing out citizens? In the midst of this financial stress, can we recapitalise some of our commercial banks and microfinance institutions and bring down the interest rates so that people can access capital?

This is because if we keep on taking the midterm access below 50 years; at 45 years and so on, I think we shall be defeating the spirit of social security for the later years of our lives. Let us please approach this with a lot of caution. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. That is a very good idea; that we could recapitalise the SMEs for people to be able to have

businesses. Yes, finance minister? There was an economic and investment aspect.

4.08

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GENERAL DUTIES)

(Mr Henry Musasizi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I come into this debate, having gone through the concerns that Members have been raising from 2012 up to 2021.

I know, as representatives of the people, that we feel concerned when they are experiencing difficulties. I, however, have this opinion; the reason we established NSSF was to look for an avenue of making people happy when they are no longer working. The underlying principle is not to make people save today and use it tomorrow when they get COVID-19 or something similar. Therefore, it is important that when we are debating this issue, we do not forget the underlying objective of why NSSF was set up.

On the economic and investment side, the NSSF funds are invested in three asset classes: we have fixed income, equities and real estate. To date, our investment portfolio is Shs 18.5 trillion, which is invested in these three asset classes.

Our interest here - I know Prof. Mushemeza is listening to me attentively. This money is helping the economy by providing long-term funds for investment. Yes, we want mid-term access, according to the law, which the minister will talk about, but from the financing side, I am very happy when very few people come to take mid-term access because I need this money to keep building a strong economic base.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, let me invite colleagues to look for avenues of building our SMEs to provide short-term sources of mitigating the shocks that come.

However, at the same time, we should not forget to think about what Dr Ayume has talked about. The life expectancy is going up and we

do not want a population where, for instance, someone was a commissioner in Government or a managing director in a parastatal and when you meet him at the age of 70 years, he is on the street begging.

I invite you, colleagues, to think about this and support the idea of long-term saving through pension funds. I thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. As much as we talk about long-term investment, we passed the law of mid-term access so you should be able to match the mid-term access vis-a-vis the investment. That is what happens in a bank. If you only have savings accounts, you cannot give out a loan for a longer period. If you have a fixed deposit account then you can give a loan for, say two years, if the fixed deposit is like five years. Therefore, you need to see how you can match and manage it. The Professor has said, do not use frustration.

4.13

THE MINISTER OF GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (Ms Betty Amongi):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the committee for the report and agree with their findings and recommendations. The biggest contest is on the word, "contribution" vis-a-vis "savings." When the law was passed, everybody saving with NSSF who had reached 45 years thought they would be able to access the money.

The context is that there are people who are in a job – for instance, the employer contributes for you, you lose a job, then maybe in a gap of five months, you get another job and start contributing. You have reached 45 years, but cumulatively, your contribution does not reach 120 months, which is in the law.

The law says you must have contributed consecutively for 10 years. If you have lost a job, even if you have been saving for 10 years, but the 10 years are not consistent, you cannot access it. I think the honourable member who talked about the regulation for the pension of Parliament got it well. Parliament got it well

and the Parliamentary Pension Scheme came and did a study with NSSF.

This is the biggest contention and I think those who have reached 45 years, in the case of able people, and 50 years, in the case of persons with disability - and there are very many who fall under the category of people who have not contributed consistently for 120 months. That is where the problem is and that is the only contention.

I have received a lot of petitions, and so has the fund, to amend this part. I consulted the Attorney-General and he indicated that if we want to analyse the impact, or if we want to take care of this category of people, we need to go back to Cabinet and replace the word “contribution” with “saving.” That is when you will be able to bring the petitioner and others on board. That is where we are –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, do not make amendments so early; just give people information. There is lack of information out there. Tell them what is expected of them and what is expected of the Board.

MS AMONGI: I want Parliament to know where the contention is because your people will continue to ask you why they are not getting mid-term access. They will say, “I am 45 years old and I have saved for 10 years.” Therefore, please tell them the difference is between the law which talks of “contributed consistently.”

The reason why we have not come back is because of the same issue you are raising. We felt that we should first implement this law and see how many - By the way, Members, I am glad to notify you that many people are not applying for mid-term access. Even those who have reached 55 years; the retirement age, and who would have wanted to exit, are instead transforming their savings into voluntary contributions. I am glad that the majority of Ugandans out there understand that saving with NSSF is for retirement. People are now working more; when they retire from Public Service, they go private. Those who are in

private service continue to work and people are accessing it at 65 or 70 years even with voluntary savings.

I thank Parliament because more people are now leaving their money in the Fund. People work for you, you get your interest and it is automatically credited –(*Interjections*)– let me finish then get the clarification.

The second issue raised was how to exit and the fact that there are people who join the Public Service or UN, but exiting becomes a problem. They want to remove their money.

If you want to exit and are going into Public Service, there is a law that provides for how to exit and how we pay you. If you join UN, you must confirm to NSSF that you have an alternative social security with the UN.

However, many people who come to me do not have social security with either the UN or another entity where they are. The law is very clear; bring evidence that you have an alternative social security in that entity and then we will process for you.

The other issues are processes. The process of accessing is an administrative issue, which I am going to work with NSSF to address. However, most of the application is online. I do not know what the issue is. Most of the people who go back and forth are those who do not upload their documents properly.

Secondly, some people have saved but not contributed for 120 months. What I agree with you is clarity to the population; awareness and information on the law and whether you are eligible or not.

On the issue of widows, many people have come to me but sometimes there are family issues. Then, there is the Will. You can be a widow, but the person has willed the social security to a son, daughter or another person. This widow comes insisting, “Give me my husband’s social security.” The law ties me. I will not be able to give you if the Will is saying something else.

