

PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

Tuesday, 21st July, 2026

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

PRAYERS

(THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF SENATE *in the Chair*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF SENATE

SWITCHING OFF OF CELLPHONES

THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF SENATE (HON. SEN. KAMBIZI): Let me remind Hon. Members to put your gadgets on silent.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. SEN GOTORA: Thank you Mr. President. I move that Orders of the Day, Numbers 1 to 3 on today's *Order Paper* be stood over until the rest of the Orders of the Day have been disposed of.

HON. SEN. TONGOGARA: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

STRENGTHENING LEGISLATION TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM ABUSE

Tenth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the rampant abuse of children in the communities.

Question again proposed.

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

HON. SEN. MOHADI: I second.

***HON. SEN. MAVENYENGWA:** *Ndagwadziwa kuti vanhu vanonyarara debate rakakosha ndakahwa kuti vana vakatsva mumba nezuro chaiye muno muHarare vaviri.*

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 22nd July 2026.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE 152ND ASSEMBLY OF THE INTER- PARLIAMENTARY UNION AND RELATED MEETINGS HELD IN ISTANBUL, TURKEY

Eleventh Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the delegation Report of the 152nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and related meetings held in Istanbul, Turkey.

Question again proposed.

HON. SEN. CHAPFUDZA: Thank you Mr. President. I rise to also add my voice to the debate on the delegation Report of the 152nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. At the outset, I wish to commend the delegation that represented Zimbabwe at this important global parliamentary gathering. Their participation reflects our nation's commitment to parliamentary diplomacy, multilateral cooperation and constructive engagement within the national community. The report before this House demonstrated that the Assembly deliberated on issues that have a direct bearing on Zimbabwe's development agenda, constitutional democracy and the attainment of Vision 2030.

International parliamentary assemblies are not ceremonial events. They provide legislators with an invaluable platform to exchange ideas, to learn from international best practices and collective development solutions to global challenges that transcend national borders. Issues

such as climate change, food security, public health, technological advancement and artificial intelligence, migration, peace and security, youth empowerment, and gender equality affect every nation, including Zimbabwe. Our participation, therefore, enables us as a nation to contribute to global policy discussions while simultaneously drawing lessons that can strengthen our domestic legislative and oversight functions.

One of the major strengths of the Inter-Parliamentary Union is its emphasis on democratic governance and accountable institutions. As Parliament, our constitutional responsibilities include making laws, representing citizens and overseeing the Executive, participating in international forums enhances our appreciation of these responsibilities by exposing us to innovative oversight mechanisms, legislative reforms, and citizen engagement. Models adopted by other jurisdictions, such experiences enable us to continuously improve our own parliamentary systems. I particularly appreciate the assembly's discussions on sustainable development. Zimbabwe remains committed to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals alongside our national

development strategies. Parliament has an indispensable role in ensuring that national legislation, budget allocation, and public policies are aligned with these developmental objectives.

Through effective oversight, Parliament must ensure that the resources intended for development programmes are utilised efficiently, transparently and for the benefit of our people. Climate change is another issue that deserves serious attention. Zimbabwe has experienced prolonged droughts, unpredictable rainfall patterns, and other climate-related disasters that continue to threaten agricultural productivity, water security and the rural livelihoods. The discussions at the Assembly reaffirmed the importance of strengthening climate resilience through sustainable agricultural practices, investments in irrigation infrastructure, renewable energy and disaster preparedness. Parliament should continue supporting legislation and budgetary allocations that enable communities to adapt to the changing climate. Mr. President, food security remains one of the greatest challenges facing developing countries. The Assembly recognised the importance of building resilient

food systems capable of withstanding economic shocks and climate-related disruptions.

Zimbabwe possesses enormous agricultural potential through appropriate legislation, adequate financing, research, innovation and support for smallholder farmers. Our country can achieve sustainable food security while contributing to regional agricultural development. Equally important were discussions on digital transformation and technological innovation, artificial intelligence, digital governance and information technology are rapidly changing economies across the world. Zimbabwe cannot afford to lag in the digital revolution.

Parliament should actively support legislative frameworks that promote innovation while protecting citizens' rights to privacy, data security and ethical use of emerging technologies. Digital transformation also presents opportunities to improve parliamentary operations and enhance public participation and strengthen service delivery. Mr. President, the promotion of peace and security and conflict prevention featured prominently during the Assembly, sustainable development cannot be achieved without peace and political stability.

Zimbabwe has constantly advocated peace, dialogue, respect for sovereignty and the peaceful resolution of disputes. Parliament should continue to support initiatives that promote national unity, social cohesion and inclusive governance while rejecting violence in all of its forms. The Assembly also emphasised the importance of empowering women and young people. Our Constitution recognises the equality and non-discrimination of fundamental principles. Parliament must therefore continue promoting legislation and policies that expand opportunities for women and youth and persons with disabilities in education, employment, entrepreneurship and political participation. Inclusive development ensures that no citizen is left behind. While participation in international conferences is essential, greater value lies in the implementation of the knowledge acquired. When our people go to these conferences and we send delegations to these conferences, when they come back, what is more important is what they bring and should be implemented. We should bear fruit from what they got from these conferences.

Mr. President, the recommendations will be referred to the relevant portfolio and thematic committees for detailed consideration, while responsible ministries should periodically report on progress made in implementing recommendations applicable to Zimbabwe. Such follow-up mechanisms will strengthen accountability and ensure measurable outcomes from our international engagement. Furthermore, Parliament should establish a structured post-conference implementation framework. Every delegation should present an action matrix identifying recommendations, responsible institutions, implementation, timelines and measurable performance indicators. This would enable Parliament to monitor progress systematically and ensure that international commitments are translated into tangible national benefits.

Mr. President, there is also a need to strengthen parliamentary research and policy analysis capacity. Members attending international conferences should receive comprehensive briefing documents on agenda items, legislative practices and Zimbabwe policy positions. Following the written and structured briefing, a section should be organised for all members to facilitate knowledge sharing across both

Houses of Parliament. This approach will maximise institutional learning and improve the quality of parliamentary debates. I also encourage close collaboration between Parliament and university research institutions, civil society organisations and development partners. Such partnerships can generate evidence-based policy recommendations that strengthen Parliament's legislative and oversight responsibilities while ensuring international commitments are informed by local realities.

