

PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

Tuesday 10th October, 2017

The Senate met at Half-past Two o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS

(THE HON. PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE *in the Chair*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE HON. PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

INVITATION TO THE ZIMBABWE WOMEN'S PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS MEETING

THE HON. PRESIDEN OF THE SENATE: All Members of the Zimbabwe Women's Parliamentary Caucus are invited to a meeting on Wednesday, 11th October, 2017 at 1000 hours in the Senate Chamber. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the women's manifesto. We really would like to urge Hon. Women Members to show up tomorrow. This meeting was supposed to take place today but it did not make a quorum. It is for women Members of Parliament's own good. I would

urge women Members of Parliament, Senators to please show up tomorrow so that this manifesto can be put together. You should feel proud that you have had your input into whatever is going to come out. So, please do show up tomorrow. Thank you.

LAUNCH OF THE BIOMETRIC VOTER REGISTRATION (BVR)

EXERCISE

THE HON. PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE: I have to inform the House that the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) will launch and explain the Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) exercise to all Members of Parliament tomorrow in the National Assembly starting at 0830 hours. ZEC will also facilitate the registration of all Members of Parliament over a number of days. To facilitate the registration exercise, Hon. Members are kindly requested to bring their national identity cards, passports and proof of registration. – [HON. SENATORS: *Proof of residence.*] – Well that is what is written here. Proof of residence.

Again I would like to urge Hon. Members to make it by 0830 hours in the National Assembly so that we make any comments about

ZEC, we will have first hand information as legislators. It is important for us to attend tomorrow.

HON. SEN. MASHAVAKURE: On a point of order Madam President. Are we suspending the thematic committee meetings tomorrow?

THE HON. PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE: I do not think so. You are urged to attend. It is 0830 hours to 1000 hours can you not attend.

HON. SEN. MASHAVAKURE: My meeting starts at 0900 hours.

THE HON. PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE: At least you will have heard something for 30 minutes. I am advised that there are no committees on Wednesday, so that falls away Hon. Sen. Mashavakure.

HON. SEN. MASHAVAKURE: There is a Human Rights Committee on Wednesday.

THE HON. PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE: Those who can make it - I did say those who can make it, please show up. There are no committees tomorrow. If Hon. Sen. Mashavakure has a Committee, well I guess he will have to make up his mind on where he wants to go but I am appealing to the rest of the Hon. Senators to please show up.

You know, we are people's representatives: so this is beneficial to us – to know what it is all about as legislators. So, I think we should play our part because it is good for us, let us show up tomorrow. I thank you. – [AN HON. SENATOR: *Inaudible interjections.*] –

HON. SEN. GOTO: On a point of order Madam President, what of those who have already registered?

THE HON. PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE: Please just show up tomorrow so that you meet with the people from ZEC. What is important is for them to explain the Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) to you and for you to pose questions on that particular exercise. I think that is very important. I thank you.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. SEN. TAWENGWA: Madam President, I move that Orders of the Day, Numbers 1 to 3 be stood over until the rest of the Orders of the Day have been disposed of.

HON. SEN. MASUKU: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH: DEBATE ON ADDRESS

Fourth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion in reply to the Presidential Speech.

Question again proposed.

HON. SEN. TAWENGWA: I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. SEN. MASUKU: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 11th October, 2017.

MOTION

CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS AND
IMPLEMENTATION REGISTER

Fifth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the Code of
Conduct and Ethics.

Question again proposed.

HON. SEN. MASUKU: I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. SEN. TAWENGWA: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 11th October, 2017.

MOTION

FIRST REPORT OF THE THEMATIC COMMITTEE ON
PEACE AND SECURITY ON THE PREPAREDNESS OF THE
GRAIN MARKETING BOARD TO HANDLE THE 2016/2017
CROP DELIVERIES AND THE SUCCESS OF THE
COMMAND AGRICULTURE PROGRAMME

Sixth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the First Report

of the Thematic Committee on Peace and Security on the Preparedness of the Grain Marketing Board to handle the 2016/17 crop deliveries and the success of the Command Agriculture programme.

Question again proposed.

HON. SEN. CARTER: Thank you Madam President for giving me this opportunity and Chairman, Hon. Sen. Mumvuri for the report about Command Agriculture.

