PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

Tuesday, 28th July, 2026

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

PRAYERS

(THE HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

HON. MAONEKE: I rise on a point of national interest to highlight a strategic trifecta of developments that occurred this week, signalling a transformative shift in our national economic trajectory. The synchronisation of our admission into the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB), the resumption of direct flights to London and the widespread reduction in airfares by major airlines marks a turning point for Zimbabwe's global competitiveness. – [HON. MEMBERS: *Hear, hear.*] –

Our entry into the BRICS Bank is a game-changer for infrastructure development. It provides Zimbabwe with access to development capital that is not tied to the restrictive conditions of traditional Western institutions. These funds are earmarked for the very infrastructure, that is energy, roads and rail that support our budgeting, aviation and trade sectors.

Madam Speaker, the skies are opening for Zimbabwe. The resumption of the direct Harare-London route has been met with a significant market response, immediately causing most airlines to reduce their prices. Moreover, re-establishing the direct link to the United Kingdom, a major global financial hub, simplifies trade and enhances Zimbabwe's open-for-business mantra after a 16-year hiatus. As if that is not enough, President Dr. E. D. Mnangagwa has, with immediate effect, removed all duplicative and unjustifiable access fees in the transport sector to reduce administrative and business costs. Kudos to Dr. E. D. Mnangagwa.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, the message is clear. Zimbabwe is becoming more integrated, visible, accessible and competitive. I urge this august House to support the continued liberalisation of our skies and the deepening of our multilateral partnerships, as these are the engines that will drive us forward. I submit.

HON. NYANDORO: Madam Speaker, today, 28th July, 2026 is World Conservation Day. In that regard, I rise on a point of national interest to mark this day and to draw the attention of this House to the urgent need to strengthen environmental protection and sustainable management of our natural resources. While we commemorate this important day, we must acknowledge the growing environmental challenges confronting our nation. One of the most pressing concerns is the mushrooming of illegal dumpsites in our towns, cities and rural communities. Despite efforts by local authorities to improve waste management, including partnering with private sector players in refuse collection and recycling initiatives, illegal dumping continues to threaten public health, pollute our environment and undermine the country's development aspirations.

There is a need to strengthen enforcement measures. The Environmental Management Agency (EMA) should be adequately empowered with the necessary legal authority, financial resources and operational capacity to effectively deal with individuals and businesses that indiscriminately dump waste in undesignated areas. Stronger penalties and consistent enforcement will help deter would-be offenders and promote responsible waste disposal.

Madam Speaker, responsible mining must remain a national priority. Mining activities continue to contribute significantly to our economy but they must not come at the expense of the environment and the livelihoods of our communities. Some mining operations have left behind open pits, polluted rivers and degraded land due to poor environmental practices. There is also great concern regarding foreign-owned mining companies that have been accused of failing to adhere to environmental regulations and safe mining standards. It is imperative that all investors, regardless of their country of origin, fully comply with Zimbabwe's environmental laws to rehabilitate mined-out areas and operate responsibly. No investor should be allowed to place profits above the protection of our environment and the welfare of our people.

As we observe the national day, let us reaffirm our collective commitment to protecting our forests, rivers, wildlife and natural resources for future generations. Environmental conservation is not the responsibility of government alone but of every citizen, corporate entity and institution. I, therefore, urge the government to continue strengthening environmental governance, empower EMA, support local authorities in waste management and ensure strict compliance with responsible and sustainable mining practices. I so submit.

HON. MURECHU: Good afternoon, Madam Speaker. I rise on a point of national interest on the profoundly devastating accident that led to the passing of one of Highlanders Football Club Executive officials and a strong supporter who perished in a freak road accident involving multiple cars along the Bulawayo – Harare Highway on Wednesday, 22nd July 2026. Horrifying to unprecedented levels is the fact that the accident was caused by a stray cow, something which could have easily been avoided had the owner of the beast taken care of his own animal before it ventured onto the road, abruptly ending the lives of our dear people.

Madam Speaker, night driving is unavoidable; we cannot ban it as a measure to reduce road traffic accidents by stray animals. It would be more like closing the toilet to stop diarrhea; neither can we cut down all the trees because many people are committing suicide by hanging themselves on trees.

In conveying my condolences to the bereaved families, Highlanders Football Club supporters and the nation at large, I urge the law enforcement agency to rigorously enforce the provisions of legislation on animals and ensure the owner of this cow is liable under *ex aequo diviti, aequo pauperi* in terms of the common law. The provisions of the law are adequate to ensure that he or she faces the full wrath of the law. In this case, the law is very clear: all stray animals must be impounded; all owners of stray animals that cause accidents must be arrested and face the full wrath of the law; all people who steal road wires that are fencing our roads must be arrested. The penalties must serve as a stark reality that it is unlawful to let animals stray on the roads and cause unnecessary loss of lives.

In conclusion, I also want to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude to our kind and listening President who accorded the State assistance to the funerals of our departed football personalities. I thank him mostly and in doing so, may the nation and the families of the deceased find solace and closure to this sad incident. I thank you.

THE HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you Hon. Murechu. Indeed, it is so sad; may their dear souls rest in eternal peace.

HON. BAJILA: Good afternoon Madam Speaker. Thank you so much for granting me this opportunity. I rise to draw the attention of this House to a public notice issued by the Office of the Master of the High Court calling for the finalisation of deceased estates by the 31st of July, 2026. While this initiative is commendable, the deadline is now rapidly approaching, yet many Zimbabweans remain unaware of this important process. In both urban and rural communities, countless families still have unresolved deceased estates. Many beneficiaries do not know the legal procedure, some lack the required documentation while others have never received adequate information on what is expected of them. If the deadline expires without sufficient public awareness, vulnerable families may face unnecessary prejudice. Specifically, the Master of the High Court may invoke clauses that allow the appointment of executors outside family structures. The services of such executors may be unaffordable to many families.

I, therefore, respectfully call upon the Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs to cause a 90-day extension of the current deadline. Such an extension would not undermine the objectives of the Master of the High Court; rather, it would promote justice by ensuring that citizens are given a fair opportunity to comply. During this additional 90-day period, I further urge the Office of the Master of the High Court to embark on a robust nationwide public awareness campaign using radio, television, newspapers, social media, community meetings and traditional leadership structures.

In addition, I request that the Office conduct a dedicated workshop for Members of Parliament so that as legislators, we are adequately equipped to educate and assist constituents with matters relating to the administration and finalisation of deceased estates. Our appreciation of the legal framework on administration of estates will help us advise our constituents properly whenever requests arise.

Madam Speaker, access to justice depends not only on the law itself but also on public knowledge of that law. Let us ensure that no Zimbabwean is left behind simply because they were not informed. I thank you.

THE HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you Hon. Bajila. Your message will be conveyed to the responsible Minister.

HON. HAMAUSWA: On a point of privilege.

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

*__HON. HAMAUSWA__: Thank you Madam Speaker. We are now in the middle of the year and as Hon. Members, we have not yet heard the report on the welfare of the Hon. Members. There are a lot of things which the Hon. Members proposed during the National Budget which were approved. Funds were disbursed but I do not know if there is any progress concerning the welfare of Hon. Members. Some of these issues are disturbing our duties; for example, when Hon. Members conduct public hearings, they do not receive their allowances. We last received allowances last year. We are pleading with those who are responsible for the welfare of the Hon. Members to sit down and give us feedback on what is happening so that we can have all the necessary resources which are needed to execute our duties properly.

THE HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you Hon. Hamauswa. Those who are responsible for the welfare of Hon. Members are going to be notified and when they sit down, they will bring the feedback.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. KAMBUZUMA: I move that Orders of the Day, Numbers 1 to 10 on today's *Order Paper* be stood over until Orders of the Day, Numbers 11 and 12 have been disposed of.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

APPROVAL OF THE ESTABLISHMENT AGREEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL MANGROVE CENTRE (IMC)

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND WILDLIFE (HON. DR. E. NDLOVU): I move the motion standing in my name that;

WHEREAS Section 327 (2) (a) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe provides that any international treaty which has been concluded or executed by the President's authority does not bind Zimbabwe until it has been approved by Parliament;

WHEREAS Zimbabwe signed the Establishment Agreement of the International Mangrove Centre (IMC Agreement) during the 15th Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (COP 15) on the 25th of July 2025;

WHEREAS the Agreement will enter into force upon deposit of the requisite instruments provided by five (5) signatory States, including the Host country (China);

AND WHEREAS to date, twenty states have signed the Establishment Agreement of the International Mangrove Centre (IMC) Agreement;

NOW, THEREFORE, in terms of Section 327 (2) (a) of the Constitution, this House resolves that the aforesaid Agreement be and is hereby approved.

On the 5th of November, 2022, the Chinese President proposed establishing the International Mongrel Centre in Shenzhen, People's Republic of China, during the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the RAMSA Convention (COP14). On the 6th of September 2023, the 62nd Standing Committee meeting of the RAMSA Convention approved the regional initiative jointly proposed by the governments of China, Madagascar and Cambodia to establish the International Mangrove Centre in Shenzhen. On the 6th of November, 2024, the signing ceremony for the establishment agreement of the International Mangrove Centre was held in Shenzhen.

Representatives from 18 countries, as the first batch of member states, formally signed the agreement and unveiled the plaque marking the official establishment of the IMC. While Zimbabwe does not have mangroves, which are a type of wetland, we do have various types of wetlands. Further, the ecological principles are the same. For mangroves and wetlands, the IMC is part of the regional centres of excellence recommended by the RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands, just like the Southern Africa RAMSAR Regional Initiatives in the southern region.

Madam Speaker Ma'am, the mission of the IMC is to promote international cooperation and joint actions in mangrove preservation, restoration and wise and sustainable use, strengthen the implementation of the Convention and other relevant current and future environmental commitments, including but not limited to the Cunningham Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the Paris Agreement, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, along with its Sustainable Development Goals. The objectives of the agreement are to:

a. Promote knowledge sharing and strengthen joint research cooperation on mangrove conservation, restoration, and wise and sustainable use;
b. Enhance technology transfer and scientific and technical cooperation and training on mangrove conservation, restoration, wise and sustainable use,

c. Develop educational information, communication and public awareness mechanisms on mangroves and adjacent wetlands and

d. Build and enhance capacity and conduct pilot projects on priorities for mangrove conservation, restoration, wise and sustainable use.

Madam Speaker Ma`am, the financing of the IMC shall depend on voluntary contributions from the host country and other member states, as well as funds from other channels. The council shall adopt an annual baseline budget to cover the core staffing and operational costs of the Secretariat. This baseline operational fund shall be provided by the host country. A special fund shall be established exclusively for mobilising resources to support IMC pilot projects in mangrove conservation and restoration. This special fund shall be managed by an independent committee comprised of three major donors. Project proposals shall be reviewed and evaluated by the Secretariat and be recommended to the special fund for consideration upon Council approval. This MOU signed between Zimbabwe and China is expected to bring several benefits, including

a. Strengthening wetland conservation initiatives, enhancing efforts to protect and restore wetland ecosystems;
b. Technical and academic exchange programmes facilitating knowledge sharing and capacity building;
c. Joint research opportunities collaborating on studies related to forestry, grasslands and wetland management;
d. Retooling with state-of-the-art research equipment and capacity development support, upgrading research facilities and training personnel;
e. Deepen our understanding of mangrove ecosystems and their contribution to global environmental health,
f. Foster international cooperation and knowledge sharing on mangrove conservation, thereby advancing our shared goals.

