

PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

Tuesday, 12th June, 2012.

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

PRAYERS

MADAM PRESIDENT (*in the Chair*)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY MADAM PRESIDENT

SWITCHING OFF OF CELLPHONES

MADAM PRESIDENT: May I remind hon. senators to switch off their cellphones before commencement of business.

THE GOVERNOR FOR MATABELELAND NORTH: I move that Orders of the Day, Numbers 1 to 6 be stood over until all the Orders of the Day, have been disposed of.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

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

Seventh 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.

SENATOR CHITAKA: Thank you Madam President. I rise just to make a very brief contribution on this Thematic Committee on Human Rights. Despite, what was stated in the report on the State of Prisons and Prisoners in Zimbabwe, the appalling conditions that were mentioned in the report, it is very sad that not much has been done to improve conditions in these prisons. We might take this matter lightly and say, well, they are prisoners but not everyone who goes to prison is a condemned prisoner. There are a lot of people now languishing in remand prisons, who are being subjected to these inhuman and very degrading conditions. It does appear now that prisons seem to be used now as a method of punishment. A lot of our citizens are paying for crimes that they have not committed. They are being incarcerated in remand without the option of bail out.

I am urging the Judiciary and the Ministry responsible for these prisons that it is really against the United Nations Charter on torture to put remand prisoners in these inhuman conditions. Some people have spent six months to twelve months living in these inhuman conditions and at the end of the day they are found not guilty of the crimes. Meanwhile, they have

actually been punished. Meanwhile, if our prisons could at least distinguish that those who are on remand were not yet guilty, would make them have reasonable conditions of living and in that way, we do not punish our citizens before they are tried and found guilty.

Madam President, members here would know, they were incarcerated during the Smith regime and those prisons were not right places to be in. It is sad that after independence, especially in the 20th century, not much things have gone worse in those prisons. We want to be different from the colonial oppressors but we continue to even subject our own prisoners to worse conditions than those that existed during the time of Smith and his gang.

I urge those responsible for the prisons and correctional services to at least have the human side of things, especially for those prisoners who have not been found guilty of any offense. Yes, they need to be locked away, just in case they run away but yes, they need a decent life. They should not be punished whilst they are under remand.

***SENATOR CHIEF NEMBIRE:** Thank you very much Madam President. I would like to make my contribution regarding the life in prisons which we visited. Madam President, let me start by saying, you will find that there were prisoners who had been sentenced to life

imprisonment. You will find out that they are allowed to go for exercises for one hour and just see the sun for just a short time. At the same time, they will be carrying some small buckets which they use as toilets and also carry their own drinking water. You will find that when somebody has committed a crime, definitely he is a human being and deserves being treated as humanely as possible. We also encourage that if one is sentenced to a death sentence, they need to be treated like human beings and they have human rights. We also find there is a problem in the carrying of food for prisoners because there is no transport. You will find that people will have their food taken by the prisoners like in Binga where the Officer in Charge takes it upon himself to ferry the food using his vehicle.

We also discovered that there are different sentences for the same crimes. Somebody is jailed for 65 years whilst somebody is sentenced to seven years and the prisoners pleaded with us to have this case put before the House so that correctional services may adopt same sentence for same crimes, lest we will have people committing the same crime with different judgments although people may commit the same crime through different ways.

MADAM PRESIDENT: Order, order, Hon. Komichi, the rules say you cannot pass through the Chair and another hon. member debating.

***SENATOR CHIEF NEMBIRE:** We visited Mlondolozhi and the problems we met are that there are children who are in prisons with their mothers and they do not have birth certificates. We plead with the Ministry to provide officers who will give these children these birth certificates and you will find that among those children going to school in prisons, they are doing very well. Therefore, they need the support. We also need the support of ex-convicts. You will find out that these people are not allowed to work in certain jobs because of the criminal record which they have. Madam President, we plead with the powers that be, that people should not be further punished because they have already paid for their crime and they are already reformed citizens. Thank you Madam President.

