PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

Wednesday, 3rd June, 2026

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

PRAYERS

(THE HON. SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

MOTION

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS NUMBERS 53 (1), 66 (2) AND 68 (5)

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE, LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (HON. Z. ZIYAMBI): Good afternoon Mr. Speaker Sir. I move that provisions of Standing Orders Number 53 (1), 66 (2) and 68 (5) regarding the automatic …

THE HON. SPEAKER: Just a second Hon. Minister. Clerk, the volume is too low. ICT, the volume is too low. Can you try now.

HON. Z. ZIYAMBI: Mr. Speaker, I move that provisions of Standing Orders Number 53 (1), 66 (2) and 68 (5), regarding the automatic adjournment of the House at five minutes to seven o'clock p.m. on sitting days other than a Friday and at twenty five minutes past one o'clock p.m. on Friday, private members motions taking

precedence on Wednesdays after question time and that question time shall be on Wednesdays respectively, be suspended with effect from today, the 3rd of June, 2026 and subsequent sittings in respect of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Bill Number 3 and any other Government business. I so move.

HON. MUSHORIWA: Mr. Speaker Sir, we hear what the Hon. Minister is proposing. I humbly stand up to oppose such a request. The Constitution Amendment Bill Number 3 requires all of us to debate it in sound mind and it would be wrong for us to push and fast-track this Bill to debate it in the middle of the night.

The Bill has to be debated during normal parliamentary days, so that Zimbabweans can actually follow the debate in this august House. So, it is wrong to suspend normal parliamentary business then. I think let us just continue with parliamentary business as usual and we debate. Let us do it properly.

I think this is important because as Parliament, we represent the people and the citizens. Let the citizens hear our voice.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Order! I did not quite follow when Hon. Mushoriwa indicated that the public may not follow. What exactly do you mean before I make my ruling? – [HON. MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections*.] - Order, order!

HON. MUSHORIWA: Mr. Speaker Sir, – [HON. MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections*.] -

THE HON. SPEAKER: Just a minute. Order, order! We are not at a picnic here. Hon. Mushoriwa, please proceed.

HON. MUSHORIWA: Mr. Speaker Sir, the normal hours of Parliamentary Business are stipulated within our Standing Orders. The Minister proposed to suspend the automatic adjournment of this House, implying that the debate on CAB 3 and other Government business will then proceed even in the middle of the night. The people that are elected and sent to Parliament, if a debate is done at midnight, they will not be in a position to follow because, remember our debate is actually televised and people want to follow the debate.

More importantly, Mr. Speaker Sir, the security of your Members of Parliament is our primary concern. We do not want to travel overnight, especially for some of us who do not stay in hotels.

HON. MATANGIRA: Point of order.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Matangira, can you follow the proceedings in terms of our Standing Orders. Hon. Mushoriwa, can you wind up.

HON. MUSHORIWA: This is the reason why I am saying that we should not go along with the request by the Minister to suspend our Standing Orders pertaining to this Bill and other Government business. We need to debate and to do it in the normal manner that we have always done as a Parliament.

In any event, Mr. Speaker Sir, we are not running away. There is no need to take CAB 3 first. Let us discuss it, debate it, agree or disagree so that the people of Zimbabwe will follow. I thank you.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. The Hon. Minister has followed what is provided for in the Standing Orders - [HON. MEMBERS: *Hear, hear.*]- Just a minute. The Standing Orders are also guided in terms of their implementation by the Presiding Officers.

Further, the suspension of this nature is not the first one. In the past, we have had to deal with matters in terms of the sections of the

Standing Orders that have been quoted, including when we debate the National Budget until the early hours of the morning. On the other hand, the concerns about the question of security and so on, that will be decided by the Presiding Officer and your point is not taken off.

HON. HAMAUSWA: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I want to add my voice to the objection to the issue raised by the Hon. Minister of Justice, specifically focusing on security.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Order. I thought you were coming with something different. I have made a ruling already.

HON. HAMAUSWA: I wanted to mention...

THE HON. SPEAKER: I have made a ruling already. Please, take your seat. I thought you were bringing something new. No, when you say you want to add your voice, what do you mean? I do not understand your English. No, you should have added your voice on a different matter altogether, not after my ruling.

HON. HAMAUSWA: May you kindly pardon me.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Order!

HON. MADZIVANYIKA: Further debate Mr. Speaker.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Yes.

HON. MADZIVANYIKA: Thank you Mr. Speaker. During budget meetings, we will be rushing against the stipulated time. Budgets must be passed before...

THE HON. SPEAKER: Order! You are raising the same matter. I have ruled already. Do not waste our time.

Motion put and agreed to.

SECOND READING

CONSTITUTION OF ZIMBABWE AMENDMENT (NO. 3) BILL

[H.B. 1, 2026]

Second Order read: Second Reading: Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 3) Bill [H.B. 1, 2026].

HON. MUSHORIWA: Point of order Mr. Speaker Sir.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Yes, what is the point of order? In terms of what section of the Standing Order?

HON. MUSHORIWA: Yes, I rise in terms of Standing Order 65, read together with Standing Order 98 (1) (e).

THE HON. SPEAKER: Standing Order Number?

HON. MUSHORIWA: Number 98 (1) (e).

THE HON. SPEAKER: What is the issue, Hon. Member?

HON. MUSHORIWA: Yes, Mr. Speaker Sir, the Standing Order expressly prohibits Members from referring to matters on which a judicial decision is pending. Hon. Speaker, Constitutional Amendment Bill (No. 3) is presently the subject of proceedings before the Constitutional Court, among other matters, Prince Dubeko Sibanda *versus* Parliament of Zimbabwe and Reuben Zulu and others *versus* President of Zimbabwe and the Attorney General.

The Constitutional Court has heard the matter and has made the judgment and it is my view, Mr. Speaker, that any debate on this Bill will inevitably touch on issues that are currently awaiting judicial determination. Proceeding with the debate would therefore place Members in the position of discussing matters that are *sub judice* and may undermine the doctrinal separation of powers and the authority of the Constitutional Court.

I, therefore, Mr. Speaker, respectfully request that the debate on CAB 3 be stayed until the Constitutional Court is actually made to see ruling. Thank you.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. The judgment was there and is a reserved judgment. Hon. Minister, you may proceed. – [HON.GUMBO: *Point of order, Mr. Speaker*.] - Nobody has spoken, so there is no point of order. – [HON.GUMBO: *Point of privilege Mr. Speaker.*] - There is no point of privilege. Thank you. – [HON. GUMBO: *Point of clarity Mr. Speaker*. *Point of clarity Mr. Speaker Sir.*] - Order, Order! – [HON.GUMBO: *Point of clarity. A reserved judgment is not a judgment. There is no judgment. The court has reserved its judgement.*] - Order, Order Hon. Member! I am warning you for the second time. Can you sit down!

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE, LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (HON. Z. ZIYAMBI): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I rise to present my Second Reading Speech on the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Number 3 Bill [H. B. 1, 2026]. This is a defining moment in our constitutional evolution, a journey rooted in the liberation struggle fought and won by the heroic sons and daughters of the soil. Shaped by the aspirations of our people and given formal expressions in the Constitution we adopted by and for ourselves as Zimbabweans in 2013.

Constitutions, by their very nature, are not monuments cast permanently in stone. They are a living instrument of good governance designed to respond to changing realities, emerging challenges and ever-evolving needs and aspirations of society. The true strength of a constitutional democracy lies not in rigid permanency but in its capacity for lawfully reasoned and progressive adaptation. This Bill is therefore not an abandonment of our Constitutional order in any way, shape or form, but a continuation of it. It is the product of practical experience, institutional reflection and of the honest recognition that after more than a decade of implementation, certain provisions of the 2013 Constitution require refinement to enhance their functionality, enhance their coherence and their service to national progress.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I ask this House to weigh the Bill in that spirit. A republic confident enough to write its own founding law must be mature enough to improve it. What I bring before you is not a leap into an unknown, but a measured step informed by the realities of Constitutional governance by lessons drawn from our history and comparable jurisdictions, and by our shared determination that the

supreme law of our land should remain an instrument for development rather than an obstacle.

Let me begin not with what the Bill does but what it does not do because a great deal of what has been said about it beyond the walls of this Chamber bears little resemblance to the text that lies before Hon. Members. – [HON. MEMBERS: *Hear, hear*.]- There have been many claims about this Bill circulated in the press and in the public sphere, especially on social media platforms, which are simply not true.

Before I comment on a single clause to this House, I want to place those claims beside the text and answer them plainly. Let me state clearly and without qualification, five things this Bill simply does not do;

1. It does not give the President a term extension or a third term.
2. It does not take away the right to vote which is enshrined in the time-honoured principle of universal suffrage.
3. It does not at all concern itself with some succession in any political party.

4. It does not postpone the nation's election to some distant or unknown year and
5. It does not concentrate power or the running of elections in the hands of the President.

None of these things is true of the Bill before this House. I will retain to each of them in its place and I will show clause by clause, why each charge fails against the text but I wanted Hon. Members and members of the public who may be following our proceedings to hear at the outset and in plain terms what this Bill does not do.

I now turn to what this Bill does. Mr Speaker, the Bill contains 22 clauses, effectively, if I discount the title, 21. This does not mean it does 21 things because when all is said and done, it actually seeks to do two main things around which it aligns the Constitutional text.

The Bill reforms the manner in which we choose and hold our highest office so that the President is elected by the people through their Parliament, the Chamber that the people themselves elect and remain continuously answerable to. Secondly, the Bill reforms the length of our national electoral cycle, extending the term of office of the President and the lifespan of Parliament from five years to seven

years, so that the people’s government has the time to plan, build and to be judged on what it has delivered.