Therefore, many issues are under play and before we give you the money, you must have all the legal documents. In most cases, in family matters, there are very many dynamics. The widow will think it is automatic for her to access the money for the late husband when the late made a different Will. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS BEGUMISA: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for giving me the opportunity and I thank the committee for your wonderful report. I am a saver with NSSF. My sister raised an issue about widows.

Honourable minister, where do we put this regulation regarding our young employees who have come to us after losing a job? After COVID-19, people lost jobs. I am an employer myself.

People lose jobs and get new ones; maybe one wants to go back to school or relocate to some other place. Many are looking at the little money they saved with NSSF as start-up capital as many are unemployed right now. I appreciate what the Minister of Finance said; that we need that money to save our people, but they are jobless –

THE SPEAKER: What does the law say about somebody who is still within the age of, say, 30 years and you have moved from one job to the other?

MS BEGUMISA: Maybe the person has lost a job, Madam Speaker. I want that clarification from the minister. It is a big hassle for these people.

THE SPEAKER: You need to look at the law and not just put empathy because you have lost a job. It should be matched with what the law requires of you.

4.23

MR KISOS CHEMASWET (NRM, Soi County, Kween): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the chairperson of the committee –

THE SPEAKER: Members who are coming from outside, do not make noise for us. My *muko*, Hon. Onzima, you are disturbing Hon. Faith.

MR CHEMASWET: I would like to allay the fears of the Minister of Finance, Hon. Musasizi on the question of the economy –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Kaala, there is space. Move for her, she needs more air – *(Laughter)*

MR CHEMASWET: I would like to allay the fears of the Minister of Finance regarding economics and give some advice on the repurchase financing or agreements.

Repurchase agreements are about trading in treasury bills and bonds by the Government. Of course, the Government has tried so much to do the reverse financing through PDM where the money is now back to the people.

I would wish that through the mid-term augmented by PDM, the Government would have looked at the amounts of money that would be reversed to the people of Uganda to deal with the economic part of it. You must look at the repurchase agreements and reverse financing. Of course, you will have the solution of the mid-term financing. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I hope you have got what he means.

4.25

MR BARNABAS TINKASIIMIRE (NRM, Buyaga West County, Kagadi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think we owe a responsibility to these people who run to us. I want the honourable minister to tell us whether when these people run to her, they receive feedback.

The biggest problem we have had is that most of the complaints are channelled online. I do not know whether there is another avenue of formal communication that is sent to them.

According to what the chairperson was explaining, the law provides that if you are out

of employment for a year, there would be a way for you to access. I think this petitioner falls in that category, not in mid-term. The honourable minister who is managing the fund, you need to assure us as to whether there is that mechanism and if it is there, whether it has been made known to these petitioners.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, one thing that you need to appreciate is that social security money cannot be treated as start-up capital. It is a safety fund for your later years.

When he was speaking economics, start-up capital is the cost of the initial capital that you are going to invest in that business. When you look at this, it requires a completely different approach like what you talked about - the PDM, where you are taking money directly to the end users. That is for PDM, not for the National Social Security Fund. Thank you.

MS AMONGI: Thank you, Madam Speaker. On the issue of those who have lost their jobs, the law is very clear. There are eligibility criteria; medical and others that can enable you get your funds at any time as long as you prove. The issue of losing a job is not part of the legal framework to access mid-term benefits. Outside the other eligibility criteria, which is medical and others, there is only the mid-term access. When you reach 55 years, you can access your mid-term benefits.

When they petition, do you give feedback? Yes, we do give feedback. Beyond online, we have automated SMS. When you apply, we also request you to write your email, if you have and we also send emails for you to know. In addition, we have telephone calls where if you want detailed information, they SMS you to call so that they explain to you in detail. We also have the whistle-blower platform. Those are the areas through which we engage with the petitioner after the mid-term access application.

We had so many people who had mistaken contributions to savings. It was this framework that we used that calmed down over 10,000 people who had applied and were not eligible, according to the word "contribution". Majority

of the people understood and are waiting for the right legal framework.

Yes, we have been notifying them by creating awareness, but a petitioner like this one - His intention was to look at how the category of these people should benefit. That is how I look at it because they told everybody that they are not eligible. The issue of Hon. Chemaswet was for the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, I now put the question that the report of the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development on the petition of the mid-term access of NSSF benefits be adopted by this honourable House with amendments.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister and committee chairperson. I instruct the Clerk to extract the resolutions of this House and forward it to you for appropriate action.

4.30

MS LILLIAN ABER (NRM, Woman Representative, Kitgum): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to raise a very painful matter that is affecting my constituency and neighbouring game parks. As I speak, the people in Kitgum, particularly Orom, Namokora and Kiteng Subcounties are on the run because of elephant invasion.

I do not know what is chasing these elephants from the parks. Over 100 elephants have invaded these areas and are destroying everything. I am afraid that people who benefited from the Parish Development Model fund and invested in agriculture, will be tasked to pay when they do not have the money.

I know that animals are not more important than human beings. We have raised this matter on the Floor and no action has been taken. We cannot keep advocating for tourism when

our people are losing lives and their food and houses are being destroyed.

My prayers are:

1. I request the minister to visit these communities and talk to them. As area Members of Parliament, we have raised this matter, had meetings, and we have nothing else to tell them. Let the minister come on the ground and meet the community.
2. We request for food relief that can take these communities for a certain period of time.
3. Honourable minister, I have pictures of houses that these elephants have destroyed. I think it is now in order that the Office of the Prime Minister provides iron sheets such that the communities can roof their houses.

These elephants are not easy to manage. You see a picture of an elephant destroying over – It is the way it used to be during the Kony war where you find houses have been burnt down and only bricks remaining.