***SENATOR CHABUKA:** Thank you Madam President, I did not debate because I had been called by the Member at the back. Thank you for affording me this opportunity to make my contribution on the topic under discussion. I would like to thank the Committee on Human Rights for the job well done. I also thank the Government for the treatment given to some prisoners in prisons. Yes, it is acceptable that these people receive different sentences. I would like to thank the Government for the treatment given to mothers, sons and daughters who are in prison because they are now being given vocational training. They are able to go for education and

write their examinations and do other vocational jobs. It means these people are upgrading their lives and I thank the Government for such a noble move. Yes, we know that some die whilst in prison because you find that when they are released, like the one who was beaten last week, this person has just been released from prison but he went on to steal from the neighbours and he was given instant justice by the mob. We also find out that there are some people who are in prisons who have received mercy from people outside and they receive lighter sentences so that they can move out to join their families. Unfortunately, when these people have been released, they go and commit the crimes instead of accepting the goodwill extended to them. Therefore may they be given reasonable sentences for their crimes? Thank you Madam President.

SENATOR MUCHIHWA: Thank you Madam President for giving me this opportunity to speak on the report given by the Committee on Human Rights after carrying out research in various prisons in the country. I would like to talk about women prisoners, we know churches visit some of these women and we have found that there are prisoners, especially near Mabvuku, who put on yellow uniforms. There are many problems faced by these women prisoners and the children they have. Some of them have infants and you find out that when they are given their food rations, the

rations are only enough for the mother and there is no ration for the infant.

We also found that when these women go for their monthly periods, they have problems in that they do not have sanitary wear and they do not have pants when they are in prison. It is because the law says when you are a prisoner; you do not have to put undergarments like bras and underwear. Again Madam President, even if I am arrested and go to Harare Central Holding Cells, I am forced to remove my bras and pants because this is what the law says. This august House should look at this law.

We have a woman who threw her child into the river and the child was eaten by crocodiles because the husband was divorcing her and we told her, you have punished an innocent soul. When we talked to this woman, she was remorseful and said she will never do it again. We also have some women, who are insane, but these people also stay in the same holding cells with others and as a result you find that when she starts losing her senses, she attacks her colleagues. I remember seeing this when I was in custody for 3 weeks after being arrested on political grounds.

In prisons, there are food shortages, as I am talking, the Treasury has not yet given money to prisons so that food can be bought. As a result, food is a problem in the prisons. We plead with Treasury that the money

that was allocated to prisons in the National Budget should be given to prisons so that they alleviate food problems. If we do not receive money from Treasury, there is need to look for other ways to feed these people. I visited Bindura Prison and there are lots of problems for the inmates because there are few people who visit that prison. I encourage the people who are responsible for these prisons to visit the prisons which are outside city centres. You find that when we are talking in this august House, we have no support because these officials do not visit these prisons, even our ministers do not visit the prisons so that when we are debating in this House, they have a clear picture of what is happening. When we went there, we met a certain woman who in a domestic fight, injured her husband with an axe. This woman has been in remand for 18 months. She has not yet been sent for trial but she is still in remand prison after 18 months. Let me tell you, remand is more painful than being sentenced because when you are in remand, you have restrictions because they do not want you to be in touch with witnesses.

I also plead with Treasury that they should allocate the money given to the prisons so that they may refurbish toilets in the prisons. This will help prevent the spread of infectious diseases, you find out that the toilets are flushed from outside and it is up to any official to flush the toilets. We

also have people who are HIV positive and practice homosexuality, when a man is taken to prison, they will come to him and call him a woman and they will say welcome sweetheart. They call him sweetheart because they want to abuse him; therefore you find out that this disease spreads at a faster rate. When this man is released from prison he will spread this disease to his wife who has been innocent. We ask for the separation of the people so that those who are HIV positive do not spread the disease, even those who are suffering from TB. In the past, we could hear that if one gets arrested, after 2 or 3 months, we could hear that they have been admitted at the hospital. I urge all Zimbabweans, as senators we should encourage the people in our constituencies so that when they have any problems, they solve them amicably and they should not fight. You find that when one's wife is taken by another man, the husband comes and fights instead of sitting down and discuss this peacefully. As leaders, as Chiefs we need to educate our people because some of them will tell you we have to go to prison because prisons were not for the people and were supposed to carry out whatever it is you want because that is what is expected of us. Prisons were created for us. I thank you Senator Muchihwa for what you have done for us.