Let me develop each of these, for they are not slogans. They are reforms with important reasons behind them. The first reform speaks to the temperature of our politics. For more than three decades, the direct national election contest for the Presidency has been the single most divisive event in our public life, the moment at which the nation divides against itself. By drawing the election of the President into this Parliament, the Bill ties the highest office to the confidence of the people's elected representatives and replaces a winner-takes-all electoral context with a model that fosters and rewards consensus, coalition building and the ability to command broad support across the Honourable House, in the national interest. The President so chosen is accountable not once in an election after several years but continuously within an electoral cycle through the confidence of Parliament.

The second reform speaks to the work of governing. Under a five-year electoral cycle such as the one we currently have, the first year is consumed by transition, forming a Government, settling its

administration and too often litigating the election that just concluded. By the fourth year, attention turns to the next contest. By the fifth, the nation is immensely immersed in campaigning. The window left for the actual business of governance for development is narrow indeed. A trunk road, a dam, a power station and the reform of a school or health system, these are works of long horizons.

Roads are not built in cycles of polarising political campaigns and power stations do not come online according to electoral calendars. Extending the electoral cycle to seven years creates the Constitutional space for strategic planning, disciplined execution and measurable delivery. It allows Government to spend less of its strength contesting power in a perennial survival mode and more of it governing wealth and delivering requisite services to the people. These are the two reforms.

I now turn to why they are necessary. Mr. Speaker, no Parliament should amend the supreme law of the land without first being satisfied that there is a real and serious mischief to be cured. So, let me put the mischief squarely before Hon. Members. It is not abstract. It is the lived experience of this nation across more than

three decades and it can be traced to a single route: the way we have chosen our President since 1990 and the short, dysfunctional and restless electoral cycle in which we have done so. Since the introduction of direct Presidential elections in 1990, our public life has been gripped by five connected afflictions, five afflictions that have stood between this country and the development and progress its people deserve. They are not separate problems. They feed one another and each electoral cycle has made them worse.

The first is the perennially disputed Presidential election. Every contest for the President this nation has held since the turn of the century in 2000, 2002, 2008, 2013, 2018 and again in 2023, has been marred by relentless allegations of violence, rigging, opacity, eroding public trust and the legitimacy of the result. This is not my characterisation alone. It is documented notably in the observer reports of the AU, SADC reports and Commonwealth, which have linked these disputes to economic sanctions against our country and to the flight of investment. By some estimates, as much as USD50 to 70 billion of investment opportunities were lost over these years and the scholarship agrees.

Shizman and Dodsworth's writing in the Journal of *Modern African Studies* finds that electoral disputes of this kind foster chronic instability. The second affliction is policy paralysis born of perpetual campaigning. Our short five-year terms tend to train those in office in a continuous election mode, derailing and delaying the long programmes a developing nation such as ours critically depends upon our own National Development Strategy 1 and 2 and our own Vision 2030. This is not campaigning in the ordinary sense. It is a perpetual posture of destructive contests that clouds the work of governing. The Commonwealth Secretariat reporting in 2002 and SADC reporting in 2018 both identified post-election polarisation as a major bottleneck in development. A drag estimated on some analyses at USD30 to 40 billion in foregone productivity, with the African Development Bank putting the cost of our electoral cycles at 2 to 3% of GDP in every year they consume.

The third affliction is the grip of corruption amplified by instability. Where political survival is a perpetual question, accountability weakens and the conditions in which graft flourishes are created and recreated with every electoral cycle. Electoral

patronage feeds it. Transparency International estimated in 2023 that corruption costs this country between USD1 and USD2 billion in every year that passes. The Zimbabwe Election Support Network has documented the predictable spikes in irregular tenders that accompany an election, some USD150 million worth in 2023 alone. Instability and corruption are not separate diseases.

The fourth affliction is bureaucratic inefficiency and the politicisation of the public service. A public service that should be neutral, professional and continuous is in a state held in permanent contest, disrupted by pages and by favouritism, a pattern noted in Commonwealth, AU and SADC reporting across 2005 and 2013. The Election Resource Centre has estimated the resulting productivity losses at some USD600 million a year. The historian Brian Raftopoulos has linked this politicisation to inefficiencies of real and lasting weight. The citizen who simply needs a service from the state is the one who pays.

Last but not least, the fifth affliction is societal polarisation. Each disputed election, each season of perpetual electoral conflict drives the nation further apart, fueling immigration and unrest. The

work of Norma Krieger in the African Studies Review and the reporting of the AU and SADC, trace the course of this division. In economic terms and in human capital, our country is lost to immigration, which the International Organisation of Migration has counted in billions. A society asked every few years to divide itself in a bitter national contest does not easily yield in the short interval before the next election.

Mr. Speaker Sir, these five afflictions, perennially disputed presidential elections, policy paralysis, instability-fueled corruption, a politicised bureaucracy and a polarised society took root with the introduction of direct Presidential Elections in 1990, and their toxicity intensified sharply from 2000 onwards. They are not separate problems. They are structural and interconnected, each feeding the others and all rooted in the same electoral toxicity. Their cumulative cost to this nation has been estimated conservatively at between USD150 and 200 billion in lost output, productivity and human capital.

Whatever the precise figure, the direction is not in doubt. The enemies, our liberation was fought to defeat the hunger, poverty,

disease and the ignorance that still shadow too many of our communities cannot be driven back by a Government held in a five-year window, of which the better part is spent defending itself and preparing for the next election that promises more conflict. That is the mischief we are trying to deal with. It is real, it is documented and it is no longer one this nation can afford to carry. The question this Bill answers is, what kind of remedy does such a mischief demand?

Mr. Speaker Sir, when a problem is structural, the remedy must be structural too. This is the point on which I most wish to be understood because it is the point most often missed. When critics are told that this country has suffered from the affliction of perennially disputed elections, from corruption, instability and division, some invariably reply that the answer is simply for good people to replace the bad people and hold office, that the Government should employ honest officials, that leaders should behave with greater virtue and that all of us should become better angels. That is not the answer, it is a wish.

Five afflictions that have persisted across three decades and seven presidential elections, deepening with each electoral cycle are

not the product of bad people who just need to be replaced by good ones. They are the product of a structural malaise of the incentives, the pressures and the conflicts that our constitutional arrangements themselves created and bred. To keep doing the same thing, election after election, while hoping for a different result, is not statesmanship. It is the very definition of folly. A structural problem is cured by changing the structure that produces it, by reshaping the arrangements within which those who hold power must act. That is what this Bill does. It does not ask anyone to become an angel.

It changes the structural design so that the ordinary conduct of office produces stability rather than conflict; construction rather than perpetual contest. The two major reforms at the heart of this Bill, the manner of electing the President and the length of the national electoral cycle, are structural responses to structural ills that have produced the structural afflictions that have bedevilled our country.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Order, Order, Hon. Minister Prof. Mavhima, please take a seat at the back. Proceed, Hon. Minister.

HON. Z. ZIYAMBI: These reforms in the Bill are not experiments. They are informed by our experience of seven

presidential elections since 1990, each more contested than the previous, and by the tested constitutional practice of the most stable democracies in our neighbourhood and across the world. It is those two reforms and the clauses that give them effect to which I now want to turn.

I will go to the core amendments. I will turn now to Clauses 3, 4, 9 and 10. These four Clauses are at the heart of the Bill. They should be read together because they are harmonious and mutually supportive. Each reinforces the others and each does a part of the same. Clause 3 reforms the manner in which we choose our highest office. Clauses 4, 9, and 10 reform the length of the national electoral cycle within which that office is held and align the calendar of our elections accordingly. Together, Mr. Speaker, they constitute a single coherent structural response to the five persistent and pernicious afflictions this country has carried since 1990.

Clause 3 deals with the election method and provides that the President shall be elected by Parliament in a joint sitting of the Senate and National Assembly by a clear majority of Members, with a run-off where no majority is reached and under the supervision of ZEC.

The people's voice is not removed by this reform. It travels by a different and steadier route. The people elect Parliament. Parliament, in turn, elects the President and holds the President to account, not once every several years but continuously through the confidence of Parliament. Executive authority continues to derive from the people, which is the principle Section 88 of our Constitution lays down. Only the transmission mechanism changes.

For too long, our Presidential elections have been framed as zero-sum contests in which victory by one side means total exclusion of the other. Such a culture breeds division, mistrust and policy paralysis. A parliamentary mechanism changes those incentives from the ground up. It encourages consensus-building, coalition-making and constructive engagement across political lines. It rewards leadership that can command broad-based support rather than leadership grounded solely in electoral mobilisation. A President who must continuously hold the confidence of Parliament cannot govern against it. That is accountability made permanent, not periodic.

The doctrine of responsible Government that underlines every mature constitutional democracy. This is the settled practice of our

nearest neighbours, where South Africa elects its President from Parliament and Botswana's President is the leader of the party commanding a parliamentary majority. Both are arguably the most stable, best-governed democracies on our continent. Let me correct a misconception Mr. Speaker Sir, being deployed against this Clause. The direct election of our President is not a founding feature of our constitutional settlement. Zimbabwe was governed from Independence through a Parliamentary Model; direct Presidential Election was introduced only in 1987 through Constitutional Amendment Number 7 in the context of the Unity Accord and the then anticipated one-party state. Those defending direct election as an axiomatic democratic principle are defending an arrangement younger than our Independence, adopted for a purpose this House would not endorse today. Unless the House wants us to turn the country into a one-party state, then I will agree to have a direct election because we will be a one-party state; then we can go for a direct Presidential Election for the purpose that it was introduced. In the first place, it was for us to have a one-party state.

The current system of directly electing the President harbours three profound risks and vulnerabilities that are eliminated when Parliament assumes the sole responsibility of choosing the nation's leader. Firstly, as we witnessed during the 2023 Harmonised General Elections, a high-profile, regional, continental or international observer can deploy as few as 68 observers to cover a mere 172 polling stations out of more than 12 374 nationwide. From this extremely narrow sample, such a mission can issue a sweeping, hostile and damaging verdict of the freeness, fairness and credibility of the entire electoral cycle. This glaring vulnerability has repeatedly sown the seeds of electoral disputes that continue to haunt our democracy.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, direct elections open the door for an independent candidate, even one potentially sponsored by the country's adversaries who command no seats whatsoever in this House, to capture the presidency. Such an outcome would fundamentally distabilise the governance of the republic and fracture the vital link between the Executive and the Legislature. The method

by which we select our President must never permit so grave a possibility.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker Sir, the present arrangements allow four provinces to decide the Presidency by themselves through sheer numerical weight. I want to repeat this Mr. Speaker Sir. The present arrangements allow only four provinces to decide the presidency by themselves through sheer numerical weight.