The key provisions of the agreement are summarised as follows. Article 1 provides for the establishment of the International Mangrove Centre. The IMC shall operate as an independent, non-profit and inter-governmental international organisation, serving as an ecosystem-based responsible research and innovation for the conservation of wetlands.

Article 2 indicates that the headquarters of the IMC, with a secretariat as the executing body, shall be located in Shenzhen, the People's Republic of China.

Article 3 provides the mission and objectives of the centre to promote international cooperation and joint actions in mangrove conservation, restoration and wise use and sustainable use, strengthen the implementation of the Convention on Wetlands and other relevant current and future environmental commitments, including but not limited to the Cunningham Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals.

Article 4 outlines membership of member states, observers and withdrawers. Membership is open to convention parties and other interested states. Admission occurs through signature or accession and is provided by silent assent. Each member state shall appoint a focal point person. The Council may suspend or expel members that fail to comply with the Charter or the obligations of the Centre. Observers will be from eligible organisations, institutions, private entities and indigenous and local communities engaged in mangrove conservation and sustainable use. Member states and observers may withdraw by written notice, effective six months after notification, without affecting prior obligations.

Article 5 outlines that the IMC governance consists of two bodies, which are the Council and the IMC Secretariat, each of which is headed by a Director General.

Article 6 outlines that the Council is the governing and decision-making body of the IMC and shall be composed of member states, with each member state designating one delegate. The Council holds regular plenary sessions and may convene interim meetings as needed.

Article 7 outlines that the secretariat is located in Shenzhen, the Republic of China and shall be the executing body responsible for the daily operations of the IMC under the authority and guidance of the council.

Article 8 outlines that the financing of the IMC shall depend on voluntary contributions from the host country and other Member States, as well as funds from other channels.

Article 9 stipulates that the working languages of the IMC shall be Chinese and English. All official documents shall be available in both languages. Interpretation shall be provided at regular council sessions unless an alternative arrangement is agreed upon.

Article 10 of the IMC shall possess legal personality in all Member States and, in particular, the capacity to enter into contracts, acquire and dispose of movable and immovable property and initiate legal proceedings.

Article 11 outlines that the privileges, immunities and facilities accorded to the IMC within the host country and other Member States shall be agreed upon in separate documents.

Article 12 outlines the cooperation with Member States, international organisations and other stakeholders. The IMC shall collaborate closely with all Member States and, as deemed appropriate under the terms of this agreement, with other international organisations responsible for research and innovation, academia, the private sector, civil society organisations, indigenous people, local communities and other relevant stakeholders.

Article 13 stipulates that the host country Government is invited to establish an interim secretariat. The interim secretariat shall, before the informal entry into force of this agreement, undertake all functions of the secretariat of the IMC.

Article 14 provides a settlement of disputes whereby all disagreements arising from the interpretation or implementation of this agreement shall be settled in the spirit of amicable cooperation and through friendly consultations.

Article 15 provides for amendments by Member States at least six months before a Council session. Proposed amendments shall be communicated to the Chair of the Council through the Secretariat, which shall then circulate them to all Member States at least four months before the session of the Council consultation.

Article 16 outlines the entry into force of this agreement subject to ratification, acceptance and approval by signatory states.

Madam Speaker Ma'am, following the extraordinary success of the Convention on Wetlands, COP15 in Victoria Falls and taking over the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Presidency during the next three coming years. Zimbabwe needs to add to the growing momentum for wetland action by highlighting the importance of the urgent need to accelerate investment in protecting, restoring and wisely using the world's wetlands. The country can achieve this faster through partnerships like joining the IMC. I thank you.

HON. MUROMBEDZI: Point of privilege, Madam Speaker.

THE HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point of privilege, Hon. Murombedzi.

***HON. MUROMBEDZI:** Thank you Madam Speaker. The agreement that has been brought by the Hon. Minister has been brought before we had a workshop. For this one, we have not attended any workshop, as the Speaker has alluded to. I think we need a workshop before we can make any contributions.

THE HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you Hon. Murombedzi. We will adjourn the debate to allow the Hon. Members to attend the workshop, then we will debate it later.

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND WILDLIFE (HON. DR. E. NDLOVU): Madam Speaker Ma'am, I move that the debate do now adjourn.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 29th July, 2026.

MOTION

APPROVAL OF THE AGREEMENT UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS ON THE CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA ON THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION (BBNJ)

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND WILDLIFE (HON. DR. E. NDLOVU): I move the motion standing in my name on the ratification of this agreement before this House, that:

WHEREAS Section 327 (2) (a) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe provides that any international treaty which has been concluded or executed by the President’s authority does not bind Zimbabwe until it has been approved by Parliament;

WHEREAS Zimbabwe signed the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) on 5 March 2025;

WHEREAS the Agreement entered into force on 17 January 2026, one hundred and twenty (120) days after the deposit of instruments of ratification by sixty (60) States;

AND WHEREAS to date, eighty-eight (88) States have ratified the Agreement;

NOW, THEREFORE, in terms of Section 327 (2) (a) of the Constitution, this House resolves that the aforesaid Agreement be and is hereby approved.

The Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction under the

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was adopted on the 19th of June 2023. Zimbabwe signed the agreement on 5th March, 2025. ENCLOS is the regulatory framework for the environmental protection of the oceans. However, parties to the ENCLOS had identified a gap in the Convention, being that there were no provisions. Governor…

THE HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Hon. Minister. Please may you approach the Clerks-at-the-Table.

The Minister having approached the Clerk's-at-the-Table.

THE HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may proceed, Hon. Minister.

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND WILDLIFE (HON. DR. E. NDLOVU): Madam Speaker Ma'am, I move the motion standing in my name that -

WHEREAS Section 327 (2) (a) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe provides that any international treaty which has been concluded or executed by the President's authority does not bind Zimbabwe until it has been approved by Parliament; WHEREAS Zimbabwe signed the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) on 5 March 2025;WHEREAS the Agreement entered into force on 17 January 2026, one hundred and twenty (120) days after the deposit of instruments of ratification by sixty (60) States;

AND WHEREAS to date, eighty-eight (88) States have ratified the Agreement;

NOW, THEREFORE, in terms of Section 327 (2) (a) of the Constitution, this House resolves that the aforesaid Agreement be and is hereby approved.

I move that the debate do now adjourn.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 29th July, 2026.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. KAMBUZUMA: I move that Orders of the Day Numbers 13 to 18 on today's *Order Paper* be stood over until Order of the Day Number 19 has been disposed of.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

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

HON. KARIKOGA: I move the motion standing in my name that this House takes note of the delegation Report of the 152nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and related meetings held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 18 to 23 October 2025.

HON. KADEMAUNGA: I second.

HON. KARIKOGA: INTRODUCTION

The 152nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Related Meetings was convened from 14th to 19th April 2026 in the magnificent and historic city of Istanbul, Turkey under the apt theme, "Nurturing hope, securing peace and ensuring justice for future generations.' Against a backdrop of unfolding geopolitical tensions and ongoing wars globally, particularly in the Middle East which have debilitating humanitarian consequences, this statutory Assembly offered a unique opportunity for participating lawmakers to pronounce themselves eloquently in advancing peaceful solutions to global conflicts as ensconced within the auspices of Parliamentary Diplomacy.

The Parliament of Zimbabwe was ably led by Hon. Advocate Jacob Francis Nzwidamilimo Mudenda, Speaker of Parliament. Hon. Mabel Memory Chinomona, President of the Senate, was also in attendance. The following Members of Parliament accompanied them:

Hon. Chief Mtshane Lucas Khumalo, member of the IPU Standing Committee on Sustainable Development; Hon. Tsitsi Veronica Muzenda, member of the IPU Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights and Forum of Women Parliamentarians; Hon. Sengezo Tshabangu, member of the IPU Health Committee and the IPU Standing Committee on Sustainable Development; Hon. Lusyomo Nyelele, member of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians and IPU Standing Committee on United

Nations Affairs; Hon. Maureen Kademaunga, member of Working Group on Science and Technology, the Forum of Young Parliamentarians and IPU Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs; Hon. Jona Nyevera, member of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians and IPU Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and Hon. Tawanda Karikoga, member of the IPU Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights.

Zimbabwe's Ambassador to Türkiye, Ambassador Alfred Mutiwazuka, supported the delegation's participation at the 152nd Assembly of the IPU and Related Meetings. In a comprehensive briefing to the Presiding Officers, Ambassador Mutiwazuka elucidated on key operations of the Embassy ensconced within the ambit of the foreign policy thrust of the Second Republic. Additionally, Ambassador Mutiwazuka informed of his fruitful engagements with the Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye as well as the Chairman of the Zimbabwe-Turkey Parliamentary Association, Hon. Kadem Mete. In this regard, he recommended the renewal of relations between the two legislatures to deepen mutually beneficial parliamentary co-operation.

In furtherance of Parliamentary diplomacy, Hon. Speaker Mudenda interfaced with some of his counterparts on the sidelines of the 152nd Assembly of the IPU and Related Meetings, notably His Excellency Brahim Boughali, Speaker of the Algerian People's National Assembly and Hon. Milton Dick, Speaker of the Australian House of Representatives.

The meeting with the Algerian Speaker sought to bolster relations between the two legislations as well as to consolidate positions on the international fora anchored on shared values and principles. In this spirit, Hon. Speaker Mudenda pledged Zimbabwe's support for Hon. Dr. Fateh Boutbig, Algeria's candidate for the position of President of the Pan African Parliament.

During the interface with Hon. Dick, the Australian Speaker shared the positive development of the launch of the Zimbabwe/Australia Parliamentary Friendship Association headed by a vibrant Member of Parliament who is keen on strengthening relations between the two legislatures. The launch paves the way for exchanges between the two legislatures.

SADC GROUP AND AFRICA GEOPOLITICAL GROUP MEETINGS

The SADC Group was expertly chaired by Speaker Mudenda, affectionately known as the *'Dean of Speakers',* in the absence of the substantive SADC-PF Chair, Hon. Speaker Randrianasoloniaiko Thierry Siteny of Madagascar. Notably, the SADC Group resolved to support the proposal for an Emergency Item submitted by the delegations from Qatar, Australia, Türkiye, France, Brazil, Zambia with the support of the Arab Group aptly entitled, "*The urgent need for concerted Parliamentary efforts to preserve ceasefires and support peacebuilding,"* for its all-encompassing approach which affirms the SADC region's position on fostering sustainable global peace through dialogue. Furthermore, the SADC Group solidly endorsed the candidature of Ambassador Anda Filip of Romania for the position of Secretary General, as duly informed by her vast experience within the ecosystem of IPU, augmented by her career diplomat status.

Of special note is that the above decisions were further endorsed by the Africa Geo-Political Group Meeting.