***SENATOR HUNGWE:** Thank you Madam President. We visited

Khami and Mulondolozzi *-(Part of speech not recorded due to technical fault)-* At this instance you find that we have people who put on these uniforms and when these uniforms are wet they have nowhere to dry them and I think we have to sympathize with them. We know they have committed a crime and they will be serving their sentences but they deserve to be treated like human beings.

MADAM PRESIDENT: Oh, there is something wrong with technology. What is happening, may we have Senator Hungwe's mike on please.

***SENATOR HUNGWE:** Madam President, thank you for affording me this opportunity to put my contribution to the debate which was introduced by Senator Chitaka. He has encouraged us to improve the condition of prisoners. There are problems which you can only encounter if you pay them a visit and we do accept that there are problems and they need to be rectified. We visited many prisons together with the committee led by Senator Marava.

I was not aware that those were the prevailing conditions. I was incarcerated in prison in November, 1965 and I was released on 23, December 1966 after spending a year but I was staying alone and as a result, I did not have the chance to see what was happening to the other

people. It was not until I visited these prisons with the Human Rights Committee that those were the present conditions.

The previous speaker has talked about what we saw in those prisons. Yes, I know most of the things in the report have been stated here but I also want to make my contribution to these places. You will find that in these prisons, there was no food especially *sadza*, not relish or beef, but the actual *sadza*. We did promise some of the prisoners and prison officials that we will move this motion but what are we doing about social responsibility. There are institutions like the GMB, which does not have enough food to give to us but we also feel that if they want to carry out their own social responsibility, they should look at the prisoners and give them some food. I think they should sympathise with these people so that we are not held responsible for denying people food. We are not a *banana* Republic, we need to think on our own so that people can have food.

If one looks at the Triangle Sugar Estates, can they not do something and give some sugar to these prisons because you find that despite the fact that they have been sentenced to prison, it does not mean that they are not wanted and they should vanish from this earth, but they are God's creation and God loves them. That is why they are not killed and therefore when sentenced to go to jail and denied food, God then says "why are they being

punished in such a manner”. Let us think of these people in the same way people donate food to people attending government functions. They donate to people who already have food in their homes, why do we not think of prisoners as highlighted by the Human Rights Committee so we can influence the society outside so that they never run out of food.

You will find out that the prisoners were virtually naked because on getting to them, the prisoners would come to us and would be definitely willing to open up their naked bodies for us to see the reality and as stated by the previous speaker, they did not even have under-wears. Therefore, I feel that as human beings, we need to look for the clothes in our homes and donate them to these prisons. We need to practice socialism at best and that means we have to show some concern to others who are in less fortunate situations than ourselves.

***SENATOR CHIEF MUSARURWA:** Thank you Madam

President, I think some of my colleagues debated a lot on human rights.

My plea is that Government should be able to supply lawyers so that they stand in for the people who will have committed crimes because you find that at times, some of these people are innocent but when they go to court, they do not have lawyers because they cannot afford them. They are found guilty because they cannot fully represent themselves and they are

incarcerated. I am pleading with the Government and this august House that whenever somebody is going for trial in a court and does not have enough money to pay for the lawyer, the Government should give that person a lawyer who will represent him. This is my contribution because most of the things have been said by the previous speaker.