Active participation in organisations such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Zimbabwe strengthens bilateral and multilateral relations, promotes mutual understanding and creates opportunities for technical cooperation, trade investment and capacity building. This relationship ultimately contributes to national development and enhances Zimbabwe's standing within the international community. As we continue to engage internationally, our Parliament should also prioritise the dissemination of information to citizens regarding the outcomes of these conferences. Public awareness strengthens transparency, accountability and system confidence in parliamentary diplomacy. Our

constituency should understand how international engagements contribute to improved governance, service delivery and socio-economic development.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I commend the delegation for representing Zimbabwe with distinction at the 152nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Their participation has provided valuable insights that can strengthen our legislative work, improve oversight and enhance national development. The responsibility now rests with the Parliament and the Executive to ensure that the recommendations that are contained in the report are effectively implemented. I, therefore, urge the House to adopt the report, establish a robust monitoring mechanism that guarantees the implementation of recommendations which are in the report. Thank you.

HON. SEN. GOTORA: Thank you Mr. President. I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. SEN. TONGOGARA: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 22nd July, 2026.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE JOINT PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
SERVICE, LABOUR AND SOCIAL WELFARE AND THEMATIC
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS ON THE PETITION BY THE
POWER OF TOUCH INSTITUTION ON THE REVIEW OF LAWS
AND REGULATIONS THAT HAVE A BEARING ON THE SENIOR
CITIZENS

Twelfth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the Report of the Joint Portfolio Committee on Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare and Thematic Committee on Human Rights on the Petition by the Power of Touch Institution on the Review of Laws and Regulations that have a bearing on the Senior Citizens.

Question again proposed.

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

HON. SEN. MATIBIRI: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 22nd July, 2026.

MOTION

REHABILITATION PROGRAMMES FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE IN THE STREETS

Thirteenth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the increasing number of people living in the streets in Zimbabwe.

Question again proposed.

HON. SEN GWATURE: Thank you Mr. President. I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. SEN CHAKABUDA: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 22nd July, 2026.

MOTION

RESUSCITATION OF THE COTTON INDUSTRY

Fourteenth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the collapse of the cotton industry in Zimbabwe.

Question again proposed.

HON. SEN. MWANZA: Thank you Mr. President, for recognising me. I rise to second the motion brought in this House by

Hon. Sen. Manyengavana. The cotton industry was once one of Zimbabwe's most important agricultural sectors, providing employment, foreign currency and income for thousands of rural households.

However, over the years, the industry has declined due to lower producer prices, lack of financing, climate change and competition from imported textiles. This examines the major effects of the collapse of the cotton industry in Zimbabwe. Many small-scale farmers were affected. They depended on cotton as their main cash crop. The collapse of the industry has resulted in reduced household income, making it difficult for families to pay for food, education, health care and other basic needs.

Reduced cotton production has forced many textile factories to reduce operations on clothes, completely leading to further job losses and reduced industrial output. Many farmers who stopped growing cotton often lacked access to inputs and financial support provided through cotton schemes. This has negatively affected overall agricultural production in some areas.

In my recommendation, the Government must introduce free and competitive cotton producer prices. Financial institutions should provide

loans and farming inputs to cotton growers. The Government should revive and support their local farmers. The local textiles industry should demand for locally produced cotton. Farmers should receive training in modern farming techniques to improve production and quality. I so submit.

***HON. SEN. KATUMBA:** Thank you Mr. President. I want to add a few words on the motion which was brought in by Hon. Sen. Manyengavana. This motion is very pertinent to us as a country. When we talk about cotton, we are talking about the economy.

I remember when we used to grow cotton in our country. It used to help a lot of families. Some of the children who are no longer going to school; if cotton was still there, they would be able to go to school. Cotton started by employing people whilst still in the fields on the weeding pad because a farmer would not be able to do that on their own. So, a lot of people would get jobs up to when it would be harvested.

In addition, a lot of our families were uplifted by growing cotton and people were able to send children to universities because of cotton. If we look at our places like Gokwe and Sanyati, Muzarabani, those

areas survived on growing cotton. If we look at the clothing industry, we cannot get our Zimbabwean materials. For clothes to be sewn, we have to import materials from outside. If we go back to growing cotton as we used to do, the textile industry would be able to make materials which we can use as a nation. The industries that we are crying about, will create a lot of jobs. The unemployed children can get jobs because of cotton. So, cotton is very important.

If only we could go back to the former days when we used to grow cotton. When the farmers grow cotton, they want to get something so that they will be energised to go back. I know someone once said that people might end up not growing tobacco because of the prices. With these few words, I think we should go back to the days when we used to grow cotton and farmers should get the implements. Lastly, they should be paid well for growing cotton. Thank you.

***HON. SEN. MAVENYENGWA:** Thank you Mr. President. Let me add my voice on the growing of cotton and the challenges that we are facing in Zimbabwe, which was brought up by Hon. Sen.

Manyengavana. Hon. Sen. Mwanza and Sen. Katumba have said a lot,

but I want to add that the growing of cotton is contributing to the exodus of professors and lecturers that we have now.

I come from Chiredzi where cotton is grown and there is a ginnery there, but we are facing challenges: cotton growers can go up to two years without being paid and it is very difficult for them to go back into their field. I once heard that the Government is now a shareholder in the cotton company so, it would have been good that through the Ministry of Agriculture, they should investigate the growing of cotton because most people are no longer interested in growing cotton. It used to help. After all, we could get oil from the seeds and we could get feed, school fees and the general upkeep of our families.

The Cotton Company should value its farmers because we saw that the COTTCO employees went for months without getting their salaries and some ended up as voluntary workers. So, I have been touched by this issue because in my constituency, as a Senator from Masvingo, I find that it affects farmers on our side and other farmers from areas like Chinhoyi and Gokwe. There are a lot of cotton farmers there. So, when it comes to the budget, I think cotton growing should be looked at

because the Government is now a shareholder in COTTCO. Those are the words that I wanted to add. I thank you.

***HON. SEN. ZINDI:** Thank you Mr. President for giving me this opportunity to add a few words on the growing of cotton in Zimbabwe. I want to give an example. Way back when there were whites growing cotton and when we joined, things were okay and we grew cotton. Hon. Sen. Bimha next to me, was once the Minister of Industry and Commerce, where cotton is looked at in that industry. I once talked to him, trying to find out how we ended up here. You find that it took many Government institutions for us to get to where we are right now. I think there was a lot of blame-game in the Ministry and no one took responsibility.

However, we forgot that all those Government arms should come together because we cannot afford to operate in our silos as a Government because we operate as a system. If one thing fails in the jigsaw puzzle, it means that the whole system is down. That is how we ended up here. I want to say that when a farmer is farming, he is in business. Like what others have contributed, even those who contributed

today, they are in business. This is because if you can take your children to school and buy clothes and you can do the basics for a family to live happily, it means that you are looking at farming as a business. If it ends up that you are in business and have taken your money and invested in the company and you expect that the money is going to grow, then you find that there is nothing that is coming from there, including the capital that you have put into the business, it dampens your spirit because when everyone gets into business, your aim is to make a profit. That is what was happening or what was happening in cotton. That is the reason why we are seeing people running away from growing cotton. Mr. President, we ended up paying cotton farmers with two litres of cooking oil, two kgs of sugar, two kgs of self-raising flour and a green bar of soap. I was just giving them a history of how cotton farmers were being rewarded. They were being paid in basic grocery items.