KEY OUTCOMES OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

The 217th Session of the Governing Council of the IPU held two sittings during the 152nd Assembly of the IPU and Related Meetings. As the decision-making body of the IPU, the Governing Council pronounced itself on the following key issues:

The Governing Council approved the IPU Strategy for the 2027–2031 period, a result of broad consultation with member Parliaments and other stakeholders. The new IPU Strategy is underpinned by the IPU policy work on peace and security, democracy, human rights, sustainable development, climate action, gender equality and youth participation. The Governing Council took note of the Report of the activities of the President, which highlighted notable activities undertaken by the President in furtherance of the IPU strategic objectives.

Furthermore, the Governing Council took note of the Impact Report of the IPU activities as presented by the Secretary General. Of particular note is that the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) made significant strides in implementing its 2022–2026 Strategy through a renewed focus on its original mission to bring parliamentarians together to advance peace, democracy and development.

The Governing Council was satisfied that the IPU financial status is healthy. However, Parliaments with outstanding arrears were encouraged to clear them to avoid censure in line with the IPU Statutes.

THE GENERAL DEBATE

A special segment with keynote speakers was held at the start of the General Debate on the theme of the Assembly entitled "NURTURING HOPE, SECURING PEACE AND ENSURING JUSTICE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS".

In remarks delivered during the General Debate on the theme, Speaker Mudenda extoled the theme for upholding the 1945 United Nations Charter and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 16 that aims to advance inclusive peaceful societies, access to social justice and accountable institutions at every level of governance.

Regrettably, Speaker Mudenda noted that despite these commitments, the Sustainable Development Report 2024 confirms that SDG 16 remains among the most severely off-track of all seventeen sustainable goals. The Hon. Speaker accentuated the scale of today's humanitarian and security crises, citing the UNHCR 2023 Report indicating that over 117 million people have been forcibly displaced from their homes while no fewer than two billion people live in fragile, conflict-affected or violent settings. To compound an already perilous scenario, Africa has recorded 44 million internally displaced persons and cross-border refugees, warning that these realities threaten the promise of the African Union's 'Silencing the Guns' initiative and the ambitions of Agenda 2063.

To that extent, Speaker Mudenda sounded a stark warning on militarisation, pointing to reporting by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) that global military expenditure topped US$2.4 trillion in 2023. He called on leaders to heed the moral appeal associated with Pope Leo XIV's exhortation that "Let those who have weapons lay them down! Let those who have the power to unleash wars choose peace!" To that extent, Speaker Mudenda stated that *"The IPU cannot and should not escape this exhortation,"* as *"It is a call to compelling Parliamentary diplomacy."*

Drawing lessons from Zimbabwe's own national reconciliation journey, Speaker Mudenda highlighted Zimbabwe's own arduous independence journey. He recalled how at independence in 1980, Founding President Robert Mugabe declared the determination to "beat our swords into ploughshares," and how the Unity Accord of 1987 ended a painful chapter of internal division and set the nation on a path of reconstruction and healing. Speaker Mudenda added that Zimbabwe's 2013 Constitution has entrenched this ethic of reconciliation through a robust Bill of Rights.

Emphasising that nurturing hope amid ongoing global conflicts requires unwavering conviction, Speaker Mudenda exhorted that HOPE DOES NOT DISAPPOINT. He explained that justice, understood as fairness, equity and moral rightness, guarantees peace for both present and future generations. He also stressed that the peace dividend must be premised on total respect for international law and multilateralism, rejecting any approach rooted in unipolar hegemony.

FORUM OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS

As per established practice, the Forum of Women Parliamentarians held its 41st Session before the 152nd Assembly of the IPU on 15th April 2026.

President of the Senate, Hon. M. M. Chinomona enunciated Zimbabwe's position during discussion of the Draft Resolution on the Role of Parliamentarians in Establishing Robust Post-Conflict Management Mechanisms and Restoring a Just and Lasting Peace. In this regard, she illuminated Parliament of Zimbabwe’s experiences, indicating that lasting peace is not achieved by ending conflict alone, but by justice, inclusion and the meaningful participation of often excluded voices, especially women and youth.

Furthermore, she highlighted that women parliamentarians are quintessential in the peace processes as their exclusion risks weakening sustainable recovery and stability. Accordingly, she opined that women and girls are not only beneficiaries of peace but essential architects of it.

Guided by Zimbabwe's Constitution, she explained that Parliament is strengthening conflict management and monitoring peace-building efforts, advancing protection from gender-based violence through enforcement and survivor support services aligned within the aegis of Zimbabwe National Gender Policy (2025–2030), as well as placing peace and good governance at the centre of development under the Zimbabwe National Development Strategy 2 (2026–2030). Through initiatives such as the Zimbabwe Women's Parliamentary Caucus, cooperation on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and a focus on inclusive law-making and oversight, Parliaments sustain peace by building trust, preventing relapse into conflict and strengthening democracy, accountability and civic engagement, she concluded.

MEETINGS OF STATUTORY BODIES OF THE IPU

The Zimbabwe delegation also contributed to the work of the 152nd Assembly of the IPU through participation in meetings of statutory bodies of the IPU, namely,

- Standing Committee of Peace and International Security
- Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs
- Standing Committee on Sustainable Development
- Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights
- Forum of Young Parliamentarians
- Working Group on Science and Technology
- Committee on Health

Additionally, Hon. Tawanda Karikoga represented the Hon. Speaker at the 5th Non- Aligned Movement Parliamentary Network Conference held on the sidelines of the 152nd Assembly of the IPU and Related Meetings under the theme, **"Climate Resilient Urbanisation**".

In his address to the Conference, Hon. Karikoga shared Zimbabwe's experience, challenges and commitments in advancing climate resilient urbanisation, a pressing and localised issue that demands urgent action.

To that extent, Hon. Karikoga highlighted that Zimbabwe is driving a climate-resilient urbanisation through robust laws, policies and oversight anchored in Section 73 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe which enshrines the right to a healthy environment for all citizens.

OUTCOMES OF THE 152ND ASSEMBLY OF THE IPU AND RELATED MEETINGS

In a historic first, Ambassador Anda Filip of Poland was overwhelmingly elected the ninth Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the first woman to hold the post in the IPU's 137-year history. She is also the first Eastern European to hold the distinguished position.

Ambassador Filip will succeed Mr. Martin Chungong of Cameroon whose third and final term ends on 30th June 2026.

Ambassador Filip brings a wealth of experience, skills and expertise to the IPU, having served within the IPU Secretariat in various capacities for over two decades.

The Assembly adopted the outcome document of the Assembly, "The Istanbul Declaration on Nurturing hope, securing peace and ensuring justice for future generations," which reaffirms commitments to peace, human rights, United Nations principles amid armed conflicts, geopolitical tensions, democratic backsliding, misinformation, inequalities, climate change and disruptive technologies.

It was a momentous occasion when the IPU Assembly adopted an Emergency Resolution on the "The urgent need for concerted Parliamentary efforts to preserve ceasefires and support peace building in the Middle East and other regions". It is trite to note that this is the first time in three years that Member Parliaments have found common ground and resoundingly voted for an emergency item to be included on the IPU Agenda.

7.3.1 The Emergency Item demands urgent Parliamentary action to uphold ceasefires, especially in the Middle East and other hotspots. Furthermore, it condemns systematic breaches of international humanitarian law, including civilian attacks and aid blockages.

The Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution submitted by the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development entitled, "Building a fair and sustainable global economy: the role of Parliaments in combating protectionism, reducing tariffs and preventing corporate tax avoidance," which urges Parliaments to fight protectionism, tax dodging by multinationals and inequality. It calls for reforms of the World Trade Organisation and digital equity.

Furthermore, the Assembly adopted a resolution submitted by the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security entitled "The Role of Parliaments in establishing robust post conflict management mechanisms and restoring a just and lasting peace" The resolution calls for nationally led peace building rooted in United Nations principles, holistic recovery for institutions and economies, reconciliation and dialogue as well as protection of women, youth and displaced persons.

Additionally, the Assembly also took note of the motion adopted by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights on "Advancing Parliamentary action on artificial intelligence" which acknowledges that while the rapid development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents countless opportunities for nations and parliaments, it also poses risks that require urgent, informed and sustained Parliamentary engagement across substantive policy areas and an appropriate legal framework.

Accordingly, the motion calls on Parliaments to strengthen capacities of Parliaments to engage on calibrated use of AI, simultaneously encouraging inter-Parliamentary exchanges on AI policy issues as well as collaborative efforts with regional, international and multilateral processes on AI governance.

CLOSING CEREMONY

At the closing ceremony, the IPU member Parliaments, represented by the President of the IPU and Chairpersons of the Geo-Political Groups offered emotional valedictory messages to the outgoing Secretary General in which they appreciated his commitment to the work of the IPU through the many milestones he recorded, including promoting gender parity, youth inclusion in activities of the IPU, implementation of the IPU Strategy and promotion of global peace through dialogue and Parliamentary diplomacy.

Speaking on the same occasion, Secretary General, Mr. Martin Chungong who tendered his appreciation to the IPU member Parliaments, the IPU Secretariat and his family for the invaluable support throughout his tenure as Head of the IPU Secretariat. He further expressed gratitude to the representatives of the IPU who had so kindly given their valedictory remarks, highlighting the achievements of the IPU during his stewardship.

In their concluding remarks, the Host Speaker, His Excellency Numan Kurtulmus and Rt. Hon. Tulia Ackson were unequivocally clear on the need for peaceful resolution of conflicts and urged Parliaments to play their part through Parliamentary diplomacy.

The next IPU Assembly will be held in Arusha, Tanzania from 5th to 9th October, 2026.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade should follow up on the engagements the Hon. Speaker had with his counterparts from Egypt and Australia. Indeed, the exchanges unlocked unlimited opportunities to enhance existing relations and exchange Parliamentary best practices within the framework of Parliamentary Friendship Associations. In this regard, there is a need to expedite the operationalisation of these associations to yield tangible outcomes. Additionally, there is a need to renew exchanges with the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye. This should be during the second quarter of 2026.

9.2. Leveraging the newly adopted IPU Strategy (2027–2031), the Parliament of Zimbabwe should proactively position itself to benefit from IPU technical support, capacity-building programmes and knowledge-sharing platforms. Particular focus should be placed on thematic areas such as peace and security, artificial intelligence governance, climate action, gender equality and youth participation.

Parliament should align its legislative, oversight and representative functions with the resolutions adopted at the 152nd IPU Assembly, especially those relating to post-conflict peacebuilding, sustainable economic systems and the regulation of artificial intelligence. This includes strengthening relevant Portfolio Committees to track implementation of these global commitments at national level.

In light of the Emergency Resolution on ceasefires and peacebuilding, the Parliament of Zimbabwe should intensify its role in Parliamentary diplomacy by advocating for peaceful conflict resolution through regional and international platforms such as SADC-PF, the African Parliamentary Union (APU) and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP).

The Parliament should strengthen the institutional capacity of the Zimbabwe Women's Parliamentary Caucus and the Forum of Young Parliamentarians to ensure inclusive participation in governance processes in line with the outcomes of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and the Forum of Young Parliamentarians.