***SENATOR DETE:** *(First part of the speech not recorded due to technical fault)*We also need to look at the situation of the released prisoners. What is needed is for the preparation to the outside world whereby members of the family of the incarcerated person should be visited before that person is released and they should be told that they should prepare for his release. I know these prisoners would have committed crimes, sometimes within the family, but that person's relatives should be prepared to accept him back. That person needs to be counselled as well and asked whether he will go back to commit crime again. They also receive vocational training in prison and that when the person goes back to the community, he will be a new person.

We also realised that in prison people are suffering from hunger. When we visited Mazoe, we found that the prisoners were farming and they had lots of vegetables and we then wonder why they cannot sell their produce. Whenever the plight of prisoners is being addressed, they must

say exactly what they need because amongst the people of Zimbabwe, we have some who have enough to share with the prisoners. We can take those donations and the prisoners are assisted and this information is to be disseminated so that people are aware that it is part of their social responsibilities that they take care of the prisoners.

I remember when we had the Smith regime, no one was allowed to talk about the plight of the prisoners because when somebody went to prison, they were not allowed to say anything. Even if we were allowed to visit these prisoners, we were given limited time to discuss on the plight of prisoners, now that we are independent and we are running our own prisons, we need to know the plight of the prisoners and rectify the problems. These days in the cells, they are also applying floor polish because they know that the human rights people will be visiting the prisons. The most important thing is we have to know their problems so that we look for means and ways of solving these problems.

***SENATOR CHIMBUDZI:** I want to start my contributions by thanking the Committee on Human Rights for visiting these prisons and giving us such a well documented report. (*Part of the speech not recorded due to technical fault*)...given training in different industrial places. What I would encourage is when Government has enough money, it should

create jobs which are suitable for these released prisoners because when they were in prison they were given vocational skills and when they are released, they should go to these places to practice what they are taught in prison.

This is the responsibility of Government because if they are gainfully employed, they will not commit crimes. Thank you Mr. President, I was thanking the Committee on Human Rights for the report which they presented regarding the conditions of prisoners to thank them for what they have done because this also lightened the burden on the Government because the Government will be aware of what is wanted by the prisoners and the prisoners and their life after prisons because if things are not brought out, Government will never be able to tell the problems that the prisons have.

I also want to thank the education given to these prisoners because when they come out of prison, they have been armed to face the world. You find that there are some prisoners who were incarcerated, when they come in they are so illiterate, they cannot even write their names but when they leave the prison, you find that they have attained some security and qualifications. I also want to plead with the powers that be that when these prisoners are given some vocational training, they should be prepared for

the outside world. The Government should make some ways of introducing some businesses so that these ex-convicts will go and work in those places.

When they are employed, they will not be idling because an idle mind is the devil's tool. You find that there will be peace in the surrounding because if an area is full of criminals and thieves, there are lots of problems socially because people will be aware of who the thief is. They are always against the parents and the family, all because of that one bad apple. Therefore as the Government, we have a role of counselling members of our people so that they claim a peaceful life. When there is a problem, it should be solved amicably and whenever there is a problem, they should get a way of solving that problem instead of solving it in violent means. I thank the committee for a commendable job because we now know what the requirements of prisoners are. Yes, we are aware that they are not allowed to put on some under-garments or whatever it is and the fear is that if they are given these, some of the prisoners may commit suicide using these under-garments.

We know since this has been brought into this august House, there could be a way of solving this problem. What we are afraid of is that at times, if they are given too much leeway and freedom, they may end up

being a danger to themselves by committing suicide. We also want to thank the committee for such a noble cause. We know that the Government will be aware of the problem. Whenever they are prioritising their needs, they will know what is needed by the prisoners.

The other thing that I would like to ask the Government is; we need to have a prison which is specifically for women so that these women do not mix with men. I know there could be a problem in the construction of a new complex, but what could happen is that men or women could be moved from one prison which is combined by both sexes and be reserved for one sex so that women stay alone. Thank you very much Mr. President for affording me this opportunity.

