

PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

Wednesday, 26th September, 2018

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

PRAYERS

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

MOTION

PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH: DEBATE ON ADDRESS

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

Question again proposed.

***HON. SEN. CHIMBUDZI:** Thank you Madam President. I want to start by congratulating you for being elected the Presiding Officer in this august House and also the election of your Deputy. We also want to thank the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe who laid out the rules and regulations which are supposed to be followed in the making of laws for the governance of Zimbabwe. He was also clearing a path for us as Members of Parliament that we should follow in making

the laws which are aimed at creating, peace, order and good governance of Zimbabwe.

Madam President, one of the Bills we are supposed to be looking at is the Traditional Leaders Bill which is aimed at looking at the roles of the traditional chiefs. They should also be part of the traditional assemblies. I know we need to look deeply at these rules because it empowers the Chiefs to be able to participate in the law making process, in the development and protection of the customs and traditions of our country.

Madam President, we know that when we have set up this board, there is going to be development and progress in the country in such a way that it empowers the chiefs. When they are empowered, there will be development because we will be following the guidance of our Statutory Instruments. We are very grateful to the Government; they have recognised the importance of traditional leaders.....

Cellphones having rung.

THE HON. PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE: Order, order, may I appeal to Hon. Senators to put our phones on silent or switch off.

***HON. SEN. CHIMBUDZI:** We want to thank the President for urging us to craft this law on traditional leaders because it empowers our Chiefs. It shows that they are important; they are the custodians of our traditions. We believe when traditional leaders have been empowered, they will fully utilise this law. I know that Chiefs are happy and they will work hard because they feel that they are included in the law making process and that they will be part of the provincial councils, following the promulgation of this law. This is going to create good relations between the traditional leaders and their subjects because they will be afforded opportunity for discussions.

Madam President, I urge my fellow Senators that when this Bill comes into this House, let us scrutinise it carefully and let us not be partisan or look at other ways which may be divisive because this law has got far reaching consequences.

The President also talked about the SMEs which he said creates employment and livelihood for women and the youth. We all know that here in Zimbabwe, women and the youth surpass the other groups. If these two groups are empowered, there is going to be development in the country. That is why the Women's Development Bank and the Youth Bank were established so that they participate in the developing of the country. Let us work hard in our rural areas; especially looking at this Bill. I urge my fellow members to disseminate this information to remote rural areas. This information will assist some people who may be afraid to utilise the loans because they are afraid of the unknown consequences. If we disseminate information and tell them how it is going to operate and the benefits accrued, they will utilise the monies. If we do not disseminate this information, this money which has been put aside for the public is going to be used by a few individuals who are financially empowered. We know very well that there are some people who do not want to borrow any monies because their clan or culture does not allow them to do so but encourages them to survive on their own. I am urging fellow women that let us utilise these monies. If you

borrow the money and use it on a good project, when you become an affluent person, please do not look down upon your husband. Do not insult them or make them feel inferior, make them feel part and parcel of that development because such projects are not meant to be divisive but they are targeted at fighting poverty. I am very grateful to His Excellency for such a developmental speech. Without that speech, there will be no debate in the House. I thank you.

HON. SEN. MOHADI: Thank you Madam President. I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity to add a few words on this motion. First of all, allow me to congratulate our President, Hon. E. D. Mnangagwa for winning the July elections and also allow me to congratulate you and Hon. Sen. Rtd. Gen. Nyambuya for being elected President and Deputy President of this august House. I say *amphlope*, congratulations, *makorokoto*.

Going on with this debate Madam President, during the speech which was delivered by the President, he talked mostly about the agricultural sector which he mentioned that it is one of our important

sectors. I cannot argue with him because you will find that without agriculture, the country cannot forge ahead. When we talk about agriculture, it is a key sector of the economy because you will find that we have to produce as a country for the people to eat. Also, if we have extras, we can export to other countries so that we gain foreign currency.

I urge all those who were given land to maximise the land and use it properly because they have to produce. As we are talking about agriculture, we also face some problems. Those farmers who are in the farms lack machinery to operate. They also lack inputs in order to produce. I am urging our Government to assist these people to get money in order to buy whatever they want so that their agricultural inputs may be sustained.

Apart from that, we are looking at the irrigation component especially for those who are in regions 4 and 5 who do not have sufficient rain. There is need for irrigation. For us to have irrigation, we are supposed to have dams. There is need for the construction of new dams as well as rehabilitating those that are not working so that we have

enough water. Other than the rehabilitation of the dams, I am looking at harnessing the little water that flows into rivers to be harnessed in a way that we can maximise every little drop of water that we are given by the Almighty to irrigate our fields.

