

PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

Wednesday, 14th June, 2023

The National Assembly met at a Quarter-past Two o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS

(THE ACTING SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. TOGAREPI: Mr. Speaker Sir, I move that Orders of the Day Nos. 1 to 17, be stood over until Order of the Day No. 18 has been disposed of.

HON. TEKESHE: I second.

HON. MADZIMURE: Mr. Speaker, is there a guarantee that we are going to deal with the issue of the Gazetted S.I. 144 of 2022 that was declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court and referred to Parliament because we seem to be running against the clock.

THE ACTING SPEAKER (HON. MUTOMBA): I am saying that the matter of S.I. 5:1 has actually concluded and the Non-adverse report was actually reported here in Parliament yesterday.

HON. GONESE: Mr. Speaker Sir, the reason why I have risen is because we must look at the matter in context. This is not an ordinary report of the PLC. If you look at the Constitutional Court Judgement, the decision of the Constitutional Court was premised on two grounds. Parliament and not a Committee of Parliament. If you look at the ruling, it refers to Parliament as an institution and as Parliament, we are required to look at new issues.

The first one is where there are constitutional issues as to whether that particular Statutory Instrument 144/22 is constitutional and that was the first aspect which the Parliamentary Legal Committee was required to look into. Secondly, because the court referred the matter to Parliament because it is Parliament which is responsible for – I just want the Chair to clarify these issues because if the Parliamentary Legal Committee sat and came up with their report, that is not the end of the matter in the particular context of what we are talking about. The second issue, when we are looking at the role of Parliament, we are also required to look at the issue of whether a particular instrument is *intra vires* the enabling Act because the enabling Act gives certain powers,

the Electoral Act itself will give certain parameters of how certain things have to be done and that is another aspect which we need to be appraised of.

If the Parliamentary Legal Committee has issued a report, in this particular instance because this matter was referred by the Constitutional Court, that report must be properly tabled, notwithstanding that it is a non-adverse report and as a result Mr. Speaker Sir, we demand that the Parliamentary Legal Committee tables their report and give reasons and explain why they came to whatever decision they arrived at. As far as I understand Mr. Speaker, even if it is a non-adverse report, the fact that this was communicated to the Hon. Speaker does not mean that the representatives of the people who are the men and women seated on your right and on your left have a responsibility and that responsibility is to examine that. This is a matter which has got very serious repercussions on the rights of the people of Zimbabwe in terms of Section 67 where every Zimbabwean citizen has a right to vote and a right to be voted for and it is this right to be voted for which is being infringed by the Statutory Instrument in question.

Mr. Speaker Sir, you must be aware that in this august House, I moved an amendment to the Electoral Amendment Bill in terms of a clause to the effect that nomination fees must neither be exorbitant nor inhibitive and prevent citizens of Zimbabwe from participating in the elections. The Hon. Minister accepted that amendment, I know that it is not law and it is not going to be law because of the provisions of Section 157(V) of the Constitution. Notwithstanding that, it is not incumbent upon this august House to deliberate and pronounce upon the constitutionality of Statutory Instrument 144 of 2022. Those will be my submissions and this is where we need yourself as the Speaker to exercise your rights.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you very much Hon. Gonese. With all due respect, the legal Committee that I am talking about has been constituted legally by this august House and their final report which is non other than the non-adverse report came into this House coming from the Parliamentary Legal Committee. I do not know if you are alleging that these people did not do their job that well. As far as I

am concerned, all the procedures that are supposed to be taken by Parliament have been dully followed. Thank you.

HON. GONESE: Mr. Speaker Sir, your sister Speaker who was seated in the Chair yesterday, indicated that the report was going to be brought to the Parliamentarians. I was listening on virtual, I was not physically in the House. Your sister Speaker who was in the Chair at the time indicated that this was going to be presented to the august House. I have already indicated to you Mr. Speaker Sir that this is a matter which is different from all other reports which the Parliamentary Legal Committee has had to issue.

This is a matter which was specifically referred to us as an institution by the highest court in the land which deals with all Constitutional matters and the wording was 'Parliament', and a Committee of Parliament is not Parliament. It is a sub-Committee constituted by this House but has got to report to us. If it was delegated to look into this issue, it was just doing so on our behalf. Those five Hon. Members are not Parliament. They are just a sub-Committee of this august House and because they are a Committee of this august

House, they are not the House. This is the reason why in this instance the report should have been presented to us with the reasons so that as Parliament, we can interrogate those reasons.

I remember yesterday, the Hon. Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Hon. Minister Ziyambi was interviewed on Studio 7 and he indicated that yes, Members were going to vote on the issue of the report, that is exactly what he said on Studio 7 which I was listening to yesterday. We do not want to have a shifting of the goal post Mr. Speaker Sir. I think those are the issues which you have got to address. The fact that the PLC is not Parliament, that is the issue which I believe Mr. Speaker Sir you would be abdicating in your duties and in your responsibility if you then rule that a decision has already been made. They cannot make a final decision on our behalf on a matter which has been specifically referred to us as an institution by the Constitutional Court. So, on those grounds Mr. Speaker Sir, I submit that it is not appropriate for the Chair to rule that the matter has already been concluded because it has not been concluded.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: What I have actually said earlier on still stands because the Constitutional Court said the decision has to be made by the 16th June, 2023. Our PLC here met before the 16th and they brought their Non-Adverse Report yesterday which I as the Chair who was sitting here yesterday – I was the one who actually wrote that report, so it actually closes the matter. I am sorry about that – [HON.

MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections.*] – We cannot debate on this issue.

Some Members from both sides of the House stood up and started arguing about the issue without being given the floor.

HON. MATARANYIKA: On a point of order Mr. Speaker Sir...-
[HON. MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections*]-

THE ACTING SPEAKER (HON. MUTOMBA): Order, order!
(1) It is declared that in respect of Statutory Instrument 14 of 2022, which was published in the *Gazette* dated 19th August, 2022, the respondent failed to fulfill its constitutional obligation under Section 152 of the Constitution.

(2) The respondent is ordered to comply with the constitutional obligation under Section 152 of the Constitution by not later than close of business on the 16th June, 2023.

(3) There shall be no order as to cause reasons for the order to follow in due course. By Order of the Court.

HON. MARKHAM: On a point of clarity Mr. Speaker.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: No, there is no point of clarification here. I am still continuing and I have not finished Hon. Markham.

***HON. HWENDE:** *Nyaya ya Chokuda takamboitaura muno umu.*
Every time he is misleading you. He is not supposed to be sitting here.
We raised this thing; he misleads you daily *paanouya pese.*

Nyaya irikutaurwa muno umu ndeye ma US\$1000. Iwewe hauna US\$1000 – [HON. MEMBERS: Inaudible interjections] [HON CHINOTIMBA: Munoda kutora Markham who is white muchisiya Biti who is a black man] - [HON MEMBERS: Inaudible interjections.] -

HON. MARKHAM: On a point of order. I consider that statement totally racial. You as the Speaker had no intention of calling the man to order. In this inflammatory position that we are in now, it is quite clear

to me that there is no reconciliation from the Hon. Member and the party he represents. Unfortunately, he is not the first to refer to me because of my colour. I was given my skin by my parents as they were and yours. It is not that I selected it. One can almost say the God or whoever your God is gave it to you. I am sick and tired of being referred to as white.

In the Constitution, it states categorically that you cannot separate us by religion, sex, gender, you name it and yet you tolerate that. Mr. Speaker. I would like to announce to this House that I am absolutely disgusted by the racism that comes from that side and is also endemic in my own. I take leave of this House. Good afternoon.

Hon. Markham immediately left the House. - [HON MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections*].

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Order! It is just unfortunate that Hon. Markham – I gave the opportunity to Hon. Markham to raise his concerns and it is unfortunate that he went out before I responded. I thought he was reporting to me for me to give a response. What I wanted to say I did not hear what Hon. Chinotimba said because of the commotion – [HON MEMBERS: *Ahhhhh*]- How can you say Ah! I did

not hear that. I wanted to confirm so that I could actually ask Hon.

Chinotimba to reply and he walked away from me – [HON.

MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections*]-

HON. T. MLISWA: Hon. Sibanda, you are a man of honour and very much respected in the Binga area. May we just exercise that in this House.

Mr. Speaker Sir, the truth of the matter is that there was an exchange of words between the left and the right. There was an exchange which we were not privy to. You were busy attending to issues and indeed you did not hear what was going on but the truth of the matter which I think is important for us to address is that – I will end up attacking you one by one, physically. We are tired of this rubbish. We did not come here for this. I train too hard. It is important that you allow me to speak.

Hon. Matsunga and Hon. Murai having stood up and exchanged words with Hon T. Mliswa. - [HON MEMBERS: Inaudible interjections.] -

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Hon. Mliswa address the Chair.

HON. T. MLISWA: Mr. Speaker Sir, to cut a long story short, the issue at hand which is important and that needs to be addressed is that indeed there was an exchange which you were not preview to. Hon. Chinotimba's remarks on Hon. Markham in terms of white and black was wrong and he must withdraw that. I heard that and I think that is the import of this issue that he had no right to talk about white and black. He must withdraw those remarks because it does not sit well with the country, with what we stand for and all that.

I actually heard it, that is why I am standing up to say that. So, it is only proper that he withdraws those remarks, but you did not hear them and unfortunately Hon. Markham left before you made a decision. It is important therefore for Hon. Chinotimba to withdraw those remarks. Thank you Mr. Speaker, Sir.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Like I said earlier on, it was unfortunate that Hon. Markham decided to go out. What I actually wanted was confirmation of what Hon. Mliswa has just said because there was a lot of commotion. Words were being exchanged. I was here concentrating on the main issue. What was actually transpiring there, I

was not preview to. So is Hon. Chinotimba around so that he can apologise - [HON. MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections.*] – Order Hon. Members! I will have to ask Hon. Chinotimba to withdraw the statement that he has actually said to Hon. Markham the moment he comes into the House. So, this issue has been concluded.

HON. P. D. SIBANDA: On a point of order Mr. Speaker Sir.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: What is your point of order Honourable?