***SENATOR FEMAI:** I would like to add my voice on the findings of the Human Rights Committee led by Hon. Senator Marava. I thank the Committee on Human Rights for its findings and for bringing this report to this august House. This issue needs to be looked at in detail. I would like to expand on what has been said by previous speakers. What I would encourage them is to tell us on how these problems could be solved. Like on the case whereby you find those new inmates, especially men, when they see a new inmate coming, the old inmates regard that new inmate as a woman. They do this so that they can sexually abuse them and commit

homosexuality. Therefore you find that this person, when he is outside, he is sodomising other people before he is arrested. This person commits a crime so that he goes to prison and when he goes there, he finds that he abuses other men. I plead with the prison officers that when they hear of some commotion in the cells, they should quickly go into the cells. They should arrest whoever will be abusing those other people in the process and re-arrest them and retry them for sodomising other men and be given a heavy sentence.

I remember when I was incarcerated because of political reasons, we were still youths in those old days. We had a certain inmate who had been incarcerated for 11 years. He was supposed to come out the following day. This person looked for a length of wire. This person had been in prison for quite some time and is one of those prisoners who were able to move out of prison and go to where they want. With this wire, he stabbed somebody because the other inmate had taken his sexual inmate because they were homosexuals. The reason why he committed this crime is that he wanted to continue staying in prison because he was abusing three other inmates.

So, if he was to go out of prison, he would find that he will leave these men behind to be taken by other men and these men would use cigarettes to propose for love to other men. You find that the prison

officials are aware of who these people are who sexually abuse other men. My plea is these people should be re-arrested whilst incarcerated and be retried and be incarcerated for lengthy periods so that they do not abuse other people. You find that when you have your relative inside there, they are abused in prison. When they go to prison, they are given different sentences and when they are incarcerated; your relatives think that you are going there for correctional services. When you come out, you are now a good person but unfortunately, you find that when that person comes out, he is now ill because he has been sexually abused by the other people and is HIV positive because there are men who see these inmates and call them women.

Therefore you start wondering whether the Government is doing the godly thing by saying these people who are incarcerated, that is why AIDS is on the increase and this has to be handled carefully. Secondly, I plead with the churches and different religious bodies. They have lots of good things which they are doing, like visiting the prisoners. Therefore when there is food shortage, and when there is shortage of clothing in prisons, may these churches please donate food and clothes to these inmates. I know churches have the ability to source for these foods because they work with other organisations who can help them.

May I also plead with the captains of industry, previous speakers have said they go and give t-shirts to other organisations outside. May they please go and buy some old clothes from other countries especially Mozambique so that they may be able to assist the people who are incarcerated in prison. Those people who are outside the prisons were also using hot water bottles because it is cold. Now, what about this person who has been arrested because he said bed rest to the aunt and the aunt killed herself and this person was arrested for causing the death of the aunt. This person is in problems because the prison is very cold and therefore, I am pleading with the captains of industry because we have some who are manufacturers of blankets manufactures of clothes some of them manufacture food. I believe that if these captains of industry can work together, they will be able to help these people. You will find that when some of these have received the initial payment they also bow to these organisations and they are accepted by these industries and therefore the captains of industry have this moral obligation to look after released prisoners so that they can be gainfully employed.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS: I move that the debate do now adjourn.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 13th June, 2012.

MOTION

MEASURES TO CURB DROUGHT

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

Question again proposed.

SENATOR DUBE: I would like to thank the Hon. Mr. President of the Senate for affording me this opportunity to make my contribution on this debate which was introduced by the Senator Mohadi on starvation in areas under climatic region 5. There is great starvation in the areas mentioned by the Senator Mohadi. I realise that people have to share the little they have and have been distributed by the Government. I would like to thank the Government for the assistance given through the GMB because you notice that in some areas people have got some respite.