Madam Speaker, I ask for your indulgence on this painful matter. Our women are running away from homes, they have nothing to eat, and you know what Northern Uganda has gone through. If we cannot talk about this peace, we must feel the peace. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Prime Minister, the issue of wild animals living together with human beings is a very bad thing. The Floor is yours.

4.33

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Madam Speaker, it is bad that our people are living with animals. I am going to direct the Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities to go on the ground and see exactly what happened so that a lasting solution can be found. *(Applause)*

Concerning the people who need some relief food items, I request my honourable colleague, Hon. Aber, through the District Disaster Committee, to write to the ministry so that food and iron sheets can be delivered for those people whose houses have been destroyed. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: When should we get feedback from the minister?

MS NAKADAMA: Madam Speaker, next week.

THE SPEAKER: We are giving you one week.

MS NAKADAMA: Thank you.

4.35

DR EUNICE OTUKO (UPC, Oyam County North, Oyam): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance. The Government, through the National Water and Sewerage Corporation, is currently laying infrastructure as part of the implementation for the water supply and sanitation project to Gulu City and small towns en route.

The small towns en route component includes three districts; Gulu, Omoro and Oyam. This very huge project that is being funded by the World Bank and the KfW Bank is drawing its water from a place called Nora in Oyam District. Oyam is going to be hosting up to 40 kilometres of the water works, which translates to approximately 60 per cent of the entire length of the water works to Gulu City.

Oyam is very happy for Gulu and the two districts in between. However, to our shock and disbelief, Oyam has been left out of the entire scheme. Not a single drop of water -

THE SPEAKER: Yet it is the hosting district?

DR OTUKO: Yes. Oyam is the hosting district and we have critical facilities like Atapara Hospital which is five kilometres from the main waterworks. There is not a single drop of water designed for the district headquarters which

is nearer to the main waterworks compared to other districts that will have -

THE SPEAKER: So, the water is just going to pass through Oyam to Gulu City?

DR OTUKO: Correct. My requests, Madam Speaker, to the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, are two: First, I would like to invite her to clarify if this injustice, the inequality of denying a critical resource that is drawn from Oyam District and passes through the entire length of 40 kilometres – that is an unprecedented injustice and inequality.

Secondly, we would like to request the Prime Minister to agree to meet-

THE SPEAKER: One thing I am aware of is that all the towns where the pipes are passing benefit. Unless you are talking about a certain village like mine, instead of Bukedea town, deep down there, that is a different case.

DR APIO: I would like to add a bit of information on that, Madam Speaker. We have had a conversation with the National Water and Sewerage Corporation, they clarified that they are going to be setting up a 10,000-litre tank in two locations; one will be at Kamdini and the other one will be at Minakulu. But these two –

THE SPEAKER: Is Kamdini benefitting?

DR APIO: No, because these two water tanks will simply serve as-(*Interjections*)- yes – it is going to serve as a processing point for the water flowing through Oyam to the rest of the districts.

So, we are asking the Prime Minister to agree, together with her line minister and the project team, to sit down with me and the district leadership to thresh out this unfortunate problem. (*Laughter*)

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, one thing – I need a confirmation. Hon. Obua, can you give us information to that effect? Because in my area, all the towns along where the pipes are passing are benefitting. But again, when

you go deep to my village, it does not benefit.

Please, let us hear from – all the main towns benefit; stop arguing on what you do not know.

4.39

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Madam Speaker, to the best of my recollection, what was submitted in Cabinet is not far from what you have stated – to the effect that all the major townships along, for instance, in this case, Kamdini and Minakulu are beneficiaries.

Even some townships in Omoro District – before you reach Gulu – are beneficiaries. What I strongly believe is about the people in Oyam because her constituency is Oyam North, which is not along the major highway. Even Oyam district headquarters is not along the major highway. It appears their intention is that there should be some – what we call in electricity, tee-off point to Oyam District Headquarters including Oyam Town Council, which now falls outside the precincts of the project as approved.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister, get that information and report back to the House on what the Member is raising and how best it can be handled.

4.41

MR JACOB KARUBANGA (NRM, Kibanda South County, Kiryandongo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance involving Ranch No. 11 in Kiryandongo District, where unidentified people are gaining entry, and want vacant possession using very serious armed influence.

We were told somehow that they are being influenced or backed up by Gen. Taban, and actually, the people who were intended to be resettled there are languishing, being punished and terrorised, some of them being arrested and others have even died. We can provide that information if we are given time.

Hon. Ngompek is here, and Hon. Kahunde is there. Now that the Ministry of Lands raised

money through the Ministry of Finance to resettle the two communities, that is, the Nubian community who were terrorised in the Northeastern insurgency and the Kibyama people who were chased from the Karuma Wildlife Reserve areas be resettled as soon as practicable.

The Shs 100 million to start with is already on the district account. We cannot see our people being pushed up and down and terrorised like that, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. Linos, can you clarify because that is your constituency?

4.42

MR LINOS NGOMPEK (NRM, Kibanda North County, Kiryandongo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is a fact that Gen. Taban Amin has deployed soldiers.

THE SPEAKER: Can you say “somebody you are not aware of”? I do not want names.

MR NGOMPEK: Let me leave that, but the Uganda Lands Commission is alleged to have awarded this ranch to a private company and did not go through the right procedure.

We have a contestation over that and the big man whom you do not want me to mention –(Laugher)-, does not allow even the district leadership to go to the ranch.

THE SPEAKER: I do not want you to mention names here because those persons are not in the House to defend themselves.

MR NGOMPEK: Okay. However, this person also claims that he only listens to the President, not other people. We have reported this matter to all authorities but nothing –

THE SPEAKER: But he is coming to the House for the first time.