HON. P. D. SIBANDA: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I have listened to my colleagues and I have also listened to you reading the order of the Constitutional Court. While my colleagues want to indicate that the order was directed to the PLC, I want to say I disagree with that. The order says the ‘respondent’ and the respondent in that matter was not the PLC. The respondent in that matter was Parliament and Parliament was enjoined by the Constitutional Court to comply with the provisions of Section 152.

Complying with the provisions of Section 152 does not mean that the report of the PLC should not be tabled before the House. Let us

disabuse ourselves from that kind of understanding. That is not what that order means. It simply says let Parliament carry out its duty. If we look at Section 152 (3) and the *proviso* to that says ‘after scrutinising, must report to Parliament, Vice President, Minister or authority as the case may be’. So the issue of reporting to this House was not ousted by the order of the court. Now, I appreciate that by tradition, this House has not been debating non-adverse reports. I totally agree, but that is just a practice. It is not a provision of the law that non-adverse reports must not be tabled in the House. Can we be bound by tradition on such an important matter of public interest? I disagree Hon. Speaker.

This matter is of critical importance. Five Members of this House cannot bind the whole House and say this is the position that Parliament has taken. The five Members were simply delegated a duty to scrutinize. After scrutinizing that Statutory Instrument (SI), this House is empowered to demand that that non-adverse report be presented here. Why, because the public is watching, they want to know why this committee concluded that the fees that were gazetted are alright. The

only way that the public can get access to that – remember this House is enjoined to be as transparent as possible in conducting its business.

Now, you smuggled a report and hid it somewhere. Nobody in this House, nobody outside knows the reason, the justification behind the finding of that committee. As a result, it is in the public interest, and as we demand, we hereby do as a House that let the report be tabled. Once that report is tabled, then we will know if the House agrees with the findings of its committee. Why are we hiding it? What is it that we are hiding? Indeed, you have been misled by the Clerk. There is no law that says a non-adverse report must not be debated here. It is just tradition and practice, the law allows presentation. It says, ‘it must report to Parliament, Vice President, Minister or authority as the case may be, whether it considers any provision in the Bill, SI, or draft, contravenes or if enacted will contravene any provision of this Constitution’.

It does not say that if it finds that it complies with the Constitution, then it should not be debated, there is no such law. Therefore, it is my submission that it is in the interest and in the integrity of this House that

the report be publicized here, be tabled so that everyone else has it and we also debate it. I so submit Hon. Speaker.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Hon. Sibanda, thank you very much for your submission. I do understand where your arguments are actually coming from. You talked about a tradition; we have been used a lot to tradition that a non-adverse report is not supposed to be debated. The responsibility of passing any report, with due respect is this House, not the Parliamentary Legal Committee (PLC). However, I also would want to inform you that the PLC is constituted by Members of this House. It is a leg of Parliament, a Committee that has been chosen from the learned lawyers, who know the law of this country. So, if they came up with their findings and they reported to this Parliament, now we are saying the House is not happy with that. I think it is very important that with all due respect, you can actually approach the court because the Parliamentary Legal Committee was instituted by this Parliament. We are not all lawyers. Those Members who form the Parliamentary Legal Committee are lawyers. So whatever they bring to this Parliament, we actually feel that it is coming from competent lawyers of this nation.

Before I conclude, let me just read out to you Part 3 of the Constitution, that is Section 9. Report of Parliamentary Legal Committee on Statutory Instrument (SI), “before the Senate or the National Assembly considers a report of the PLC that a provision of a SI contravenes this Constitution or its enabling Act, the Committee may withdraw the report if the Committee is satisfied that the provision has been repealed or amended in such a way as to remove the contravention. (ii) if after considering a report of the PLC, that a provision of a SI contravenes, the Senate or the National Assembly resolves that does contravenes the Constitution, the Clerk of Parliament must report the resolution to the authority which enacted the instrument. That authority must, within 21 days after being so notified, either (a) apply to the Constitutional Court for a declaration that the SI is in accordance with this Constitution or repeal the SI”

HON. P. D. SIBANDA: Hon. Speaker, I did not hear the section you were citing but I am informed that it is the Fifth Schedule. What I got when you were reading, you intimated that when the Senate or the National Assembly is not happy with an SI, the PLC must withdraw that

report. Mr. Speaker, that should be the remedy, of course I appreciate you are saying lawyers, we are also lawyers here. Those that sit in that Committee are not the most competent and remember Mr. Speaker, the decision of – [HON. MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections.*] – *Togarepi, kana usinganzwe chirunguka, tsvaka* interpretation.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Let us give him the floor. Can you finish up we want to proceed?

HON. P. D. SIBANDA: There were five Members of that Committee. The decision was not unanimous. Now, the report comes to this House, I am a Member and I enjoy certain privileges as a Member. The people of Binga North and the rest of this country, want to know the rationale behind the decision that was arrived at. Possibly, we might agree with the Committee or we might disagree with it but I am saying where Members are showing that they are in disagreement with the findings of the PLC, there is a remedy. The remedy is either it is withdrawn or it is tabled because the law does not ban a non-adverse report from being debated. That is my position Mr. Speaker. It cannot stand when I am objecting it. I am a Member here and I am objecting to

the adoption of that PLC report. How do you treat me? Will you tell me because I am one who has stood up and I know many others here who are not in agreement with that report. So, you will say you can go to hell just because that report has just come from the PLC. There is no way five Members can then make a decision on behalf of the rest of this House. I rest my case Mr. Speaker.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I think Section 39 actually explains the way forward and we are talking about Mr. Clerk, who is also mentioned in this section. Mr. Clerk has got 21 days which he is supposed to act accordingly, if ever there is disagreement on the PLC report. So, we need to move forward. May I say again, we have taken much of our time debating on this issue. It is no longer important because it is eating a lot into our business of the day. Any other Member who is going to raise this, that will be so much disrespecting the orders of Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

HON. P. D. SIBANDA: Twenty-one days is just the maximum.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: It is clearly stated that Mr. Clerk has got 21 days where he is supposed to act, not now.

HON. P. D. SIBANDA: No, no, Mr. Speaker....

THE ACTING SPEAKER: I told you that any other Member who is going to stand up not in compliance or listening to my orders, that would be so much showing disrespect to the Chair.

HON. P. D. SIBANDA: I do not intend Mr. Speaker, to show disrespect to your office. I do not intend at all. My desire is to represent those that are voiceless who are outside there. I am not standing because of my own personal ego. I am standing because there are so many people outside there who are crying for what I am saying. The 21 days that are being mentioned is not the minimum. It is the maximum period that is provided. So, the Clerk cannot only act within a day or within two days. It is not a requirement that we should act after 21 days.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Okay Hon. Sibanda. My decision at the moment is final. May I give Hon. Mayihlome the floor to continue –
[HON. MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections.*] –

HON. T. MLISWA: On a point of order Mr. Speaker Sir. I think with due respect, I hear your response. What I am not sure about is, the Constitutional Court is the highest court of the land and they equally got

Parliament to act. Maybe it is the aspect of procedure which I am probably questioning. I just want to make sure that the procedure was followed. If indeed the Constitutional Court ordered Parliament to act, was it not proper for it to be announced in this august House that the Constitutional Court has ordered Parliament to do this, as a result, it is now referred to the appropriate Committee? The appropriate committee must report back. I am just asking on the aspect of procedure because we were not informed that the Constitutional Court order was done.

People are trying to question why was this not done transparently. There is also the aspect of procedure. Many times there are issues that come before this House, announcements are made and it is referred to a certain Committee. That Committee's task is to report back to us. It cannot report directly to the Speaker or Clerk. It has to report to us, table the report of its findings and then that report is adopted. So, I just want to understand from a procedural point of view - was that not supposed to be done? If it was not supposed to be done, then what is it that will really give credibility to this because the Constitutional Court is the highest court? As Members of Parliament, we do not want a situation where we

are seen to be going against the Constitutional Court. Procedure is what I am asking. If there is no need for such a procedure, then I do not have issues. We do not want Parliament to be sued tomorrow because they did not follow procedure and all that. That is all I would want to know.

If the process and the procedure I am talking about is not important and we do not have to do it, then let it be on record. Not only that, can we also be told the proper procedure? At times we lack information and we do not have the knowledge. We are always eager to learn. We can then be told of the procedure which is to be used. Tradition, as you admitted is said. I am the one who said I have never been in this House and seen a non-adverse report being debated. It is tradition but is it supposed to be debated? All these things, I think we need to be schooled about them so that we are better representatives of the people. Thank you.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: To answer the issue you have raised Hon. Mliswa, the procedure was actually followed. The way the Parliamentary Legal Committee reports to Parliament is that it produces a report which is supposed to come to this House and it is read to the

Hon. Members. That is the time when Hon. Members heard about the report, they were suppose to raise a non-adverse report or adverse report. That is the time when you are supposed to raise your concerns. Now, this issue is already passed. It was reported yesterday – [HON. MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections.*] – No, I am not opening because I have already responded.

HON. T. MLISWA: The question Mr. Speaker Sir, from a procedural point of view, was there an announcement in this august House that we have received an order from the Constitutional Court and the Legal Committee has been mandated, it is seized with the matter and they will report back? I do not even know when the Legal Committee reported this in this House, maybe I was not there. I would like to know when it was reported in this House. Hon. Members, do you remember when it was reported in this House? When was it reported in this House *Mhofu? Ndipo pane nyaya* – [HON. MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections.*] –

HON. MATARANYIKA: Mr. Speaker Sir, thank you for affording me the opportunity to elucidate the import of the judgement by

the High Court. To begin with, Statutory Instruments are referred to the Parliamentary Legal Committee every month and –[AN HON.

MEMBER: Inaudible interjections] - but I am still explaining myself Mr. Speaker Sir.

HON. T. MLISWA: On a point of Order Mr. Speaker. I asked for the procedure which is in the interest of everybody here. Was the procedure followed? Mr. Speaker, I can come there but it must be on record.