If you think about it, if I was able to take my children to school, to buy a scotch cart or maintain it, to buy inputs for me to go back into the field, then I ended up being paid with two litres of cooking oil. It is a thing that dampens spirits and it makes people angry. People end up

thinking that they have been left on their own whilst the Government is there.

If you want people to go back into cotton growing, it is an uphill task for people because once beaten, twice shy. I want to encourage the Government to take steps to look after the goose that lays the eggs. They should look after that goose because where we are right now, we used to get foreign currency from cotton. We had so many cotton farmers.

Like what Hon. Sen. Mavenyengwa has said, even the ginnery machinery are now just white elephants because they are no longer in use. Like one other Hon. Member who debated last week, what happened in cotton is the same that is now happening in tobacco. The Government should take a strong position in covering up, in trying to curb corruption that is happening in those industries and is affecting the people who are supposed to grow the economy of the country. The speakers who spoke before me spoke about Kona events, which are happening between the buyers. They tell each other that they should not surpass five dollars per kg when buying and that is what they are doing.

When you go to the market, I used to grow cabbages, but I gave up because corruption is a cancer in our nation. You get into the market with your truckload of a good crop of cabbages. When you get into the market, all those who want to buy will connive that they will not buy above 20 cents or 30 cents. Then you think you cannot take the cabbages back to the farm, so you just sell at that price but, the price will not enable you to go back into the field because you would have bought the seed in US dollars and the salaries for your workers are in US dollars. I also have to pay National Social Security Authority (NSSA) contributions and also pay Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA).

You can talk of all the taxes; the National Employment Council (NEC) also wants its share from there. If you do not pay NSSA, ZIMRA and NEC, the next step is to garnish. When they garnish, they garnish your accounts, but there is no money in those accounts because we have lost. Then they will end up confiscating your machinery, you used to grow the cotton. If it is a tractor, they will sell the tractor so that NSSA, NEC or ZIMRA get their money. But looking at it from a logical point of view, you have confiscated my tractor and I did not get anything from

my yield. You have sold my equipment for USD 200.00, which I was not able to remit as tax but, what you have confiscated is capital equipment. How am I going to replace that equipment? You will see that a farmer will not be able even to stand up from there because he cannot go and get a loan because he does not have collateral now. If he was able to use his tractor as collateral, it means he does not have anything and that is the end of it. Then we end up belittling ourselves that we are not able to farm as black people. We are not looking at all these things that are contributing to the downfall of farmers.

If we have a drought, taking a leaf from the whites, they did not farm what was extraordinary, but the wives were given money to grow whatever they wanted. They were even given school fees to pay for their children as loans. They were given upkeep money per year and that money would be included on that loan. Then they farmed, grew the cotton and then the money would be repaid after the harvest. There were clear lines on how to sell and even to make the repayments.

When they would go to floors to sell their cotton or tobacco, it was transparent without any corruption but now corruption is rampant. If

there was a drought, they did not repay the loans; they would call it compounding. They were trying to help farmers and also encourage them to keep on farming and also to make them realise that they were valuable in the growth of the economy.

I think the Government should take into account that if you have enough things, farming is very easy. If you have equipment, farming is not extraordinary, anyone can do farming, that is how I understand farming. So, with that, I think the Government should do everything within its means. It should bring clear policies that make the farmer great and bring out his value. You should look at the foreign currency that is being brought in by tobacco. If we all leave farming, what would happen? What happened in cotton will eventually creep into tobacco farming, so I think we should work together as a team so that we move forward. Thank you.

+HON. SEN. R. M. NDLOVU: Thank you very much Mr. President. I want to thank the previous speakers who spoke before me, talking about the same issue the issue which is quite concerning Mr. President. Firstly, I would request the Minister of Agriculture,

Mechanisation and Water Resources Development to come and respond to the issue, which has been raised, to clarify where the problem is.

When we took over land from the colonialists did the white men take their knowledge with them? Did they take the cotton seed hybrids? Do we not realise that this is affecting people's livelihoods because there are no longer jobs in that sector? When we were growing up in Bulawayo, there were the textile mills, a company that had three shifts per day.

Some would have the seven to three, three to seven, then seven to seven years. They were doing shift work. Now, nothing is happening and the company is now defunct. As the Government, how is this issue going to be solved? Can we leave it like that? What are people saying and those who worked for that company, the former workers? I believe that they have the knowledge and probably they want to know how the Government wants to address the issue.

In Mangwe, there was cotton production in Ngwizi. There were a lot of trucks that were coming to collect cotton and a lot of people were employed but that industry is now defunct. It has collapsed. These are the people who are being deported from South Africa who are told to

come back home. We desire that the Government investigates the issue because it makes people despise us as a Government. We end up being insulted by people who do not deserve to tell us to go back. This beautiful nation is quite amazing. Zimbabwe is a beautiful country.

I would like to request that the Minister of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Water Resources Development should come and present a ministerial statement responding to the issue that has been raised so that he clarifies where the challenge is. We are a rich country with minerals. It cannot be given as an excuse that we do not have capital. Farmers need to be funded so that they resuscitate the sector and that we continue planting cotton and engaging in cotton production. This is my plea to you Hon. Senate President, that you please invite the Minister of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Water Resources Development to come to this august House to respond.

A lot of issues have been raised, but the most important thing is that no matter how much we talk, there is no response. We do not get any response. He winds up his motion at the end of the day. Next week we will bring another similar motion and we keep on repeating the same

thing all over again. It is like hitting against the wall. My request to the President of the Senate is that please use your authority to invite the Honourable Minister to come and respond to the motion before it is wound up. Thank you.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF SENATE (HON. SEN.

KAMBIZI): Thank you very much Hon. Sen. Ndlovu. Yes, the request that you made is a very valid one and very important. I will take up that matter with the responsible authority and ensure that the Minister comes and responds. Not that Minister alone, but I think all other Ministers with their various ministries.

***HON. SEN. GWATURE:** Thank you very much Mr. President. Let me add my voice to the motion which was brought to the august House by Hon. Sen. Manyengavana. I believe that a lot has been said by previous speakers, but our plea as Senators and as leaders is that we are together. We view this in the same manner, which means that leaders in this august House are genuine leaders who concur with each other. I add my voice by saying that when the motion was moved by Hon. Sen. Manyengavana, I believe that he could have spoken about other issues

besides cotton, because this is the challenge facing Zimbabwean farmers from cotton, tobacco, maize, even the tobacco that we are talking about which was bought at a paltry amount.