MR NGONPEK: To the House, yes, but we have reported this matter to authorities and they are intimidated by him.

THE SPEAKER: The authority of Parliament is receiving it for the first time.

MR NGOMPEK: We are praying-

THE SPEAKER: Madam Prime Minister, can we have that handled? Nobody is above the law. One person cannot make other people suffer. Okay?

MS NAKADAMA: Much obliged, Madam Speaker.

4.44

MS HELEN KAHUNDE (NRM, Woman Representative, Kiryandongo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Kiryandongo has a lot of land-related contradictions and conflicts. My colleague, Hon. Karubanga Jacob Ateenyi raised a matter concerning Ranch 11 and whatever he and Hon. Linos submitted is true.

I am not going to address myself to that. Mine is yet on another ranch, Ranch 22, but also within Kiryandongo District, Kiryandongo Subcounty and Kitwara Parish.

There is a contestation on the ownership of Ranch 22 and forceful eviction taking place on the same ranch by use of armed security personnel.

As I speak now, one person has died and several others are seriously injured and are in various health centres within the district.

I pray that the Ministry of Security, together with the Ministry of Internal Affairs send their teams and thoroughly assess the situation and assure the locals that there will be no more attacks and such shootings in the local community.

I also pray that the Minister of Lands urgently halts further evictions on that same ranch until the contestation has been addressed.

I also pray that the Minister of Lands personally visits the place or better still, sends a team to conduct a detailed investigation and establish a lasting solution to the above conflict. Madam Speaker, I so pray.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. You are repeating the same.

MS NAKADAMA: I would like to call the Minister of Internal Affairs because this is an issue involving security.

So, I call on the Minister of Internal Affairs to come and respond.

THE SPEAKER: And, security is about the protection of lives and property of persons. We want to stop the killings.

4.47

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Madam Speaker, through my leader, we shall consult with the lands ministry and converge in the locus and see how to get a comprehensive solution.

THE SPEAKER: Maybe what you need to do immediately, since he said some people are being killed, is to find out what the situation on the ground is.

GEN. MUHOOZI: Much obliged, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR TINKASIMIRE: Madam Speaker, this looks to be a persistent problem, where the army and the police are being used against our people and in the process, they are killed. Without court orders, they evict.

This happened in my constituency, where Rebecca Masika was killed and this matter is in the committee. So, the procedural matter I want to raise is: To the people in charge of the army, how are these people running out of the barracks and we find them on our pieces of land, terrorising people?

THE SPEAKER: Have you confirmed whether they are from the army or police? There are many Ugandans who -

MR TINKASIMIRE: We have a lot of evidence. They come in civilian clothes. Recently, I went to Ndaiga and they were helping a rich man to fence off one of the pieces of land of our people. When they saw me, they took off and *-(Laughter)*

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Tinka, the issue you are raising is before the committee. Do you want to start discussing what is in the committee on the Floor? Everybody knows that matter of yours and it is before the committee.

Let me have Hon. Emma and Dr Ayume.

4.49

MS EMMA CHERUKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kween): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a point of insecurity in Kween. Kween is divided into two parts. The lower part of Kween is much affected by insecurity, caused by our neighbours. I do not want to mention them *-(Interjections)-* you know them.

My people from Soi County, particularly Kiriki Subcounty and Ngenge Subcounty, have sleepless nights. Our brothers, the Karamojong, always attack us, day and night. Even the right to have children has been denied to my people because when they are sleeping at night, these raiders come. *(Laughter)*

In brief, they are disorganising the peace –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, please, listen. Why don't these rustlers leave the Sabinu to produce more athletes? *(Laughter)* Anyway, the issue is that we may not be sure whether they are Karamojong; they are cattle rustlers. Like in our place, they come, but you cannot know – unless you are part of them to determine that, this one is a Karamojong.

General, the issue of the rustlers – you are depriving us of the right to produce.

GEN. MUHOOZI: Madam Speaker, I take the concern of the Member and I will relay the same to the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs for the necessary intervention.

THE SPEAKER: Kindly, get all the information from the whole of Sebei Subregion. Even Hon. Chemutai is there, raising the same thing. Hon. Solomon is also there. Get all the information from that subregion. The tallest man in the House is also there. The Sabiny team, please – with Toroma – get information to the General and then he will give it to the responsible office.

They will report to this House on the action they have taken. We also have that problem; they stole my cows.

MS CHERUKUT: Madam Speaker, I had talked of insecurity in two places. The lower part of Sebei, that is, Kween, Tingey and Bukwo, in a place called Tek. The security is not good.

When you come to the upper part, that is, Benet, there is a very unhealthy relationship between the UWA rangers – the park rangers – and the community. There is a lot of shooting, day and night, even without proof that someone is entering into the forest with animals. We have lost a lot of lives.

So, it is my humble prayer –

THE SPEAKER: That is okay. Please, handle it. Honourable members, I do not want you to wait for things to get worse for you to bring them to the House. We have a very good commander, Don Nabasa. He is doing a very good job there. *(Applause)* I wish you could really keep in touch with him. If you want his phone number, I will give it to you. He is doing a good job; I can attest to that.

Let us have Dr Ayume and then Hon. Laura.

4.54

DR CHARLES AYUME (NRM, Koboko Municipality, Koboko): Thank you, Madam Speaker. In August 2022, this Parliament approved a loan for the construction of the Uganda Heart Institute in Naguru, under your stewardship. His Excellency has given 10 acres of land.

In the same neighbourhood, China-Uganda Friendship Hospital, Naguru, is going to be upgraded to the status of the National Trauma Centre. I think you can envisage the number of emergency vehicles that will be descending on that locality. Then, you have the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs building a superstructure and we also have the police headquarters there.