There is a need for enhanced domestication of international frameworks such as UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security as well as strengthened oversight on gender-based violence interventions in line with the Zimbabwe National Gender Policy (2025–2030).

The Parliament of Zimbabwe should ensure timely settlement of its financial obligations to the IPU to maintain good standing and continue participating fully in IPU programmes and decision-making processes.

CONCLUSION

The delegation expresses its gratitude to the Government of Zimbabwe and Parliament for allowing it to represent the institution at this high-level Assembly.

Accordingly, the delegation calls on Thematic and Portfolio Committees and Caucuses to implement, to the extent possible, the resolutions under their purview. The full texts of the Resolutions have since been circulated. I thank you.

HON. KADEMAUNGA: Thank you Madam Speaker, and good afternoon. I rise to second the motion on the report of the 152nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union held in Istanbul, Turkey. In doing so, I wish to associate myself fully with the comprehensive presentation made by the mover of this report, Hon. Karikoga.

I commend our delegation for its active participation across the Assembly, the Governing Council, the Standing Committees, and various statutory bodies of the IPU.

The report before us reflects an Assembly convened at a defining moment in international affairs. As rightly observed in the report, the theme is nurturing hope, securing peace and ensuring justice for future generations. This was a timely response to an increasingly fractured global order, characterised by armed conflict, humanitarian crisis and growing geopolitical tensions. It is therefore significant that this Assembly reaffirmed parliamentary diplomacy as an indispensable complement to traditional statecraft and diplomacy. At a time when diplomatic channels are often constrained by political interests, parliament continues to provide a unique space for principled dialogue, consensus building and also the pursuit of peaceful solutions. The report, Madam Speaker Ma'am, further records that the Assembly adopted the Istanbul Declaration and, significantly, the Emergency Resolution which called for concerted parliamentary efforts to preserve ceasefires and support peacebuilding.

As the report notes, I think this is very important. This marked the first successful adoption of an emergency item in three years at the Inter-Parliamentary Union, meaning that for three years, the Inter-Parliamentary Union had met at Assembly twice a year and failed to agree on an emergency item. Now, this achievement for me demonstrates that despite profound geopolitical divisions, parliamentary engagement continues to build consensus where conventional diplomacy often reaches an impasse. It is a timely reminder for us as parliaments that dialogue remains one of the most enduring instruments of peace.

I am particularly encouraged that the report consistently highlights how the Assembly links peace with justice, accountable governance and inclusive development. It reminds us that peace cannot simply be understood as the absence of conflict. It is sustained by institutions that uphold the rule of law, that protect fundamental rights and inspire public confidence.

Our work as legislators, therefore, learning from this Assembly of the IPU, must extend beyond making laws through effective oversight and meaningful representation. However, Parliament itself must become an instrument of peace-building and democratic resilience. The report also highlighted the Governing Council's adoption of the IPU Strategy for 2027-2031.

I think that the Parliament of Zimbabwe must seize the opportunity to leverage the strategy's technical cooperation because as it was highlighted in the report, I think there are opportunities for peer learning for institutional capacity-building initiatives that are supported by the IPU in its strategy for 2027-2031, particularly in areas of climate governance, artificial intelligence, gender equality, youth participation and peace-building. Equally, I think the resolutions adopted at the Assembly should be systematically domesticated through the work of our Portfolio Committees so that our international commitments are translated into measurable national outcomes.

I also want to speak to one other aspect Madam Speaker Ma'am. I particularly welcome the work of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights as reported in the report on advancing parliamentary engagement with artificial intelligence (AI). The report correctly acknowledges that while AI presents unprecedented opportunities, it also introduces profound governance challenges requiring informed legislative leadership. As lawmakers, we cannot afford to regulate yesterday's problems while tomorrow's technologies reshape our societies.

Parliament of Zimbabwe or ourselves, should therefore move towards a comprehensive legislative framework on artificial intelligence, data governance and algorithm accountability that protects citizens' rights and promotes responsible innovation and ensures transparency in the deployment of AI within both the public and private sectors, learning from the engagements that were held at the IPU Assembly.

I just want to quickly also say that the Parliament of Zimbabwe, I think these recommendations that were given in the report and what I am also speaking about, resonate strongly with the direction of our own Parliament at this point through the establishment of the Committee of the Future under the CSRO framework. This is a progressive institutional reform that should now be adequately capacitated with strategic foresight, expertise, technology assessment capabilities and robust research support to strengthen anticipatory governance. In an area of rapid technological disruption, Parliament must be equipped not merely to respond to change but to anticipate it and to shape it through evidence-based lawmaking and oversight.

Just the last thing that I want to speak to as I second this report and this is very important, I think for Parliament to note, it was mentioned in the report but this is a milestone; I wish to highlight what I consider one of the defining moments of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the election of Ambassador Anda Philippe as the first female Secretary General of the IPU in its 137 years of history. There has never been a female Secretary General. She is the first one to be elected as the IPU and I really think it deserves a round of applause. – [HON. MEMBERS: *Hear, hear.*] -

It is a matter of pride, of particular pride that the Zimbabwean delegation under the leadership of the Hon. Speaker, Adv. J. F. N. Mudenda, unequivocally supported the candidature right from the start, in the SADC group, in the Africa group and in her subsequent election at the General Assembly. In doing so, I believe our delegation affirmed a principle that should continue to define Zimbabwe's engagement in multilateral institutions but also that should continuously define how we do things in this House.

That leadership is neither conferred nor constrained by gender but it is earned through competence, integrity and the capacity to serve. Her historic election was therefore not a milestone for women; it was a triumph of meritocracy, an affirmation that representative institutions like Parliament are strongest when they recognise excellence above all else.

Madam Speaker Ma'am, this report demonstrates that Zimbabwe continues to make meaningful contributions to global parliamentary discourse and parliamentary diplomacy while simultaneously drawing valuable lessons that can strengthen our own institutions. The true value of our participation, however, will ultimately be measured by our ability to domesticate these commitments, all those recommendations that were given in the report, through stronger legislation, more effective oversight and institutions that are responsive to the aspirations of our people.

Parliamentary diplomacy achieves its highest purpose when international engagement produces tangible national progress and does not just end in reports. With these observations, I have the pleasure and the honour to second the motion and the report by Hon. Karikoga. I so submit.

HON. KAMBUZUMA: I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 29th July, 2026.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. KAMBUZUMA: Madam Speaker, I move that we proceed to Orders of the Day, Numbers 20, 21 and 22 in that order.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE JOINT PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR AND SOCIAL WELFARE AND THEMATIC COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN ZIMBABWE

HON. MALINGANISO: I move the motion standing in my name that this House considers and adopts the Report of the Joint Portfolio Committee on Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare and Thematic Committee on Human Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Zimbabwe.

HON. MASVISVI: I second.

HON. MALINGANISO:

Introduction

The pursuit of universal human rights and human dignity remains an unfinished global endeavour and the inclusion of persons with disabilities stands as one of its most pressing and defining chapters. Globally, over 1. 3 billion people, which is about 16 % of the world's population, experience significant disability and persons with disabilities are disproportionately excluded from education, employment, healthcare and social participation.

The Constitution of Zimbabwe, section 22, guarantees equality and non-discrimination and expressly protects the rights of persons with disabilities, requiring the State to take proactive measures to promote their inclusion in all spheres of life.

Zimbabwe's development agenda situates disability inclusion within its human capital, social protection and economic empowerment priorities. The national vision articulated in Vision 2030 envisages an inclusive, equitable society where all citizens contribute to and benefit from national prosperity. According to the Zimbabwe 2022 Population and Housing Census Report, disability prevalence is estimated at approximately 9. 5 % of the national population, underscoring the significant scale of inclusion that development planning must address. Yet, persons with disabilities continue to face systemic barriers, ranging from inaccessible infrastructure and social services to exclusion from formal employment and political life.

Against this backdrop, the Joint Portfolio Committee on Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare and the Thematic Committee on Human Rights undertook an inquiry to evaluate whether existing legislative, policy and administrative measures align with international standards, the Constitution of Zimbabwe and national development imperatives, as well as identifying gaps that must be addressed to translate formal commitments into meaningful, lived inclusion for persons with disabilities.

Objectives of the Enquiry

The key objectives of the verification visits were to:

- Assess the welfare and living conditions of persons with disabilities in institutions and communities
- Assess the impact of social welfare grants and other assistive devices afforded to persons with disabilities
- Proffer recommendations on enforceable reforms that ensure the full inclusion and equal participation of persons with disabilities

Methodology

The Committee used the following methods in conducting the enquiry:

Oral evidence meetings with the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare and Persons with Disabilities Interest groups.

Fact-finding visits to Centres of Persons with Disabilities

Public hearings

Committee Findings

Legal and Policy Framework Governing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

Zimbabwe ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) on 23rd September 2013, committing to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities in line with international standards. The UNCRPD emphasises on accessibility, participation and equality as guiding principles for national policies and practices.

African Disability Protocol

Zimbabwe has ratified and domesticated the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disability in Africa (African Disability Protocol).

Constitution of Zimbabwe

The Constitution of Zimbabwe enunciates disability issues as a national objective. Section22 and 83 articulates significant advancement towards expanding the rights of persons with disabilities in the country. It guarantees rights to equality and non-discrimination. It states that persons with disabilities have the right to dignity, respect and the opportunity to live independently. The Constitution further mandates the State to take appropriate measures to ensure full participation and equality for persons with disabilities in various aspects of life including education, employment and healthcare.

Disabled Persons Act [*Chapter 17:01*] 1992

The Act, which is under review, provides for the welfare and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities through the office of the Director for Disabled Persons Affairs and the National Disability Board.

The National Disability Policy

The policy, which was launched on 09th June 2021, outlines the Government's commitment to enhance the quality of life for persons with disabilities. The policy sets key standards, an implementation framework and responsibility and accountability under each key standard. The policy ensures multi-sectoral responsibility for upholding the rights of persons with disabilities among the 26 Government line ministries, parastatals, independent Commissions and organisations for persons with disabilities.

Measures to Uphold Disability Rights by the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare

Education

The Ministry submitted that they pay tuition for children with disabilities through the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) from Early Childhood Learning (ECD) to Advanced Levels including boarding fees for special schools and examination fees. The same support is available for college, universities and vocational training fees with the Ministry paying for tuition and boarding fees up to Masters Level.

The Ministry also administers three Vocational Training Schools that offer free accommodation, tuition and food for student with disabilities. The institutions are Lowden Lodge, School for Girls, Ruwa National Rehabilitation Centre and Beatrice National Rehabilitation Centre.

The Disability Revolving Loan

The disability revolving loan is provided to entrepreneurs with disabilities to access loans without need for a guarantor. The Ministry submitted that a maximum of USD 1000, payable in local currency at the prevailing interbank rate, is availed to an individual as startup support and recipients can embark on a project of their choice.

Employment

The Ministry submitted that the Public Service Commission was the biggest employer of persons with disabilities and pays salaries for those in need of personal assistants.