As we look at agriculture Madam President, there is need for the availability of clean water as well. Our people do not just need water – because water is life, they need clean water for their consumption and for any other use. Talking of agriculture, we are also looking at the Command Livestock which was started during the Eighth Parliament. I am urging all those who are involved in the Command Agriculture; they really know that we have got zones in this country, the green and the red with our livestock but now have a tendency of taking their livestock from the red zone to the green zone without permits. They should desist from that practice because the whole country might end up being affected by the foot and mouth disease.

Madam President, this Command Livestock programme is very good especially for those who stay in the low rainfall areas like the

Matabeleland region and other areas which I cannot mention by name.

You find that cattle do very well and it may also resuscitate the CSC which used to sell most of the beef outside the country and earn foreign currency.

In the agriculture sector, you will find that we now have a problem. Our farmers used to grow soya-beans but as of now, it has gone down. It needs to be resuscitated because soya-beans play a major role. You find that it is feed for the animals like the cattle that I am talking about. It is also used for the production of our cooking oil which we need on a daily basis. So without soya-beans, we are letting ourselves down.

The President also talked about devolution and the decentralisation of power, which is a welcome gesture to all of us because our people at grass root level will have a time or a chance to participate in Government issues. They will also have a chance of making decisions about their problems that they meet in their areas. So it will help the Government a lot because what the Government will be dealing with are real issues from the people, which I think they will forge ahead.

Let me talk about gender equality. Let me first of all congratulate the women who managed to make it to this Parliament because it was not easy. They had challenges but I congratulate you for your bravery for standing and winning these elections. It is not enough Madam President. Instead of our numbers increasing as women, they have terribly gone down. We will never stop fighting for our rights as women. Definitely, you can laugh or look down upon us but we will keep on pressing this issue until we win. The SADC Protocol emphasises the 50-50 representation, not only in this Parliament but even in the private sector. Wherever there is a job, we should see women rising up because they have got the qualities to rule, work *et cetera*.

Madam President, I was also impressed when our President said there would be a Bill which would come to this august House, which would be dealing with child marriages. I do not think this Bill will fail to sail through because women are worried about this issue. Every woman in Zimbabwe, across the political divide is worried. Our children are getting married when they are so young. The period when

our children are supposed to be attending school is the period when they get married.

Madam President, this brings me to the element of education, whereby we do not have Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) at district level. This is an important issue because if ever we had these VTCs at district level, when our girl children fail to get to school, they would at least enroll at these VTCs and learn skills such as sewing, agriculture, carpentry, engineering *et cetera*. Some of them do not have the chance of getting there because if these VTCs are far away, they will not have the money to travel long distances or to pay for accommodation.

Madam President, I cannot finish my deliberation without mentioning anything about the cholera outbreak that we had in the country. Let me say thumps up to the Harare City. Even though they were affected by cholera, they managed to conquer it. Today, when you drive in the central business district, vending is really minimized. I also want to thank those who managed to donate and assist the Ministry of Health and Child Care in dealing with this epidemic. I want to thank

them from the bottom of my heart because some would just sit and say, “*hameno ikoko, asazi khonale. Ngokwe Harare.*” However, there are some people who managed to pump out their monies and handouts in order to contain the cholera in Harare.

Madam President, on the health sector again, there is a problem because this cholera keeps on coming and going. There is need for us to look for alternatives on how we can combat this disease which is a problem within our country. There is need for us to have clean water. Boreholes should be sunk in our communities, especially the rural areas. There is need for the people in the rural areas to have more clinics which are nearer to them, so that as soon as one falls sick, one has to be taken to medical facilities with immediate effect.

Let me just mention in passing a place called Malabe in Beitbridge East in the Chikwalakwala village. This village is isolated and very far from town. A certain organisation built a health centre there but it is a pity when I talk about this health centre. As I speak, nurses at that health centre do not have accommodation. They are accommodated by

nearby villagers. You can imagine a nurse coming out from a hut at a nearby village to go and work for the people. We wonder whether we can ever combat this cholera if we keep on like that.

Madam President, finally let me congratulate all Hon. Members of the Senate who managed to make it to this Ninth Parliament. May the Almighty God be with you throughout this term. “Makorokoto, amhlope.” I thank you.

***HON. SEN. MALULEKE:** Thank you Madam President for affording me the opportunity to debate the Speech given by His Excellency Hon. E.D. Mnangagwa. May I start by congratulating you for being elected as President of the Senate and to also congratulate Hon. Nyambuya for being elected the Deputy President of Senate.