Madam Speaker, Naguru Road, Naguru Avenue and Katalima Road are colonial single-carriage roads. Last year, I wrote to the Minister for KCCA and brought this to his attention, that these projects are coming. With all those emergency vehicles, we are going to get a spill over of traffic like it is right now.

It is one year down the road, but I have not got any response. I seek the intervention of this House to prevail so that those roads can be made into dual carriages, in anticipation – *(Applause)* – and for the first time, we can have an ambulance lane like it is in the modern world so that all the ambulances that are running to Uganda Heart Institute and to the National Trauma Centre have the right of way.

Those are my prayers, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Government?

4.56

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO

(Ms Rukia Nakadama): Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable member for the concern. It will be taken to the Minister for Kampala so that they can implement what is being requested, especially that dual carriage. I know it is very important and we have a hospital there.

So, the Minister for Kampala is going to be directed to see how they can expand – because right now they are doing some maintenance. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: You see, when you talk about expansion and look at that road; they have encroached on the railway reserve. I do

not know whether you have passed by that road. Now, one wonders how the expansion is going to be when the railway reserve has already been built on.

I think we need that to be handled because it is a serious matter. We have a hospital, police, and the Uganda Heart Institute coming up there. We need the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) to give us the way forward on how to handle that. Yes, Hon. Laura?

4.58

MS LAURA KANUSHU (NRM, PWD Representative): Thank you, Madam Speaker. My –

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter.

MR KIBALYA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Dr Ayume has raised a serious issue and, on most occasions, we find ourselves failing in some areas when some ministries or agencies say they never budgeted for that. We are now in the budget period; would it not be procedurally right that you pick interest in this, invite the concerned ministries, discuss, and agree before we enter into the Budget Cycle? Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Maybe we need to visit the area first, Dr Ayume. Organise and we go there next week before we talk.

MS KANUSHU: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to seek your guidance. On Tuesday, you intimated that today we would have a debate on land. I noticed that most of the Members, especially from Kiryandongo, were talking about security issues, but I think the root cause is the land wrangles.

This morning, I received information that in Mbale, people came and fought the people with disabilities who have land wrangles. I seek your guidance on when we shall have the debate on land. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, there was a complaint in this House that the land belonging to people with disabilities, women and

everybody else is being sold by the ministry. We wanted to have this discussion when the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development are both here. Can we fix that on Tuesday? (*Applause*)

4.59

THE MINISTER OF GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (Ms Betty Amongi): Madam Speaker, much of the land belonging to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and the institutions thereunder, is spread throughout the country and has been encroached on. Some of the land has been allocated by the Uganda Land Commission and there are directives on some.

I wrote to you requesting that for us to give a comprehensive report, we have to sit down with the Uganda Land Commission and they give us the status of all the land in the country. Your directive was –

THE SPEAKER: The status of all the land has been laid on the Table.

MS AMONGI: The status of all the land by the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development? As the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, we shall respond to the report from our ministry because we do not give out land. It is the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development that allocates land and what I read from the *Hansard*; it has given out all the land talked about. Some have titles, and some we have asked for cancellation of titles where we have presidential directives I will come and answer. Yes.

THE SPEAKER: There are specific lands that have been talked about and those are the ones Hon. Laura is talking about. Not so?

MS KANUSHU: Yes, Madam Speaker. There is Mbale, Lweza, Jinja, Rukungiri, Naguru, Kabale, and Ruti land. We need a comprehensive report.

THE SPEAKER: What we also need to get from your office is a stock register of the land belonging to entities in your ministry. Then, we will compare with what the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development will bring such that we can have a good debate. *(Applause)* Hon. Patrick?

5.02

MR GEOFFREY MACHO (Independent, Busia Municipality, Busia): I need help -

THE SPEAKER: Yes, but the way you smuggle. *(Laughter)*

MR MACHO: I come from the Uganda-Kenya border. I would like to be helped. Some of my colleagues must have been asking themselves this question. I have seen many times people getting free land titles in other parts of the country. How do we in this era where we have gold in Karamoja, in the East and other minerals in other areas- How can God visit other people, majorly in Busia, where we have gold so that they have free titles like the ones the Government is giving in other parts of the country? I request that you direct the Prime Minister to help so that I go with that today.

THE SPEAKER: Okay. Honourable Prime Minister?

5.10

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Madam Speaker, the land where we have minerals in Uganda belongs to the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development and it does not give titles but exploration licences. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Patrick?

5.03

MR PATRICK BINGI (NRM, Butemba County, Kyankwanzi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. With our magic bullet fired - that is the Parish Development Model - and well aware that 90 per cent of the beneficiaries are farmers. For example, in my district, Kyankwanzi, I am concerned with the quality of agro-chemicals

and the inputs. The farmers complain that when they spray the weeds, they become more luxuriant. *(Laughter)* The ticks when sprayed become healthier.

It is my humble prayer that the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives through UNBS regulates the use of these chemicals. We should look at certification, standards and compliance in liaison with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Trade minister—

5.05

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES (TRADE) (Ms Harriet Ntabazi): Thank you, Madam Speaker and Members. I appreciate the effort of the Member but this matter is totally agricultural. Most of the issues to do with certification and chemicals were taken to agriculture. We shall help to identify the gaps and communicate effectively. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: When do you get back to us?

MS NTABAZI: Madam Speaker, I am at the disposal of the House. I will do that next week.

THE SPEAKER: Give us a report on that including the one for acaricides because they are killing the cows.

MS NTABAZI: Most obliged.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Hon. David, Hon. Kaala?

