

PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

Wednesday, 16th May, 2012.

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

PRAYERS

(MADAM PRESIDENT *in the Chair*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MADAM PRESIDENT

NON-ADVERSE REPORT RECEIVED FROM THE

PARLIAMENTARY LEGAL COMMITTEE

MADAM PRESIDENT: I have to inform the Senate that I have received a Non-Adverse Report from the Parliamentary Legal Committee on Statutory Instruments published in the Government *Gazette* during the month of March 2012, except the following:

Statutory Instrument 25/2012

Statutory instrument 28/2012

Statutory instrument 30/2012

Statutory Instrument 40/2012

Statutory Instrument 41/2012 and

Statutory Instrument 44/2012.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

MADAM PRESIDENT: I also have to inform the Senate that the Organizing Committee of the National Day of Prayer is inviting all hon. senators as individuals to attend the National Day of Prayer at the Smithfield, Harare Showgrounds on Friday 25th May 2012, starting from 0830hrs, until 1400hrs. This is not a state occasion and hence Parliament will not provide fuel coupons.

SWITCHING OFF OF CELLPHONES

MADAM PRESIDENT: May I remind hon. senators to switch off their cell phones before business commences.

MOTION

FIRST REPORT OF THE THEMATIC COMMITTEE ON HUMAN
RIGHTS ON THE STATE OF PRISONS AND PRISONERS IN
ZIMBABWE

First Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the First Report of the Thematic Committee on Human Rights on the State of Prisons and Prisoners in Zimbabwe.

Question again proposed.

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE,
MECHANISATION AND IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT: I**
move that the debate do now adjourn.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 17th May, 2012.

MOTION

MEASURES TO CURB DROUGHT

Second Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on harsh climatic conditions in Region V.

Question again proposed.

***SENATOR MUCHIHWA:** (*First part of speech not recorded due to technical fault*).....We did not get enough rain, even Mazoe Dam does not have enough water. I am referring to areas where we do not get rains in Region V like Chiredzi, Mt. Darwin, going to Guruve and Kanyemba. This year we did not get enough rain. It is very difficult in the rural areas where we come from. Even drinking water is a problem before we even get into summer.

We are urging those who drill boreholes that they drill boreholes. In our areas we have A problem that we cannot even get water by drilling boreholes. We do not know how the Government can help by assisting those people.

This is affecting even animals, the grazing areas are now dry. Animals now have problems of grazing areas. When we get to summer, it means that those animals will be affected by diseases and they will start dying. The people will not have any livestock. People will end up not having any food and any animals to till their land with. We are pleading with Government that they should start sending food down

there like what happened in 1985. The Government should see that animal feeding can be send there. I am referring to hay which is made from stalks and grass so that our animals would find food to eat. Even tanks of water should be provided so that when the animals go for dipping they will eat and get water from there.

Now coming to people, right now we are battering a goat to one bucket of maize, which means that by the end of the day, we will not be having any animals at all. I remember in 1985, young girls were married to old men so that the family would get some food to eat. This really disturbed a lot of families for a lot of children did not go to school. You would find that children as young as ten years would be pledged into marriage to old people who are about 60 years.

Yes, we are part of the Government but we are saying those who are really responsible as part of the Government should really look into those areas which are being affected, so that when the food is being sent there, there will be no favouritism going on. It should be food for all. If it is for animals, it is for all the animals in that area.

Looking at that, in those affected areas, you find that we have a rise in people who are sick. You find that during that time, young girls used to engage in prostitution so that they would feed the other members of the family. This will end up in the spread of HIV and AIDs. If there is hunger there will be a rise in those diseases.

We are urging that the Government should take food to the people. We also urge the ministers responsible, especially the Minister of Agriculture that they should have time to visit those areas in their own personal capacities so that they have first hand effects of the drought in those areas. If you rely on people they will tell you what they want but if you go you will see what is going on. If you look at the road that leads to Kanyemba, the road is very good but it is not tarred. It is even better than the roads in Harare. The DDF there is really working very hard, although you can find bad patches here and there. Your cars I think they can manage. I am also pleading to all of us here, those who have ideas I think you can come in with your ideas. Thank you Madam President.