Based on the 2023 Voters Roll, Harare, Manicaland, Mashonaland West and Midlands together accounted for 3 540 000 voters of the country's 6 600 000 registered voters, more than half the national total. In a direct popular vote, of course with a possible run-off, you know candidates get 50 plus 1. It is entirely possible for a candidate to secure outright victory with overwhelming majorities in just these four provinces while losing the other six entirely or even if larger parts of the republic cast no vote at all. So, these four provinces, even if everyone else does not vote, can actually ensure that happens.

Mr. Speaker Sir, this structural flaw risks leaving vast regions of our nation politically marginalised and should concern every fair-

minded citizen committed to national cohesion and unity. By contrast, Mr. Speaker Sir, election through Parliament draws every province, every region and every voice into the choice, leaving no one and no place behind. It ensures balanced representation, strengthens institutional legitimacy and safeguards our democracy against these serious threats.

On the law Mr. Speaker, the Bill reforms the methods of election by amending Section 92, which sits in Chapter 5. It is not in Chapter 4 and it does not amend Chapter 4, the Declaration of Rights, nor Section 328 itself. The Constitutional Court in the Mupungu Judgement of 2021 affirmed that the Referendum requirement in Section 328 is triggered by the constitutional text which is amended not by the consequences said to flow from it. On that footing, Mr. Speaker Sir, this reform proceeds by two-thirds majority of this House.

I now turn to Clause 4, 9 and 10, the term length or electoral cycles. These three Clauses must be taken together for their one reform expressed three times. Clause 4 amends Section 95 (2) of the Constitution to extend the Presidential term length that is the electoral

cycle, from five to seven years. Clause 9 does the same for Parliament by amending Section 143 (1) so that the two branches rise and fall together rather than drifting out of alignment. Clause 10 aligns the seven-year election calendar; their coherence is the point. A seven-year President alongside a seven-year Parliament on the same electoral cycle, planning and delivering together.

Here, Mr. Speaker Sir, I must draw the distinction on which this entire debate turns and I will draw it as plainly as I can because much of the criticism of this Bill rests on a confusion between two things that sound alike but are wholly different. The length of a term and the limit on terms, Mr. Speaker Sir, permit me to share an image for it has helped me and it may help Hon. Members. Mr. Speaker, picture a great Presidential runway, a permanent purpose-built platform at the very heart of our constitutional order. That runway is the Office of the President itself, the critical infrastructure from which the nation is served and led. Section 95 (2) (b) is its architect and guardian. It defines the runway's length, how long each authorised use may last from the swearing-in to the next election. It does not choose or restrain any particular operator. It simply ensures that the runway

exists as a disciplined, open permanent public structure belonging to the people of Zimbabwe, available at predictable intervals so that no operator, however popular, can ever claim permanent rights over it.

Now, consider the airline that operates on the runway. That airline is the office holder, the individual President. Section 91 (2), speaks to the airline alone and it issues a firm and personal command. The airline may hold an operating contract of one term, renewable once only if the people, through Parliament, chose to re-appoint him; two contracts in a lifetime, whether served consecutively or years apart and never a third under any circumstances.

Here is the point Mr. Speaker. Lengthening the runway does not give an airline an extra contract – [HON. MEMBERS: *Hear, hear.*] – Extending the term changes only the length of each contract. It does not change the number of contracts an operator may hold. The limit remains two. Section 95 (2) governs the runway, the term length. Section 91 (2), governs the airline and the term limit. The Bill lengthens the runway; it does not touch the limit on the airline. The two-term cap stands exactly where it has always stood. This Bill does not amend Section 91 (2) by a single word.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I will not pass over the question I know is in the minds of some Hon. Members. Does the longer term reach the office as it stands today or only a future occupant? – [HON. MEMBERS*: Inaudible interjections*] –

THE HON. SPEAKER: Order, order! Can you sit down please, except the Hon. Member who is raising a point of order.

HON. G. HLATYWAYO: Hon. Speaker, we just wanted to find out – we have got a sitting arrangement in the House. We feel very uncomfortable when the right side comes to the left side. We want to understand what is happening. We feel very intimidated Mr. Speaker.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Order, order! Hon. Members, there is still room this side. If you feel uncomfortable with the overflow, you can come and sit on this side.

Hon. Molokela-Tsiye having wanted to raise a point of order.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Just hold on, the Hon. Member is still moving – [HON. MOLOKELA-TSIYE: *Hon. Speaker, on a point of order*] -Who has spoken? – [HON. MOLOKELA-TSIYE*: I need guidance on what is happening; that is why I said on a point of order.*

Hon. Speaker, am I allowed to go this side because I am feeling…]

Order, order! Hon. Molokela, you may not know, perhaps there is a crossover here, so do not be unduly worried. The boundary is there.

HON. Z. ZIYAMBI: Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir. I was saying I will not pass over the question I know is in the minds of some Hon. Members. The question is, does the longer term reach the office as it stands today or only a future … – [HON. MEMBERS*: Inaudible interjection*]-

THE HON. SPEAKER: Order! Can the Hon. Minister be heard in silence, please!

Hon. Molokela-Tsiye having crossed over to the right side of the House - [HON. MEMBERS: *Hear, hear.*] -

THE HON. SPEAKER: I am so happy that Constitution Amendment Number 3 Bill can be a unifying force. Order please. Can we have the Hon. Minister continue?

HON. Z. ZIYAMBI: Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir. I was saying that I will not pass over the question I know is in the minds of some Hon. Members. The question is, does the longer term reach the office as it stands today or only a future occupant? Mr. Speaker, it reaches

office as it stands. The Constitution cannot hold one President on a seven-year cycle and the next on a five-year cycle. The Bill provides for this openly in the same plain language that the Constitution used for the continuation in office of our Superior Judges in the Constitution Amendment Number 2 Act of 2021. It does not go silence and it takes nothing from the limit on terms, which the Bill does not touch on.

I will now turn Mr. Speaker, to why seven years – because it is not an arbitrary number but a tested governance architecture. First, between 1990 and 2008, the term length of the Presidency was six years, not much different from seven years. In September 2025, Guinea adopted a new Constitution, with a seven-year electoral cycle. France operated a seven-year Presidential term for the better part of 127 years.

Mr. Speaker. Ireland has elected its President to a seven-year term since 1937. A five-year cycle, properly counted, yields at best two years of genuine, uninterrupted governing. The first consumed by transition, the last by the next campaign. Seven years gives a government the time to see a major programme through, from design

to delivery and to be judged not on what is promised but on what is built. Mr. Speaker, consider what that time makes possible. Time to plan beyond the next ballot so that a budget saves a decade and not a season. Time to build the roads, the dams, the power that a developing nation cannot complete in the gap between two campaigns. Time to carry a programme such as Vision 2030 through to completion. Time, in the end, simply to govern.

Mr. Speaker, I now turn to the Administrative Electoral Ecosystem that is Clauses 2, 11, 12, 13 and 17. This next section of clauses concerns the institutions that surround or support our election. Clause 2 retains the registration of voters and the keeping of the voters' roll to the Registrar General, the office that already holds the record of every citizen's life from birth to death. This is not a novelty and it is not a partisan measure. I want to say so plainly Mr. Speaker, and I want to give this Hon. House the proof because it answers directly the charge that this Bill concentrates the running of elections in the hands of the Executive. The proposal to retain voter registration to the Registrar General did not originate with this government. It first came from the opposition benches of this House on 18 May 2023. In

the 9th Parliament, during the Committee Stage of the Electoral Amendment Bill, the Hon. Charlton Hwende moved this transfer precisely. He was supported, Mr. Speaker, strongly and on the record by the Hon. Tendai Biti and the Hon. Alan Markham, who pointed out that the Registrar General had already registered well over a million citizens and that everything the Commission was doing in this field, the Registrar General was already doing. It is recorded in the *Hansard* of that day, a public document and any Hon. Member and any member of the press or of the public following these proceedings may check it for themselves. I told them Mr. Speaker, what I tell this Hon. House now. I agreed with them. There is no need for the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to register voters. It is better to have the separation and the Registrar General, as the keeper of the nation's civil records, is the natural registrar of voters. The function was placed with the Commission in the first instance, not on any principle of electoral independence but one of mistrust of one official. Just one individual – Mr. Tobaiwa Mudede in his day, in moving it, we threw away the child with the bath water at considerable and continuing cost, for the Commission cannot so much as clean its role of the

deceased or enroll those who newly come of age without the Registrar General to do it. That one individual Mr. Speaker, is long gone. The Registrar General biometrically and therefore, accurately and reliably registers every citizen continuously as the law requires from birth onward. The Commission, by contrast, appears only when there is an election and without the primary data.

The sensible cost was blamed on both sides of this House. The only reason we did not take it then is the very reason Mr. Speaker we are gathered here today. The Constitution gives this function to the Commission and only an amendment to the Constitution can move it. That moment has now come Mr. Speaker. So, I want to thank the Hon. Charlton Hwende because the other two are not there. This is a progressive amendment that he proposed then, but we could not do it because we needed to amend the Constitution. We are now completing through the proper door what this House had already, across its divisions, found common ground to do.

Clauses 11 to 13 carry the same logic into the drawing of electoral boundaries. They establish a dedicated Zimbabwe Delimitation Commission, chaired by a Judge of the Supreme Court,

standing and composed of members chosen for defined expertise in law, in administration and governance, in demography or cartography.