MOTION

**THIRD REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON
DEFENCE, HOME AFFAIRS AND SECURITY SERVICES ON
PARLIAMENTARY ENGAGEMENT TO THE UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM HIGH LEVEL
PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE HELD IN DOHA**

HON. BRIG. GEN. (RTD) MAYIHLOME: I move the motion in my name that this House takes note of the Third Report of the

Portfolio Committee on Defence, Home Affairs and Security Services
on Parliamentary Engagement to the United Nations Office of Counter-
Terrorism High Level Parliamentary Conference held in Doha.

HON. HWENDE: On a point of Order Mr. Speaker. According to the rules, if I have a point of Order, I should be given audience.

THE ACTING SPEAKER (HON. MUTOMBA): You are not referring to this issue Hon. Hwende.

HON. HWENDE: Which one, but it is important.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: No, no, I have made a ruling. I do respect you Hon. Hwende and do not force me to do what I do not enjoy doing.

HON. HWENDE: No. no, I want you to clarify.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: I have already made a ruling on that issue.

HON. HWENDE: No. no, you did not respond to Hon. Mliswa's question. He asked a very simple question which was, if something is

referred by the Court to Parliament, did you announce it in Parliament that you were directed by the Constitutional Court to reconsider this. You did not announce and you must accept it. There is no way that a court order can fly from the court straight to a committee. So, we just want you to clarify on that simple matter. If Parliament has been directed by the court, does it go straight to the PLC or the Speaker announces that we have been ordered by the court to consider this matter. If that can be clarified, then we will be happy to proceed.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Hon. Hwende, the procedures were followed. I think that is my final answer pertaining to this issue. Thank you very much.

HON. BRIG. GEN. (RTD.) MAYIHLOME: I rise to present a report of the Delegation that attended the United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism High-Level Parliamentary Conference on Parliamentary Engagement, in Partnership with the African Parliamentary Union (APU) and the Shura Council of the State of Qatar on “Understanding the Terrorist Threat in Africa: New Challenges and

Necessary Measures” held at La Cigale Hotel In Doha, the State of Qatar
From 30 to 31 March 2022.

HON. T. MOYO: I second.

HON BRIG. GEN. (RTD.) MAYIHLOME:

1.0 Introduction

The United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism (UNOCT) Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement, in partnership with the African Parliamentary Union (APU) and the Shura Council of the State of Qatar, organized a high level Parliamentary conference to discuss the threat posed by terrorism and violent extremism on African states. The theme of the Conference was “Understanding the terrorist threat in Africa: new challenges and necessary measures.” The Conference took place at La Cigale Hotel in Doha, the State of Qatar from 30 to 31 March 2022. Hon. Brig Gen (Rtd) Levi Mayihlome, the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Defence, Home Affairs and Security Services (DHASS), Hon Tafanana Zhou Member of the African Parliamentary Union (APU) Executive and Mr. Pensel Marunga,

Committee Clerk to the Portfolio Committee on Defence, Home Affairs and Security Services, attended the Conference. The Conference sought to engage members of Parliaments in Africa and the region's member states in a meaningful discussion on the existing and emerging terrorist threats and the development of adequate measures to address and mitigate terrorism, considering the crucial role of parliaments as the key legislative body with the function of oversight. The importance of engaging parliamentarians in counter-terrorism efforts is well recognised under resolution A/RES/60/288 of the United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy, under which member states resolved to undertake necessary measures to prevent and counter terrorism by strengthening the coordinated efforts and measures of prevention of violent extremism.

2.0 Brief Background to the Threat of Terrorism.

The threat posed by the rapidly growing presence and activity of terrorist organisations in the continent in the recent years has become one of the most critical international concerns. According to the Terrorist Index, African states such as Nigeria, Somalia, Democratic

Republic of Congo, Mali, Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Tanzania, Libya and Egypt are among the world's most affected countries by terrorism. Militant Islamic fundamentalist groups such as Da'esh and Al 'Qaeda, that are particularly active in Syria and Iraq, have been able to extend their influence in several African states where local terrorist groups such as Boko Haram, Al Shabaab and Al Qaeda pledged allegiance to them. The influence of these local affiliates has continued to rise in Africa. In West Africa, particularly the Sahel region, those groups have successfully exploited local grievances and weak governance to command growing numbers of followers and resources, notwithstanding internal divisions and rivalries. Since 1963, the international community has elaborated nineteen international legal instruments to prevent terrorist acts. The instruments were developed under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and are open to participation by all Member States. The instruments include but are not limited to instruments regarding civil aviation, nuclear material, maritime

navigation, explosive materials, terrorist bombings, financing of terrorism and nuclear terrorism.

HON. T. MLISWA: My point of order is, I thought all business was suspended to accommodate Government Business and Government Business is mainly the Bills. I do not know whether this is a Bill or not. In my listening to it, it is a report not a Bill? I think it is important for us to be informed properly because we have been misinformed. *Question Time* was suspended which is critical. We want the Minister of Finance to be here to respond to issues which they brought up. The Bills are not being tabled here, now we have a report.

I am not trying to disrespect Hon. Mayihlome, but that is what was said we will be doing. I now want to know what has changed everything. We need some explanation because if there are no Bills, we must as well just go because we have a lot of things to do. There were Ministers who were here. Hon. Mhona was here and now they have gone, and this is what we are now being exposed to. Is this what was supposed to be the order of the day?

THE TEMPORARY SPEAKER (HON. DR. MAVETERA):

Thank you for the point of order Hon. Mliswa. I am being advised that Hon. Togarepi moved and there was no objection that we continue with the Business of the Day. The Ministers who were here, indeed by that time, the business which was urgent is the one which was then happening. If there were Ministers in here, we could have continued with that but there are no Ministers.

We are now doing business which is there as what Hon. Togarepi has requested and no one objected – [AN HON. MEMBER: *Inaudible interjection.*] – Hon. Togarepi requested for that and you did not object. We are going to proceed with business because that is exactly what Hon. Togarepi asked for. If you had any reservations, you could have objected and so we are proceeding – [AN HON. MEMBER: *Inaudible interjection.*] – No, he requested for us to go to Order Number 18 which no objection was moved. So, the procedure is we will continue with that.

HON. BRIG. GEN. (RTD) MAYIHLOME:

3.0 The Aim of the Conference

The major aim of the conference was to discuss the main existing and emerging terrorist threats in the African continent in order to develop a set of measures aimed at mitigating and addressing these threats.

3.1 Expected Outcomes

The high-level parliamentary conference had the following specific outcomes:

- i. Identifying and discussing the main current and emerging terrorist threats in Africa, including the nature, root-causes, key actors, and drivers of these threats.
- ii. Developing and discussing a set of the relevant immediate measures that contribute to mitigation, prevention of these threats.
- iii. Discussing the role of the parliaments in Africa in prevention, mitigation and addressing the existing and emerging terrorist threats.

iv. Identifying the needs of the parliaments in Africa for technical assistance and capacity building in specific areas of Counter Terrorism and Prevention of Violent Extremism

(CT and PVE), including the development or revision of the national CT and PVE strategies and action plans; and

v. Discussing the need and possibility of establishing a CT and PVE network of African parliamentarians.

4.0 Keynote Speeches

4.1 H.E. Mr. Hassan bin Abdulla Al-Ghanim, Speaker, Shura Council of the State of Qatar

The welcome remarks affirmed the strong support of the State of Qatar to all national and international efforts to combating, eliminating terrorism and preventing the spread of violent extremism, especially the benevolent efforts of the United Nations. The State of Qatar has committed great material and moral support to UNOCT, which is embodied in many memoranda of understanding and agreements concluded between the two parties. The memorandum of understanding

signed between UNOCT and the Shura Council, frames the cooperation between the two and approved the opening of the UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism in Doha. It was highlighted that UNOCT had so far made great strides in fighting terrorism and prevention of violent extremism through organizing and hosting high level conferences for various parliamentary unions and organisations interested in combating terrorism. The Office would also provide technical support, build the capacity of parliaments, and assist in developing policies and legislation to prevent and address terrorism, as well as working to increase the participation of women parliamentarians and youth in efforts to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism and its causes.

4.2 Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism (UNOCT).

In his opening remarks, the Under-Secretary General, highlighted the following:

That the threat posed by the growing presence and activity of terrorist organisations in parts of Africa in recent years had become one of the most pressing international concerns.

- That the threats from Da'esh, Al-Qaeda and their affiliates had increased in terms of frequency and lethality of attacks, especially in the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, Mozambique, Somalia, and other parts of Africa.

- That the Conference was key and part of a broader initiative to give new momentum to inter-parliamentary cooperation among national parliaments in Africa and relevant parliamentary assemblies to collectively address the evolving threat of terrorism and violent extremism.

- The Conference demonstrated the importance of African-led and African-owned counter terrorism efforts that were strengthened by the solidarity among African parliaments and the collective responsibility they hold towards their respective peoples.

- That UNOCT had enhanced the delivery of more impactful, cost-efficient, and sustainable capacity building support through new global programmes on National Inter-Agency Coordination Mechanism or Fusion Cells”, Protection of Vulnerable Targets and Youth Engagement and Empowerment.

- That Parliamentarians play an essential role in supporting governments to fulfill international counter-terrorism obligations with respect for the rule of law and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism.

- He emphasized that more needs to be done to address the threats plaguing the region, especially with regard to enhancing regional cooperation and sharing of information, expertise, and best practices to prevent and counter terrorism.

4.3 H.E. Mr. Mohamed Ali Houmed, President, Executive Committee, African Parliamentary Union.

The narrative alluded to the fact that the scourge of terrorism on the continent was at an unprecedented scale and which, coupled with the resurgence of unconstitutional changes

of government, calls for a new approach in addressing security on the continent, especially in light of “new destabilizing factors” in Africa. It was reiterated that the spread of Da’esh in Africa has been the most alarming development in 2021, with spillover from Mali into Burkina Faso and Niger, incursions from Nigeria into Niger, Chad and Cameroon, and from Mozambique into Tanzania. The expansion of Da’esh in Central Africa, and

especially in northern Mozambique, could have far-reaching implications for peace and security in the region and needed to be addressed through a coherent, regional approach as a matter of priority.