***SENATOR CHIBAGU:** *First part of speech not recorded due to technical fault* ...people there are hard working. If people get there we as leaders from that area have realized that there are certain types of crops that are grown there - seeds like Pannar then groundnuts if we can get those in time when there is rain then people in those areas can live. Coming to animals, we have Zambezi and Hunyani river, right now we have animals coming over crossing to Darwendale because the people who are farming there are people who are engaging in stream bank cultivation. They harvest sweet potatoes, bananas and groundnuts, but this year there is drought. Our animals used to graze from there but not anymore because of drought. We are also urging our Government to take into account that there are a lot of commercial farmers that need Government support. I thank you.

***SENATOR MAKAMURE:** I would like to add my voice to this motion. I come from Masvingo, an area that is well known when it comes to erratic rainfalls but long ago dams were built but because of siltation the dams collapsed. In some areas people are even crossing

where there used to be a dam. In Masvingo coming from Harare we pass through Nadanda, we cross a lot of rivers but now there are valleys and there are a lot of people. There are a lot of people who are panning so if you continue saying that there is no water it does not help because people are engaging in panning which is filling our dams with sand. I am glad that the Ministers responsible are there so that people could be resettled in proper areas not in swampy areas and this is affecting our dams. Mutirikwi was once the biggest lake in Zimbabwe but now it is silted and it did not happen over-night but it took years.

Mutirikwi was really affected by the resettled farmers. All the rivers up to Mutirikwi, these areas are being used for cultivation right into the river bank. With the help of the extension officers, people should be resettled properly so that we will curb the siltation. We do not see the effects now but it will affect the next generations. So I am urging the Government that they should remove people who are engaging in stream bank cultivation. Yes, dams can be built but as long as we engage in stream bank cultivation the dams will be silted with

sand and it will not help, so my contribution is that people should be resettled properly. Thank you.

SENATOR KATYAMAENZA:.....(First part of speech not recorded due to technical fault)*... it does not mean that there is no rain at all in these areas. At times there are a lot of rains but that rain water is not being curbed, we should curb the first rains. The people must farm vegetables and in region where there are good rains, let us promote farming. In Matabeleland you will find that there are trees which you find there which are unique but those trees do not harm animals. What we are saying is, experiments should be done so that people will see why those areas were created by God like that. There is gold in those areas yes, rain is not adequate there but projects should come in those areas so that they should find money and buy things from the areas where they are receiving a lot of rain.

I think we should pledge with the Government so that they bring experts in those areas. We must look at what is needed in those areas and go the relevant ministries so that they provide us with adequate

information but we would like to thank the Lord because in certain areas, they keep beef cattle and they are doing well. There is water that is suitable for animals but not fit for human consumption. I thank you Madam President.

SENATOR MUCHENJE: We all come from different areas which are unique to the problems that are faced there. The area that I come from is blessed with rains, we have a bumper harvest but in some areas where the soils are sandy, a lot of fertiliser is needed for people to harvest anything but the people in those areas are farmers. I am one of the new farmers. We farm and people tried to farm but the problem is that the people did not get their dues from the GMB yet these farmers are really hard working. They buy their fertilisers from the proceeds that they get from the GMB but the problem is that this time they did not get their dues from the GMB.

Most areas where we come from, there is a bumper harvest and people are already harvesting. I was really saddened by one of the speakers who said that some people are engaging in batter trading. What

is there is that those people are not farmers but those people who are doing that are third parties who are taking advantage of the situation because people now are reluctant to take their produce to the GMB and those third parties, the private buyers are shortchanging the farmers.

I am urging the Minister of Finance to put money into GMB so that people will not suffer because they really worked hard. There is a lot of food and no one will die from hunger but just make sure that there is money. You will find that if the money is availed, there is a lot of food at the GMB. We plough a lot of food, not only for ourselves but we have in mind people from other regions that do not get enough rain.

I am urging the Government that they should put money in the GMB then they can go and survey all the areas where they have bumper harvests and you will find that there is a lot of food out there. People are not taking their grains to the GMB because there is no money there and the people should be paid on time so that our country will not suffer from hunger.

+SENATOR CHIEF GAMPU: I thank you Madam President. I would like to take this opportunity and add on the motion that was brought by Senator Mohadi.

When you talk about the issue of drought, it troubles me a lot because I come from Matabeleland North where there is too much drought. I was in Binga last week when we were appointing Chief Mbhatu to be the chief. What I realised when I got there was that people from Binga have already started to buy a bag of maize. As the leaders of the nation and the Chief from Matabeleland North, I would like to ask from the Government if they can assist so that the people from such regions do not suffer from hunger.