We are very grateful for what His Excellency President Mnangagwa did in opening this Parliament where he laid out the Bills which are to be passed. The Senate is made up of the elders of the nation and this has to be reflected in our debates. We are going to receive a lot of Bills which are based on the Speech given by His

Excellency, which we saw on yesterday's *Order Paper*. We are representing the people who elected us into power and we need to represent them well as one of the functions of Parliament. We should debate and make laws aimed at development and progress. Listening to that Speech, His Excellency talked about the development and advancement of women. Watching what was said on television, on ZTV when the news reporter talked about 57 magistrates who were sworn in and the majority were women and we see there is advancement of women. We know that in most cases we have some impediments in trying to get into these public offices. As women we have a lot of responsibilities. Looking at the area where I come from in Chiredzi, the women folk and the girl child have a lot of problems which they encounter in their day to day lives. During the Christmas holiday we have a lot of movements of people coming back home from South Africa and a lot of young girls marry these people coming back from South Africa regardless of how young they are. I remember the President said these children must not rush into marriage because *kumhanya hakusi kusvika*.

In this august Senate we are lucky because we are benefiting from the knowledge given to us by the traditional leaders who are in this Senate. We need to tap into their knowledge because they meet a lot of problems in the rural areas through these youngsters either boys or girls. What we need is to inculcate the value of appreciation of education in these youngsters so that they will have that spirit of discernment. If I am not educated I will not be able to interpret even road signs, I will just proceed on a red robot because of lack of education.

At times it may seem as if you are a drawback but you are not. I remember my time when I went to school, it was a time that society did not believe in educating girl children and because of that I was the only girl who went to school. My father was fighting the culture and normative values of our society. People were saying if you educate this girl-child, she is going to be a prostitute. My father acted awkwardly because I did not suckle on my mother's breasts the day I was born. He believed that if he educated a girl-child she would become a prostitute. My mother responded that my girl child will prosper and she will bring

me a suit jacket - it is the boy that will go come back and impregnate married women so which child is better. So, my father replied that it is the one that will bring me a suit then my mother answered him that both children should be treated the same. Let us unite and educate the community on the importance of educating girl children and the dangers of child marriages.

His Excellency also talked about agriculture, we realise that in the past two seasons, the Lord was with us and he gave us plenty of rains especially in Chiredzi because drought was anticipated and we were told to grow small grains but surprisingly, the Lord was with us. We had a bumper harvest of maize instead of the sorghum which we were used to. Through the Command Agriculture programme, we were able to get all the inputs in time. You should come and see how blessed we are in Chiredzi. Seasons are changing, I noticed in my area trees have not developed new leaves yet but here trees have developed new leaves, it is the will of God and we must be happy.

His Excellency talked about animal husbandry; yes it is known that livestock is a project that does well in the lowveld. We are glad, the Government or the President has urged this Government to take into account the livestock command agriculture and I am urging fellow women that we must not take this as a men's thing but we should go and talk to the experts in animal husbandry so that we are also given bullocks so that we had a good breed. We should not be afraid of tackling all these objects. I am very grateful for His Excellency, he is a visionary, he is foresighted and I believe that if we are to take into account all the Bills he asked us to create into Acts of Parliament, there is going to be development especially in our rural areas. We should utilise the civil servants in our areas, interact with them so that when there is something given by the Government, we must be able to ask the district administrator, the Governor so that we work together.

Let me turn to cholera, we may say it is in Harare but it is everywhere. We had an incident where a driver came from Chipinge to Chiredzi and when he was taken to hospital, it was discovered that he

had contracted cholera. Let us live a hygienic and clean life especially in areas like Chiredzi. Access to water in Chiredzi is far and wide but we need to have more boreholes so that people have access to clean water. We need more boreholes, more wells. We have women who are the main fetchers of water and they travel long distances.

Talking of distances we also need to have health institutions near us. Pregnant women go into labour during the night and will have to travel a distance of about 10km to 30 km. we also need to have health institutions nearby, especially when people fall ill at night. In some instances, these institutions are there, but with no personnel, or if staff is available, there is no medication. We are appealing to Government that more clinics are built and health services be accessed freely by the elderly. I conclude by congratulating His Excellency, the President for a job well done and I also congratulate the ones that were here before that have managed to come back again and the new ones as well, I hope we will work in harmony. I thank you Madam President.

HON. SEN. MUZENDA: Madam President, I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. SEN. MOHADI: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 26th September, 2018 – [AN HON. SENATOR: *Inaudible interjections.*] –

THE HON. PRESIDENT OF SENATE: Order Hon. Senators. I am speaking here and someone is shouting what is that? It is good to hear what is being said. If you have something to say, I recognise you, you stand up and say whatever, everyone is free to talk.

On the motion of HON. SEN. MUZENDA seconded by HON. SEN. MOHADI, the Senate adjourned at Ten Minutes past Three o'clock p.m.