It is not surprising that in the near future we might see tobacco going down to the level of cotton. I was quite impressed when Hon. Sen. Zindi articulated the issue that when a farmer produces his or her produce, then they are told that we are giving you two kilogrammes of flour which is equivalent to the cotton that they will have produced. I wanted to highlight the same issue because it is happening in Mashonaland Central. It has happened, but it is no longer happening because there is no cotton ginnery. I believe that my Hon. President of the Senate knows the issue. When talking about Muzarabani, this is what is happening. In the past, people were buying cotton from Muzarabani, but people would wait for their payments for the sugar, tea leaves for a long time.

Why should one plant cotton on his or her land so that he will be paid with a token of sugar or basic commodities like rice which one can also produce from one's land? When we plant cotton, we anticipate

payment, which will benefit our children. Even those who work in rural areas, when they come home, they should find us having bought new beds. They would be able to say I am not buying a bed because you have bought that. However, when they come back home, they would still face the same situation. Sometimes they do not work wholeheartedly because of stress thinking of their parents sleeping on the floor. Sometimes the parents would face challenges in tilling land and producing cotton, but the children would still be suffering and they expect to pay school fees from their produce.

What I am saying is that agriculture is facing a big challenge and when we talk of our farmers who produce different farm produce, they are going to face challenges if this is not solved. If the Minister does not respond, then it is a challenge but we desire that the Minister should come and respond. When we go back to the provinces, we want to hear people saying things have changed. We hear that there were cars and we would respond by saying that they were our Hon. Ministers. Sometimes it is as if we are singing the Song of Solomon, which is in the Bible. I

am saying that we need a solution. With these few words, I want to thank you.

+HON. SEN. NDEBELE: I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity to add my voice to this motion, which pertains to cotton, which is no longer being produced in our country.

Mr. President, it seems this issue has been exhausted. People have spoken about it in this august House but I believe I have to add my voice. I cannot be left behind because emphasis produces results. If we do not emphasise, then results might not be forthcoming.

I rise to address a pressing challenge that has significantly impacted our community in Gokwe, particularly concerning the decline in cotton production. As you are aware, this region was once a thriving hub for cotton cultivation, providing livelihoods for many individuals and fostering economic growth. However, the recent downturn in cotton production has led to dire consequences not only for cotton farmers but also for the entire supply chain, including cotton buyers and textile companies that rely on this vital crop.

The repercussions of this decline are profound. We have witnessed a reversal of the gains we previously achieved, notably in employment opportunities. Many individuals, especially the youth who once had stable jobs in cotton production, are now unemployed. This unfortunate situation has compelled some to seek alternative livelihoods, such as mining, which necessarily does not offer the same level of financial security that cotton farming once provided.

Furthermore, the downsizing of COTCCO has exacerbated the situation, leading to significant job losses among those who were directly involved in cotton production. The root causes of this decline have been highlighted by previous speakers, notably the issues surrounding inadequate payments to cotton producers. Many farmers are receiving meagre compensation for their hard work, which discourages continued investment in cotton cultivation. As a result, producers are left with no choice but to return home with insufficient earnings, often resorting to bartering with basic commodities rather than receiving fair monetary compensation.

We must address these challenges head-on. We must ensure that cotton farmers receive equitable payments that reflect the true value of their labour and investment. By doing so, we can revitalise the cotton industry, restore employment opportunities and empower our communities, including women's clubs that produce cotton-based products.

Mr. President, I urge you to prioritise the revitalisation of cotton production in Gokwe. By implementing policies that support fair compensation and foster a conducive environment for cotton farming, we can reverse the current trend and restore hope and prosperity to our community.

I would like to draw attention to a critical issue that affects women in our community, particularly in relation to the payment of tokens or basic commodities. As a woman, I can personally attest to the challenges we face during our monthly cycles, especially concerning the availability of sanitary products.

The decline in cotton production has led to a significant shortage of cotton, which is essential not only for the textile industry but also for

the production of sanitary pads. This scarcity has created a pressing need for alternative solutions. In response to this situation, we have begun educating women and girls on the use of reusable cloths as a substitute during their menstrual periods. While this is a commendable effort towards sustainability, it is not a perfect replacement for commercially produced sanitary products.

The lack of access to adequate menstrual hygiene products poses serious health risks and can adversely affect the dignity and well-being of women and girls. We must address this issue with urgency. By revitalising the cotton industry, we can ensure a steady supply of cotton, which in turn will facilitate the production of sanitary pads and other essential products.

I urge you Mr. President, to consider the broader implications of cotton production on women's health and well-being. By supporting policies that enhance cotton cultivation and ensure fair compensation for farmers, we can improve the availability of necessary sanitary products, thereby empowering women and fostering a healthier community.

However, if this situation of cotton was not happening, I believe that we would not be having this challenge – [HON. MEMBERS: *Inaudible interjections.*] - Mr. President. Can I be protected? Senator Mavenyengwa is talking with Senator Mutsvangwa, but I want them to hear me. They were interfering with my contribution; I ended up listening to them.

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: Order, Hon. Senators.

+HON. SEN. NDEBELE: I would like to express the deep pain and frustration felt by our cotton farmers, many of whom are still owed substantial amounts of money and find themselves without any resolution regarding their payments. The application of the law in ensuring that these farmers receive what is rightfully due to them has been inadequate. As highlighted by Hon. Sen. Ndlovu, we once saw a vibrant network of vehicles traversing the routes for cotton transport, but that is no longer the case.

In light of the current circumstances, many cotton farmers have resorted to producing sweet potatoes, which do not yield the same

financial return as cotton. This shift is not only economically detrimental but also reflects a broader issue exacerbated by climate change. While we acknowledge the challenges posed by climate change, farmers must receive their due payments regardless of these external factors. The ongoing debt has severely diminished their motivation to cultivate cotton, leading to a decline in production that is both concerning and unsustainable.

Mr. President, I urge you to consider the necessity of following up on compensating our cotton farmers. They are owed significant amounts of money, and without this financial support, their desire to continue cotton production will wane further.

Moreover, I must bring to your attention the unfortunate state of the textile company that once operated between Harare and Bulawayo. This facility now lies in disrepair, resembling a ghost of its former self. It is disheartening to witness such a dilapidated structure, a stark reminder of lost opportunities for employment and economic growth. The Government must take action to rectify this situation, as we all aspire to see our unemployed citizens gain meaningful work.