We realise that many of times, people from Matabeleland North and other regions are faced with drought and especially from Matabeleland North region, they are facing so much droughts. This is due to the rains that they received in this region. We realise that people are able to do their farming using cattle but with such drought you will realise that they can not use such cattle because they will be affected by

drought. We are therefore appealing to the Government if they can have any means of assisting people from such regions.

We also want to highlight to Government that they should talk note that dams such as Gwai are not receiving enough rains.

Even if there are any rains that are coming, we realise that the Dam can not hold enough capacity to be reserved for everyone in that region. We are therefore appealing to Government to assist. We realise that the power that was used long ago is no longer functional and this affects even the animals that are there in the surrounding areas.

As I speak, we realise that even lions have already started attacking from this region. This shows that this drought is affecting even the animals as they are not getting enough water as well and this is putting human life at risk. We therefore thank the President, Robert Mugabe that when he highlighted this problem, he promised that there is no one in this country who is going to face drought. As a leader, he was able to assure us as a nation that we are not going to suffer from drought.

We have areas where there are people who are not taken care of in such regions. We are therefore appealing to the Government to take note of such people especially from Parks, we are appealing that the Minister of Parks and Wildlife should take care of such places. We are also appealing to Government to assist people from the regions affected by drought for they are the people who we are more concerned with. I thank you.

***SENATOR CHIEF CHISUNGA:** I would like to add my voice to the motion raised by Senator Mohadi. I would like to focus on the recommendations that she made that the Government should take immediate action. Yes, it is very good for the Government to go ahead with the Grain Loan Scheme in all the areas that were affected, but we should not end there only, we should also look at why we always cry about hunger. As you have seen we have a lot of water and dams, but I think we should put a policy in place so that we should look at areas where we get enough rain and declare that those areas should be planted maize only. The reason why I am saying this is that farmers who are in

region I and II can grow maize which can feed the whole country, but these farmers prefer to plough cash crops like soya bean or tobacco instead of maize because of money, which means that our granaries do not have grain at the end of the day. So, we end up importing food from South Africa and Zambia. I am saying that the Government should identify places where we can grow a lot of maize because of the rains that fall in those areas. The inputs for those areas should be subsidized. I am looking at things like fertilizer. This has worked in Malawi because in Malawi, instead of giving people for free they have subsidized them so that everyone has access to those inputs. The Government should put in place a price so that when the farmer is selling they will get a good price for that. This is what happens in the United States. They subsidize those crops and they help the farmer to grow those crops. You find that these farmers will end up growing a lot of food for the country.

I would also want to look at irrigation. In Zimbabwe we are blessed compared to Libya and Israel, but you find that in those

countries they grow enough food even though they have difficulties with their rainfalls because they have got good irrigation policies. Our Ministry of Irrigation and Mechanization has got a challenge before them as they have to look for areas to put dams so that we will not have problems if we do not get enough rains because we will be having dams for irrigation. I am looking at areas where we grow cotton. People who grow cotton can grow cotton do so and then buy food from the areas where they grow maize, but right now farmers are not growing cotton because cotton is not paying.

We export cotton in this country, but we find that the buyers now hide behind international prices. We know that with cotton in this country we can make cooking oil, stock feeds. The Government can help the price of cotton to go up so that the farmers will be encouraged to grow cotton in those areas where we do not get enough rains. They can raise money to buy food. So as Government I think that we can also help in curbing hunger in our country. I am also looking at the department of AREX. You find that we do not get enough research. I

think as a country we should put enough money and resources so that enough research can be done so that the right crops will be grown in the right areas. Most crops these days are not paying. Where I come from the farmers are now engaging in tobacco growing only because it is paying, so people are growing tobacco in areas where tobacco should not be grown. I think the Government should put in place policies that will help our researchers to do enough research so that it will help us as a nation.

Looking at the subsidies I would urge the Government to encourage subsidies from the seed, fertilizer and chemicals because this will save our country. If Government funds all that it will save when it comes to importing food and we will not import food from Malawi and Zambia. If we follow these steps, at least we will curb hunger in our country and it would help in curbing people who practice river bank cultivation. Thank you Madam President.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND LEGAL

AFFAIRS: I move that the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 17th May, 2012.

On the motion of **THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF JUSTICE
AND LEGAL AFFAIRS**, *the Senate adjourned at Eighteen Minutes
past Four O'clock.*