I would like to mention the name of the Chief Executive Officer of the Zimbabwe Farmers Union (CFU), Mr. Paul Zakariya. He explained in a recent interview that Command Agriculture was basically an inputs scheme. He said that for those who managed to access the scheme, their crops performed very well despite challenges caused by the armyworm and late deliveries of fertiliser and herbicides. The ZFU which has about 75 000 farmers on their books and is the biggest farming organisation, many of them are small and large scale commercial farmers. Only about 500 secured inputs through Command Agriculture.

When he was questioned as to why this was so and whether his ZFU farmers had failed to meet the stipulated requirements for

Command Agriculture, he said no, it was not that; it was more information dissemination and there was quite a lot of confusion about terms, who to approach and how to get enlisted. So, for him it was a disappointing exercise but for the people who managed to do it, it was obviously very successful. Most of his farmers battled to get inputs, it is a perennial problem amongst his farmers of getting inputs for a whole year ahead. A few funded themselves, others got contracts and most would love to approach the banks but the banks are reluctant to lend because the 99 year lease is not bankable.

I would like to quote so that I do not get it wrong, if I may read what he said to me Madam President. He said, 'we are now talking about an active land market. If we do not have an active land market, this land will not have value and nobody is going to lend to someone who has an asset which has no value. The problem is not with the bank, the problem is with the instrument itself. The 99-Year Lease in its current form will not give comfort to financial institutions, so they will not accept it as security. We have been assured of this many times that it is coming, but it is not coming.

Most of our Government officials and influential people in authority actually hold 99-Year Leases which they cannot use to borrow. This is still him speaking – so I would think that high ranking officials should see that as a problem because it is in their interest to use that instrument as security and not use their houses in towns. So he appeals that those in authority should address this so that ordinary farmers who do not have houses in towns can also use the leases as security. In other words, Command Agriculture has done well for certain a number of people. If we want it to do well for everybody, we have to equalise it and his solution is to make the 99-Year Leases bankable. The issue remains, we only need command agriculture because the Government does not allow its own people to own land. I thank you.

***HON. SEN. CHIMHINI:** I thank you Madam President. I would like to make a small contribution on the motion raised in this House. When we moved around during a public hearing looking at the progress of Command Agriculture, we were informed that there was no insurance and what it means is that if such a project is not covered by insurance

when there is disaster there is going to be a lot of problems for the people affected. We will then know that if the project is a failure, it is not the fault of the farmer but the system. As far as I am concerned if we are using public funds on a trial and error basis it shows we do not care for this. So, what we encourage is that we need to put more emphasis on the financial support for such a programme especially insurance so that we do not waste taxpayers money.

We also asked where the finances used in the command agriculture were coming from and we were told that we should not bother about where the money came from. This means that there is no transparency because some people were saying the money was coming from a donor, while others were saying from Government. In other places, people were saying the money was sourced from such a place. There is no need for us to hide the source of this funding because if a project is funded by Government – Government does not create money but money comes from the public and the public has a right to know how the money is used.

We also noticed that when beneficiaries were selected, it seems that some people are of the opinion that the beneficiaries of this programme are decided on partisan lines and yet what we know is that such a noble programme should benefit everybody regardless of the political party which they belong to because the aim is to fight hunger in the country so that Zimbabwe again dominates in food production in southern Africa. We also observed that when seeds were distributed they were simply dumped onto the people without asking them whether it was suitable for the rain pattern in their region. We believe in that the farmers know their climate better and they should be given a chance to select some seeds which are adaptable to their farming areas. We had a situation whereby dry areas like Chivi were given seeds which needed a lot of rains.

I will conclude by saying this is a very noble programme and whosoever has been engaged in this programme should benefit. As of now people are not very sure as to how people should be paid when they take their grain to GMB because some are told it will take a week for

papers to be processed and some are saying two weeks while others are saying three weeks. We need to be very clear on that so that this programme becomes a success.

***HON. SEN. MAVHUNGA:** I thank you Madam President for giving me the chance to make my contribution on this report which has been tabled by the Thematic Committee on Peace and Security which is chaired by Hon. Sen. Mumvuri. We are very grateful for scouting and seeking knowledge on how Command Agriculture is progressing. We need to have a research so that we know how successful this programme was. I am grateful to the Government of Zimbabwe because when the programme was introduced it was said to be an import substitution programme because there were a lot of things which were affecting agriculture in the country such as the rainfall patterns and other economic challenges and at times people thought that farmers were lazy. When the programme was introduced, it showed that the people of Zimbabwe are really hardworking and they had a bumper harvest because they had been given all the inputs on time.