It was forewarned that the situation in the wider region could be aggravated by the relocation of terrorists and other foreign fighters from Libya.

5.0 Session 1: Main current and emerging terrorist threats in the African Continent: Interventions by National Parliaments present.

It was highlighted that certain regions in Africa had become serious incubators of transnationally organized crime which quite often was associated with terrorism. Terrorism was no longer faith based as it was perceived in the recent past. In the modern day era, it was seen to be influenced by a plethora of factors which included lack of internal political stability, conflicts over natural resources, climate change, the ravaging effects of COVID 19, smuggling and human trafficking among others. The use of online media for propaganda, recruitment, radicalisation and unemployment of the youth, religious intolerance and the continued exclusion and alienation of marginalized groups of society from the mainstream political and economic agenda created conflicts and divisions which led to violent extremism. It was stressed that the major aim of terrorists was to dismantle the African fabric of brotherhood in order to cause total destabilisation through the despoliation of natural resources. In addition, it became apparent that

some unscrupulous non-state actors and nongovernmental organisations were responsible for financing acts of terror and influenced recruitment of child soldiers in war torn and highly conflicted countries.

Despite being a mammoth task, ending terrorism was achievable through collaborative efforts at local, regional and international level. Emphasis was made on the need for political freedom, respect for human rights, equitable distribution of resources, transparency and accountability and a commitment towards the adoption, ratification and domestication of international and regional legal instruments on counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism. Maintaining peace, justice and harmony among communities in a multiethnic society such as Mauritius was quite complex yet possible through addressing challenges on structural development and using a holistic approach on countering terrorism and preventing extremism. To this end, countries expressed the need for capacitation and training on counter terrorism intelligence and multilateral cooperation and coordination at local level.

Parliamentarians were implored to be proactive in coming up with robust and implementable laws and policies on counter terrorism.

6.0 Common issues that were raised during the plenary sessions

Root causes of terrorism and ways of mitigating terrorist threats and violent extremism were discussed. The following were topical and common throughout the two-day conference:

- Ideological and cultural differences, lack of resources and weak governing systems exposed most African states to threats of terrorism; Terrorists use illegal transnational boundaries to finance illicit activities in Africa; Poverty and high unemployment rates among the youth are exploited by terrorists in recruiting the youth into their illicit and heinous operations;
- Illicit extraction of and trade in precious minerals is very common in countries where acts of terrorism and violent extremism are high;
- Lack of transparency in the distribution of resources causes serious divisions among citizens which usually culminate in the aggrieved parties resorting to violence in order to settle their scores. In worse

scenarios, terrorist groups take advantage of these deep-rooted animosities to finance civil wars and violent mob uprisings against the state;

- Corruption by both state and non-state actors will continue to foment strife and conflicts in a country if it is not addressed, and terror groups take advantage of this challenge to loot public resources;

- Weak criminal justice systems enable terror groups to operate in a country without fear or respect of the law;

- Bandits penetrate state institutions, including state security, using very sophisticated mechanisms that are very difficult to detect and usually do so to destabilise national elections;

- Terrorists have also invaded the cyber space to spread their influence;

- Some non-state actors (civic society organisations) divert from their sanctioned mandates to finance terrorism. They do so by taking advantage of weak governing systems and the prevalence of poverty among African states;

- Regime change agenda has been used to destabilise African governments;
- The media is often times used to propel divisions among citizens and terrorists exploit such civil conflicts to penetrate societies and communities by financing those that fall prey to them.

7.0 Session 2: Measures aimed at mitigating terrorist threats and violent extremism suggested by the participating parliamentarians.

7.1 Transparent and Equitable distribution of resources

It was noted that corruption was an evil that had left many African countries poorer. The economic gap between the rich and the poor has reached alarming levels, thereby causing strife between and among several African communities. It was therefore suggested that legislation that ensured transparency and equitable distribution of resources was essential in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism.

7.2 Adoption of programmes that promote tolerance and respect for human dignity as well as coopting traditional leaders in state institutions;

Governments were encouraged to promote and implement programs that were acceptable and culturally viable for the targeted communities. Development programs which deliberately left out traditional leadership were most likely bound to fail. National governments were advised to engage community leaders who understood the needs of their communities at grassroots level.

7.3 Political and Economic Cooperation at regional level

Regional bodies such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) were vehemently advised to

strengthen political cooperation in addition to the existing economic ties. This also included the strengthening of military and security structures at national and regional levels;

7.4 Sharing of information

Increased and strengthened information sharing at national and regional levels for concerted collaborative efforts in curbing terrorism is critical. State institutions should keep up-to-date data and statistics regarding the movement of people within and across its borders. Migration management is very essential and information pertaining to the same must be available to all connected institutions as a counter-terrorist strategy aimed at detecting terrorist threats. Neighbouring countries sharing borders were encouraged to collaborate through sharing vital information on mitigating terrorist threats and violent extremism.

7.4 The Media

Positive reporting void of hate speech is very crucial in the prevention against violent extremism. The Media was seen to be a key

player in countering terrorism violent extremism by complementing government efforts of peace building and nation building. Media Houses were encouraged to make a commitment to resort to constructive reporting rather fueling divisions through negative broadcasting.

7.5 Citizen engagement and empowerment

Fighting terrorism and violent extremism should involve all state institutions, private entities and every citizen in the country. The State must come up with programmes that are progressive and people centered. Citizens must not be divorced from the State. National governments must adopt programs aimed at empowering vulnerable groups of society including the youth, women, people living with disability and minority groups. The total engagement of citizens in developmental projects gives them a sense of ownership and

belonging and this is an essential strategy for curtailing violent extremism and terrorism.

7.6 Demobilisation of child soldiers, rehabilitation and reintegration into the society.

In countries torn apart by civil wars and mob uprisings, demobilisation of child soldiers was said to be very vital. Young children who were forced into joining military groups should be rehabilitated in special institutions that would prepare them for reintegration into society.

7.7 Sport and Sport legends

It was noted that sports can be very instrumental in educating, reconciling and uniting communities in conflict. Well organized sporting events can be effectively utilized in settling scores between or among conflicting and warring parties. More so, sport legends can be very influential in settling differences and educating communities and societies on the need to unite against any terrorist threats.

7.8 Parliaments were encouraged to be more proactive by adopting robust legislation and strengthening oversight of its implementation (legislation aimed at mitigating threats to terrorism). Parliamentarians and State Security should regularly be capacitated in order to keep abreast with evolving terrorist threats.

7.9 Relevant security and law enforcement organs of Member States should engage in a dialogue on the development of effective solutions and robust measures, including the harmonisation of national legislation and regulations on PVE and counter-terrorism (CT) in line with the relevant resolutions and recommendations of the UN Security Council and General Assembly as well as the international standards and best practices.

8.0 Session 3: International technical assistance programmes and projects Counter Terrorism and Prevention of Violent Extremism.

8.1 Rabat Programme Office

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism Program Office for Counter-Terrorism and Training in Africa, based in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, was officially inaugurated on June 23, 2021. The Program Office was tasked with developing and implementing key counter terrorism training programs and initiatives to support requesting Member States and their Security sector and Law Enforcement agencies, with a particular focus on the Sahel and West Africa region.

The Office supports and host already existing and ongoing short-term programs and projects on Counter-Terrorism investigations, border management, prison management, prevention, disengagement and reintegration and countering financing of terrorism that are being carried out by different branches of UNOCT.

8.2 Border Security and Management

The global Border and Security Management programme aims to prevent the cross-border movement of terrorists and stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters through improved border security and

management and cross-border cooperation among beneficiary countries. It seeks to increase and strengthen awareness, knowledge and capacity of Member states. Biometric data is shared and used responsibly to enhance border control and security in the counter terrorism context [Security Council Resolution 2396 (2017)]. UNOCT's targeted capacity-building training, based on established best practices for border security management, is being delivered through an “All of UN” approach with key Global Compact partners including IOM and INTERPOL.

8.3 Cyber Security and New Technologies

The Programme on Cyber security and New Technologies was adopted in April 2020 with the aim to enhance the capacities of Member States, international and regional organisations and UN entities to raise awareness of the terrorist cyber-threat. It also sought to enhance technical capacities required to prevent, mitigate and respond to terrorist and violent extremist groups misusing new technologies like the internet and Artificial Intelligence. The programme also intends to enhance

capacities of Member States to counter and investigate terrorist activities by gathering digital forensic evidence and through the use of new technologies. Ideally, the intention would be that of building a collective understanding on the threat of malicious uses of new technologies by terrorists.

8.4 Countering Terrorist Travel

The Programme assists beneficiary Member States in building their capabilities to detect and counter terrorists and serious criminals. This is done by using Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) to improve the use of international databases with known and suspected terrorists and criminals, such as with INTERPOL, and enhance international information exchange, in accordance with Security Council resolutions and relevant privacy laws. The programme targets. The courses on offer are open for registration to all Counter Terrorism Travel Beneficiary Member States, law enforcement agencies, national counter-terrorism agencies, and any official institutions dealing with potential terrorist travel.

The Secretary-General officially launched the Programme on 7 May 2019. Since then, 47 Member States officially joined the Programme, with approximately 40 more Member States indicating strong interest to do so.

8.5 Global Programme on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE)

UNOCT's Global Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) Programme was launched in January 2021 and its main objective is to enhance the capacity of Member States, UN entities, regional organisation, and civil society in areas such as strategic communications, youth engagement and empowerment, policy assistance, mental health and psychosocial support, gender, and human rights. Member states would benefit from capacity-building initiatives designed using a human rights, evidence based, co-design approach, which is specially tailored to the needs and existing capacities of beneficiaries, within the local context in which they operate.

8.6 Fusion Cells

The Global Fusion Cells Programme is funded by the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund (China). The programme is being implemented by UNOCT in cooperation with Interpol and various other organisations. The focuses on strengthening existing national counter-terrorism structures (Fusion Cells or Centres) that engage in collecting, all – source, all – threat, reporting and provide support through specialist technical assistance. It also seeks to improve Member States’ production of strategic and operational level outputs, such as the strategic threat assessments, and where possible, support Member States’ capacity to develop and maintain “terrorist watch lists”. The current programme beneficiaries include Ghana, Botswana, Uganda, Togo, and the regional body SADC.