Submissions from Organisations for Persons with Disabilities

The Committee consulted with National Council of Disabled Persons of Zimbabwe and the National Association of Societies for the Care of the Handicapped (NASCOH) and came up with the following findings:

Access to Healthcare and Communication Rights

Persons with disabilities in Zimbabwe continue to encounter major barriers in accessing healthcare services, particularly due to communication challenges, inaccessible infrastructure and discriminatory attitudes within health institutions. Hearing impaired persons face severe exclusion because there are very few qualified sign language interpreters in public healthcare facilities, resulting in misdiagnosis, breaches of confidentiality and inadequate treatment outcomes.

Organisations further submitted that many deaf patients rely on family members to interpret sensitive medical information, compromising both dignity and quality of care. Physical inaccessibility of clinics and hospitals further disadvantages persons with mobility impairments, while health information is rarely available in *Braille*, sign language, or simplified formats. Women with disabilities experience compounded discrimination in maternal healthcare, including lower access to prenatal care and higher maternal health risks compared to non-disabled women.

Education Rights and Inclusive Learning

The Committee established that despite constitutional guarantees on the right to education, children with disabilities continue to experience widespread exclusion from Zimbabwe's education system. Studies cited in the submissions revealed that only a small proportion of children with disabilities have access to formal education, while many schools lack ramps, accessible toilets, adaptive learning materials, specialist teachers and inclusive teaching methodologies. Negative societal attitudes and limited teacher preparedness further reinforce exclusion, particularly for girls with disabilities and children in rural communities.

Evidence also showed that children with disabilities often begin school much later than their non-disabled peers due to accessibility barriers and inadequate support systems. Underfunding of inclusive education programmes and insufficient BEAM support for learners with disabilities contribute to high dropout rates and poor educational attainment, thereby perpetuating long-term poverty and social exclusion.

Transport Accessibility and Mobility Rights

Transport systems in Zimbabwe remain largely inaccessible to persons with disabilities, limiting their participation in education, employment, healthcare and community life. Public buses, kombis and transport terminals often lack wheelchair access, auditory and visual communication systems and other universal design features necessary for inclusive mobility. Disability organisations highlighted that many transport operators discriminate against passengers with disabilities, while accessible private transport alternatives are significantly more expensive, deepening economic hardship. Urban infrastructure such as narrow pavements, overcrowded streets and inaccessible public buildings further compounds mobility challenges. The absence of a fully operational inclusive public transport policy continues to undermine constitutional commitments to accessibility and equality.

Economic Exclusion and Poverty

Organisations submitted that persons with disabilities face disproportionately high levels of unemployment, poverty and economic marginalisation in Zimbabwe. Many are excluded from formal employment opportunities due to workplace discrimination, inaccessible work environments and limited access to vocational training and assistive technologies. Women with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, gender-based violence and dependence on informal livelihoods. The high cost of assistive devices such as wheelchairs, hearing aids and screen-reader software places them beyond the reach of most households, while social protection programmes remain inadequate and inaccessible to many beneficiaries. This creates a vicious cycle in which poverty increases vulnerability to disability, while disability simultaneously reinforces deeper poverty and dependence.

Social Stigma and Cultural Discrimination

The Committee noted that deeply entrenched cultural beliefs and stigma continue to undermine the dignity and social inclusion of persons with disabilities in Zimbabwe. Disability is often associated with witchcraft, punishment, or misfortune, leading to discrimination, isolation and exclusion from community activities and decision-making processes. Women and girls with disabilities face heightened risks of abuse, neglect and gender-based violence due to harmful stereotypes that portray them as dependent or incapable. Such stigma discourages many persons with disabilities from seeking healthcare, education, employment and justice services, thereby reinforcing exclusion and marginalisation. Disability organisations have therefore emphasised the importance of community awareness campaigns, anti-stigma programmes and engagement with traditional and community leaders to transform societal attitudes toward disability.

Access to Justice and Political Participation

Organisations submitted that access to justice remains limited for many persons with disabilities due to inaccessible courts, police stations, legal procedures and communication systems. Disability organisations reported that many public hearings, legal documents, and civic participation processes are not available in accessible formats such as *Braille*, plain language, or sign language interpretation. Political representation of persons with disabilities also remains significantly low despite constitutional commitments to inclusion. Current parliamentary representation does not adequately reflect the proportion of persons with disabilities within the national population, limiting their influence on policymaking and governance. Voting procedures and electoral systems also remain inaccessible to many visually impaired and intellectually disabled citizens, compromising the secrecy and independence of the ballot.

Welfare and Living Conditions of Persons with disabilities in institutions.

Overcrowding

The Committee established that the living conditions in institutions catering for persons with disabilities were, in some instances were substandard, overcrowded and inconsistent with minimum human dignity thresholds envisaged in the Constitution. At Jairos Jiri School for the Blind in Kadoma, enrolment exceeded institutional carrying capacity, resulting in overcrowded boarding facilities where primary and secondary learners were compelled to share limited space.

Infrastructure

The Committee noted that dilapidated and inadequate infrastructure is a widespread and systemic challenge across institutions of persons with disabilities, significantly undermining living conditions and service delivery. At Silobela Old People's Home in Kwekwe, facilities were in a deteriorated state and lacked reliable water sources, while Jairos Jiri School for the Blind in Kadoma was operating beyond its intended capacity, resulting in overstretched boarding and sanitation facilities. At Lowden Lodge in Mutare, there was a challenge of non-disability-friendly accommodation and similarly, at Hugo School for the Blind in Masvingo, incomplete infrastructure projects and rising enrolment have led to congested learning and residential spaces.

Healthcare and Rehabilitation

The Committee established that access to healthcare and rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities was severely constrained. Across institutions and communities visited, there was a pronounced shortage of specialised personnel, including physiotherapists, audiologists and rehabilitation practitioners, coupled with inadequate equipment and poorly resourced facilities. At Ishe Anesu Rehabilitation Centre in Harare, the physiotherapy unit is ill-equipped and lacks a resident therapist, significantly limiting the effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes, while at Silobela Old People's Home, access to essential medication for conditions such as epilepsy and psychiatric disorders was inconsistent and inadequate.

From the public consultations, the Committee further noted that the near absence of sign language interpretation services across public health institutions constituted a functional barrier to healthcare access for persons with hearing impairments, effectively excluding them from meaningful interaction with health professionals. Public submissions also highlighted the centralisation of specialised services, which forces individuals in rural areas to travel long distances to access care, thereby increasing financial and logistical burdens.

Assistive devices

The Committee noted that access to assistive devices for persons with disabilities remains highly constrained, fragmented and inequitable, thereby limiting independence and effective participation in education, economic activities and community life. Across institutions and districts visited, there was a persistent shortage of essential devices such as wheelchairs, prosthetics, crutches, hearing aids and specialised educational tools, with many beneficiaries either remaining on waiting lists or relying on outdated and non-functional equipment. At Silobela Old People's Home, residents lacked adequate assistive devices, including functional wheelchairs and prosthetics. Submissions given by the public in different provinces indicated that requests processed through Social Welfare systems were not fulfilled, indicating administrative inefficiencies and weak follow-through mechanisms. Public hearings further revealed that the cost of acquiring assistive devices is prohibitively high for most households, effectively excluding persons with disabilities from accessing essential support, while concerns were also raised regarding inequitable distribution and instances of misallocation. The institutions also submitted that the absence of a coordinated national procurement and distribution framework has resulted in over-reliance on donor support and ad hoc interventions, which are neither sustainable nor predictable.

Skills training and development

Specialised learning material

The Committee established that the availability and adequacy of specialised learning materials for learners with disabilities remain critically insufficient, thereby undermining the delivery of inclusive and equitable education. Across institutions visited, there was a pronounced shortage of essential assistive learning technologies, including *Braille* machines, embossers, scientific talking calculators and up-to-date brailled textbooks, resulting in learners being unable to fully engage with the curriculum. At Jairos Jiri School for the Blind in Kadoma, limited access to brailled learning materials left learners lagging behind in the implementation of the updated curriculum, while the high cost of procuring and maintaining *Braille* equipment continued to constrain the institution's capacity. Similarly, at Hugo School for the Blind in Masvingo, reliance on manual writing methods such as slates and styluses, coupled with inadequate teaching and learning materials, reflected slow progress towards digitalisation and modern assistive learning systems, despite increasing enrolment and demand for quality education. The Committee further noted that high teacher-to-student ratio in specialised settings exacerbated the problem, as learners requiring individualised support were compelled to operate in resource-constrained environments.

Education Funding

The Committee noted that the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM), remained a central mechanism for supporting access to education. While BEAM has played a critical role in enabling vulnerable learners, including those with disabilities, to enroll and remain in school, its effectiveness is significantly undermined by persistent delays and inconsistencies in disbursement. Evidence from institutions such as King George VI Centre and Jairos Jiri School for the Blind in Kadoma indicates that arrears in BEAM payments have accumulated over multiple academic cycles, leaving schools unable to meet operational costs and compromising the provision of boarding, learning materials and essential support services.

At Jairos Jiri School for the Blind, they reported that their last disbursement was in 2022, forcing the institution to operate under severe financial strain despite high enrolment and specialised needs. Similarly, at Hugo School for the Blind, where the majority of learners rely on BEAM, delayed payments have disrupted institutional planning and the delivery of education services.

Public submissions further revealed that, in the absence of predictable funding, some schools continue to demand fees from learners with disabilities contrary to policy intent, thereby shifting the financial burden back onto already vulnerable households. Collectively, these findings demonstrate that while BEAM remains a critical social protection instrument, its current implementation is inconsistent and insufficiently reliable to guarantee sustained and equitable access to education for persons with disabilities.

Economic Disempowerment and Social Protection

From the public hearings held, the Committee noted that economic empowerment and social protection mechanisms for persons with disabilities remained limited in scope, inconsistently implemented and largely ineffective in promoting sustainable livelihoods. Evidence from public hearings indicates that persons with disabilities are systematically excluded from key Government empowerment programmes, including agricultural inputs schemes, land allocation frameworks and income-generating initiatives, despite existing policy provisions intended to guarantee their inclusion. In districts such as Zvimba, participants reported that programmes such as fertiliser distribution and community development projects have not reached persons with disabilities, while limited access to start-up capital and lack of structured post-training support continue to undermine the transition from skills acquisition to economic participation.

The Committee further established that social protection systems were weak and unreliable, characterised by low value grants, irregular disbursements and in some cases, complete non-payment despite beneficiary registration. Reports of mobile money transfers failing to materialise and continued demands for school fees highlighted serious gaps in implementation and accountability. In addition, the public submitted that high user fees for public services, including council charges, further marginalised persons with disabilities and eroded their limited incomes. Collectively, these conditions indicated that economic empowerment initiatives are not sufficiently inclusive, while social protection mechanisms are not providing predictable income security, thereby perpetuating vulnerability, dependency and exclusion from meaningful participation in national development.

Committee Observations

Persistent Implementation Gap between the Legal Framework and Lived Realities

While Zimbabwe has a progressive constitutional and international legal framework on disability rights, the enquiry established that these protections have not yet translated into tangible and enforceable entitlements on the ground. This reflects not a policy deficit, but an implementation and coordination challenge across sectors, which is limiting the realisation of sections 22 and 83 of the Constitution and slowing the attainment of inclusive national development.