In this regard, I call upon the Minister of Agriculture to take a proactive stance in addressing the concerns of cotton farmers, especially as we approach the next agricultural season. Inputs must be made available to these farmers so they can adequately prepare their land for planting. They must not be forgotten during this critical period.

Furthermore, when the Hon. Minister comes to this esteemed House to respond to this motion, I request that he present evidence of thorough research on the subject. We are weary of empty promises and assurances of future research that often go unfulfilled. He must provide concrete solutions and actionable plans rather than vague commitments.

I speak from a place of deep concern, not only as a woman but also as a representative of many female farmers who are directly impacted by these issues. Women are actively discussing their struggles on social media, seeking to raise awareness about the lack of cotton and the resulting limitations on their participation in various activities.

HON. SEN. KABONDO: Thank you Mr. President for giving me this opportunity. I would like to point out one thing about the effects of no longer farming cotton. A lot has been said on this issue and people

have indicated the loss of jobs and the failure of parents to take children to school. It does not end there. It also goes to the de-industrialisation of the manufacturing company or industry, where people went on further to lose their jobs and children failed to go to school. It is a chain because it started from not farming cotton. It got into the industry.

The reason why I personally stood up is that I want to talk about how this whole thing has affected a special type of people, Mr. President. That special type of people is people like me, those that are not exactly small because if you say we are big, we feel offended. We will say you are body-shaming us. We have a challenge because when we still had cotton in this country, our local manufacturing industries knew us and they had us in mind when they were doing their designs for clothes. Now that they are closed, we realise we are having clothes that come from outside the country, from China and the north. Those people do not have people like me in mind when they create their designs. I get into a Chinese shop – [*Laughter.*] - I know you can laugh at me but I am very serious about this. When I get into a Chinese shop, the minute I ask the shop attendant if he has anything my size, you should look at his

face. The expression on his face is like I have said something from outer space.

We really wish we could go back in time, when we could get into shops like Edgars because it had a special section where we could go and get clothes. Now we cannot do that. What choice is left for us then? We have to go to those bend-down (*kotamai*) boutiques or the *mabheros*, I do not know what to call them, where we are most likely to get what we can to cover ourselves so as not to move around like Adam and Eve after eating the fruit of knowledge. It is really difficult because we are wearing what we find and not what we want. We have no choice. I think as a Government, we need to revisit cotton farming so that at least we can breathe some life into these industries and, in turn, breathe life into us the special people, so that we can at least retain our dignity. I thank you Mr. President.

HON. SEN. ZVIDZAI: Thank you Mr. President for allowing me this opportunity to contribute to this very important motion, a motion by a very interesting emerging farmer whose name is not Mavenyengwa but Manyengavana. I really stand here to support this motion from that point

of view to try and keep encouraging him to carry on with his passion for farming and that perhaps one of these days he will lead an expedition towards the revival of this important ecosystem, the cotton production ecosystem.

Mr. President, I walk a slightly different path; a path which some might think is controversial but my background always informs me that we must explore the unexplored areas because in there may lie the very bright silver lining on this whole subject. Your team, your Senators have very eloquently dealt with the problems of the cotton industry at the moment; the fall from about 350 000 tonnes of cotton in 2012 to about 70 000 tonnes now, if not less. As Hon. Sen. Mutsvangwa aptly put it, we are not just talking about agriculture here, we are talking about what agriculture can do in terms of the downstream benefits such as employment, which obviously any Government wants to be proud that they have created so much employment, that they have dealt a blow on the unemployment numbers of the country. We seem to have placed the blame purely on indigenous issues whereas the mix is both indigenous in my opinion, as well as things that are outside our total control.

Mr. President, it is true that as the world advances, new technologies come up. If you do not move with technology, you are effectively moving backwards. I always remember, the first time I jumped on a bus from Bikita to Harare and watched outside, I was amazed to see that all the trees were racing backwards while we were going forward. The trees were standing still but effectively they were moving backwards because they did not move with the speed of the bus.

There are now very strongly competing materials such as viscose, hemp, polyester, for example, a synthetic material. I think it is the biggest competitor to cotton products. It probably is one of those products that has contributed to the decline of this very important industry. This industry has seen different edible oils, clothing, the beef industry, enhancing our competitiveness in the EU market of beef, for example. Cotton helped a lot in doing that. So that equation, the cotton ecosystem equation, has got that supply side and the growing of the cotton. We have remained stationary while the whole world has continued to move. If we keep an attitude that is anti-biotechnology, no

matter what we do, we are moving backwards. No matter what we do, cotton will not be revived because the competition is moving.

Remember, in the current discourse around the environment, cotton has a problem on the pesticides side of things, which is a serious problem for our water systems, our rivers. It is a problem. It is a problem with respect to the carcinogenic nature of some of the chemicals that we use to manage pests. We must embrace biotechnology. We must welcome technology so that we can beat these adversities and move sure-footedly against the competing products like polyester. Polyester synthetic, is safe, friendly and cheap. It is even more enduring than cotton products. We need to face animal rights in the eye. My proposal is a request for the Executive to shift the attitude towards genetically modified organisms (GMOs). I think this is one of the problems that our cotton thread remains; if it was one foot 20 years ago and we pride ourselves saying, we have got the longest lint threads, it is no longer the same today. It is falling behind because other people have developed genetically modified cotton varieties that can give you a metre.

You are suffering because you are remaining standard when everybody else is moving. You are remaining standard when everybody else is taking advantage of technology. If we embraced GMOs, this is what that would do: You would develop varieties of cotton that do not need as much pesticide and you are being friendly to environmental issues of the environment. You will develop a cotton lint that is longer, that will be able to compete with polyester. On the supply and the manufacturing side of cotton, the key drivers of cost are pesticides. If we invited our biotechnologists to develop a cotton variety that does not need so many pesticides, it means our cost is reduced and the farmer is now able to put more in their pocket, in spite of the exigencies of competition.

Mr. President, even digging deep into our traditional methods of treating cotton, this can only happen if we create a strong synergy between the Executive, institutions of research and the universities, so that they can place on the table solutions which are environmentally friendly. In fact, if we remain standing, there is a danger that the world will eventually place a ban, as they did on asbestos. They will say this is

dangerous; let us not buy it. You will get a ban because of the general environmental effects on the cotton value chain.

Therefore, we need to wake up, change our attitude towards the technology and change our attitude towards the GMOs. Perhaps we might win. Of course, we also have to deal with the marketing side of issues but today, Mr. President, my focus is more on the production side and that we must be techno-savvy around some of these things. We must not keep dug-in that we do not deal with GMOs when everybody else is moving in that direction. The world is moving in the direction of ever using new technologies and we cannot afford to remain in the Stone Age. I thank you Mr. President.