9.0 Session 4: Needs of Parliaments in Africa for technical assistance and capacity building

It was noted that African Parliaments required technical assistance and capacity building in specific areas of counterterrorism and

prevention of violent extremism. A call was made to establish an effective and dedicated counterterrorism and prevention of violent extremism network of African Parliamentarians. This would provide a conducive platform for Parliamentarians to share experiences and information on counterterrorism and extremism.

10 Key outcomes and Resolutions

- Establishment of an online network for Parliamentarians from African States on Counter Terrorism and Prevention of Violent Extremism- This will facilitate continual engagements of Parliament through direct sharing of information and experiences relating to mitigating threats to terrorism.
- Establishment of a working group on Africa to design concrete plans of actions for future engagements;
- Setting up parliamentary advocates on Counter-Terrorism and Prevention of Violent Extremism at national level to sensitize the population;

- Where necessary, review of legislation on Counter Terrorism at national level;

- Supporting sporting engagements and Youth Education programmes;

- Consolidating and expanding technical assistance and capacity building programmes to member states in thematic areas such as Border Security and Management, Counter Terrorism Investigations, Prison Management, Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) and Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (PRR).

10.0 Observations

10.1 Noting that Zimbabwe is currently not directly and overtly experiencing terrorist threats in particular, it is worth knowing that terrorism is increasingly becoming ubiquitous. The Cabo Delgado case is an eye opener and should serve as a lesson that terrorism knows no boundaries and the threat posed by the same is imminent hence the call for a proactive as opposed to a reactive approach to terrorism.

10.2 Political instability, corruption, unfair distribution of resources, weak conflict and resolution strategies and polices, lawlessness, weak justice delivery system, poverty, gender imbalances, unemployment of the youth and exclusion of minority groups from national development programs are among the common sources of extremism and drivers of terrorism

10.3 Fighting terrorism calls for strong bilateral and regional collaboration and international cooperation. Information intelligence is critical and countries which share borders are encouraged to share vital information that is critical in countering terrorism.

10.4 The porosity of the border remains a cause for concern. It is reported that there are more than thirty-three undesignated crossing points countrywide. Thus, the unregulated cross border movement of people through undesignated crossing points is a threat to the internal security of a country.

10.5 The State, media and civil society organisations must operate in a harmonious environment where the media and civil society organisations should be independent in their operations yet positively complementing government efforts of nation building and development as opposed to fueling divisions and conflicts at all levels.

10.6 There is need to capacitate academic and security sector research institutions in order to enhance the State's preparedness to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism.

10.7 The State must also take advantage of UNOCT programmes aimed at capacitating State Security agencies as well as Parliamentarians on their legislative and oversight function.

11.0 Recommendations

11.1 Starting with the 2023 national budget going forward, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development should increase its budgetary allocations on all programs and projects aimed at strengthening the capacity of the State in preventing social unrest which has the potential of fueling violent extremism and threats of terrorism;

11.2 The State must take stern measures to arrest corruption, address gender imbalances, ensure transparent and equitable distribution of resources, implement conflict and resolution

strategies and polices and strengthen the capacity of law enforcement agencies and the judiciary system in order to guard against violent extremism and terrorism;

11.3 Bilateral agreements on integrated border management and sharing of immigration data with neighbouring countries must be prioritised to cope with ever-changing trends in technology which have a large bearing on terrorism;

11.4 By the end of 2023, the Government must ensure that all designated ports of entry and exit are upgraded with enhanced physical and electronic security systems while increased

physical patrols supported by adequate tools of trade must be prioritised in order to curb illegal crossing along the borderline;

11.5 By end of July 2023, local media practitioners should be sensitized and capacitated on positive and constructive journalism that resonates well with national ethos, interests and aspirations;

11.6 The government must invest in capacitating and strengthening academic and security sector research institutions with a view to increasing knowledge on drivers of violent extremism and terrorism and possible ways of curbing these ills of society that threaten the security of the nation.

12.0 Conclusion

The pervasive nature of violent extremism and the threat of terrorism are inevitable. No single country is purely safe from the scourge of terrorism. Political instability, weak judicial systems, economic collapse and social decay, cyber bullying, corruption, transnational crimes, severely porous borders, increased human trafficking, increased irregular migration, soaring unemployment rates, exclusion and alienation of minority groups and the marginalized groups

of society, hunger and the perils of natural disasters due to climate change, pandemics, religious intolerance and ethnic conflicts among others are all drivers of extremism and terrorism, individually or collectively. Indeed, Africa is under siege! A whole-of-government or whole-of-society approach is very critical in addressing violent extremism and terrorism. Regional cooperation and integration in countering terrorism is the way to go. Preparedness is significant. Zimbabwe needs to stay awake and be on the guard. I thank you.

HON. T. MOYO: Thank you Madam Speaker Ma'am. I wish to add my voice to the report that has been moved by Hon. Mayihlome mainly concerning the causes, manifestations and impact of terrorism. In my presentation and articulation, I will mainly focus on the underlining causes of terrorism. There are different types of terrorists which I can mention as Al Shabaab, which is an example, Boko Haram, different types of al-Quaeda, ISIS and several terrorist groups. What causes terrorism is a multiplicity of factors.

Some of them are as follows; balkanisation of countries especially African countries and Asian countries. It is a global challenge. Another cause of terrorism is the issue of ethnicities as having contributed to the upsurge of terrorism like poverty, tribalism and several other causes which include inequitable distribution of resources. There are two types of terrorism. Extreme terrorism or extremism in terms of terrorism and moderate forms of terrorism and the impact is prodigious. The impact is quite huge and some of the effects of terrorism include kidnappings, bloodshed, destabilisation, poverty, suicidal bombings, assassinations to mention just a few. What is important is the issue of engaging in counter terrorism and we want to encourage the African Union to have a peace keeping force that deals with counter terrorist attacks.

We have seen that terrorism is funded sometimes by NGOs and sometimes by legitimate governments with the intention of causing regime change and those efforts must be avoided and African governments must be on the alert to deal decisively with terrorist attempts. We have seen a lot of terrorist attacks happening in our neighbouring country Mozambique where people have been beheaded

and we need to commend the SADC for having provided troops that dealt decisively with those terrorist forces especially in the Cabo Delgado region of Mozambique.

We have seen children being kidnapped in schools. A case in point is the activities of Boko Haram in Nigeria where girls were kidnapped for more than two years. By the time they were released, some of them were already mothers and that violated their fundamental rights to education and some families had to lose their daughters because of the impact of terrorism. One key recommendation I am going to proffer is the issue of having a counter-terrorist force; that all the regional groupings like COMESA, SADC, East African Community and ECOWAS should have troops on standby to deal and ensure that terrorism which is a threat must be brought to an end.

As policy makers, we need to come up with pieces of legislation which discourage terrorism. The punishment for terrorist attacks will be prolonged incarceration. Those leaders of terrorist groups, when they are arrested, must face the music. For example, having life imprisonment.

With those few remarks, I need to thank you for giving me this

opportunity. I will not say it vociferously like Hon. Nduna, but I need to thank you so much for this opportunity and also to thank the mover of this motion Gen. Mayihlome.

HON. BRIG. GEN. (RTD.) MAYIHLOME: Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir. I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. MUTSEYAMI: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 15th June, 2023.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. TOGAREPI: Thank you Madam Speaker. I move that we revert to Order of the Day No. 11.

HON. MUTSEYAMI: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ON THE LEARNING AND

EXCHANGE VISIT ON FINNISH EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION AND CARE MODEL

HON. T. MOYO: I move the motion standing in my name, that this House takes note of the Report on the Learning and Exchange visit on Finnish Early Childhood Education and Care Model by the Portfolio Committee on Primary and Secondary Education.

HON. MURAMBIWA: I second.

HON. T. MOYO:

1.0 Introduction

The Portfolio Committee on Primary and Secondary Education, together with the officials from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, participated in a learning and exchange visit on Early Childhood Education and Care in Finland and Sweden from 18 February to 3 March 2023. The delegation was led by Hon. T. Moyo, the Chairperson of the Committee and was accompanied by the following:

- 4 Committee Members – namely; Hon. C. Mutambisi, Hon. S. Budha-Masara, Hon. O. Murambiwa and Hon. G. Chanda;

- 3 Ministry officials – namely; Mrs. O. Kaira, Ms E. Mangezi and Mr. M. Danga, and
- 1 staff of Parliament, Mrs. P. S. Mtetwa (Secretary to the delegation).



The learning and exchange visit was facilitated by the Ambassador of Sweden, Her Excellency Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga, who extended an invitation on behalf of Sahwira Africa International.

2.0 Objectives

The objectives of the visit were to:

2.1 Learn about Finland Early Childhood Education and Care Model that has been rated the best in the world by the Economist Intelligence Unit (2021),

2.2 Understand the Education Financing Model in Finland,

2.3 Discuss best ways of collaborations between Zimbabwe Government and Zimbabweans in the Diaspora, particularly, Sahwira International Africa,

2.4 Visit the UNICEF Innovation Hub in Sweden, and

2.5 Engage the Zimbabwean Ambassador in Sweden and discuss best ways to collaborate with Finland and Sweden in the education sector.

3.0 Background to the Learning and Exchange Visit

The Ambassador of Sweden, Her Excellency Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga has had several engagements with Zimbabweans in the Diaspora in the different countries she is accredited to. One of her engagements was with Dr. Faith Mkwesha, the founder of Sahwira Africa International, a Non-Governmental Organisation based in Finland, with special interest in working and advancing the education system Africa. Thus, Sahwira Africa International working with its Partners, Fun Academy and Helsinki Education Consultancy seeks to have a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of

Primary and Secondary Education particularly, to support Early Childhood Education and Care in Zimbabwe. The Ministry is expected to benefit from the Finnish Model, which will be tailor-made for the Zimbabwean context.