5.06

MR DAVID LAGEN (NRM, Agago County, Agago): Thank you, Madam Speaker. On several occasions, we have raised issues of security. At the same time, you are fully aware that the belt of Northern Uganda has been going through lots of difficulties as a result of the cattle raids. We have asked about the issue of the security road several times.

In the last two months, we were surprised. The grader that was taken to begin the work was taken again away. We were wondering what the problem could be. Why is it that the ministry, after taking the grader to begin the work, shifted it to another place? We want to find out what the problem could be. We do not need to wait for the issue, for incidents to first occur, and then Government begins to respond.

THE SPEAKER: Who took the grader?

MR LAGEN: We were told that it is Government that took the grader away.

THE SPEAKER: What is Government? Government is you.

MR LAGEN: We were told the Ministry of Works and Transport took the grader away.

THE SPEAKER: Did you try to follow up?

MR LAGEN: Yes, we followed up. We even talked to the Prime Minister and she told me the grader was taken away for some work. We are wondering what the priority is. You know that the issue of security in our area is bringing a lot of difficulties and poverty. We want the Government to respond and help our local people for peace to be restored.

At least, at the moment, we are very grateful for the work of the UPDF; they are doing a lot of work. The rates of raids have at least reduced, though we still have the issue of the elephants and the buffalos that are disturbing the people.

THE SPEAKER: That has been addressed.

MR LAGEN: We are appealing to Government to respond quickly. This is a problem. Through you, Madam Speaker, we are requesting, kindly, let our people be helped.

THE SPEAKER: Which district is the equipment meant for?

MR LAGEN: The equipment was taken to begin work in Agago and Kitgum.

THE SPEAKER: For which district?

MR LAGEN: For opening the security road. The equipment is from the Ministry of Works and Transport.

THE SPEAKER: Is it, therefore, opening the roads for work?

MR LAGEN: It is opening a security road in Agago and Kitgum Districts. The equipment was taken away from one district to another.

THE SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister?

MR JOHN OKOT: Thank you, Madam Speaker. What Hon. Lagen is saying is true. Remember when the insecurity –

THE SPEAKER: Has anybody said it is not true? *(Laughter)*

MR JOHN OKOT: No, I am trying to build on what he has said. There was a security road that has been approved to be worked on. The Ministry of Works and the Office of the Prime Minister called us for a meeting. The roads that we are talking about have been planned for and there was some money earmarked for them.

The grader went up to Agago. That road was supposed to be open. However, to our surprise, the grader and the bulldozer were withdrawn. That is why we are raising a concern that since that security road was one of the roads that had been earmarked, yet the graders and the bulldozers have been withdrawn, why wouldn't they allow it to finish the work? Then later, they can shift to another place – that place was not even defined. That is the information I want to beef up to what my colleague has mentioned. Thank you.

5.10

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Madam Speaker, those people met with the Minister of Works and Transport in the Prime Minister's office. The withdrawal of the grader and the bulldozer is a technical program, whereby I have to call

the Minister of Works and Transport to come and explain why the grader and the bulldozer were withdrawn. Thank you.

5.11

MS KEVIN OJINGA (NRM, Woman Representative, Pallisa): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance affecting my district.

First of all, I thank the Government of Uganda for constructing for us a first-class tarmac road; that is the Tirinyi - Pallisa, Pallisa - Kumi, Pallisa - Kamonkoli. However, this road has now turned into a death trap for our people. That highway does not have any humps anywhere. The road is very good. People cruise on it. Most of the ministers pass there; Our Members of Parliament, our uncles and aunties from Karamoja pass there cruising. They do not even stop. *(Laughter)*

I bring to the attention of the House that our people are dying. We are losing people on a daily basis because the highway lacks humps. On commissioning of that road - by the way, it was commissioned by the Rt Hon. Prime Minister - we noticed that the road did not have humps and we foresaw the problem.

We brought it to the attention of the Prime Minister and she promised to direct the Minister of Works and Transport to build humps, especially along the trading centres. Similarly, one of my colleagues here raised the same issue last year. We personally went with my colleagues to the Office of the Minister of State for Works and Transport and he promised to work on the road. However, up to now, the road has no humps. People are dying. We are burying people every day. People have also got permanent injuries and they are nursing them.

My prayers, Madam Speaker –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Prime Minister, I think what you need to do is to liaise with the Ministry of Works and Transport. Indeed, it is first-class tarmac and there are no humps at all even in the town centres. One can cruise from Tirinyi up to Soroti non-stop – actually up to

Moroto. There are no humps anywhere. That is a little dangerous.

MS OJINGA: Madam Speaker, I wanted her to note these points because it happens almost on a daily basis. These trading centres –

THE SPEAKER: They will go on the ground. Do not worry. Do not stretch yourself.

MS OJINGA: Most obliged, Madam Speaker.

5.14

MR GOLI OGWAL (NRM, Dokolo North County, Dokolo): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: You people go out and then you come back and shout. Do you think I do not get tired? *(Laughter)*

MR GOLI OGWAL: Thank you very much. I rise on the issue of maize as a product. One of my enterprising young men informed me that they have over 2,500 metric tonnes of maize lying without sale in Dokolo and Lira.

They have also advised, and I see, that with the harvest – we are about to get a bumper harvest – the prices have tumbled and tumbled. However, I have been advised that there is a good market in DRC Goma area. What is happening is that some traders or business persons from a neighbouring country are able to come and purchase some of this maize from Lira, but our own persons cannot drive through that country to access the Goma market.

I request that Government sees how best to handle this as East African Community.

Secondly, how best can we use maize other than the usual way, so that the demand can be improved to support the situation we have? Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The problem with some of our farmers is that they buy maize, and keep it expecting higher prices, and by the time they decide to sell, another harvest comes in. Let me have Carol and Eddie.