In year two, there was agreement in this House that caused the eyesore that the Commission's proper task is to conduct elections and that the drawing of boundaries, a distinct and technical discipline, belongs with a body built for it. The Bill also extends the intent interval between the drawing of boundaries and the elections that follow from six months to 18 so that no one who runs the race also draws the field and so that the field is settled well before the contest begins.

Finally, on this section, Clause 17 completes the rearrangement. It removes from the Commission the functions now placed elsewhere and leaves it free to do its central work, the conduct and supervision of every election and referendum without distraction. This is not the hauling out of the Commission that critics allege; it is the focusing of it. A Commission that conducts and supervises elections in the land has not been weakened by being relieved of a record-keeping function and a boundary-drawing function that sits more naturally elsewhere. The custodian of the civil record is the Registrar General. The drawer

of boundaries is a dedicated expert Commission. The conduct of the election remains wholly and securely with the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission. So, the right to vote is untouched. The separation of these functions, custodian, delimiter and administrator, is the practice of mature electoral democracies and it is a model that strengthens credibility rather than diminishing it.

Mr. Speaker, allow me now to turn to judicial alignment, which is Clauses 7, 14, 15, 20 and 21. Mr. Speaker, this next section concerns the institutions of justice and aligns each with the standard its office demands. I take these five clauses in turn. Clause 7 raises the question and status of the office of Attorney General to the standard required of a judge of the Supreme Court. The Attorney General, Mr. Speaker, is the State's principal legal advisor. She/he represents the nation's interests before our highest courts. Also drafts the legislation this House considers and defends Zimbabwe's legal sovereignty in regional and international forums. She/he sits too on the Judicial Service Commission alongside the most senior judges in the land. It is right that the qualification for such an office should match the company it keeps and the responsibility it discharges.

Clause 14 widens the door of the Constitutional Court. It permits the court to hear any matter that raises an arguable point of law of general public importance where the court grants leave. This enlarges access to justice; it does not narrow it. It allows our apex court to settle with authority the question that matter to most citizens and to commerce while a disciplined requirement of leave keeps the court the master of its own role. A constitutional democracy is better served when its highest court can speak clearly on the questions that most divide us.

Clause 15 concerns the appointment of judges; it refines the process, setting aside public interview and the binding shortlist while leaving wholly intact the guarantees that fully secure judicial independence, that is, security of tenure, the protection of conditions of service and the freedom from interference once a judge has taken the bench.

This Mr. Speaker Sir, aligns with Constitution Amendment (No. 1) of 2017 regarding the appointment of Chief Justice and Deputy Chief Justice. The Judicial Service Commission continues to be consulted on every appointment. The model this Clause restores is the

appointment by the President after consultation with the Commission, is the model that prevailed in this country before 2013 and the model that prevails across much of the Commonwealth today.

Judicial independence, Mr. Speaker Sir, does not reside in the manner of a judge's appointment. It resides in the protections that surround that judge for every day of service thereafter. Those protections, Mr. Speaker, this Bill does not touch, as you will notice.

Mr. Speaker, Clause 20 addresses the appointment of the Prosecutor General and here, I must correct a misunderstanding directly. At present, Mr. Speaker, the President appoints the Prosecutor General on the recommendation of the Judicial Services Commission, a body comprised of the most senior judges in the land. Those same judges are the very persons before whom the Prosecutor General's decisions will come in trials, bail applications, dues and in appeals. To have the judges who adjudicate the prosecutor's cases also select the prosecutor is not a safeguard of independence.

It is a structural conflict of interest written into the constitutional text. Clause 20 removes that conflict and let me be precise because critics have conflated two separate things. The independence of the

Prosecutor General, guaranteed in Section 26,0 which provides that the office is not subject to the direction or control of any person, is left entirely untouched by this Bill. The guarantee of independence stands in full. It is only the conflicted appointment procedure that goes. No comparable democracy in our region, not South Africa, Kenya, Botswana or Ghana requires the Judicial Commission to select the prosecutor. Clause 20 brings us into line with others.

Clause 21, Mr. Speaker, contains our traditional leaders and it resolves a contradiction that sits on the face of the present Constitution. The most powerful fact in this debate is one that the critics do not engage; I will repeat, Mr. Speaker, the most powerful fact in this debate is one that the critics do not engage. Our chiefs are already, by the Constitution's own design, actors within the State and within constitutional politics. Eighteen of them, Mr. Speaker, sit in this Parliament; eighteen chiefs sit in this Parliament. So, the argument that they are not political is not there - [HON. MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections*] – Their votes, Mr. Speaker, are counted in the very two-thirds majority that amends the Constitution and they are part of the legislature, including the majority that will decide this Bill.

So, the chiefs will decide this Bill, Mr. Speaker, which is a legislative process. They preside over our courts of customary law. They administer communal lands on behalf of the State. They sit on the National Council of Chiefs. Yet one provision, Mr. Speaker, Section 281, pretends that the same chiefs are private persons who must stand wholly outside political life. Yet they are doing everything in society, in Parliament, courts, administering lands and settling disputes. They are everywhere but this Clause says they must stand outside of politics. Mr. Speaker, a Constitution that seats traditional leaders in its amending Chamber while stripping them of their civic standing as ordinary citizens is internally contradictory and Clause 21 removes the contradiction.

Now, I must be candid with this House about what is repealed, for the provision did more than one thing. Among its words was a prohibition on traditional leaders violating the fundamental rights of others. Mr. Speaker Sir, let me be plain, that protection is not lost. It is restored to where it belongs and where it binds every person equally. In Chapter 4, the Declaration of Rights, which by its own terms binds the State and every person and institution in Zimbabwe traditional

leaders, Mr. Speaker, among them, the duty of a chief to respect the rights of those he serves does not depend on a special clause singling out chiefs. It rests as it rests for every one of us, on the Declaration of Rights itself. While Clause 21 is an enforced prohibition on civic participation of a class of citizens, what it leaves untouched is the constitutional command in Section 281 (1) that traditional leaders act with independence, impartiality and dignity, a command Parliament will give effect through enforceable codes of conduct. An unenforced prohibition is replaced by an enforceable standard that is strengthening accountability and not weakening it.

Mr. Speaker, I am now turning to recalibrating the legislature. Clause 8 permits the President to appoint 10 additional Senators chosen for their professional skills and competence, raising the Senate from 80 members to 90. It has been said that this dilutes an elected Chamber. The objection does not survive examination and I want to give the House three main reasons why; the first is the nature of the Senate itself. The Senate has never been a directly elected Chamber. Under the present Constitution, the electorate casts no direct ballot for an individual Senate. Sixty Senators are allocated to political parties

by proportional representation, from party li;t, the voter has no hand in composing. Sixteen are traditional chiefs elected by provincial assemblies of chiefs. Two hold their seats by virtue of office and two are chosen by an electoral college to represent persons with disabilities.

The Senate was constituted in 2013 as a Chamber of indirect representation.

Clause 8 adds one further indirect method, appointment for expertise, to a Chamber that has always been filled indirectly. The second reason, Mr. Speaker, is that the appointment power is not unbounded. The text requires that these 10 Senators be chosen for their professional skills and competencies. That is a constitutional qualification and it is justifiable. An appointment that cannot be referred to a genuine professional skill or competence relevant to the work of the Senate may be challenged and set aside by the courts.

This places the new seats squarely within an honourable comparative tradition. The nominated members of the Indian Council of States who must have special knowledge or experience, the live Senators of Italy who must have brought honor to the nation, the

Taoiseach’s nominees to the Irish Senate, the purpose is to bring into the service of the House the expertise that modern governance demands in finance, in science, in law, in technology, in public health, expertise that the ordinary context of politics does not always retain and from which the pool of those available for ministerial service is widened.

The third reason is arithmetic and it is decisive. Even with these 10 appointees, the Senate remains very nearly nine-tenths non-appointed. Across both Houses of this Parliament, the bicameral legislature remains more than 97% non-appointed. In the National Assembly, the directly elected Chamber, the Chamber closest to the people is not touched by this clause at all. Ten expert voices in a Parliament of 370 does not dilute the people's representation; they enrich the quality of the legislation that representation produces - [HON. MEMBERS: *Hear, hear.*]-

Mr. Speaker, I now turn to the function of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, Clause 16. Clause 16 amends the words that describe the function of our Defence Forces, replacing the phrase, “To uphold this Constitution” with the phrase, “In accordance with this

Constitution". It has been suggested, Mr. Speaker, that this weakens the Constitutional position of the military. The truth is precisely the opposite. The amendment strengthens the subordination of the military to the Constitution and I want to explain why because the point is important and it is widely misunderstood. Consider the question honestly. Either the Defence Forces are subject to the Constitution, or they are a core equal guardian of it, standing alongside the elected President, the elected Parliament and the courts.

If they are subject to the Constitution, as in every constitutional democracy, they must be in accordance with the Constitution, which is the correct expression of that subordination and the old wording which cast the military as an independent upholder of the Constitution in its own right was the anomaly.

The institution whose function is to uphold the Constitution, is the elected and appointed civilian institutions. The President takes an oath to uphold it. Judges take an oath to uphold it. Members of this House take an oath to uphold it. The Defence Forces protect the nation within the constitutional framework that those civilian

institutions uphold and interpret. They are not a parallel constitutional authority - [HON. MEMBERS: *Hear, hear.*]-

To suggest, Mr. Speaker, otherwise, is to invite exactly the danger our history warns against nor is the constitutional anchor of civilian control removed by this clause, for that anchor was never Section 212; it is Section 208, which has required since 2018, that every member of the Security Services Act in accordance with the Constitution and the law, that none act in a partisan manner and that none further the interests of a political party.

Section 208 is not touched by this Bill. It stands entirely. Clause 16 simply harmonises the language of Section 212 with the standard Section 208 already set and in doing so, it reinforces Sections 213 and 214, the provisions that place the deployment of our forces in the hands of the elected President, subject to the oversight of this Parliament.

The Bill's own memorandum sets this purpose plainly. The amendment is intended to reinforce Sections 213 and 214. The civilian and constitutional control of the military is not weakened by Clause 16. It is made textually consistent and thereby strengthened.