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

HON. SEN. MATIBIRI: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 22nd July, 2026.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR
AND SOCIAL WELFARE (HON. DINHA):** Mr. President, I move
that we revert to Order of the Day, Number 2.

Motion put and agreed to.

SECOND READING

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH BILL [H. B. 6, 2025]

Second Order read: Second Reading: Occupational Safety and
Health Bill [H. B. 6, 2025].

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR
AND SOCIAL WELFARE (HON. DINHA):** Thank you Mr.
President. I rise to deliver my second reading speech on the
Occupational Safety and Health Bill. The Bill before you today is a
necessary measure to improve the administration, safety and health of
our workers at the workplace. As would be expected, this Bill has gone
through all internal legal processes that include discussion and approval
by both the Cabinet Committee on Legislation and Cabinet, gazetting by
Parliament and public hearings. None of these processes and stages have
given it a thumbs down, including the Parliamentary Legal Committee.

I therefore, present my second reading speech on this Bill today to this august House and open it up for discussion, debate and approval by the House. The Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Bill, among other things, seeks to harmonise OSH legislation in the country, replacing the existing old, fragmented and difficult to enforce laws. The Bill is a key piece of legislation that will not only contribute to the prevention and reduction of occupational injuries, fatalities and diseases but also to the national competitiveness on the global scale.

The promulgation of this law has become even more urgent as it will assist in the decent work agenda, as well as align with the recently adopted resolution by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to have OSH as part of fundamental principles and rights in the workplace. The Bill, among other things, will provide for the governance and provision of the occupational safety and health framework in Zimbabwe, the safety, health, and welfare of people in workplaces, the establishment of the Tripartite Zimbabwe Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Council, the establishment of the Department of Occupational Safety and Health, the setting out of the

role of the National Social Security Authority (NSSA) in implementing the provisions of this Act. The necessary framework and systems to ensure compliance with the various ILO Occupational Safety and Health Conventions to which Zimbabwe is a signatory, regulation and control of plant machinery and hazardous substances used at the workplaces and repealing of the Pneumoconiosis Act [*Chapter 15.08*] and Factories and Work Act [*Chapter 14.08*]. With those remarks, I now move that the Occupational Safety and Health Bill, [H. B. 6, 2025], be now read a second time.

***HON. SEN. TONGOGARA:** Thank you Mr. President for granting me this opportunity to contribute to this important Bill, which was brought by the Minister today, the Occupational Safety and Health Bill for 2025. I would like to say that the Minister has done a good thing by bringing the Bill because it had delayed. People working in different workplaces get injured whilst on duty. They may feel ill whilst at work but there was nothing, which was being done for those workers. When the Minister came and said that there is going to be an inspection at workplaces where people work such as mines because in some instances,

you hear that a person succumbed to TB because nothing was being done for the people to get attended to. There were also no laws on how to protect against accidents at workplaces. There was also nothing which was there to see, if a worker gets injured, they are going to be compensated or paid since they are breadwinners. If a breadwinner gets injured, it must also be noted how their families are supposed to be assisted.

Mr. President, in this Bill, it is being said that the employers must see to it that their workers or employees have enough tools of trade and wages or salaries or are they complying with laws on what is supposed to be done to the employees? She said that when some employers fail to do this, there are some penalties for them. I would like to know from the Minister what is going to happen to those employers who do not follow the rules that are there for the welfare of the workers. What penalties are being highlighted and what are they like? May the Hon. Minister explain to us what will happen to those employers who do not follow the rules and regulations in the said Bill? Is there a law that stipulates how the

employer is going to be penalised or if the employee is going to benefit anything from this?

Mr. President, Clause 14 mentions the rights of workers. I would like to know from the Minister that if an employee is at work, how do they come to know about their rights at their workplace? Is there any form of education that companies provide to educate their workers? May you also explain that to us?

In Clause 17, there is the issue of registration and insurance of certificates. If a company is there, it is supposed to be registered and have enough documentation that will assist its workers. I would like this august House to know who is going to be given these certificates. Are there people from the Ministry who will do follow-ups to see to it that all that is required is followed?

Mr. President, in this Bill in Clause 20, which is talking about buildings, I would like to know whether these buildings that are said to be constructed are going to be accessible to people with disabilities so that they can access these buildings. For example, those people in wheelchairs and those using clutches, are they able to access such places

because our President says no one must be left behind. I would like to know if this group of people is also catered for in this said Bill and how they are going to be assisted.

Clause 22 talks about accident records. I would like to know if there is an initiative in all these companies on how workers are supposed to work and their work conditions. If they feel ill, are they going to be assisted? Is there an initiative that these records are going to be kept by the employers? If there is an employer who does not have that record, is there an initiative to do a follow-up on those employers who do not have records? Is there anything that is going to be done if there are no resources like that?

Clause 23 talks about inspectors. I would like to know if these inspectors were trained and if they know what they are supposed to do when they get to a place. Sometimes they will go there without knowing what they are supposed to be inspecting. If they have the knowledge, they will know how they are supposed to execute their duties and ensure the health of the people and that they must not disturb people who will be working or those who get injured whilst on duty. This will assist in

the sense that those who are working will be working together and they will know what they are supposed to be doing if they have a company. One might not even know what they are supposed to do when they are at a company. They must also be aware of their rights.

Mr. President, I would like to thank you for granting me this opportunity and I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Minister who brought this Bill. Long ago, people would get injured whilst on duty and there was nothing which was being done. It was very difficult for a person who got injured as they would not benefit anything and their families would suffer. No one would record these injuries. This does not give a good image of our country because we want our country to develop. If we want our country to develop, we must safeguard the safety and health of our employees. Thank you for granting me this opportunity.

HON. SEN. MATIBIRI: I must admit at the outset that my level of engagement with this Bill was not as detailed as that of Hon. Sen. Tongogara. Indeed, on that note I want to appreciate the various issues that she has raised and advanced in respect of this very important Bill.

Also, to thank the Hon. Minister for bringing this Bill before this august House.

Occupational safety and health are key to productivity. Workers themselves drive productivity. When workers work in a safe environment, productivity is most likely to go higher. Zimbabwe is indeed open for business. Hon. Sen. Mutsvangwa, in his famous line, says investors are flocking into Zimbabwe and indeed, they are. They are coming in, setting up shops in this country and we want them and it is a beautiful thing for that to happen.

I was lucky to represent the Committee on Sustainable Development Goals at the Inaugural Indaba of the Small to Medium Enterprise on Thursday and Friday last week. Mr. President, I wish to inform this Senate that a lot is happening in our informal sector and the informal sector is actually contributing 66% of Gross Domestic Product. This is not happening on its own. It is being driven by workers. The rights of workers are something else and productivity is something else.