Unpredictable and inadequate financing is undermining service delivery

The delayed and inconsistent disbursement of BEAM funds has created a structural vulnerability in institutions that cater for learners with disabilities, affecting their capacity to procure assistive learning materials, retain skilled staff and maintain operations. This financing model makes planning impossible and places the right to education for learners with disabilities in a precarious and unsustainable position.

The current state of infrastructure is incompatible with inclusive education

The absence of disability-friendly hostels, classrooms, ablution facilities and transport systems is directly contributing to school drop-outs and low retention levels. This indicates that inclusion is being pursued within an infrastructure framework that was not designed for diversity, thereby structurally excluding learners with disabilities despite the existence of inclusive education policies.

Weak transition mechanisms from training to economic participation

Although rehabilitation and vocational training centers are imparting valuable skills, there is no clear pathway into tertiary education, entrepreneurship or formal employment due to lack of start-up capital, high costs of support services and absence of deliberate labour-market linkages. This results in a cycle where training does not translate into economic empowerment, thereby limiting the contribution of persons with disabilities to national productivity.

Communication barriers in the health sector amount to functional exclusion

The near absence of sign language interpretation services in public health institutions effectively denies deaf persons access to healthcare on an equal basis with others. This transforms what should be a service delivery gap into a rights-based concern, as access to health cannot be realised where communication itself is not facilitated.

Assistive device provision is constrained by both capacity and accountability challenges

The shortage, high cost and reported irregularities in the distribution of assistive devices point to the need for a more transparent, adequately funded and decentralised procurement and allocation system. Without reliable access to assistive technologies, participation in education, employment and community life remains severely restricted.

Disability inclusion is not yet mainstreamed in economic empowerment programmes

The limited participation of persons with disabilities in land allocation, procurement frameworks and empowerment initiatives indicates that disability is still treated as a social welfare issue rather than a cross-cutting economic development matter. This has the effect of unintentionally excluding a significant demographic from contributing to and benefiting from national growth.

Social protection mechanisms are not yet providing reliable income security

The minimal value, inconsistent disbursement and non-operationalisation of key support mechanisms such as the Disability Levy weaken the social protection function and perpetuate vulnerability among persons with disabilities. Predictable and adequate support is essential for safeguarding dignity, enhancing independence and reducing long-term dependency.

Recommendations

Cognisant of the above observations, the Committee recommends as follows:

The Ministry of Finance should ring-fence BEAM support for learners with disabilities and operationalise the Disability Levy to create a sustainable funding stream for disability programmes by December 2026

The Ministry of Health and Child Care should institutionalise sign language interpretation services at all public health facilities as part of the health service establishment by December 2026.

The Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare should review disability grant levies, guarantee regular monthly disbursements and integrate beneficiaries into livelihood and empowerment programmes by December 2026.

The Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare must review and adjust disability grants in line with the poverty datum line by December 2027

The Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare must enforce the minimum operational standards for institutions serving persons with disabilities by December 2026.

The Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare must, establish a national assistive devices acquisition and distribution framework that guarantees timely, affordable and equitable access for persons with disabilities by June 2027

The Ministry of Local Government and Public Works should adopt and implement a National Inclusive Public Transport Policy that compels all public transport operators to comply with universal accessibility standards by December 2027

The Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development should establish targeted empowerment programmes for women and girls with disabilities, including access to microfinance, vocational training, safe shelters, and gender-based violence response services by December 2027.

Conclusion

The Joint Portfolio Committee on Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare and the Thematic Committee on Human Rights recognises the significant progress made by the Second Republic in establishing a robust constitutional, legislative and policy framework for the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities.

However, the enquiry established that the full realisation of these rights is being constrained by implementation, financing and coordination challenges, which continue to limit equitable access to education, health services, economic opportunities, assistive technologies and social protection. The Committee therefore reiterates that disability inclusion is not a welfare consideration but a constitutional, human rights and national development priority that requires a whole-of-Government, adequately resourced and results-based approach.

The Committee is confident that the timely implementation of the recommendations contained in this report will accelerate the attainment of an inclusive society in which persons with disabilities participate fully and contribute meaningfully to national development in line with Vision 2030 and the National Development Strategy. In fulfilment of its constitutional mandate, Parliament will continue to exercise rigorous oversight to ensure measurable progress, enhanced accountability and the progressive realisation of the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities in Zimbabwe. I thank you.

HON. MAVHUDZI: I rise to second the Report of the Joint Committee on Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare and the Thematic Committee on Human Rights on the rights of persons with disabilities in Zimbabwe as delivered by Hon. Dexter Malinganiso, the Chairperson of the Committee on Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare.

At the outset, I wish to commend the Chairperson and the Members of the Joint Committee for undertaking a comprehensive enquiry across the country.

The report before this House is not merely about disability. It is a constitutional promise of equality, dignity and inclusion. It is about whether Zimbabwe is prepared to ensure that no citizen is left behind. Section 22 of the Constitution obliges the State to recognise the rights of persons with disabilities and to take appropriate measures to ensure that their full participation in society is guaranteed.

Likewise, Section 83 guarantees the rights to dignity, equal opportunities in education, employment and public life. The Committee found that while Zimbabwe has progressive laws and has ratified international instruments such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the greatest challenge remains implementation. The first critical issue that I found very critical is the issue of a persistent gap between policy and reality. The Committee found that constitutional guarantees have not been translated into meaningful improvements in the lives of many persons with disabilities. Too many citizens continue to encounter inaccessible schools, hospitals, transport systems and workplaces. This is not because we lack policies but because the implementation has been inconsistent and not well coordinated.

Secondly Madam Speaker, I wish to highlight the crisis in inclusive education. The Committee established that many schools lack ramps, accessible toilets, Braille learning material, specialist teachers and assistive technologies. Worse still, Madam Speaker, institutions such as the Jairos Jiri School for the blind, King George VI Centre, and the Hugo School for the Blind continue to operate under severe financial pressure because BEAM disbursements have been delayed for years. Some schools last received BEAM payments in 2022, yet they continue to educate the vulnerable learners. This situation is unsustainable. Education should never be a privilege simply because a learner has a disability.

The other issue that I found disturbing is the stigma that people with disabilities face in our health institutions. Many public hospitals do not have sign language interpreters. This means that deaf citizens cannot communicate with healthcare professionals, resulting in delayed diagnosis, compromise on confidentiality and poor treatment outcomes.

Basic health information is rarely available in an accessible format. Health cannot truly be universal if communication itself is inaccessible.

Another pressing issue is the shortage of assistive devices. The Committee observed that many institutions lack wheelchairs, prosthetics, hearing aids and other essential equipment. Many beneficiaries remain on the waiting list while others depend entirely on donor support. Without assistive devices, persons with disabilities are denied access to education, employment and independent living. I, therefore, fully support the recommendation for a national framework to procure and distribute assistive devices in a transparent, equitable and sustainable manner.

Another issue of concern is the issue of economic exclusion, which remains widespread. Despite existing empowerment policies, many people with disabilities remain excluded from these programmes. Programmes such as land allocation, employment opportunities and income-generating initiatives. Skills acquired through vocational training frequently fail to translate into sustainable employment because of inadequate access to finance and weak links with industry. Disability should never be viewed solely as a welfare issue. It is an economic development issue. Zimbabwe cannot achieve Vision 2030 while excluding nearly one in ten citizens from productive participation.

Equally concerning is the issue of living conditions as observed by the Committee. Institutions visited by the Committee reported overcrowding, deteriorating infrastructure, inadequate sanitation facilities, shortage of medication and insufficient rehabilitation services. Such conditions fall below the standards of dignity envisaged in our constitution. Persons with disabilities deserve facilities that promote independence, safety and respect.

As Parliament, our responsibility does not end with articulating reports. We must vigorously and religiously exercise our oversight role to ensure that the recommendations proposed are implemented within the timeline proposed by the Committee. The Ministry must report regularly on progress and resources must be allocated accordingly. I so submit. Thank you Madam Speaker.

HON. KAMBUZUMA: I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 29th July, 2026.

ANNOUCEMENTS BY THE TEMPORARY SPEAKER

VISITOR IN THE SPEAKER'S GALLERY

HON. SPEAKER: I wish to recognise the presence of His Excellency Mr. Sergei Berdnikoy, Ambassador of the Federation of the Republic of Russia to Zimbabwe, in the Speaker's Gallery – [HON. MEMBERS: *Hear, hear.*] -

NON-ADVERSE REPORT RECEIVED FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY LEGAL COMMITTEE

THE TEMPORARY SPEAKER: (HON. MAUNGANIDZE): I have to inform the House that I have received a Non-Adverse report from the Parliamentary Legal Committee on Biological and Toxin Weapons Crimes Bill [H.B 9A:2025].

MOTION

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE ON NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE SUBMISSION OF FINANCIAL

STATEMENTS BY STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES AND PARASTATALS

HON. MAPOSA: Madam Speaker, I move the motion standing in my name that this House considers and adopts the Report of the Public Accounts Committee on non-compliance with regard to the submission of the Financial Statements to the Auditor General by some State-Owned Enterprises and Parastatals (2024 Auditor General's Report) (S.C. 12, 2026).

HON. MASVISVI: I second.

HON. MAPHOSA: Madam Speaker, the report is as follows:

INTRODUCTION

Section 49 (1) (b) (c) of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) requires the accounting authority of every public entity to prepare annual financial statements and to submit them to the Auditor-General and the Accountant-General within two months of the end of each financial year. This statutory obligation is a cornerstone of public financial accountability, enabling independent verification of how public funds have been managed.

- Non-submission of financial statements is a breach of the PFMA that compromises transparency, weakens public accountability and undermines the constitutional mandate of Parliament to monitor and oversee the expenditure of all state institutions, as provided for under Section 299 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe.
- The Public Accounts Committee noted with concern that a significant number of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and Parastatals had failed to submit annual financial statements for audit for multiple consecutive financial years. The institutions cited for non-compliance include Chitungwiza and Ingutsheni Hospitals, the Zimbabwe Defence University, the Nurses Council, New Ziana, Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO), the Zimbabwe Youth Council, Silo Foods, the Zimbabwe Academic and Research Centre, Defold Mines, the National Handcraft Centre and the National Libraries and Documentation Centre.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ENQUIRY

•The key objectives of the inquiry were to: i) Tto identify and understand the root causes of delayed and non-submission of financial statements by SOEs and Parastatals. ii) To assess the implications of such non-compliance on accountability, transparency and sound public financial management. iii). To make recommendations aimed at improving the timeliness, completeness and quality of financial statements submitted to the Auditor-General.

METHODOLOGY

The Committee examined the Auditor-General's Report for the financial year ended 31 December 2024, which was tabled in Parliament on 23 July 2025, with particular attention to findings on entities that failed to submit financial statements for audit. Oral submissions were received from the Accounting Officers of Chitungwiza and Ingutsheni Hospitals, the Zimbabwe Defence University, the Nurses Council, New Ziana, ZUPCO, the Zimbabwe Youth Council, Silo Foods, the Zimbabwe Academic and Research Centre, Defold Mines, the National Handcraft Centre and the National Libraries and Documentation Centre.