4.0 Summary of the Visit to Finland and Sweden

The delegation had meetings and workshops with the following organisations and individuals in Finland from 20 – 24 February 2023;

- a) Helsinki Education Hub Consultant to discuss the Finnish education System,
- b) Fun Academy Founder to discuss fun learning and early childhood education and care in Finland, particularly, the private sector perspective,
- c) Minister of Education and Culture and discussed the Finnish Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), and possibilities for partnerships,
- d) Finnish National Agency for Education

- e) The Finnish Centre of Expertise in Education and Development,
- f) Chairperson of Education and Culture Committee – Finland Parliament,
- g) Member of Parliament responsible for Finland and Africa Relationships,
- h) Technology Industries of Finland
- i) Sahwira Africa International to discuss decolonising Early Education – From Zimbabwe to Finland
- j) Helsinki University
- k) Director of the UNICEF Learning Innovation Hub at Aalto University Toolo Campus, Helsinki
- l) Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department for Africa and the Middle East to discuss Development Aid and collaborations between Finland and Africa.

The delegation also toured the following institutions in Finland;

- a) The Helsinki Central Library Oodi, the biggest national library in Finland.

- b) International Centre for Early Education (ICEC), which is a private led Kindergarten School, and
- c) The City of Espoo Kindergarten preschool owned by the City of Espoo Municipality.

In Sweden from 27 February – 1 March, the delegation participated in the following;

- a) Tour and meeting with officials from the UNICEF Innovation Hub Head Office, and
- b) Tour of the Zimbabwe Embassy offices and round up meeting with Her Excellency, the Ambassador of Sweden, Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga.

5.0 Committee Findings 5.1 Overview of the Finnish Education Model

In 1921, Finland introduced new laws aimed at transforming the education sector, which has since evolved over time to ensure equal access for all children irrespective of background, origins, age or economic status. Firstly, the Finnish Government made school attendance compulsory for all Finnish children, and secondly, introduced

free education for all children starting basic education to university level. However, Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) is not free but heavily subsidised. According to the regulations, no one should derive profit from providing basic education in Finland.

The Finnish basic education system consists of (a) early childhood education and care, (b) preprimary education, (c) primary and lower secondary education and (d) upper secondary education. (See Figure 1). The stipulated teacher pupil ratio for ECEC is 1:4 for children under three years, 1:12 for children between 3 and 6, and 1:21 for children older than 6 years. The education system has developed to the extent that there are no glaring disparities in schools. This has resulted in '*no best school*' rankings in Finland as all schools equally provide the same quality of services.

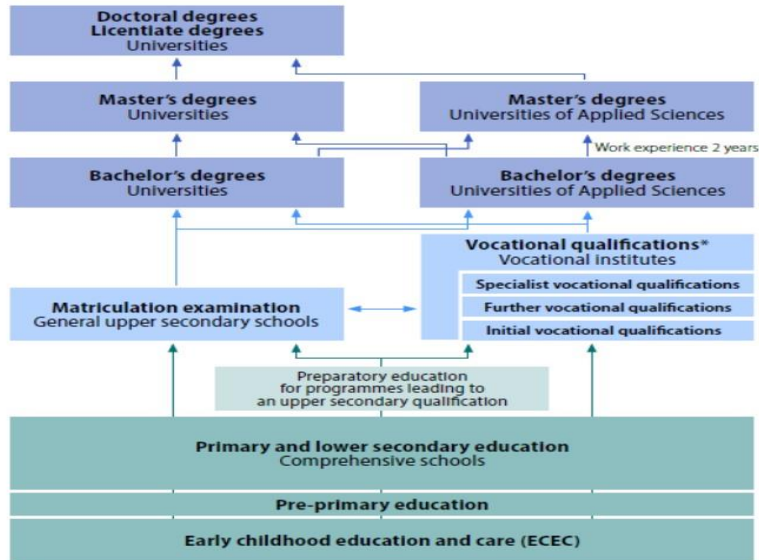


Figure 1: Education System in Finland

5.2 Early Childhood Education and Care (ECCE)

Every child has a right to attend early childhood education at the end of parental leave, from 10 months to six years. The Finnish ECEC model believes that playing is the best way of learning for this age group. Therefore, teachers ensure that children develop skills, knowledge and capabilities from different learning areas in accordance with their age, abilities and areas of interest. The planning stages involves the children too, who are the major stakeholder in all the school activities. The teachers do respect the children's areas of interest and design the curriculum in line with that. Teachers utilises various learning

methods which are (a) Individual learning, (b) small group learning activities, (c) whole group learning and (d) project-based learning.

The delegation had the opportunity to visit two ECEC centres, namely;

- Espoo Pre-school operated by the government through the City of Espoo municipality, and
- International Child Care Education Centre (ICCEC) operated by the private sector.

What was striking to note was that both centres were equally good with almost similar infrastructure and services despite being operated by different entities. Both pre-schools are furnished with state-of-the-art equipment to support early learning for the children, such as books, toys, gadgets, bunk beds and mattresses, among others. The centres also offer carpentry and painting facilities. The government provides grants to support and maintain all the pre-schools, regardless of ownership as measures to ensure equality and equity. Parents have the option to take their children to any of the pre-schools. Pre-school fees ranges between 0 – 280 Euros depending on the family's size and income. Those who opt for private day care centres receive a private day care support from

the Finland Government to cushion them so that no child is excluded from school.

5.3 Comprehensive Basic Education

Comprehensive basic education starts when the child turns seven (7) and is compulsory. This stage comprises of nine grades. Grades 1 – 6 teachers specialise in pedagogy, while grade 7 – 9 (lower secondary) teachers, specialise in the different subject areas. The children have the same teacher for the first six years, which allows the teacher to get to know the students well. In turn, the teacher is able to develop the class curricula which suits the learners' needs. Assessments are done by the class teacher on a regular basis using the written down set standards in the curriculum. There are no national examinations or standardised tests for children in primary and lower secondary school. The class teacher is the one responsible for evaluating the students' progress over time. The final certificate given at the end of ninth grade are given by the school teachers and the learners are selected for further studies based on these school assessments.

5.4 Matriculation System

Matriculation examination is the first important standardised tests taken by students as they transition to either university or university of applied sciences or vocational colleges. These examinations are taken at the end of Upper Secondary School. The learners are tested on the following 5 subjects; mother tongue and, according to the choice of each candidate, 4 of the following; second national language, a foreign language, mathematics or one subject in general studies such as humanities and natural science. Students are also free to include optional examinations.

5.5 Teacher Professionalisation

Teaching is an attractive career choice in Finland given that the teachers are valued, well paid and trusted people in Finland. In the early 1990s, Finland decentralised the education system and abolished the school inspectorate system. This has given the teachers autonomy to run the national education curriculum without any supervision. The teachers are at liberty to plan their teaching material independently based on the

national and local school curricula. The teaching profession is governed by the 1994 legislation, which introduced a master's level as the minimum qualification for all basic education teachers and a Bachelor's degree for ECEC. In terms of remuneration, a teacher earns on average 3 570 Euros (US\$3900) with the lowest earning as little as 1 750 Euros (US\$1900) per month. However, teacher salaries vary significantly based on years of experience, skills and location. Of importance to note is that the Finnish and Swedish language teachers are paid lucratively as measures to preserve and encourage teachers to specialise in the indigenous languages.

5.6 School Administrators

The School Heads or Principals are the school administrators responsible for day-to-day operation of the school including budget management, acquisitions and recruitment of teachers. The School Heads or Principals must have a master's degree in any teaching qualification, a certificate in educational administration or equivalent and an appropriate work experience. The Municipalities are responsible

for the recruitment of school administrators. The schools have the right to provide educational services according to their own administrative arrangements and visions, as long as the basic functions, defined by law, are carried out.

5.7 Education Financing Model

Education in Finland is free of charge, with all learners receiving financial and educational support from the government. The education system is mostly state and municipal funded, with the State providing approximately 25% while municipalities about 75% of the resources. The State spends between 11% and 12% of its budget on education. The Finnish people are highly taxed in order to raise enough budgetary resources to finance education. The statutory government transfer to local authorities is based on the number of 0-15 years living in the municipality and the special conditions of the municipality. The municipalities do decide independently how the funds are allocated and utilised within the school. It is the responsibilities of local authorities to

provide free textbooks, meals and transportation for all learners. The municipalities are also responsible for paying the teachers' salaries.

5.8 Special Needs Education

Children who require special attention are assisted and provided by the school through the Special Needs Education model, provided within the mainstream education system. There are basically three levels of support that learners get from their school designed as follows;

a) General Support whereby every pupil has the right to sufficient support for learning and attending school as soon as problems emerge. Support is usually through remedial instruction as part of everyday activities of the school.

b) Intensified Support whereby pedagogical assessment and plan for support is made in the pupil welfare group of the school.

Intensified support is more robust and consistent than general support. It aims at preventing problems from accumulating and becoming more serious or complex.

c) Special Support is given where intensified support is not adequate. The school in cooperation with the teachers and the school welfare group draws up an individual education plan which will be used together with other support measures.

The Finnish education has developed over time such that there is no private tutoring of children in Finland. The main purpose of special needs education is to provide pupils broad based and systematic help so that they can continue to upper secondary school level.

5.9 School Meals

Free school meals have played an important part in strengthening economic growth and transforming Finland into a knowledge-based society. Finland was the first country in the world to introduce a legislation on free school meals in 1943, and has been doing this since then. Free school meals have been provided with the aim of supporting children's learning, nutrition, and health. All pupils from pre-primary to upper secondary schools get a free of charge, nutritious meal each day. The Finnish school feeding system is a joint responsibility, steered

nationally while implemented locally by municipal education authorities.

5.10 Role of Helsinki Education Hub

The City of Helsinki funds the Helsinki Education Hub project, which seeks to promote growth of the education and technology (EduTech) entrepreneurship and new businesses. The concept was developed based on the need to address market concerns through development of science and engineering skills through education. The Hub connects funding, researchers and corporations through encouraging students to be innovative. Innovation Hubs creates opportunities for pre-incubation, co-creation, research acceleration and collaboration space and events. Most municipalities funds most of these innovation hubs.