This Bill seeks to harmonise laws related to occupational safety and health and that will keep Zimbabwe in line with key provisions of

the International Labour Organisation (ILO), to which we are a party. It becomes very important that those who seek investment in our country are made aware of the rights of our workers because they are going to utilise Zimbabwean labour.

We have had cases where our people are working in hazardous conditions, offloading tonnes of cement without any form of protection. That will expose them to very dangerous diseases early in their lives. When that happens, do they have any recourse to their employers? They do not because the laws are not harmonised. So, we welcome this Bill insofar as it is seeking to harmonise those laws and address those concerns.

We have also had cases where workers are injured at the workplace and nothing is done for them. They are not compensated in any way. So, it is very important that as we welcome investors, before they even start producing anything in this country, they comply with this particular piece of legislation. Only then would we be saying we are moving to protect the welfare and health of our workforce as a people. Yes, we agree, *nyika inovakwa nevene vavo nevamwewo vanouya*.

Those people may have a different attitude towards our workers. It is only through the enactment of this legislation that these people will be protected.

So, I welcome this Bill. I also identify strongly with the questions raised by Hon. Sen. Tongogara, that if these are addressed, we have no reason absolutely not to support this particular important piece of our legislation. I thank you.

HON. SEN. TSHABANGU: Thank you very much Mr. President. I would like to ride on the two distinguished speakers who have spoken before me. I am from the International Labour Organisation and my activism is through labour. I am a student of labour. How does this Bill seek to resolve the conflict where NSSA is both the compensator and the inspector at the same time?

The Minister speaks about ratification of various conventions that we are not aware of. Has Zimbabwe ratified the occupational health service under the ILO? He has to maybe elaborate on that. Then, on the scope of workers, what is the legal right of workers to refuse unsafe work and report violations without any victimisation? The previous

speakers have expressly echoed that our economy is in the informal sector. Our labour force is in the informal sector; 80% of our labour force is in the informal sector. Does this really cover those who are in the informal sector? What mechanisms does this Bill seek to cover those in the informal sector? Since this is where the majority of the labour force is, as opposed to the formal sector.

We have seen on social media workers in the mining sector, for example, beating each other with shovels, holding managers by their necks. So, it does not really cover at what stage. If it does, what are the mechanisms, because they are not really clear in the Bill. We cannot really ignore the informal sector, which is the driving force of this economy and speak to the formal sector, which is about 10% to 20% now. I thank you.

^^HON. SEN. MOHADI: Thank you Mr. President. I do not know whether my voice will come out since I have the flu. I want to thank the Hon. Minister who brought this Bill to this House that speaks about occupational safety and health....

THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF SENATE: Order! Can Hon.

Members confirm that you are hearing her? -[HON. MEMBERS: *No!*]-

HON. SEN. MOHADI: I rest my case.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF SENATE: Thank you for the contribution. We really wanted to hear what you were saying. Unfortunately, you are not audible. I am sorry about that Hon. Sen. Mohadi.

***HON. SEN. NDEBELE:** Thank you Mr. President. Thank you to the Hon. Minister for bringing us this Bill today because we think that is going to help in many places. By protecting the employees, they are not well protected when they are working. We thank you very much because I do not know if this Bill applies in all places or even in the health sector. If it applies in the health sector, may it lead by example? You find out that in many places there is no safety, especially for people who are working in the health sector. This is because of the places that they work in, sometimes there is no water, there are no trailers and there are no gloves.

At the end of the day, they end up in danger because of the diseases that they are trying to heal in other people. That is why I am asking if this Bill applies in the health sector. I want the Hon. Minister to tell us if it applies so that even those in the health sector are protected, so that everyone else follows suit and the inspectors that were being talked about should check up the situation at the hospitals. This is because it might not be feasible down there. After all, on their side, all is okay. We saw that this Bill will pass on one side because on the other side the benches are empty. Thank you.

HON. SEN. ZVIDZAI: Thank you Mr. President. I would like to make some brief contributions to this Bill. I will look at three points which applaud the Bill and what I think are three weaknesses that need strengthening. As I do that, I also want to lament and lacrimate the fact that generally what we are doing here is just a ritual. The originators of these Bills are generally unprepared to take on board our contributions.

Having said that, I rise to make a few contributions, riding on colleagues who have already made significant points around this.

I honestly commend the Bill for extending occupational safety protection to all workers and all workplaces, whether temporary or permanent. It is a significant departure from the outdated Factories and Works Act. So, it does reflect an attitude of being a bit progressive. We applaud the Hon. Minister for that.

Secondly, I also applaud the Bill for strengthening the rights of workers. It empowers employees to refuse dangerous work, to say, *uh-uh*, I am not going to do this because in my opinion it is dangerous. The Bill provides for that and I think we must applaud that. Generally, the feeling was that you take an instruction and complain later. Now, it allows the worker to say, no, I will not do it because I think it is dangerous. This is very progressive. Workers are now allowed to participate in workplace safety structures. Moreover, they are entitled to safety training, allowed to whistle-blow around unsafe conditions in the workplace without fear of being victimised. I think this is very commendable and very progressive.

Thirdly, the Bill rightly places greater responsibility for occupational safety on the employer. It has to be because *ndiye muridzi*

webasa. It demands that there is a report on risk assessment around the work environment. I think this will improve accountability because it is now placed squarely on the employer. There are so many strengths and I have just picked three so that I can conclude.

However, there are also weaknesses. I have just picked three but there are many. I have just chosen to pick three to emphasise what I want to emphasise and to eventually arrive at a conclusion. The Occupational Safety and Health Department remains under NSSA. Like Hon. Sen. Tshabangu said it cannot remain in NSSA who are also responsible for compensation. There is conflict there. There is a need to create a separate entity to deal with issues of occupational safety and give the report to NSSA for compensation. If NSSA is going to have to compensate as well as determine whether the conditions are unsafe, whether the injury was here or there, I think we are bound to get people losing compensation.

Secondly, the Bill delegates too many important matters to the Hon. Minister through regulations and directives. The Minister does this, the Minister does that, the Minister kicks this, the Minister picks that.

Parliament should legislate the key standards directly rather than leaving these two statutory instruments, which are in the realm of the Hon.

Minister. Let us lift the burden for the Hon. Minister, let us legislate and the Hon. Minister executes.

Thirdly, while the Bill applies to all workplaces, it does not provide specific mechanisms for protecting workers. The majority of workers, actually, the majority of working people who are largely in the informal economy, including domestic workers, artisanal miners, vendors, these are the people who face the bigger dangers around occupational risks.