5.17

MS CAROLINE KAMUSHIME (NRM, Woman Representative, Rukiga): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity.

My concern is about how the ambulances were distributed. I will add my voice to what my brother said - they were talking about constituencies. There are districts without ambulances. For example, Rukiga. I remember the last time I raised this issue - I appreciate your effort - you wrote to the Minister of Health requesting for beds to help Rukiga. However, I was surprised when they gave out ambulances and Rukiga missed yet we are on the border.

I am happy the honourable minister is here. I have written letters about this issue but up to now, Rukiga has not benefited. Madam Speaker, I request for a response from the honourable minister.

The other issue is; that we have a maternity ward which is almost collapsing – that is Mparo Health Centre IV. Considering that we do not have a district hospital, I request you, Madam Speaker, to push so that we have a maternity ward. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable minister.

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH (PRIMARY HEALTH CARE)

(Ms Margaret Muhanga): Thank you, Madam Speaker and Hon. Kamusiime, for raising this pertinent issue. The ambulances were only 116, so definitely there would be a constituency that would miss.

However, I want to allay your fears and promise you that as funds become available, we shall give every constituency an ambulance.

For Mparo Health Centre IV, I would like you to come to my office on Tuesday at 11 o'clock, - (*Applause*)- so that I can link you up with the technical people who may help you do whatever you want. If it is functional and dilapidated or it is in a bad state, we do come in handy whenever we have some funds, to repair and rehabilitate the health centre, so that it is usable and habitable.

5.19

MR EDDIE KWIZERA (NRM, Bukimbiri County, Kisoro): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate your conduct of the House. I will raise two issues which are on foreign policy.

Madam Speaker, in the East African Community we have diplomatic representations in all the countries. However, there are some countries where we have very close ties, but do not have full diplomatic representation, even when this House has appropriated funds for the in-post positions of ambassador.

It is over a year since we lost the Ambassador to Kenya, and we have not had full diplomatic representation. We have a big challenge of how to relate to them. That is one issue that the Government should take as a priority.

Relatedly, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) - my colleague talked about trade in Goma which we cannot access through Bunagana; it is because we do not have a full consulate in Goma and an Ambassador in Kinshasa. They posted an Ambassador in Kinshasa but was rejected. The Government of DRC has never posted an ambassador here since 2015.

These are issues that the Ministers of Foreign Affairs should pick an interest in.

The second point is that attending Parliament is not a ritual by ministers. It must be mandatory. They attend the Cabinet on Monday and they should attend Parliament on Thursday. However, there are those who do not attend. When you are discussing policy issues, policy is not delegated –

THE SPEAKER: It should not be only on Thursday. We sit on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

MR KWIZERA: We talk about Thursday because that is when we get time to raise issues, as they accompany the Prime Minister while responding to issues.

However, when you come here, you have very humble and obedient ministers like the General

there, Hon. Ogwang, and the Government Chief Whip - Parliament should recognise them, and blacklist the ones who do not come. *(Applause)* This is because the attendance of Members of Parliament should be motivated.

You find that some Members of Parliament do not attend Parliament because of poor motivation; policy questions are not being answered. The Deputy Prime Minister is trying to look for the Minister of Works and Transport, and none of them is here. That is why we have more than two ministers in each of the ministries.

Lastly, we need to have a minister –

THE SPEAKER: They have somehow improved. Credit must be given where it is due. *(Applause)* I do not want to say it is as it used to be.

MR KWIZERA: As I finish, Madam Speaker, we need - because the issue of presidential pledges –

THE SPEAKER: However, the issue of the Ambassador to Kenya and Kinshasa is very important. You need to see how to forward that to the boss. We also have the Minister of Foreign Affairs here.

MR KWIZERA: Can I finish so that they answer together?

THE SPEAKER: Okay.

MR KWIZERA: On the issue of presidential pledges; every Member of Parliament is blamed for not following up those pledges, and they have become historic. *(Applause)*

Can we have a minister specifically assigned for presidential pledges, so that we know where to focus? *(Laughter)* They have become too many.

My constituency was promised that there would be a takeover of Nteko-Buhoma Road and is now 10 years. When I go there, I become

unpopular because of presidential pledges. Why should I be gauged on the failures of presidential pledges? Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable member, we have a Committee on Government Assurance and Implementation. It is supposed to collect all Government pledges, they become documents of this House, and then we ask for action taken. We have never got a report from that committee, so how do you expect us to know what is pledged and where? I am not blamed so do not say all Members are blamed.

Foreign Affairs, can we have ambassadors?

5.25

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (REGIONAL AFFAIRS) (Mr John Mulimba): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will use two authorities in this respect. I will refer to the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 as amended, and I also use the UN Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961.

I will start with the Constitution; Article 122 is very informative and it states that “The President may appoint Ambassadors and Heads of Missions with approval of Parliament.”

THE SPEAKER: The word is “may” not “shall”?

MR MULIMBA: Yes, that is the effective word. Madam Speaker, indeed, in accordance with that provision, the President had appointed Hon. Dr Galiwango, who passed on 19 January 2023.

I will now go to the provisions of the Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961. Article 4 states, and I want to read the verbatim. \

Let me start with Article 5. It reads, “*The sending state may, after it has given due notification to the receiving state concerned, accredit a head of mission or assign any member of diplomatic staff to represent that state in the sending state.*”

Madam Speaker, it is not true that we do not have head of mission in the Republic of Kenya. Uganda has accredited one of the staff to head the Mission in the Republic of Kenya and the Republic of Kenya has never written back rejecting it. Therefore, we are fully represented.