We know there could be some people who did not do as much as they were expected but we know that in every experiment there are bound to be some challenges and we believe as we go into the next season, people have learnt their lessons and they have made their corrections. As we are now many people have been asked to register for Command Agriculture and some have done that. In my constituency people who are in the A1 programme have already started benefiting from the inputs of this season.

This programme was a success in that we know that our GMB silos which were dilapidated because they were out of use, were refurbished and the infrastructure which was crumbling was resuscitated. We were informed by the Minister of Agriculture that the refurbishment of silos was an ongoing progress.

I hope that as we progress with this Command Agriculture we need to source for driers which would be installed at every GMB depot, because without these driers farmers will be in problems. There were situations whereby a farmer would carry about three tonnes to a GMB

depot and that would be rejected because the moisture content was incorrect. If we have these driers at GMB depots, then farmers will benefit.

I am pleading with the extension officers to work very hard, especially in checking the moisture content which should be about 12.5 and the moisture should be checked when the grain is still at the farmer's homestead so that we do not carry to the Grain Marketing Board (GMB). When it is rejected, you bring it back or at times you have to buy some tents so that you dry it and this will raise the cost of production. I am saying, agricultural extension officers should be helpful. We have noticed that this Command Agriculture Programme has since been introduced in the wheat crop with the aim of reducing the import expenses on wheat.

We encourage the Government to work hard towards promoting this Command Agriculture through the use of opening up more irrigation schemes. I am saying, when we are talking of the irrigation scheme, we are not talking of a give-away from the state, but we are saying, farmers

should pay for the services of erecting this irrigation facility and farmers should be helped in engaging in water harvesting. If we do that, agriculture will develop through these irrigation programmes.

I can safely say with confidence, Command Agriculture was a great success and if you want to join, you are free to do so. We know that there are some of us who can join this programme without asking for money from the state, they have their own money, which is alright. However, from the past, we used to know that, even white farmers who were doing well in this country used to borrow money from the banks and they will use their other money for capital development. I thank you.

***HON. SEN. BUKA:** Thank you Mr. President for giving me a chance to make my contribution on this motion about Command Agriculture which was launched this year. I will start by being grateful to His Excellency, Cde, Robert, Gabriel Mugabe, ministers and all Government officials who took part in the success of this Command Agriculture. I am now aged, but since the time I was born, I have never

seen such an amount of grain. I visited the GMB in Nembudziya and I was mesmerised by the excess supply of maize at the GMB. Some of the maize was covered in tents. I am very grateful to this Command Agriculture Programme. What we know is that, whenever a new programme is launched, there are bound to be some feasibility problems, which have to be noted and corrected so that when the next phase comes, we will be making informed decisions because we will have eliminated all the drawbacks identified in the initial project.

I was very much grateful for this Command Agriculture because I noticed that with the A2 farmers, the agricultural extension officers were moving around the farms and working together with the farmers checking on whether they had irrigation facilities and also whether they had farming equipment so that they could carry out a successful programme. They also wanted to check on the stability of that farmer because there were some things which were not given as inputs but were needed as the farmers' initiative.

We noticed that civil servants were moving around the country checking on the legitimacy of the beneficiaries and some of these people who benefitted were very successful. Yes, we know that in any programme, there are bound to be some failures. This was a success because, unlike the banks, which call for collateral security and interest, when we talk of the Command Agriculture, the collateral was the ownership of land and an irrigation scheme or access to it.

Consequently, the people of Zimbabwe were able to put together their finances in order to develop their programmes. We believe that should this programme continue, the farmers will definitely develop. I met some of the farmers who were beneficiaries to this programme. They informed me that they had already bought some equipment such as shelling machines, tractors and sprayers because it is a programme for development.

As far as I am concerned, this programme should be undertaken by all the people of Zimbabwe without being partisan because what we want is food security. Some families have excess grain left for the

sustenance of their families. We also noticed that there are some people who are not farmers, especially from towns, who buy from supermarkets; they are assured that there is food in the country. This has shown that the Command Agriculture programme was a success.

Let me also point out that Command Agriculture did not only develop and benefit the farmers only, but there were other downstream beneficiaries such as transporters, suppliers of herbicides and millers and other goods and service providers. This means that they had to live a happy life. The people who are involved in the supply of agricultural products like seeds and chemicals all benefited and definitely had a successful season.