Mr. President, with these three balanced points, I would like to support the Bill in principle. I urge the House to rise and demand to strengthen certain weak areas around this Bill through amendments that enhance regulatory independence, reduce excessive ministerial discretion and provide stronger protection for workers in the informal economy. If we do that, we will accede to this Bill with pleasure and happiness. If our contributions are taken and thrown in the dustbin, we shall continue to mourn and cry. The workers out there will suffer.

Occupational health standards will not improve. I thank you Mr. President.

***HON. DINHA:** That you very much Mr. President. I would like to thank Hon. Sen. Tongogara for what she said pertaining to this Bill.

Thank you for supporting this, Bill. You mentioned that people get injured or when they feel ill at work, nothing was being done. Through this Bill now, people are going to get compensated. There are going to be penalties. The Hon. Senator also mentioned Clause 14, in which you mentioned employees' rights. This clause gives workers' rights that if they are tasked to use a machine and if they see that the machine might injure them, they have a right to deny using the machine. There is nothing that should be done to them if they refuse. So, workers are being given many rights. We also see that when there was the Factories and Work Act, there was a penalty of USD 20.00. Through this Bill, we are moving from USD 20.00 to penalties that will stop those people from committing these crimes. You also inquired about these penalties.

If this Bill is going to be a law, there are going to be regulations and these regulations are going to stipulate fines. This is going to be

higher than what was being done long ago. You also mentioned about the issue of the places where workers work. If we look at people with disabilities, these places must have ramps for them to be able to move around. When they have wheelchairs or clutches, they must be able to access these places. You mentioned the issue of accessibility to buildings. All these things are going to be looked into when this Bill is going to be a law.

At the moment, this is being done, but it is not being done thoroughly. We realise that many workers are working, especially those with disabilities. We realise that most of the time, there are places like that in which people with disabilities are failing to access such places. I encountered this yesterday when I was in Chinhoyi at our ministry's offices. When they tried to get access, there were some stairs and there was a man in a wheelchair. I greeted the man and he said, you have denied me access to enter the offices. All these issues are going to be addressed by this Bill. People must not fail to get access and we must not leave people behind. All these issues are going to be looked into again.

The Deputy Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare

Hon. Dinha, switched to English.

I also want to thank Hon. Sen. Matibiri, you have talked about the informal sector and you said that this Bill seeks to harmonise the laws within the labour market because now everybody is being brought on board, all the workers and all the workplaces. You also indicated that our people are working in hazardous environments without any form of protection. Also, there are cases where workers are injured and are not compensated in any way. You have welcomed the Bill because the Bill is there to solve or to answer all those questions, I would also like to thank Hon. Sen. Tshabangu. Your question was, did Zimbabwe rectify the occupational safety under the ILO? Yes, Zimbabwe rectified the key ILO Occupational Safety and Health conventions. Conventions like Convention 155, Occupational Safety and Health 1981, which Zimbabwe ratified on 9th April, 2003.

There are also some of the conventions like Convention 176, which is Safety and Health Minds. Convention 161, Convention C170 and also Convention 187 on Promotional Framework for Occupational

Safety and Health. Also, there is the other question, which says, what mechanisms does this Bill cover for those in the informal sectors? Some of the laws that were there before this Bill did not cover home offices, bike deliveries and domestic workers. Right now, this Bill applies to all workplaces, whether temporary or permanent and that includes street vendors, street vending stores, construction sites, home offices, commuter ranks, and the Bill seeks to protect persons at work. When I say persons, it is everybody who is at work, whether he or she is in informal or formal employment.

The other question was on NSSA, that NSSA is both the compensator and the inspector. You are saying there is a conflict of interest there but if we look at the Bill, you can see that there are also institutions that are coming with the Bill. There is the Occupational Safety and Health Department which is going to be in NSSA and it will have the power to inspect, to test equipment and shut down workplaces before it, but we also have the Zimbabwe Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Council, the tripartite which will consist of the Government, employers and the workers and that council is also coming

in with the Bill. The Government, the workers and the employers are all involved in the decision-making of the OSH and besides those two, there will also be the Accident Prevention and Workers' Compensation Fund and this will also be an independent institution that gives the Workers' Compensation Fund and also promotes accident prevention.

You can see that the Occupational Safety and Health Department will have the power to inspect, but they are not involved in the compensation of workers. The Accident Prevention and Workers' Compensation Fund institution will be responsible for compensating the workers. There will be two separate institutions within NSSA.

I would also like to thank Hon. Sen. Ndebele for supporting the Bill. He indicated that in many places, there is no safety for people working in the health sector. He was concerned about the health sector. Does this Bill also apply to the health sector, that is, the hospital? Does it apply to the nurses and all the environmental workers? Yes, this Bill applies to everybody. It applies to all workers, nurses and hospitals. Hon. Sen. Ndebele said that they work without any protective clothing and this Bill would be looking at that. There will be inspectors who will

be moving around from place to place checking those things, whether the workers are protected physically, that is, whether they have protective clothing and whether their conditions are amicable.

I would also like to thank Hon. Sen. Zvidzai. Thank you for your contributions and you commented on the Bill for covering all workers and all workplaces. You also applauded the Bill for supporting workers' rights, safety training, whistleblowing without the fear of being victimised. You stated that the Bill improves accountability and those were the strengths of the Bill that you have indicated. However, you also said that there are weaknesses when you look at the Bill. It is the same question that Hon. Sen. Tshabangu asked: that the OSH department remains under NSSA and also that NSSA is responsible for compensation. I think I have already answered that.

You have indicated that Parliament should legislate rather than leave it to the Minister. For Parliament to legislate, yes, Parliament has the oversight role, so I do not have a problem with Parliament legislating. We are talking about NSSA and also that NSSA is an institution which is within the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and

Social Welfare. There is a Minister there and the Deputy Minister, so they will also be involved in the legislation of the Bill.

There was also the question that, does the Bill provide specific mechanisms for protecting home workers and informal workers? Yes, the Bill does have the mechanism of protecting the informal and home workers and the formal workers. As I have already alluded to, the Bill supports everybody and it also includes all workers, even domestic workers and small mining workers. Usually, you can see that there are many injuries in the mines and even deaths. These things are only trampled on; they are not reported and those who suffer that fate are buried without any justice to them. So, the Bill covers everybody, especially the house workers, even the informal workers who work in the ranks. It is there to prevent accidents for all the workers. In case of accidents in workplaces, there is the compensation fund that is there. With those remarks, I now move that the Occupational Safety and Health Bill [H. B. 6, 2025] be now read a second time.

Motion put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Committee Stage: Wednesday, 22nd July, 2026.

*On the motion of **HON. SEN. GOTORA**, seconded by **HON. SEN. TONGOGARA**, the Senate adjourned at Five minutes to Five o'clock p.m.*