5.11 Role of Technologies Industries (TI) of Finland

Technologies Industries is a consortium of more than 1800 technology companies of which 70% are privately owned. Technology Industries have committed to developing future schools through

supporting innovations, research and development in schools. Focus is on different critical sub-sectors such as mechanical engineering, information technology, electronics and electro-technical industries, science and technology among others. Finland is having an aging population hence the need to address the technological gap in future schools. It is estimated that in 10 years' time, three quarters of new employees must have studied technology or ICT. Therefore, TI works closely with schools, especially the young learners so as to help develop their skills in their early years. Technology Industry hosts a programme titled, *'technology programmes for 1st graders'* which supports children to be innovative in their early years. The focus is mainly on development of technology, innovations and creativity among the ECD learners and how to solve life problems. TI funds the school activities and the technology to support new innovations by the learners.

5.12 Collaborations between Ministry, Sahwira Africa International, Fun Academy and Helsinki Education Hub Consultancy Group

Sahwira Africa International, Fun Academy and the Helsinki Education Consultancy Group have expressed interest in partnering and collaborating with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in supporting Early Childhood Education in Zimbabwe. It is believed that Zimbabwe can benefit from Finnish Early Childhood Education model through contextualising it to the Zimbabwean environment. Given that Finland and Zimbabwe are two extreme worlds apart, it was highlighted that the early childhood content development must take into account the Zimbabwean context of culture and heritage. Thus, Sahwira Africa International together with its partners, would like to work with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education on advancing ECD education in Zimbabwe through engaging in the following activities;

- a) Training of ECD teachers on the latest pedagogy, particularly in the use of digital and electronic tools in innovative teaching and learning trajectories; and

b) Up-skilling/Professional Development of Early Childhood policy makers, infant supervisors and administrators in digital and electronic monitoring and supervision of the Fun learning packages.

c) Train primary and secondary school teachers and heads on phenomenon based methodology that supports solution based thinking in students using the Finland case study model that can be contextualised to the Zimbabwean situation.

5.13 Visit to UNICEF Innovation Hub

The delegation had the privilege to visit and meet with the Directors at both UNICEF Innovation Hubs in Finland and Sweden. Sweden hosts the headquarters of UNICEF Innovation Centre while Helsinki University in Finland hosts the Learning Innovation Hub and the Innovative Finance Hub. The Innovation Centre facilitates the discovering, co-creating and scaling up of bold solution and technologies for children today. The hub brings together a team of experts who helps in identifying latest innovations and experimentations happening in academia that could be a game changer in the development world, particularly for the children around the world. In addition,

UNICEF Innovative Finance Hub hosts the Venture Fund which finances and supports early-stage, open source technology solutions in the global south to improve children's lives and amplify local talent to global markets.

To date, many innovative solutions have been identified for scaling up and 5 are already reaching over 1 million children in multiple countries. These innovations include among others, the Giga, Water More Life, Oky (World's First Period Tracker App Designed by Girls for Girls) and Bebbo (mobile parenting app designed to support Early Childhood Development). The Hub is also implementing a project called UPSHIFT, which is an opportunity to support youth and adolescents to become a force for positive social and economic change, contributing to a competitive labour force, sustained economic growth, improved governance, and vibrant civil societies.

5.14 Round Up Meeting with the Zimbabwean Ambassador to Sweden

The delegation concluded its benchmark visit with a round up meeting with the Zimbabwean Ambassador to Sweden, Her Excellency Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga. The following key points were highlighted;

a) That the development of the Education Financing Model is the panacea for the sector as the Government adopts '*free education for all*' policy. The Finnish people are highly taxed contributing significantly to the national budget.

b) That the '*school hot meal*' or school feeding program provided by the Government of Finland has gone a long way in promoting equality in education as well as increasing school completion rates. There is need to rethink the school feeding model in Zimbabwe to ensure effectiveness and efficiency.

c) That Zimbabwe must continue its re-engagement program so as to unlock more business opportunities in Finland and Sweden, particularly in revamping the education sector,

d) That there is need for ECD teachers to participate in capacity development and training, either online or physical exchange programmes with Helsinki University through the Sahwira Africa International Initiative. The signing of the MOU between the Ministry and Sahwira Africa International is recommended.

e) That digitalisation is the way to go for the education sector so learners are exposed to the latest technology. The role of the private sector must not be underestimated.

That the Committee engages and give feedback to the following stakeholders; Finland Ambassador based in Mozambique, Swedish Ambassador in Harare and UNICEF given their interest in the benchmark visit and exchange program.

6.0 Committee Observations

6.1 Finland education system has excellent learning outcomes which have been witnessed over time due to its research-based pedagogy and innovative approach to teaching and learning. This has been strengthened by the system which allows one teacher to teach pupils

from grade 1 to 6. In Zimbabwe, the children are subjected to new teachers every year, which makes it difficult for a teacher to fully understand the needs of his or her learners.

6.2 Finland considers ECEC as the foundation of education and the Government ensures that it meets all the educational requirements for all schools to facilitate proper and equal learning in class and schools. In Zimbabwe, the Government has very little role to play in ECD financing as witnessed by limited budgetary funding of less than 1% of the budget. Nevertheless, significant progress has been made in formalising the introduction of ECD A and B facilities in all public and private schools.

6.3 Finland has the best and top quality teachers, including for ECEC who do enjoy professional freedom and trust from the government, hence the abandonment of the school inspectorate system. Teacher professionalisation has been central to the successful development of the education sector. In Zimbabwe, the Teachers Professional Council has been on the drawing board for too long and there is need to resuscitate this proposal as measures to transform the welfare of the teachers in Zimbabwe.

6.4 Finland pays its language teachers lucratively as measures to promote and motivate and the teaching of such languages in Finland. In Zimbabwe, while progress has been made in training of language teachers, challenges relating to the recruitment process continues to impact negatively on schools. Some schools, especially in remote and rural areas have no or limited language teachers.

6.5 Finland hosts great innovative teaching methods and strong ICT sector, which has contributed in creating favorable conditions for developing cutting-edge digital learning solutions that make learning fun. The private sector industries play a pivotal role in ploughing back to schools and encourage development of innovative solutions by the young generation. In Zimbabwe, access to ICT has been a major challenge especially in rural schools, where ICT services are not available.

6.6 The Finland government has been consistent in providing school meals since 1947 and this has greatly improved school completion rates as well as promoted equity in schools. Zimbabwe has adopted the concept but implementation has been constrained by limited financial

resources. In Finland, the school feeding program is a national program, which is implemented through the Municipalities. Therefore, Zimbabwe can take advantage of the devolution agenda to manage the school feeding program through decentralizing implementation of the program to local authorities.

6.7 Matriculation Examination in Finland is only done at the end of upper secondary school, which reduces the burden on the government of running examinations at various intervals of basic education. In Zimbabwe, the first standardised tests are written at the end of primary school in grade 7. The Zimbabwe School Examination Council has been overburdened by the limited resources to run such national examinations at grade 7, form 4 and form 6, which require huge funding. This has resulted in a huge burden on the government and parents.

6.8 In Zimbabwe, the education system provides for inspectors who monitor schools' performance. However, this inspectorate system has not been functional due to limited resources.

6.9 The Technologies Industries in Finland is making significant progress in the formation of future schools that are ICT compliant

through working with relevant schools to support use of technology and development of innovative ideas. This model is also ideal for Zimbabwe and can be contextualised to suit the Zimbabwe economic environment.

6.10 UNICEF Innovation Hub is central to development of innovations that can transform the lives of children across the globe. The Jotters Innovation was a case in point recommended for UNICEF to take over and support since it can benefit many children in Zimbabwe.

7.0 Committee Recommendations

Early Childhood Education and Care

7.1 That the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Sahwira Africa International to capacitate ECD teachers by 31 December 2023.

7.2 That the Government develops, through legislation, the education financing model suitable for ECD in Zimbabwe by 31 December 2023.

7.3 That the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education be supported with subsidies to upscale the school feeding program to all schools (On-going).

7.4 That the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education working with the Ministry of Energy and Power Development be supported to electrify and power all schools so that the ECD departments also benefit from modern digital technologies (On-going).

7.5 That the Government invest in recruitment of local language teachers, which is central to ECD education as provided for in the Education Amendment Act (31 December 2023).

7.6 That the Government prioritise funding ECD education and increase budgetary resources to 5% of the national budget (On-going).

Primary and Secondary Education

7.7 That Zimbabwe School Examination Council focuses on writing of 'O' and 'A' Levels examinations only and restructure grade 7 examinations to allow children to focus on the Continuous and Learning Assessment (CALA) and other school assessments, as measures to

reduce the examination burden on both parents and government by 31 December 2023.

7.8 The Ministry of Primary and Secondary education be capacitated to fully operationalise the inspectorate system so that schools are adequately monitored.

7.9 The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education must continuously liaise with the UNICEF country office for incubation and development of home-grown solutions that can benefit the education system (On-going).

Other Key Recommendations

7.10 That the Government urgently improves remuneration and conditions of service for all teaching personnel in Zimbabwe (On-going).

7.11 That teacher professionalisation through the establishment of the Teacher Professional Council will go a long way in addressing the current challenges facing the education sector by 31 December 2023.

7.12 That the Portfolio Committees on Primary and Secondary Education and that on Higher Education, Science and Technology in collaboration with its line Ministries host an *'All Stakeholder Conference'* that involves the private, intergovernmental organisations, civil society and the public sectors to discuss *'future schools'* by 31 December 2023.

7.13 That the Committee engages the Finland Ambassador based in Mozambique, Swedish Ambassador in Harare and UNICEF and update them on the Committee's key findings by 30 June 2023.

8.0 Conclusion

The Committee fully believes that investment in the education sector, particularly, improving the conditions of service for teachers and creation of an education fund will also go a long way in addressing some of the current challenges bedeviling the sector. The sector is central to national development through the development of human capital essential for economic growth. Therefore, the Committee calls upon the House to take note of its report which proffers some recommendations

aimed at transforming the education sector, particularly Early Childhood Development. It is critical for the Government to remodel its early childhood education and care using the Finnish model and adopt what is applicable for the Zimbabwe situation.