COMMITTEE FINDINGS The Auditor-General's Report revealed that a number of State-Owned Enterprises did not submit their financial statements for auditing. The table below highlights the entities and the years they failed to submit the financial statements:

Entry	**Period of Non-Submissions**
National Handcraft Centre	2009-2024 (13 years)
National Libraries and Documentation Centre	2009-2024 (13 years)
Zimbabwe Defence University	2021 – 2024 (4 years)
Chitungwiza Hospital	2022-2024
Defold Mines Pvt Ltd	2022-2024
Zimbabwe Academic and Research Centre	2022-2024
Ingutsheni Central Hospital	2023-2024
Nurses Council	2023-2024
Silo Foods Pvt Ltd	2023-2024
ZUPCO	2023-2024
Zimbabwe Youth Council	2023-2024
New Ziana	2023-2024

State-Owned Enterprises that failed to submit Financial Statements for auditing. Based on evidence received from accounting officers and the Auditor-General's Report, the Committee identified the following five principal categories of causes for non-submission of financial statements. 4.1 Human resources constraints Human resource constraints emerged as a pervasive and systemic cause of non-compliance across the institutions examined. These deficiencies manifested in three forms, which were understaffing of finance departments, the employment of personnel whose qualifications were insufficient for the complexity of the reporting function and destabilising staff turnover in key finance roles. At Ingutsheni Central Hospital, the Chief Medical Officer informed the Committee that the Finance Department operated with only six accounting personnel holding qualifications ranging from certificates to Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) who were responsible for managing daily financial operations and statutory reporting for a workforce of 720. This limited the department’s capacity to discharge its reporting obligations without deprioritising statutory submissions. The Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education confirmed to the Committee that the National Libraries and Documentation Services operated without a qualified accountant throughout the period under review. The consequence was that no financial records were captured, rendering the preparation of financial statements for audit impossible for a period of thirteen years. The Zimbabwe Youth Council (ZYC) reported that only three of its thirteen approved finance positions were filled during the period under review. This left a skeletal team responsible for coordinating financial data across ten provinces, resulting in severe bottlenecks in data capturing, consolidation and reporting. These constraints were further exacerbated when the Finance Manager departed in early 2023, creating a gap in coordination that was only partially resolved months later. The National Handcraft Centre operated without a Board of Directors from 2017 to 2024. The Acting General Manager for the National Handcraft Centre, Mr. Ngwerume, submitted that this governance vacuum weakened institutional oversight and accountability. Staff turnover in key finance positions such as Finance Manager and Accountant posts meant that remaining personnel were compelled to assume incompatible duties, further degrading the quality and continuity of financial records. Defold Mines experienced frequent accountant transitions between 2023 and 2024, resulting in the loss of institutional memory and disruption of the audit trail, which slowed the onboarding of new personnel.

COMMITTEE OBSERVATION

The Committee observed that human resource deficiencies constituted a primary and systemic cause of the failure to submit financial statements for audit by multiple institutions. This capacity crisis manifested in understaffing, the deployment of underqualified personnel in key finance roles, destabilising staff turnover and in some cases, a complete absence of oversight due to vacant Boards.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS.

Treasury, Public Service Commission and relevant Line Ministries, by 31 August 2026, should conduct a human resource audit of all non-compliant SOEs' finance departments and implement a mandatory, time-bound plan to fill critical vacancies with appropriately qualified personnel. Line Ministries should, by 30 October 2026, ensure the urgent constitution of Boards of Directors for all SOEs currently without a board, in accordance with the Public Entities Corporate Governance Act [*Chapter 10:31*].

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The inadequacy, obsolescence and in some cases complete absence of functional financial management systems was identified as a cause of non-submission across several SOEs. These system failures undermined the reliability of financial data, destroyed audit trails and in certain instances resulted in the permanent loss of financial records. The Chief Medical Officer at Ingutsheni Central Hospital submitted that the hospital’s Pastel Evolution accounting software license lapsed in 2021 following non-payment, forcing the Finance Department to revert to entirely manual processes. This substantially increased the time required to prepare financial statements. Chitungwiza Central Hospital experienced a crash of its SAP accounting system in 2022 that resulted in the loss of vital financial data, including debtors’, creditors and cashbook. This data loss exposed fundamental weaknesses in the hospital's internal controls, including the absence of system backups and an over-reliance on unsecured manual Excel records as a fallback. Furthermore, the National Handcraft Centre operated without an accounting system throughout the period under review. Its records were maintained on manual worksheets and financial statements prepared for the years 2009 to 2018 were lost following a computer crash, with no backup having been maintained. The Zimbabwe Defence University similarly relied entirely on manual systems for accounting data capture, which undermined both the efficiency and the verifiability of its financial records. The Committee was informed that ZUPCO revised its data capture model within its ERP system to record financial transactions at the individual vehicle level, requiring the daily posting of approximately 1,426 waybills across all depots. While the reconfiguration was intended to enhance operational performance monitoring, it resulted in a delay of about 15 months in finalizing the 2022 financial year accounts. ZUPCO subsequently undertook a further ERP upgrade to accommodate multicurrency and branch accounting, which introduced further configuration timelines and contributed to continued delays in financial reporting for 2023 and 2024 financial years. The Nurse Council of Zimbabwe highlighted that a new accounting system was introduced in 2023 whose adoption slowed reporting as staff adjusted to the platform, compounded by limited capacity to manage both the transition and existing reporting backlog concurrently. The Chief Executive Officer of Silo Industries, Mr. Dube, informed the Committee that Silo Food Industries operated on a shared

SAP A1 system belonging to the Grain Marketing Board, over which it had no independent control and only intermittent access. This dependency on an external entity's system, over which Silo Foods had no governance, left it unable to access Complete and timely financial data, directly contributing to its failure to finalize its financial statements for 2023 and 2024. Committee observations 1. The Committee observed that the absence of any data backup protocols and reliance on obsolete, dysfunctional, or non-existent financial management systems is a major enabler of non-compliance. The lapse of software licenses, unmitigated system crashes resulting in data loss and complete reliance on manual processes at multiple entities demonstrated a systemic failure of basic financial infrastructure across the SOEs sector. New system adoptions and ERP upgrades at ZUPCO and the Nurses Council were undertaken without adequate parallel-running arrangements or resourcing to ensure that statutory deadlines could still be met during the transition period.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

All SOEs, by 31 December 2026, should have their accounting systems licensed, operational, and maintained by qualified staff. Where a licence has lapsed or a system is non-functional, a remediation timeline should be submitted. All SOEs by 31 December 2026, should have in place verified, off-site data backups of all financial records, updated at minimum on a weekly basis. Treasury should immediately ensure that Grain Marketing Board provides Silo Food Industries with dedicated, independent access to its own financial data on the SAP A1 system, or alternatively fund the migration of Silo Food Industries to its own standalone financial management system by 31 December 2026.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ISSUES

Several entities demonstrated financial constraints arising from inadequate government funding, declining own-revenue streams and the cumulative effects of Zimbabwe's hyperinflationary environment. The National Handcraft Centre presented evidence that, although financial statements were prepared for the years 2009 to 2018, the entity could not submit them for audit because the associated audit costs were unaffordable given the prevailing financially constrained environment. In addition, the company did not receive any funding support until late 2024, which further undermined its capacity to sustain proper financial reporting and meet statutory audit requirements. New Ziana cited financial constraints as the primary cause of its failure to submit 2022, 2023 and 2024 financial statements for audit. The Executive Secretary, Mr. Mungoshi, informed the Committee that the entity experienced delays in receiving Government support and had only received a fraction of its Treasury allocation for 2025, leaving it unable to meet its operational costs and salary obligations, resulting in the accumulation of arrears. While the 2023 and 2024 financial statements had been prepared, they remained pending audit due to funding constraints, and the 2022 audit was still being finalised at the time of the Committee's enquiry. The Committee further noted that New Ziana’s financial challenges were compounded by low business activity, reduced uptake of advertising space and significant staff shortages, which collectively resulted in loss of business. While the agency had transitioned from print to digital media, the shift had not yet yielded the anticipated financial returns.

COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS

The inability to afford audit costs reflects an institutional funding model that is structurally unsustainable and requires urgent policy attention. Audit fees constitute a predictable, recurring and statutory expenditure item. The failure to ring-fence funding for audit costs from allocated budgets indicates a gap in financial planning and Treasury oversight of grant conditions. Hyperinflationary conditions do not extinguish the statutory obligation to submit financial statements. Entities operating in difficult economic conditions require proactive support mechanisms, not retrospective condonation.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Accountant-General should, by 31 December 2026, develop a framework for use by the Office of the Auditor-General to determine SOEs that cannot afford private audit firms and should therefore be audited by the Office of the Auditor-General. This will ensure that inability to pay private audit fees does not become a justification for non-submission. All SOEs receiving Treasury grants should budget and ring-fence funds for audit fees from the grant. 4.4 Transaction Complexity and International Financial Reporting Standard compliance.

The Committee was informed that in 2014, ZARNet was designated by the Government of Zimbabwe to acquire a 60% shareholding in Telecel Zimbabwe Limited (TZL) from VimpelCom (Netherlands) at a cost of US$40 million, as part of the implementation of the Indigenization and Economic Empowerment (IEE) policy. The financial complexity of this acquisition, which involved multiple government ministries, departments and agencies, created significant challenges for ZARNet in preparing compliant financial statements. The involvement of multiple Government entities and the unresolved accounting treatment of the TZL shareholding resulted in incomplete financial statements that did not meet IFRS requirements. This position was eventually resolved through the enactment of Statutory Instrument 156 of 2023 (Temporary Measures) (Investment Laws Amendment) Regulations, which transferred the TZL shares to the Mutapa Investment Fund in September 2023. However, this resolution came years after the non-submission had begun, leaving a multi-year gap in ZARNet's statutory reporting record.

Committee observation 1. The decade-long delay in resolving the ZARNet/TZL position through legislative intervention (SI 156 of 2023) demonstrates a failure of inter-governmental coordination and a disregard for the downstream financial reporting consequences of complex policy transactions. The absence of a specific IFRS technical support mechanism for SOEs that are assigned complex transactions by Government represents a systemic gap in the public financial management support framework.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Accountant-General should develop a dedicated IFRS Technical Advisory Service, accessible to all SOEs, to provide guidance on complex accounting issues, particularly where complex government policy transactions create measurement and recognition uncertainties. The cost of this service should be borne centrally rather than by individual SOEs.

External Factors

The Committee acknowledged that certain external factors contributed to reporting delays, particularly at Ingutsheni Hospital. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in reducing working hours and restricted operational flexibility during the period 2019 to 2021, exacerbating preexisting backlogs in the hospital's financial reporting and audit processes.