Mr. Speaker Sir, allow me now to turn to consequential amendments that are Clauses 5, 6, 18, 19 and 22. The Bill closes with a section of clauses that align and complete the constitutional text, each following from a decision taken elsewhere in the Bill.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, just a minute. There is a point of order.

HON. CHIGUMBU: Hon. Speaker, I want you to take note of a post that has been posted on our Parliamentary platform.

THE HON.SPEAKER: You want me to do what?

HON. CHIGUMBU: I want you to take note of a post that has been posted on our Parliamentary Social Media Platform. It is saying Hon. Molokela-Tsiye has crossed over to ZANU PF. It is not true. They must respect.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Order, order Hon. Member. Order! I thought you should be listening to what the Hon. Minister is saying, rather than being distracted by social media which may not be accurate. Hon. Member, you know the truth. Thank you.

HON. Z. ZIYAMBI: Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir. The Bill closes with a section of clauses that align and complete the

constitutional text, each following from a decision taken elsewhere in the Bill, aligning with previous amendments to the Constitution or correcting an arrangement that experience has shown to be unsound.

Clause 5 removes the word ‘first’ before Vice President, a remnant of the running mate system that this House set aside in Amendment Number 2 of 2021. With that system gone, the word implied has no further work to do and the text is best tidied out.

Clause 6 aligns the rules of succession with the new method of election, so that a vacancy in the Presidency is filled by the same constitutional pathway that fills the office in the first place.

Clauses 18 and 19 consolidate the work of the Zimbabwe Gender Commission within the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I know this is among the most keenly contested proposals in the Bill and it deserves a careful answer rather than a slogan. Let me give the House the single most important fact, the one that critics do not engage.

The constitutional commitment to gender equality does not reside in the Gender Commission and it is not touched by this Bill.

Gender equality is a founding value of our Constitution, Mr. Speaker, under Section 3, which cannot be amended without a referendum. The right to equality and non-discrimination is entrenched in Section 56 in the Declaration of Rights.

The rights of women are entrenched in Section 8. The State's duty to promote gender balance is in Section 17. Not one of these provisions is amended by as much as a word. They remain exactly where the founding framers of this Constitution placed them, justifiably in every court in the land.

What Clauses 18 and 19 change is not the commitment but the vehicle. The gender mandate is not abolished; it is written expressly and at constitutional level, the mandate of the Human Rights Commission in the amended section 243. This is a consolidation not abandonment and it is the practice of many of the world's respected democracies.

The United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, each pursue gender equality through an integrated Human Rights Board rather than a stand-alone commission. Kenya combines its gender mandate with equality, disability and minority mandates in a single

board. The International Instruments our critics cite, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Maputo Protocol, the SADC Protocol on Gender, require appropriate and effective machinery for gender equality. Not one of them prescribes a stand-alone commission as the only permissible form. This reform places them where human rights are protected, at the centre of human rights architecture rather than at its periphery.

Clause 22 draws the curtain on the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission. This was the outset of a transitional institution. When this House was created in 2013, it was given a defined 10-year mandate, a body built for a season, not for perpetuity but Clause 22 does not abandon the work of reconciliation; it does the opposite. The duty of the State is to promote national reconciliation, peace and unity, which is set out in Section 10 of the Constitution which the Bill does not touch and that duty endures.

What Clause 22 does is to carry the work of reconciliation out of a single time-bound commission into the permanent responsibility of the State, where it can be pursued through dedicated legislation, purpose built for the task or under the auspices of the Human Rights

Commission. Reconciliation, peace-building and national healing are too important to be confined to one commission with a closing mandate. There must be enduring obligations of the State itself. That is what this clause secures.

Mr. Speaker, I now conclude. This Bill is best understood not as an act of invention but as an act of completion. When this nation gave itself a new Constitution in 2013, it promised itself a modern, multi-party democracy built to deliver development and social progress. Yet it carried forward untouched two features fashioned for a country that no longer exists. An electoral cycle so short that the next campaign began the moment the last one ended. An institutional design left half-complete, with mandates that overlap and offices placed in quiet tension with one another. We know the price the country has paid: a generation of perennially contested elections of capital that took flight, of confidence withheld, of potential left waiting on the next ballot.

What this Bill seeks to do is to recalibrate the architecture of our democracy so that it serves the work of governing and the task of development rather than the endless fighting of elections. It does so

for the institution and never for the individual, for the steadier season it creates belongs to the office and to the republic and to no person. Consider what the nation stands to gain: a disciplined and continuous season of Government in which a programme such as Vision 2030 can be carried through to completion. A calmer way of choosing its highest office, drawn from the settled practice of mature democracies such as Botswana and South Africa, which lowers the temperature of national politics and ties the Executive to the confidence of the people elected. A cleaner and more trustworthy voters' roll kept where the records of every citizen's life already live.

Boundaries drawn by a dedicated and expert hand and settled well before any contest so that no one who runs the race also draws the field. A highest court able to speak with authority on the questions that matter most. Institutions that are clearer and stronger for having a single task they can discharge well and a place once more among the African and Commonwealth democracies whose tested practices these reforms reflect.

This is the choice before the House between a Constitution built for the endless electoral conflict and a Constitution built for the long

walk of development, between a republic that begins itself anew every few years and a republic permitted at last to finish what it starts. I do not ask, Mr. Speaker, this House to leap. I ask it to take a step, a measured step, a lawful step, an overdue step within the power this Parliament holds. For what this Bill offers, in the end, is the one thing a developing nation can never buy back once it has been spent.

It offers time, time given to the office, not to the person, to the republic and not to the moment. Time not to perpetually campaign but to build. This Bill is sound in its law. It is principled in its purpose, inspiring in its aspirations and it is overdue in its time. Therefore, I commend the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Number 3, [H. B.1, 2026] to this House and I accordingly move that the Bill be now read a second time. I thank you. – [HON. MEMBERS: *Hear, hear.*]-

THE HON. SPEAKER: Before I put the question, I want to address myself to the issue raised by the Hon. Mushoriwa. Regarding Section 98 (1) (e) of our Standing Orders. In the case of Divine Muhambi, Nee Hove *vs* -[HON. MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections*]- Either you want to listen or you can go in peace

outside. I will repeat. The case is one of Divine Mhambi Nee Hove *vs* Parliament of Zimbabwe*, CCZ 12/23*. That is the citation of the case.

The Constitutional Court clarified the scope and limits of the *sub-judice* rule in relation to Parliament. The Court held that the *sub-judice* rule whose purpose is to prevent interference with ongoing judicial proceedings, is not absolute. While Parliament must generally avoid discussing matters pending before the courts, this restriction cannot override Constitutional obligations. Specifically, the Court found that Parliament, through the Parliamentary Legal Committee, could not rely on the *sub-judice* rule to delay or avoid its constitutional duty under Section 152 of the Constitution.

To examine Statutory Instruments, the rule must yield where strict adherence would frustrate constitutional mandates. It went on to rule that accordingly, the court concluded that Standing Orders incorporating the *sub-judice* rule are subordinate to the Constitution and Parliament is obliged to act even if related litigation is pending. In essence, the decision affirms that the *sub-judice* rule is a qualified procedural restraint, not a barrier to fulfilling constitutional responsibilities.

HON. G. HLATYWAYO: On a point of privilege, I was going to request your office to favour this House with information on how the CAB 3 is going to unfold and in particular, issues around how we are going to be voting. There has been a lot of speculation in terms of how the process is going to…

THE HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, we are not yet there.

HON. G. HLATYWAYO: I understand and that is the reason why we say…

THE HON. SPEAKER: We are not yet there – [HON. MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjection*.] – Order! I am saying, we are not yet there. At a point so relevant, the process will be carried accordingly.

HON. ZVOBGO:

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of Zimbabwe (Amendment) Bill (No. 3), 2026 (H.B. 1, 2026) was officially published in the Government Gazette on 16th February, 2026. Accordingly, Parliament invited the members of

the public to express their views on the proposed Bill in public meetings and through written submissions in accordance with section 328(4) of the Constitution. The Bill was referred to the Portfolio Committee on Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs.

Recognising the Bill's cross-cutting implications for governance, gender equality, human rights, and traditional leadership, among other issues. Parliament constituted a joint Committee to ensure a comprehensive review of the Bill. The Joint Committee comprised the Portfolio Committees on Women Affairs, Community and Small and Medium Enterprises Development; Defence, Home Affairs, Security Services and War Veterans Affairs; Local Government, Public Works and National Housing; and Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training, as well as Thematic Committees on Human Rights, Peace and Security and Gender and Development.

In fulfilment of Section 141 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, which mandates Parliament to facilitate public involvement in its legislative processes, the Joint Committee embarked on nationwide public consultations. These consultations were designed to ensure that

the legislative process is informed by the lived experiences, aspirations, and democratic concerns of the Zimbabwean citizenry.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the analysis of the Bill were:

a) To assess whether the Bill is in the interest of the public to ensure broader consensus.

b) To check whether the proposed provisions are consistent with other provisions of the Constitution.

c) To consider the impact of the Bill.

d) To check whether the proposed amendments align with regional and international best practices.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

To ensure a rigorous and inclusive consultative process, the following methodology was employed: After the *gazetting* of the Bill, Parliament immediately began receiving written submissions made directly to Parliament and through emails from the public until 18th May, 2026.

Parliament also deployed eleven teams drawn from the eight Parliamentary Committees to cover each of the administrative

districts in all the country's ten provinces. Public hearings were held in the districts from 29th March to 1st April, 2026. There was a real-time recording of the submissions from participants during the hearings. Physical documents submitted by the public during the public hearings were collected at every venue to accommodate those who did not get an opportunity to speak.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

	Sub-Totals	**Number of Submissions in Support of the Bill**	**Number of Submissions against the Bill**
Written Submission to Parliament	**470 117**	469 040	1077
Written Submissions Received During Public Hearings	**67 688**	67 302	386
Written Submissions via emails	**2 232**	760	1472
Grand Totals	**540 037**	**537 102**	**2 935**

For a detailed breakdown on attendance and written submissions received during and after public hearings, see Annexure.