***HON. MURAMBIWA:** Thank you, Hon. Speaker. I have stood up to support the report that has been presented by Hon. Moyo, the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Primary and Secondary Education.

Madam Speaker, the visit that we went to Finland as a Portfolio Committee was a very important one because we observed and learnt a lot of things with regards to education. Firstly, I was impressed with their curriculum. The Curriculum from ECD is of good standard, which gives children skills to do a lot of things. In one of the classes, I saw children skillfully painting, a child aged three years, painting a rocket.

However, when I compared it with our education system in Zimbabwe, I observed that we rush to have exams at the end of the year and the child is said not to be good at school because the child would have failed either English or Mathematics but in Finland, they advocate

that whoever teaches the Finnish Language must be paid more because they place a lot of value and importance on the person who teaches Finnish contrary to what Zimbabwe does. We do not appreciate our languages when teachers, nurses, and every other job are being recruited, the recruitment requires English, Mathematics, and Science, and there is no mention of local languages such as Tonga, Chewa, and Shangani or it means that a child who is good at Shona, when they are at school, they are not respected. This will cause a lot of our children not to want to attend school because of the type of education that we have. One may be good at crafts like woodwork and may not be good at English; others may be sports people, good at playing football, whilst others may be good at carpentry. So the skills should be identified from a tender age.

I was impressed by the education system in Finland. If as Zimbabweans, we were to expand our curriculum and ensure that talents are identified at a young age, that will help us. It will even instil an attitude of liking school by our children when they are in school.

The other issue that I was impressed with was the issue of teachers, as already stated by the Hon. Chairperson. Teachers are well respected

in Finland. In what way are they respected? Teachers are consulted in the formulation of the curriculum and they are also respected by their remuneration. Upon qualification, they are given a car and a house. We are also trying to look into the welfare of our teachers here, their children's fees should be paid for. Upon comparison, I realised that when I visited a particular school, the headmaster said that the teachers were paid and the money that was meant to be paid for teachers was paid. It was USD \$25.00 and Government had allocated RTGS3 500.00 per child. I do not know its USD equivalence – that was the money that was paid to schools. How much is it? Maybe \$0.50c, this is what was paid to schools and then the teacher is then asked to pay the difference from \$25.00 – this demoralises teachers. We should walk the talk.

When we undertake to pay fees for teachers' children, then we should pay it in full. If a school requires \$25.00, then its equivalence should be paid. This will encourage our teachers to work harder.

In Finland, I observed that teachers are respected but in Zimbabwe, when you meet the majority of teachers, they are no longer proud to be associated with their teaching profession. Their work is now being

looked down upon because of their remuneration. Hon. Speaker, you are in that Chair because you went to school. We have doctors and pilots because they went to school. When we then look at what they now earn, they have high paying jobs but they do not forget to adequately compensate or remunerate their teachers - €3750.00 is their salary. It will be more than USD5000 although there may be deductions but that is a reasonable amount and a teacher will be comfortable with paying fees for his or her children.

In order for a teacher to send their child to boarding school, now no teacher can afford to do so from their salary unless they have additional income earning capacities. The teacher is there at the boarding school, teaching children of those who are capable of paying school fees. Let us try to implement what we learnt in Finland. Maybe our teachers may enjoy their work. There is nothing that they miss, starting from the classrooms, they are state of the art in terms of the provision of furniture, books and computers. There is no school that does not have computers. We are in the right direction, trying as much as we can but we are still lagging behind. I urge those who are seized or

responsible with ICT power in schools to make sure that our schools have the power and are fully resourced if we said that ICT should be taught in schools.

In addition, the teacher to pupil ratio is something that impressed me and the Hon. Chairperson mentioned it. ECD, the teacher to pupil ratio was one to four – there is no way the children can fail. There is no way a teacher would not want to teach because he or she will only have four books to mark. Here, we talk of one is to 60 in ECD or one is to 90 so that when the teacher comes from home, they will be stressed already when they think of the workload that they have to deal with, that is, 60 books to be marked. It is difficult.

We should also adjust this teacher to pupil ratio. It will help our Government if we could reduce it to one is to 40 or 25 in lower grades. It will also reduce the rate of unemployment to qualified teachers who are unemployed. This will help in employment creation as a lot of people are sitting at home and crying for employment will be absorbed into the teaching sector. We have schools and a lot of pupils. I have

decided to talk about it so that possibly, our Government would look into that issue with a view to correct it.

I will deal with the issue of the school feeding programme. In Finland, I was quite happy and impressed that there is a feeding programme and they implement it very well. It will help us, in our country, because we have families that leave home without having had any meal or food. So, if there is a school feeding programme, it will help to reduce the dropout figures. Teachers also like their work because they will be teaching well fed children and by so doing, education will be improved because the children will focus on their studies; unless it is a child who goes to school on an empty stomach; who may simply get there and sleep because they will be hungry.

Our Government should take a leaf from the Finnish example. I am alive to the fact that we also have a feeding programme in our schools. Schools used to get maize only and the school heads would be stressed about where they would get the relish and cooking oil. In Finland, school children have tea, sausages and bread for breakfast, sadza with chicken and various other dishes. Juxtapositioning that with

the Zimbabwean scenario, one child would bring dried vegetables, beans, mopani worms *et cetera*. We should mean it when we talk of school feeding programmes for our schools.

THE TEMPORARY SPEAKER (HON. DR. MAVETERA):

Order, order, you are left with Five Minutes Hon. Murambiwa.

***HON. MURAMBIWA:** Those in the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare with the responsibility of distributing food to our schools should also adequately resource the schools so that the responsible authorities such as the headmasters, teachers-in-charge and the parents who do the cooking are not stressed and do not have headaches over where they will get the relish from.

Lastly Hon. Speaker, in conclusion, I am saying that if we say that we want our Zimbabwean education to be developed, it is only when the teachers are free; once the teachers are free, then we will never talk of a zero percent pass rate. We will not get 30 to 40 schools with zero pass rates, if the teachers are free because in Finland, teachers are not inspected. They do their work diligently at their own pace.

Let us ensure that our teachers are adequately resourced so that they will love and enjoy their work unlike a scenario where a teacher who is in the classroom is busy stressing over where she will get relish and their child who is supposed to be in boarding school has unpaid fees. Their children cannot go to school and eat when they have unpaid fees. Who do the children expect to pay their fees? The children will be at home instead of in school.

The issue of BEAM has set a lot of schools backwards. Yes, we are being assisted by the Government but the Government is also assisting the vulnerable children. Those who are responsible for disbursing that money should do so timeously so that schools get their money on time and use it while the rate is still reasonable. This will enable teachers to love their jobs because they will be at work. This will be the same thing as they did with lawyers. We should try and put our heads together to ensure that we advance the welfare of our teachers so that our education can improve. I thank you.

HON. JOSIAH SITHOLE: Thank you Madam Speaker Ma'am. I also want to add my voice to this very important report that was tabled

by Hon. Torerai Moyo, as Chairperson of the Committee on Primary and Secondary Education, seconded by Hon. Murambiwa.

Madam Speaker Ma'am, the visit was very crucial in terms of trying to bring us closer to what we would also expect in our country for the benefit of enshrining quality education. Zimbabwe made a very bold stance to harness early childhood education into the formal education system. It used to be a stand-alone programme and as it was, it was not providing the necessary quality education that we were expecting. Now that it is there in the formal sector and with such a report as we have just received, we find that we benefit a lot from this report. Our education system tries to ensure that we incorporate the concept of living no-one behind and also trying to catch our children while they are still young.

Mr. Speaker Sir, we have certain challenges in our country and some of them have been alluded to. I would like to look at the issue of distances that our children have to travel - those who are doing early childhood, especially in the rural areas. You will find that they have to travel 5 to 10 km going to the nearest school. This exposes them to certain dangers, for example during the rainy season, we experience the

challenge of flooded rivers. In some cases, they are also crossing thick forests and that is a disaster to our young children. As a result, some of the children will end up going for early childhood at the age of seven instead of going at the age of five. That would be stealing their time which they should be using to the maximum at school level.

When we talk about lack of resources, we also have to look at the types of teachers in our country who are teaching ECD. Most of the teachers teaching ECD are not qualified to teach ECD. They have not trained to teach ECD and in some cases, you find a teacher who actually trained to teach the juniors is found teaching ECD or a teacher whom they call a paraprofessional, someone who has not even gone to do the actual training at a college or a university. That person is made to teach ECD classes. In that case, we cannot expect the quality that we expect from that lower grade because it needs highly qualified persons.

We have just been informed from the report that in Finland, you have to have a degree in order for you to teach early childhood development. In Zimbabwe, we can just emulate someone who has got a simple diploma to teach because we do not have the relevant staff and I

call upon our Government to continue teaching and churning out more teachers who can teach these lower grades.

We also have the issue poor accommodation for our teachers. In most cases, our teachers get to schools but where they stay, you can hardly have a visitor coming to your school to interact with you because there will be no accommodation. It is difficult especially in the resettlement areas. Some of the teachers actually teach from other neighbours' homes. That is where they get accommodation from.

We are also a country that is trying to make sure that we provide good quality education as enshrined in our New Education Amendment Act of 2020. This visit can enable us to see where we are with our endeavours to provide quality education. You will also find that from ECD, it is the starting point for Education 5. 0. We have seen from the report that in Finland, if you get there, you will find people are churning their children and training them towards practical lessons or practical skills which will improve their competence. When they go up the ladder, they will be going through the required system.

Madam Speaker Ma'am, the issue of feeding has been touched on and feeding in schools is important in terms of luring some of the children that may not go to school because of hunger. Our schools develop some agricultural projects which can enhance food for the schools. They can grow crops. They can keep poultry or other forms of livestock so that our children will benefit locally rather than waiting for Government to ensure that there is feeding for those children. What Government provides might not suffice and might not be nutritious enough. So, I submit Madam Speaker, and I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. TEKESHE: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 15th June, 2023.

*On the motion of **HON. T. MOYO**, seconded by **HON.***

TEKESHE, *the House adjourned at Twelve Minutes past Five o'clock p. m.*