With respect to DRC, the assertion by the honourable colleague is also not true, that we do not have a head of mission. The UN Convention of 1961 and Article 4 states that, “The sending state must make certain that the agreement of the receiving state has been given for the person it proposes to accredit as head of mission to the receiving state.” In the year 2022, Uganda received an agreemo or an agreement in respect of the person who was sent as head of mission and that person was received in DRC and is duly there.

The formalities of delivering or presenting credentials are other formalities. Uganda, as a sending state, received an agreemo in respect of that person. It is also not true that we do not have a head of mission. DRC is one of the most packed in terms of foreign service officers, where we have two ambassadors on top of the one who was accredited or designated as head of mission.

I would like to inform this House that we are not lacking in any respect as far as the deployment of heads of missions or foreign service officers representing this country. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: There is information from an ambassador.

MR BABA: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. There are levels of representation in diplomatic missions. *(Applause)* The one accredited by the head of state as a full ambassador is normally given the title of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. That means you have full powers of the head of state to commit your country conclusively and not any other person.

I agree that the head of state or the ministry can accredit an officer in the mission to represent the Government but he or she will

not have the same powers or recognition as an ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary. The tragedy of our diplomatic missions today, is that they are being headed by people who are not fully accredited as ambassadors and plenipotentiaries. Governments respect people who have those powers to commit their governments. Therefore, we need to up our game and accredit officers with the full powers.

There are officers in the ministry who have joined the ministry to rise to the position of ambassadors and they are being frustrated. There are people who joined the army so that they become generals, like Gen. Muhoozi here. Those in the Uganda Police Force aim to become Inspector General of Police. It is the same thing with the foreign service officer. He wants to become an ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary, but these guys end up being just protocol officers in missions. It is unfair to them. *(Applause)* Let them rise to their careers and reach the top. Honourable minister, thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I would like to hear from another ambassador.

5.31

MR MWESIGWA RUKAARI (NRM, Mbarara North Division, Mbarara City): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Mine is not about the diplomatic issues, it is about foot and mouth disease in our Mburo Rangeland.

THE SPEAKER: When you are speaking to persons who are not cattle keepers, you mention it in full. *(Laughter)*

MR RUKAARI: Even Prof. Mushemeza was surprised. *(Laughter)* Madam Speaker, it started a month ago around the Government farm, National Animal Genetic Resources Centre (NAGRC) in Mburo Rangeland. Yesterday, –

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, listen.

MR RUKAARI: Yesterday, I talked to the district veterinary officer of Nyabushozi, but as I speak now, it has reached my farm in Sanga.

Aware of the season we are going into next month, it will be a crisis not only for our area but Kampala inclusive.

I beg the Government to intervene with vaccines that were supplied, especially by FAO two months ago and you help us. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR MULIMBA: Madam Speaker, permit me to make clarity with due respect to the senior retired ambassador.

First of all, it is not true that the designated heads of missions that Uganda has accredited, are not respected. We have not had that. They are fully respected and are in charge of those missions, and they are delivering.

THE SPEAKER: What he is saying is that, can that person sign on behalf of the country?

MR MULIMBA: Yes. Madam Speaker –
(Member rose)

THE SPEAKER: Let us first hear from the minister.

MR MULIMBA: There is no way a country can give an agreemo if they do not respect a person proposed by the sending state. That is the standard. (Applause) By the time you issue an agreemo, there is a committee that vets and allows him in the country. After giving that agreemo, that is a document that states that the person you are sending is fit within the framework and arena of the two authorities that I have cited, especially the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

It is until we hear or get notification from the sending state that this one has been rejected. By the way, when they reject, we are obliged to withdraw immediately we get the confirmation of rejection. Uganda has not heard from those who are heading missions, including those who are not ambassadors extraordinary and plenipotentiary. We have not heard any information that they have been rejected. That

means that we do due diligence sufficiently and by the time we deploy, we have already received agreemos for those, including the head of mission in DRC.

Like I explained, Madam Speaker, the process of presenting credentials is another ritual, but the fundamental bottom line is about granting an agreemo. It is the instrument that permits you to land in the receiving state, and that also shows that you have been duly vetted and found sufficient to represent the sending state. Thank you.

5.35

MR RICHARD GAFABUSA (NRM, Bwamba County, Bundibugyo): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance regarding the implementation of the new teacher policy in this country. Under the new teacher policy, all teachers are supposed to be graduates from early childhood to university.

In doing so, the Government closed all Grade 3 teacher colleges in the country, so that we no longer have Grade III teachers and they are supposed to go and upgrade from Grade 5 up to a Bachelor's degree.

Madam Speaker, last week I was in my constituency in Bundibugyo where we also had a Grade III Teacher Training College. But I was tongue-tied to discover that the college was closed, even after engaging us the stakeholders to have it repurposed and changed into a nursing school.

However, because of funds, it could not start immediately. It has now been abandoned –

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Kwizera, switch off your *Kabiriri*. (Laughter)

MR GAFABUSA: I do not know what is happening to the other colleges but the teachers' college in Bundibugyo has been abandoned in the bush. The capitation grant was withdrawn; it has not been handed over to the district. It is actually in nobody's hands –(Interruption)

THE SPEAKER: There is a procedural matter.

MR MACHO: Madam Speaker, in a situation where your doctor is missing in the House and given the advice from your doctor to sit for two hours, it is almost four hours now.

Since we love you and your health, I do not know whether we are proceeding well by you continuing to chair the House on such a matter?
(Laughter)

THE SPEAKER: Honourable members, it is good to have smugglers in the House. I adjourn the House to 2.00 p.m. on Tuesday. *(Laughter)*

(The House rose at 5.38 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday, 5 December 2023 at 2.00 p.m.)