To fulfill the constitutional requirement under Section 157(4), which provides that *no amendments may be made to the Electoral*

Law or its subsidiary legislation unless the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) has been consulted and its recommendations duly considered, the Commission presented its recommendations to the Joint Committee on 14 May 2026. During the same meeting, the Zimbabwe Gender Commission and the Council of Chiefs also presented their views on the Bill.

Thereafter, the Joint Committee conducted five meetings to deliberate on the oral and written submissions before crafting its draft report, which was considered and adopted. To that end, the Committee expresses its profound gratitude to the people of Zimbabwe who took their time to attend the public hearings held in the administrative districts and present their written submissions on the Bill.

4.0 Committee's Findings

Clause 2: Transferring of voter registration and management of the voters' roll from the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to the Registrar-General. The majority of submissions strongly supported transferring the responsibility for voter registration, as well as compiling and maintaining the voters' roll, from ZEC to the Civil

Registry Department (Registrar-General). Participants argued that the Registrar-General is uniquely positioned to maintain an accurate, up-to-date voters' roll, effectively preventing the prolonged inclusion of deceased or non-existent individuals.

Given that the Registrar-General already serves as the custodian of vital civil records, including birth and death certificates, as well as national identity data, the public noted that this transition would enhance administrative efficiency, accuracy and centralized accountability. Furthermore, it would eliminate a duplication of roles, minimize data management inconsistencies and ultimately strengthen the integrity and credibility of the voters' roll. This approach also aligns with international benchmarks, where civil registries routinely manage voter registration data. Ultimately, this reallocation of duties would allow ZEC to concentrate more effectively on its core mandates of voter education and election management.

The minority view opposed transferring the voters' roll to the Registrar-General, recalling that management of the roll had previously been stripped from that office due to serious concerns over credibility and manipulation. The minority argued that ZEC is far

better suited to manage the roll, raising several key concerns regarding the proposed transfer. It was submitted that as a Government department, the Registrar-General lacks the constitutional safeguards designed to protect institutional independence, expertise and integrity. Shifting this responsibility risks increasing executive influence and undermining the neutrality of the electoral process.

In addition, fragmenting the responsibilities of the electoral management compromises accountability, which could severely damage both public trust and international credibility. Furthermore, entrusting voter registration to independent commissions aligns with established best practices across other SADC countries. It was submitted that the significant financial investments already made into ZEC's biometric voter registration systems serve as a compelling reason to maintain the current structure rather than introducing an inefficient administrative shift.

During consultations with ZEC, the Committee was informed about the potential occurrence of fragmented roles among institutions. It further underscored the need for clear legislated timelines spelling

out when the voters' roll will be made available to the electoral body. ZEC had migrated from the ward-based to polling station-based voting as well as biometric registration of voters and hoped that these milestones will be maintained if this function is transferred to the Registrar General. In its humble submission, it had recommended that the status quo be maintained.

4.1.2 Committee's Observations

The Committee noted that leveraging on vital civil records provides a distinct technical advantage in maintaining an accurate voters' roll, while simultaneously acknowledging legitimate concerns surrounding the need for institutional independence for the electoral body. Furthermore, the Committee observed the significant investments already made by ZEC, particularly the acquisition of biometric equipment for effective voter registration and also the poll-based voting system which was introduced in 2018.

4.1.3 Committee's Recommendation

The Committee recommends the adoption of Clause 2 to decisively address historical challenges where deceased individuals have remained on the voters' roll.

4.2 Clause 3: Changing the Election of the President from a Direct Public Vote to an Election by Parliament.

The majority of submissions strongly favoured the amendment, arguing that the proposed model would foster greater collaboration and confidence between the Executive and the Parliament, ultimately enhancing governance and policy alignment. They emphasised that electing the president through Parliament would substantially reduce the immense financial costs of organising nationwide presidential elections.

Furthermore, they noted that past elections had been marred by political tension, violence and contestation, especially in respect of results for Presidential elections, issues that would be mitigated or eliminated by narrowing the electorate to directly elected representatives.

Supporters pointed to successful continental precedents, noting that nations like South Africa and Botswana utilise this system to achieve greater political stability, minimise electoral expenses and robust institutional accountability. Back home, they observed that an

identical model was already successfully utilised at the local government level, where mayors are elected by sitting councillors, proving the system's practicality and familiarity within the country’s existing governance structures.

Finally, they argued that electing the President through Parliament remains fully consistent with Section 88(1) of the Constitution, which states that "executive authority derives from the people of Zimbabwe and must be exercised in accordance with this Constitution" because citizens would continue to exercise their democratic will through their elected representatives, reviving a legitimate constitutional practice utilised between 1980 and 1990. Given that Parliament, in terms of Section 97 of the Constitution, has a role to impeach the President, they indicated that it was consistent for it to elect the President.

Conversely, a minority of submissions opposed the amendment, viewing the shift as a retrogressive step that would dismantle the democratic milestones achieved since independence by undermining the fundamental principle of "one person, one vote." Dissenting voices argued that restricting the presidential vote exclusively to

Members of Parliament would effectively circumvent the will of the broader electorate, fundamentally altering the source and character of executive legitimacy. From their perspective, removing the direct vote represents an erosion of democratic participation and a direct infringement on every citizen's constitutional right to free, fair and regular elections for the election of the President.

4.2.1 Committee's Observations

The Committee noted that since Section 97 of the Constitution vests the power to remove the President in Parliament; therefore, Parliament should ordinarily possess the authority to elect the President. The Committee is convinced that adopting a legislative appointment model would significantly reduce the fiscal burden associated with direct presidential elections. Furthermore, this approach would bolster political stability by minimizing contentious electoral disputes which have characterised previous presidential elections, while firmly anchoring executive accountability within representative democratic institutions.

4.2.2 Committee's Recommendation

Informed by the observations, the Committee strongly recommends the adoption of Clause 3, thereby mandating Parliament to elect the President.

4.3 Clauses 4, 9 and 10

Extension of the electoral cycle of the President and Members of Parliament from five to seven years and its application to the incumbent.

The majority of public submissions favoured the adoption of longer electoral cycles, primarily because reducing the frequency of elections mitigates both the immense fiscal burden on the state and the disruptive "perpetual campaign mode" that frequently derails governance and development. The majority argued that extended electoral cycles defuse the political toxicity inherent in election seasons, providing the Government with the necessary time horizon to fully implement long-term projects while ensuring policy stability and continuity. They noted that developmental activities routinely slow down or halt during election periods as national focus shifts entirely toward political processes. Furthermore, submissions pointed out that extended mandates are not unprecedented globally, citing Egypt's six-

year presidential cycle and Azerbaijan's seven-year electoral cycle as successful examples.

Conversely, the minority submissions contended that in a democratic society, leaders must remain directly elected by the populace, arguing that structural constitutional changes of this magnitude should be subjected to a national referendum to guarantee broad public participation and democratic legitimacy. They argued that longer electoral cycles disenfranchise citizens and weaken executive accountability by concentrating power within political elites. Extending the electoral cycle was viewed as diluting the democratic cycles that keep leadership answerable to the public, as in shorter terms, the electorate swiftly removes underperforming public officials. The minority also viewed the proposed amendment as a direct violation of Section 328(7) of the Constitution, which explicitly prohibits any amendment extending a term of office from benefiting the incumbent holder of that office.

4.3.1 Committee's Observations

The Committee observed that major developmental projects, particularly those yielding the most profound socioeconomic impacts

on the populace, inherently require extended timelines to reach full implementation and completion. Members further noted that global jurisdictions utilizing longer electoral mandates consistently exhibit greater political stability and achieve more meaningful, sustained progress in their national development agendas. While the Committee holds the view that a ten-year term would be ideal to maximize these developmental benefits, a balanced compromise is necessary to align with public feedback and institutional realities.

4.3.2 Committee's Recommendation

Consequently, the Committee recommends the adoption of Clauses 4, 9 and 10, thereby extending the electoral cycle for the President and Parliament to seven years.

4.4 Clause 5: Removal of Reference to the "first" Vice-President for Consistency.

Public submissions were unanimous in their support of the proposal to eliminate hierarchical distinctions between the Vice Presidents. The public observed that utilising the uniform designation of "Vice President", without hierarchical stratification, promotes a sense of equality within the presidium. This structural alignment is

anticipated to foster greater political unity and enhance the principles of collective leadership at the highest level of executive government.

4..4.1 Committee's Recommendation

The Committee concurs with submissions and recommends that the Clause should be adopted as presented.

4.5 Clause 6: Provision for Vice President to be Elected by Parliament in the Event of a Vacancy, Removing Automatic Succession.

The public submissions were once again unanimous in concluding that the proposed amendment represents a practical, cost-saving measure. Stakeholders emphasised that this mechanism effectively averts the prohibitive financial expenses associated with staging mid-term presidential elections, while simultaneously safeguarding national stability by immediately closing any governance or succession vacuum that might otherwise arise.

4.5.1 Committee's Recommendation

The Committee concurs with the public's views and recommends that the Clause should be adopted as presented.

4.6 Clause 7: Raising the Qualifications for Appointment as Attorney-General to those Required of a Supreme Court Judge.

The Committee received a diverse range of submissions regarding the proposed amendment, with the clear majority expressing strong support for the measure. The majority argued that aligning the qualifications of the Attorney General with those of a Supreme Court judge provides a vital safeguard for the office. They emphasised that such stringent criteria would guarantee that the appointee possesses the highest calibre of legal expertise, professional competence, and personal integrity. Consequently, this elevated standard is expected to significantly improve the quality of legal counsel provided to the Government and substantially strengthen the state's capacity to handle complex constitutional and legislative affairs.