I say that because this has been done by the Government of national Unity which is led by Cde. R.G. Mugabe and therefore we want to thank this Government for giving relief to people. Because had it not been Government's intervention, some people could have died because we know that there is hunger all over the country. Not only in region 5 because you find that we have some places that used to have good harvest

but unfortunately because of the climatic change the harvest is poor.

Therefore, when we move around these places we find ways and means of saving the people and therefore as members of the Upper House in the Senate we have to look for ways of relieving people. We in this House are sitting together with those Chiefs because Chiefs are not elected but they are there because of our culture. They are to stay forever. We also asked the chiefs to support this idea of feeding the people and also as members who represent different constituencies, we also have to look for food from other areas or neighboring countries so that we assist people, and this grain loan scheme is a noble idea because we have to look after these people if food is not given to them especially this time of the year.

I plead with the Government that the GMB be given food so that people can have as much as they want. We also raise livestock, especially cattle and have a very big problem in this country, especially in region 5 which is a cattle ranching area. You will find that in these areas people will come with the problem of cattle dying, especially if you live in places like my area, Gwanda. People are saying all the cattle will die and there will not be any beast. They are asking what the Government is going to do for them? They are looking for Government's intervention in their different areas and they want Government to give them ideas and assistance on how

they can save their cattle and that is the idea they are proffering to the Government.

They want the Government to revisit that. They are saying Government through Cold Storage Commission was giving cattle feed to these people because they can come to the people and ask how many cattle that person has. Let us say for example that person has 11 cattle and they would say they want to take one beast from that place which is going to pay for the feed of those other cattle and those other 10 cattle will be saved. And people in different area are asking for the Government to re-introduce this scheme whereby one beast would save these other beasts because what they want is when they feed their reserve cattle they also buy their farming inputs so that when the rains come they will also be able to carry on with their farming activities. We look forward to a happy season especially if we get assistance from the Government. I thank Senator Mohadi for this motion because as members of this Upper House we should look at the lives of the people. We should look at the problems they face. We should also proffer solutions to their problems. My plea to this House and Government is that we need to hold meetings especially through the Cabinet and also look for ways of saving not only human beings and also their livestock. That way, their cattle will also multiply but

if we do not take remedial measures, you will find that all our cattle will be gone and our future, we will be a very poor country.

So this is my plea Hon. President. People are asking for Government's intervention and this should be introduced as soon as possible. Thank you Mr. President.

***SENATOR KABAYANJIRI:** Thank you Mr. President. I rise to support the motion brought by Senator Mohadi that looks into the issues of the climate change as it regards to our country Zimbabwe. Mr. President Sir, most of the things have been mentioned by others but I would want to add on the problems that we are facing in terms of climate change.

Senator Mohadi made reference to region 5, but I would like to say in my area Uzumba-Maramba-Pfungwe and Mudzi are some of the areas that are mostly affected by climate change. When we look at this Mr. President Sir, we believe that since the motion has been brought before the august House of Senate; we should put our heads together and see how best we can give advice to the Government. Closely examining this issue, I observe that most of the work that is being done in the rural areas is being done by people who are not mostly educated. When we look at the issues concerning food security for the nation, these people bring food to the nation but with no degrees in agriculture. It is because they were brought

up in farming. It is now the time when they cannot do anything about climatic changes.

Sometime ago, we used to have names in communal lands to describe the type of rainfall that will be falling, like *Gukurahundi*, *Bumharutsva* and others. That would coincide with events on the ground. At the moment, Mr. President Sir, we are not sure as to whether the type of rainfall that we would have received is ideal for planting the first crop or whether it is for other activities.

We have rivers Mr. President Sir, that do not dry up if they would have received adequate rains. The rainfall is being wasted because it flows down the river and goes to the sea without being placed in a catchment area. We humbly suggested that the Government should intervene. We should not look at issues about dams but we should look at small scale dams for communal lands. There should be sufficient water catchment so that the people in the community would benefit from such water using irrigation. For one to be involved in farming, one requires implements. I would want to thank the Government for having brought input support scheme that they gave to the people.