We also have some people who managed to repay their loans through the successes of Command Agriculture. I am emphasising that this was a success and I personally am very glad about this programme because it developed individuals and other organisations in the country. Above all, it fights starvation in the country. We were always talking about importing grain or food into the country, but I am sure the bumper

harvest we had will lead to Zimbabwe being able to export grain and once again reasserting our country as the breadbasket of Southern Africa. I am therefore very glad that this Committee obtained this observation when they were going right round the country on the successes of the Command Agriculture. I know we had problems in the initial stages but that is what happens in the growth of a child who starts by crawling, walking and running. That is what we did with this programme. My hope and wish is that the GMB will be able to pay the farmers for the grain deliveries they made to the depots. I know there could be delays but the crux of the matter is that farmers are being paid their monies. I say to my fellow Hon. Members across the party lines, this was a good programme, let us keep it up.

HON. SEN. MUMVURI: Mr. President, I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. SEN. MOHADI: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 11th October, 2017.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE ZIMBABWE DELEGATION TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROMOTING STAKEHOLDER AND PARLIAMENTARY DIALOGUE ON THE ARMS TRADE TREATY (ATT)

Seventh Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the Report of the Zimbabwe delegation to the International Conference on Promoting Stakeholder and Parliamentary Dialogue on Arms Trade Treaty.

Question again proposed.

***HON. SEN. MACHINGAIFA:** Thank you Mr. President for giving me the chance to make my contribution on this Report. I hope I find you well President of the Senate. Other Senators have debated before me and I would like to make my contribution on the International Conference on Promoting Stakeholder and Parliamentary Dialogue on the Arms Trade Treaty that was held at Pullman Teranga Hotel in Dakar, Senegal from the 13th to 14th June, 2017.

Mr. President, let me talk about what was discussed by the Zimbabwean delegation that attended this Conference in Senegal, Dakar. They were talking about the trade of arms, both great and small that are used in fighting where people are either killed or maimed because they are fighting for a certain cause. The idea was to target the people that trade into the arms that they should not recklessly sell these arms. They should be selective as to whom they sell to and it should be for a particular reason. As far as we know, Zimbabwe is a peaceful country, what I do not know is, when these delegates went to that meeting, did they make the contribution that in Zimbabwe, we do not allow these guns to be seen everywhere. The strict laws we have prohibit the *willy nilly* use of these guns. Even when we are fighting as individuals, we do not use guns.

I remember, in one certain developed country in America, there was a certain man who took many guns into a hotel. Some of the guns were big and some were small. This person murdered 52 people using those guns. In the process, he also injured 524 people. This is quite

surprising as to why this should be happening in a developed country whereby anybody can get hold of any kind of weapon that they want. Above that, staking such weapons into a hotel, this man disturbed people who were going about their lives innocently and enjoying themselves. When they were investigating, they searched this man's house and found that he also had arsenal in his home, a big catchy of arms.

I am sure the Zimbabwean delegation that went to this Conference were listening and gathering information because it was something strange to them because in Zimbabwe, we are very strict in handling and distribution of guns, whether big or small. We say they should not be sold in shops like we do with bread, soft drinks and beer because if they are sold in such open markets, people will murder or injure each other. I remember some days, when we were in the Army, when some of the people who had been engaged in the war came back, they were encouraged to take their guns at home. These would be stored in a gun cabinet. These people would be told about what had happened when they were out, especially misbehaviours by their spouses. It was

discovered that it was not necessary for people to take the guns home because they will be used to kill others.

The other time when the soldiers were coming from war, instead of taking these guns home, they were taken and stored in an armoury so that whenever you are told something bad and you become angry, you will not run for a gun to shoot whoever has offended you. We are saying this leads to a peaceful life. I am saying to the delegation that attended the Conference, whether they will go back or whether there will be another session; when they attend this conference again, they should be proud of Zimbabwe. They should tell the story of Zimbabwe that Zimbabwe is a peaceful country.

We also advise that guns should not be sold in the open market as we do with bread and cheese, beers and soft drinks. They should be sold discreetly. I thank you Mr. President.

HON. SEN. MASUKU: I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. SEN. MOHADI: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 11th October, 2017.

*On the motion of **HON. SEN. MASUKU**, seconded by **HON.***

SEN. MOHADI, *the Senate adjourned at Seventeen Minutes past Three o'clock p.m.*