On the contrary, the minority view raised concerns that the amendment could overly restrict the recruitment process. Dissenting submissions cautioned that establishing such elevated prerequisites would inevitably narrow the pool of eligible candidates, potentially excluding otherwise capable legal professionals from consideration.

4. 6. 1 Committee's Recommendation

Having carefully weighed both perspectives, the Committee stands in alignment with the majority of submissions. It recognizes that the long-term benefits of securing top-tier legal and constitutional stewardship for the nation outweigh the risks of a more restrictive selection pool. Accordingly, the Committee recommends the clause for adoption without amendment.

4.7. Clause 8: Increase in the Membership of Senate from 80 to 90, by Including 10 Presidential Appointees

The proposed increase in Senate membership garnered a strong majority of support from public submissions. The majority argued that expanding the chamber would inject vital specialised knowledge and diverse professional expertise into the legislative process. Furthermore, the public noted that a larger membership would broaden the pool of qualified individuals available for Ministerial appointments. They also view the additional ten members as necessary to bridge political and social divides, by incorporating non-partisan perspectives into governance. The amendment is, therefore,

expected to elevate the quality of decision-making and foster greater national cohesion.

In contrast, the minority submissions expressed reservations, cautioning that increasing membership could undermine the Senate's independence and compromise its crucial role in holding the Executive accountable. Dissenting voices warned that the shift might weaken the chamber's representative character and create a public perception of excessive Executive influence over the legislative branch. Additionally, they argued that the amendment could result in a Senate composition disproportionate to the outcomes of the popular voting process, thereby eroding its democratic legitimacy.

4.7.1 Committee's Recommendation

After thorough consideration of both the public enthusiasm for enhanced expertise and the expressed concerns regarding institutional balance, the Committee finds that the potential benefits to governance and national unity were compelling. Consequently, the Committee recommends the clause for adoption.

4.8 Clauses 11, 12 and 13: Establishment of the Delimitation Commission, Transfer of Delimitation Functions from ZEC to the New Commission

The majority of submissions strongly favoured the establishment of a separate Delimitation Commission, arguing it would significantly alleviate the heavy workload currently borne by the ZEC. The majority believed that a dedicated entity would foster greater fairness, transparency and accessibility throughout the electoral process. Furthermore, they emphasised that such an institutional split would cultivate technical specialisation in the complex task of drawing constituency boundaries, thereby directly addressing historical shortcomings in ZEC's handling of previous delimitation exercises.

On the other hand, the minority contributions raised concerns regarding institutional independence and public trust. They cautioned that transferring the delimitation mandate away from ZEC might weaken the primary electoral management body and spark fears of political meddling in electoral affairs. To support their argument, they pointed to regional democratic standards, specifically the SADC

Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections, which strictly emphasise the need to protect electoral management bodies from Executive control.

4.8.1 Committee's Observations

The Committee observes that past delimitation exercises managed by ZEC did encounter notable challenges, which underscores the merit of a specialised body. However, the Committee highlights the absolute necessity for meticulous coordination between ZEC and the newly proposed commission to guarantee a seamless transfer of roles and operational data.

Furthermore, in alignment with a direct submission from ZEC itself, the Committee agrees that the new body's title should omit the word "**Electoral**." This linguistic distinction is crucial to clearly separate its specific boundary-drawing mandate from ZEC's broader, overarching electoral responsibilities.

4.8.2 Committee's Recommendation

Having carefully balanced the need for technical specialization against the imperative of safeguarding institutional independence, the Committee recommends the adoption of Clauses 11, 12 and 13 to

establish a dedicated boundary-drawing authority. To ensure absolute clarity regarding its mandate, the Committee further recommends that this new entity be formally named the Zimbabwe Delimitation Commission.

4.9 Clause 14 – Jurisdiction of the Constitutional Court

The majority of submissions strongly supported extending the Court’s jurisdiction beyond strictly political disputes to encompass matters of significant public importance. They argued that this expansion would greatly broaden access to justice and ensure that pressing national issues receive timely, definitive resolutions. Furthermore, stakeholders believed this shift would substantially enhance the Court’s vital role as a primary guardian of constitutional rights.

On the contrary, the minority submissions raised concerns that broadening the Court's purview would trigger an unmanageable increase in its workload, ultimately leading to case backlogs and judicial delays. Some also expressed concern that this shift might inadvertently de-prioritise specialised knowledge, incentivising the

selection of judges with general legal expertise over those with deep specialisations in constitutional law and human rights.

4.9.1 Committee's Observations

The Committee observed that apprehensions regarding a crippling workload, systemic backlogs, and severe delays are unfounded and unsupported by empirical data. While an expanded jurisdiction will undeniably increase the volume of cases brought before the Court, the Committee notes that this does not automatically translate into judicial delays. Rather, the restructuring will effectively increase the number of available judicial levels, optimizing the allocation of legal resources and maintaining efficiency.

The Committee observed that there would be problems with the jurisdiction of the Supreme and Constitutional courts, which may eventually need to compete in terms of which matters can be finalised by which court. There will also be a problem with the hierarchy of the two courts, making it difficult to determine which court holds final authority. If the Constitutional and Supreme Courts interpret laws differently, lower courts are left confused about which legal precedent binds them.

4.9.2 Committee's Recommendation

The Committee recommends the adoption of the clause with an amendment to clarify the hierarchy of the two courts.

4.10 Clause 15: Amendment of Section 180 (Appointment of Judges)

The majority of submissions supported the proposed amendment to vest the appointment of judges in the President, to be exercised in consultation with the Judicial Service Commission (JSC). They expressed the view that this mechanism would strengthen judicial independence and streamline the selection process by eliminating perceived inefficiencies associated with current procedures.

In contrast, the minority submissions argued that public interviews remain an indispensable safeguard for ensuring transparency, upholding meritocracy and maintaining public confidence in the judiciary. They cautioned that transitioning to a appointment process would dilute existing constitutional protections designed to insulate the judiciary from excessive Executive influence. By reducing the role of the JSC to a purely advisory capacity,

dissenting voices argued that the amendment would weaken institutional checks and balances.

Furthermore, they noted that the proposal deviates from established regional approaches in nations such as Botswana, Namibia, Eswatini and South Africa, where the Judicial Service Commission holds decisive authority over High Court appointments.

4.10.1 Committee's Recommendation

The Committee notes the competing viewpoints regarding executive involvement and public transparency in judicial selections, as well as the regional precedents cited by the public. However, having balanced the objective of administrative efficiency and executive accountability against these concerns, the Committee stands in alignment with the majority view. Accordingly, the Committee recommends the clause for adoption.

4.11. Clause 16: Amendment of Section 212 (Functions of the Defence Forces)

The majority of submissions expressed strong support for the amendment, operating under the view that the proposed changes would effectively limit undue military influence in civilian

governance. Those in support of the clause argued that establishing clearer boundaries for the military would safeguard democratic processes and, consequently, prove vital to maintaining long-term national stability.

On the other hand, a minority of submissions raised concerns regarding the broader implications of the change. They cautioned that the amendment could inadvertently and materially weaken the constitutional fidelity obligation of the Defence Forces, potentially diluting the military's foundational commitment to uphold and protect the supreme law of the land.

4.11. 1 Committee's Recommendation

The Committee acknowledges the critical importance of balancing civil-military relations and preserving the constitutional integrity of the armed forces. However, recognising that fortifying democratic governance and securing state stability were paramount public interests, the Committee stands in agreement with the majority. Accordingly, the Committee recommends the clause for adoption.

4.12 Clause 17: Amendment of Section 239 (Functions of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission)

Members of the public were unanimous in their support for repealing these specific functions from ZEC and reassigning them to the Registrar General. Contributors consistently expressed the view that this institutional realignment would significantly improve administrative efficiency and reduce institutional overload. By divesting ZEC of these secondary duties, the amendment would allow the Commission to focus its resources and attention entirely on its core mandate of conducting and supervising national elections.

During consultations with ZEC, the Committee was informed by the electoral body that clause 17 had repealed its function to accredit observers but the accreditation of observers was not assigned to any other agency or body.

4.12.1 Committee's Observations

The Committee reemphasised that the successful execution of this structural shift depends on close, continuous and effective collaboration between ZEC and the newly proposed Zimbabwe Delimitation Commission and the Registrar General to ensure a seamless transfer of relevant duties, operational data and responsibilities. Furthermore, the Committee highlights that

comprehensive staff training will be essential to guarantee that personnel are fully equipped to perform effectively in their newly defined roles.

4.12.2 Committee's Recommendation

The Committee recommends the clause for adoption with an amendment for ZEC to retain the function for the accreditation of observers.

4.13 Clauses 18 and 19: Repeal of the Zimbabwe Gender Commission and Amendment of Section 243 (Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission)

The majority of submissions supported the proposed repeal of the provisions establishing the Zimbabwe Gender Commission and the subsequent transfer of its responsibilities to a specialised department under the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC). The submissions supporting the repeal of the provision argued that this consolidation would eliminate the duplication of institutional mandates, optimise resource utilisation and foster a more integrated, holistic approach to the protection of human rights within the country.

On the contrary, the minority, which included submissions from officials of the Zimbabwe Gender Commission itself, strongly cautioned against the merger. They argued that absorbing gender portfolios into a broader human rights framework risks inducing "gender blindness," where the specific needs of women and girls are overshadowed by general human rights concerns. They warned that the dissolution of a standalone entity would weaken dedicated oversight and reduce focused attention on systemic gender inequalities, gender-based discrimination and gender-responsive governance. The Zimbabwe Gender Commission contended that the fiscal benefits of a merger would be negligible, as it has historically operated on just 0.02% to 0.04% of the National Budget.

Furthermore, the minority stressed that dismantling the Commission could reverse historic gains and cause significant reputational damage, portraying Zimbabwe as backsliding on its commitments to gender equality. They noted that the standalone Gender Commission directly fulfills the nation’s international obligations under the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which emphasises the need for high-level, specialised national machineries for the advancement of women. Their submissions emphasised that a dedicated commission remains best placed to demand accountability and track commitments across all government ministries, departments and agencies. Members of the public similarly expressed fear that, without a specialised monitoring body, public and private institutions could more easily evade accountability for gender-based discrimination.