I am not ashamed to say I am a beneficiary of that project since I received a tractor. When I received the tractor, the manner in which I used

to farm changed. What I mean is that this country can be developed if only the people have been properly given implements and farming equipment. We should place in the forefront, irrigation projects for communal lands. At the moment we have small miners, and there is a programme to fully support these small miners from their main stream. We urge Hon. Made to also have such projects for communities or communal lands for irrigation.

I would want to thank that our first indigenisation came through farming when we acquired farms. When we settled on these farms, I will give an example of my farm; it was a farm which was being run by a single white farmer. It was under irrigation and it was divided to seven or ten farmers. As a result of that, the equipment was at one of the houses which is now a plot to someone. There was a dam which was used to supply water to the single farm but now because of the sub-divisions, the person who has the equipment now only benefits and I for instance cannot benefit. What it then means is that I am supposed to have sufficient equipment to irrigate my own plot.

We urge Hon. Made and his ministry to set up a committee to look into such issues so that we have adequate irrigation plants. Despite the fact that when we acquired those farms, it was of the promise that we

would have sufficient capacity to irrigate, but there is a single dam that was capable of supplying irrigation to the entire farm. We urge the Government to assist such farmers where there are irrigation projects to be accorded the chance to completely irrigate the whole farm as was the case with the white farmer.

Mr. President Sir, I would want to say that in these farms we also need a lot of assistance so that people can be successful. If we look at the whites, when they went on this land, they were given funding by banks to finance their agricultural activities. We need the same assistance from the banks because we are talking about climate change as it is affecting all of us as legislators. The same applies to our people, we should see how they are being affected. We can no longer receive funding from banks. Banks do not want to support the agrarian reform. It is now the duty of the Government, of Hon. Made, to come up with the committee that will fully look into this issue so that we can be successful. Agriculture is the cornerstone of development in Zimbabwe. As Zimbabweans, we are blessed. We have the rivers that I was talking about where we can construct large dams that can be used for irrigation purposes. As a result we will not have any starvation. A lot of maize is coming from the communal lands and ending up at the Grain Marketing Board.

We want to thank the Government for the extension officers that have now tremendously increased in the communal lands but they are not being fully supported. They do not have equipment. For example, I have the veterinary department, we do have livestock and it is difficult for the veterinary service people whenever my cattle have a problem, it takes them time to come to my farm to attend to critical cattle illnesses because of lack of transport. We should prioritise issues pertaining to agriculture so that we can suppress some of the problems that we are now facing as a result of climate change.

It is our duty as Zimbabweans to come up with different views especially in this House of Senate. I would want to thank Senator Mohadi for the research that she did based on Region Five. It is not affecting Region Five only but this should apply to a national scale. As an august House, we should put our house together. Our workers that were given farms are doing a splendid job, but they do not have sufficient equipment. I thank you Mr. President.

SENATOR HLALO : Thank you Mr President. I would like to add my voice on the motion by Senator Mohadi and thank her at the same time that she had vision to speak about the situation in region 5 as it turns out that exactly what she was saying is what is obtaining on the ground I

would like to say this, that if this august Senate is not going to be a talk show, I think we need to get into a position where some bit of action can be done to avert disaster to many lives in the affected regions and the only way, maybe we can have a trajectory which maybe, might mitigate the problems which the people in those regions will be affected, by way maybe of asking or making provisions to get the various places be declared national disasters so that Government might come into action and alleviate the situation.

I would like to speak on behalf of those people with livestock which are at risk, as they are part of our national herd and maybe we should direct our efforts towards the Government, starting from the office of the Governor that they should try and do something instead of us just talking and at the end of the day people do not get help. I would ask the Governor of Matabeleland South to put in place some action towards declaring the region a national disaster so that help can come from Government. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS: I move that the debate do now adjourn.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 13th June, 2012.

On the motion of **THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC**

WORKS, *the Senate adjourned at Five Minutes to Four O'clock p.m.*