4.13.1 Committee’s Observation

The Committee acknowledges that the majority of the submissions were in support of the clause regarding the need to repeal the provision and incorporate the Zimbabwe Gender Commission into the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission. There were, however, concerns by some stakeholders, especially women’s organisations, that gender issues still require a specialised standalone institution in line with the requirements under CEDAW and to ensure continued gender mainstreaming in the country.

4.13.2 Committee's Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the Zimbabwe Gender Commission should remain in place and the clause should not be adopted.

4.14 Clause 20: Amendment of Section 259 (Appointment of the Prosecutor-General)

The majority of submissions expressed strong support for the proposed amendment to Section 259 regarding the appointment of the Prosecutor-General. Submissions consistently pointed out that the changes would streamline the selection and appointment procedures, thereby significantly enhancing administrative efficiency within the justice system.

4.14.1 Committee's Recommendation

Recognising the clear operational benefits of a more responsive and streamlined appointment framework, the Committee stands in agreement with the consensus of submissions. Accordingly, the Committee recommends Clause 20 for adoption.

4.15 Clause 21: Amendment of Section 281 (Principles to be observed by Traditional Leaders)

The majority of public submissions supported the amendment allowing traditional leaders to participate in political activities. The public, including several traditional leaders themselves, expressed the view that as an integral part of the Zimbabwean citizenry, traditional leaders should enjoy the same fundamental political rights as ordinary citizens. The public submitted that their active involvement would enhance inclusivity, strengthen community representation and accelerate development at the local level, while simultaneously promoting and safeguarding cultural heritage.

On the contrary, the minority view, supported by a submission from the Chiefs' Council, steadfastly opposed the amendment. They argued that the existing constitutional prohibition on political participation was a vital safeguard that insulates the institution of traditional leadership from political manipulation, thereby protecting its integrity and independence as enshrined in Section 283(c) (iv) of the Constitution. The Chiefs' Council cautioned that political involvement would compromise the neutrality expected of traditional leaders, thereby risking deep social divisions and exposing vulnerable rural populations to discrimination on political grounds.

Furthermore, concerns were raised that political partisanship would distort the administration of justice within communal areas, fostering political intolerance and raising the spectre of reprisals against dissenting community members.

In addition, the Chiefs' Council highlighted that engaging in political activities would directly violate the constitutional mandates requiring traditional leaders to act impartially and forbidding them from political alignment in their capacity as judicial officers, as espoused in Sections 163(1)(f) and 165(4)(a) as read together with section 283(c) (iv) of the Constitution.

In addition, the Chiefs' Council submitted that there was need for an amendment to section 285(6) of the Constitution to align the term of office for the President and Deputy President of the National Council of Chiefs with that of the Presidential and Parliamentary terms as proposed in clauses 4 and 9 of the Bill. In fact, the Chiefs' Council advocated for an amendment of clause 21 of the Bill to provide for the repealing of Section 285(6) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe to remove all prescribed term limits for both the President and the Deputy President of the National Council of Chiefs. In their

view, this amendment will align the tenure of the Council's leadership with that of Members of Parliament, who serve without constitutional term restrictions.

4.15.1 Committee's Observations

The Committee noted the contradiction between the right of traditional leaders to participate in political activities as proposed in clause 21 and the institutional imperative of traditional leaders' neutrality, particularly regarding their roles as judicial officers in terms of sections 163(1)(f) and 165(4)(a) of the Constitution.

4.15.2 Committee's Recommendation

While the majority of traditional leaders and the general public supported the provision regarding the participation of traditional leaders in politics, the proposed amendment conflicts with sections 163(1)(f) and 165(4)(a) of the Constitution and as such, the status quo should remain. Secondly, the Committee recommends the alignment of the electoral cycles for the President and Deputy President of the National Council of Chiefs from five to seven years as per the proposed parliamentary and presidential terms.

4.16 Clause 22: Repeal of Part 6 of Chapter 12 (National Peace and Reconciliation Commission)

The majority of submissions expressed support for the proposed repeal of Part 6 of Chapter 12, operating under the view that the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) has successfully fulfilled its mandate and outlived its operational purpose. The public argued that because the country currently enjoys widespread peace and stability, the institutional necessity for a dedicated, standalone reconciliation commission has diminished.

A minority of submissions strongly advised against the repeal. They expressed the view that dismantling the constitutional framework that established the NPRC is premature and undesirable. Submissions cautioned that removing the Commission risks undermining ongoing, sensitive community reconciliation processes and could be perceived as a weakening of Zimbabwe’s national commitment to transitional justice, institutional accountability and long-term national healing.

4. 16. 1 Committee’s Recommendation

The Committee acknowledged the competing views regarding the optimal timeline for transitional justice institutions and noted the concerns raised regarding the continuity of healing processes. However, taking into account the prevailing environment of peace and the majority consensus that the Commission has completed its primary objectives, the Committee stands in alignment with the supportive submissions. Accordingly, the Committee recommends Clause 22 for adoption. The Committee also noted that this was a procedural matter since the Commission had ceased to exist in 2023 when its term ended. The Commission's timeline was limited to ten years in the current constitution.

5.0 Conclusion

Generally, the Joint Committee was in support of the Bill and urged the two Houses to consider the proposed recommendations. In its analysis, the Joint Committee sought to ensure that there was consistency between the Bill's provisions and the Constitution, as well as aligning with the expectations and aspirations of the people and regional and international best practices.

ANNEXURES

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS BROUGHT TO THE PARLIAMENT

TABLE 1:

DATE By 18 May 2026	GRAND TOTAL	YES, WITH REASONS	YES, WITHOUT REASONS	NO, WITH REASONS	NO, WITHOUT REASONS
Totals	**470 117**	**229 600**	**238 362**	**1 887**	**4**

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS TO THE PARLIAMENT BY EMAIL
TABLE 2:

DATE By 18 May 2026	Sub-Totals	Number of Submissions in Support of the Bill	Number of Submissions against the Bill
Totals	**2 232**	760	1472

TABLE 3: PROVINCIAL ATTENDANCE

Province	Total Attendees	Male	Female	Persons with Disabilities
Harare Metropolitan	11 039	3 209	7 830	765
Mashonaland Central	7 407	3 539	3 868	246
Masvingo	5 847	2 553	3 294	401
Mashonaland West	5 730	2 944	2 786	349
Bulawayo Metropolitan	5 400	2 100	3 300	1
Manicaland	5 358	1984	3374	299
Midlands	4 286	2 223	2 063	171
Mashonaland East	3 558	1 491	2 067	167
Matabeleland North	2 911	1 245	1 666	35
Matabeleland South	2 695	832	1 863	51
Grand Total	**54 231**	**22 120**	**32 111**	**2485**

PROVINCIAL WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS TABLE 4

Province	Total	Yes, with Reasons	Yes, without Reasons	No with Reasons	No without Reasons
Harare Metropolitan	42 503	41 286	1 076	133	8
Mashonaland Central	2 240	2 218	16	6	0
Masvingo	13 369	13 105	264	0	0
Mashonaland West	1 208	658	550	0	0
Bulawayo Metropolitan	342	287	45	3	7
Manicaland	1837	1717	74	39	7
Midlands	1597	1511	86	0	0
Mashonaland East	2 697	2 482	44	171	0
Matabeleland North	787	780	0	5	2
Matabeleland South	1108	1102	1	5	0
Grand Totals	67 688	65 146	2 156	362	24

SUMMARY OF WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

TABLE 5

	Sub-Totals	Number of Submissions in Support of the Bill	Number of Submissions against the Bill
Written Submission			

to Parliament	**470 117**	469 040	1077
Written Submissions Received During Public Hearings	**67 688**	67 302	386
Written Submissions via emails	**2 232**	760	1472
Grand Totals	**540 037**	**537 102**	**2 935**

THE HON. SPEAKER: Thank you Hon. Zvobgo for completeness of your report. If you could include the two Annexures of your report and give them to the Clerks-at-the-Table so that those two Annexures appear in the *Hansard,* as well as tables 31, 2, 3, 4 and table 5.

THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE, LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (HON. Z. ZIYAMBI): Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir, I move that debate do now adjourn.

THE HON. SPEAKER: I think it is in order that you need time to digest the presentation by the Hon. Minister and the Chairman of the Justice and Legal Committee. So, it is only fair that you apply your minds so that when you make your contributions, we avoid some repetition.

HON. MADZIVANYIKA: On a point of privilege Mr. Speaker.

THE HON. SPEAKER: What is your point of privilege?

HON. MADZIVANYIKA: Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir, it is the right…

THE HON. SPEAKER: What is the relationship with what I have just indicated?

HON. MADZIVANYIKA: It is in relation to what has been provided already, what has been tabled already. That is where my matter of privilege is emanating, from your comments. From what has been raised already by the Chair and the Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs…

THE HON. SPEAKER: You wanted to do what about those two?

MR. MADZIVANYIKA: No, I have a point of privilege Mr. Speaker, in relation to the right of every Member of Parliament to debate.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Order, order, we need to debate and shoot at the target. We do not want repetition. The Standing Rules and Orders say that if you are going to repeat over and over again what has been said already, you will be ruled out of order. So, it is better to

study these two presentations and then you will have enough preparation to debate accordingly.

HON. MADZIVANYIKA: Mr. Speaker, are you going to indulge me?

THE HON. SPEAKER: I have indulged you already.

HON. MADZIVANYIKA: It has nothing to do with this case.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Please, can you take your seat?

HON. MADZIVANYIKA: You must hear me Mr. Speaker Sir, with your indulgence.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Please can you take your seat? I thought you agreed with me already; can we now adjourn the debate?

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 4th June, 2026.

On the motion of **THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE, LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (HON. Z. ZIYAMBI)**, *the House adjourned at Five Minutes past Five o'clock p.m.*