The Committee further noted that the sequential nature of the audit process, whereby audited financial statements for a subsequent year cannot ordinarily be submitted until the preceding year's audit has been concluded, created a compounding effect at Ingutsheni Hospital. 4.5.3 The audit firms engaged over the years include PNA, Moore PNA Zimbabwe, and KFN International, which took prolonged periods to finalize audits. In some instances, required adjustments to reports dating as far back as 2013, preventing the progression of subsequent financial years through the audit cycle. This cascading effect ultimately resulted in the non-submission of financial statements for the 2022 to 2024 financial years. Committee observation. The absence of a formal reporting mechanism represents a governance gap that allowed Ingutsheni's backlog to grow unchecked for years. The prolonged duration of audits by successive audit firms at Ingutsheni Central Hospital with reports dating to 2013 still being required years later raises questions about audit quality management, the appropriateness of the audit firms' engagement terms and the adequacy of oversight by the Auditor. General’s office over the quality and timeliness of private sector auditors conducting public entity audits.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The PFMA should be amended, or subsidiary legislation should be enacted, to provide a formal mechanism through which SOEs and MDAs may apply for extensions of statutory reporting deadlines in defined circumstances of genuine external disruption. Such applications should be assessed and determined by the Accountant-General, with a copy provided to the relevant Public Accounts Committee. Extensions must not be granted retrospectively. The Auditor-General by 31 December 2026, should establish a performance monitoring framework for private sector audit firms conducting public entity audits under the Auditor-General's mandate, including enforceable timelines for the delivery of audit reports and escalation procedures when those timelines are not met. Corrective Measures and Current Compliance Progress

4.6.1 In response to the Committee's enquiry, several State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) provided accounts of the corrective measures taken since the non-compliance was formally identified. The Committee acknowledges these initiatives as constructive first steps, while noting that the credibility of reported progress be verified through independent confirmation by the Auditor General. Committee observations

The corrective measures reported by most institutions reflect a genuine and encouraging effort following the Committee's engagement. The completion of backlog clearance by the Zimbabwe Youth Council, the active audit engagements at Ingutsheni and ZUPCO were noted. The Zimbabwe Defence University's commitment to submit all outstanding financial statements for 2019–2023 by 31 August 2025 was noted.

The corrective measures, while necessary, were largely reactive, responding to years of cumulative non-compliance rather than preventing it. The Committee noted the absence, in most institutions, of forward-looking governance frameworks that would prevent a recurrence once the immediate backlog has been cleared.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion should by 30 October 2026, submit to Parliament corrective measure being taken by each SOE including measures addressing Board composition, finance staffing and system operability.

Treasury by 31 December 2026, should strengthen the Public Finance Management Act to impose punitive measures on directors who are grossly negligent in the submission of financial statements, and to curtail accounting officers from shielding or failing to act against such negligence.

Conclusion

The non-submission of financial statements by State-Owned Enterprises and Parastatals for multiple consecutive financial years represents a serious and systemic failure of public financial accountability in SOE sector. In the most extreme cases the National Handcraft Centre and the National Libraries and Documentation Services this failure has extended for thirteen years, denying Parliament, the public and oversight bodies any meaningful insight into the stewardship of public resources at these institutions. I so submit.

HON. MASVISVI: Thank you Madam Speaker for giving me this opportunity to share my views on the Public Accounts Report. Section

299 of the Constitution mandates this Parliament to oversee the expenditure of public funds. The submission of financial statements to the Auditor General is the bedrock of this oversight. It is the primary mechanism through which we, as elected representatives and the citizens of Zimbabwe, can ascertain how the money is being spent. The report tabled by the Public Accounts Committee reveals a dereliction of duty. We are not talking about a single instance of delay. We are talking about a systematic collapse of accountability. The evidence is damning.

Madam Speaker Ma'am, we can see there is institutionalised negligence with entities like the National Handicraft Centre and the National Libraries and Documentation Centre that have not submitted accounts for an incredible 13 years. This is not a lapse; it is a decade-long period of operation in a black hole of financial transparency. We see a culture of impunity. The Committee has identified a pattern of non-compliance from 2022 onwards involving hospitals, utility companies and regulatory bodies like the Nurses Council. This demonstrates that these entities feel they can ignore the law with impunity. This cannot be allowed to continue.

Madam Speaker Ma'am, it is sad that the report identifies principal categories of failure but when we peel back the layers, we see a singular root cause, a profound disregard for the principles of public financial management. We hear excuses like - we do not have enough staff. We hear issues like - our system has crashed, like Chitungwiza Hospital. It is an SAP failure that exposed a catastrophic lack of basic internal controls such as data backups. We hear so many issues around these councils, yet they report system failures. To some extent, we fail to believe their submissions. It could be a challenge that councils refuse to adhere to principles of Public Finance Management.

Madam Speaker, how can we condemn the National Handicraft Centre when its financial records for a decade were lost due to a computer crash with no backup? Why was there no central government cloud storage mandated? This is a failure of State infrastructure and policy. We have New Ziana, a State agency tasked with telling the nation's story, unable to submit accounts because it cannot afford to pay its own staff, let alone an audit firm. The Treasury is led with its allocations and then the entity is condemned for not being able to afford a statutory audit. This is a secular logic of failure. The Constitution does not provide for a get-out-of-jail-free card when the economic environment is tough. The conduct of these entities is a direct assault on the principles of accountability.

As Parliament, we are denied an oversight function. It denies the Auditor General the ability to conduct their work and it denies the people their fundamental right to know how the resources are being managed. The argument about a lack of funding for auditors is a strawman. If an entity cannot afford a private firm, it is the Auditor General's Office that is mandated to step in. The entity's duty is to prepare the statements. The Auditor General's duty is to audit them. The failure of the entity to even prepare statements is the primary crime here.

At the Zimbabwe Youth Council, there are only three finance staff members to cover the ten provinces, but whose responsibility is it to fill the other ten positions? It is the entity's leadership supported by the Public Service Commission. I therefore call on this House to condemn these failures and demand the immediate and full implementation of the

Committee's recommendations. Accountability is not negotiable. I thank you for giving me the opportunity.

*__HON. MADZIVANYIKA__: On a point of order. I am appealing to the Chairpersons that when they give notice of a report of the third quarter, they must send a copy to the *WhatsApp* group. This report of Public Accounts, which is being read here, we are only hearing about it now. So, it must be a report of everyone in the House, not only the Committee report. So, I am appealing to you, Madam Speaker, that this report be availed to us so that we can have ample time to go through it before it is debated in the House. I thank you.

THE TEMPORARY SPEAKER (HON. MUGOMO): Noted, Hon. Madzivanyika.

HON. KAMBUZUMA: I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 29th July 2026.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. KAMBUZUMA: I move that we proceed to Order of the Day, Number 22 on today's *Order Paper*.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE ON NON-SUBMISSION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS BY SOME LOCAL AUTHORITIES

HON. MAPHOSA: I move a motion standing in my name that this House considers and adopts the Report of the Public Accounts Committee on non-submission of Financial Statements to the Auditor General by some Local Authorities.

HON. MAONEKE: I second.

HON. MAPOSA:

Introduction

The Public Accounts Committee derives its oversight mandate from Section 299 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, which empowers Parliament to monitor and oversee State expenditure to ensure that all public funds are properly accounted for and applied in accordance with the law. In addition, Section 49 (1) (c) and Section 35 (6) of the Public Finance Management Act [*Chapter 22:19*] require Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to prepare and submit financial statements within sixty days of the end of each financial year for audit by the Auditor-General.

Despite these clear statutory provisions, a number of Local Authorities have consistently failed to meet the prescribed deadlines. Notably, Pfura Rural District Council, Karoi Town Council, Beitbridge Municipality, Beitbridge Rural District Council and Hwange Local Board have been cited for delays and non-submission of financial statements for several years. The Committee conducted an inquiry into this matter in order to establish the reasons for such persistent non-compliance and to recommend measures to ensure adherence to the legal framework governing financial reporting.

Objectives of the Inquiry

The Committee sought to

- Assess the level of compliance by the selected Local Authorities with the statutory provisions of the Constitution and the Public Finance Management Act relating to the submission of financial statements.
- Understand the underlying causes of non-submission and delays, to evaluate the implications of such non-compliance on accountability, transparency and sound public financial management.
- Make recommendations aimed at improving the timeliness and completeness of submissions to the Auditor-General.

Methodology

In carrying out its inquiry, the Committee examined the Auditor-General's Report for the financial year ended 31st December 2024, which was tabled in Parliament on 23rd July 2025. Oral submissions were received from the Accounting Officers and Management of the Local Authorities concerned, namely Pfura Rural District Council, Karoi Rural District Council, Beitbridge Municipality, Beitbridge Rural District Council and Hwange Local Board.

Findings

The Auditor-General's Report revealed a continued trend of non-submission of financial statements by several Local Authorities. Pfura Rural District Council, Beitbridge Municipality and Rural District Council, Karoi RDC and Hwange Local Board all failed to submit 2023 and 2024 financial statements for audit.

BEITBRIDGE RDC

Beitbridge RDC attributed the non-submission of financial statements to acute staffing shortages following the resignation of the Council Treasurer in March 2023, the subsequent vacancy being filled in August 2024 after 17 months. The Council further explained that during the absence of a substantive Council Treasurer, financial statements for 2021 and 2022 were finalised.

Furthermore, it was submitted that the absence of a substantive Treasurer significantly undermined the performance of the finance unit, inadequate supervision of staff and non-compliance with statutory financial management timelines. To address the shortcomings, the Council had finalised the 2023 and 2024 financial statements, which were submitted to the Office of the Auditor General on the 22nd of October 2025.

Observation

The Committee noted the commendable remedial action taken by Beitbridge RDC in addressing the 2023 and 2024 backlog of submitting financial statements. However, despite the plausible explanation for the absence of a substantive Treasurer to compile financial statements, the breach of the Public Finance Management Act must be taken seriously by the Management of Beitbridge RDC.

Furthermore, the Committee observed that the non-submission of the 2023 and 2024 was a result of incapacitation of the finance unit in the absence of a substantive Council Treasurer.

Recommendation

The Committee therefore recommends that going forward Beitbridge RDC should fully capacitate its finance unit through continuous training and development on an annual basis to be able to fulfil obligations set in section 49 of the Public Finance Management Act.

Beitbridge Town Council COVID-19 ICT Challenges

The Municipality experienced significant financial management challenges primarily arising from the COVID-19 period (2020), during which staff rationalisation resulted in a substantial backlog in transaction postings. Following the pandemic, limited staff capacity required the simultaneous handling of current transactions and historical backlog, which slowed overall progress.

These challenges were compounded by persistent system inefficiencies associated with Sage Version 7, including transaction duplication, processing failures and inaccurate reporting. This necessitated the upgrade of the ERP system and supporting ICT infrastructure. Although upgrades were implemented, including the acquisition of new hardware and a server, the council highlighted that transitional challenges such as data migration and system configuration continued to affect system performance.

Staff Shortages

The Council further explained that its Finance Department also faced critical staffing shortages, which were further exacerbated by staff turnover, including the departure of key personnel such as the Finance Director. Although additional staff were later recruited, capacity constraints remained, particularly at junior levels, limiting the Municipality's ability to clear backlog efficiently.

The lack of automation was further cited as one of the reasons several financial processes remained manual, including cashbook updates, bank reconciliations and asset management, which increased the risk of errors and inefficiencies. Some ERP modules were not fully operational and system failures particularly within the voucher management module, disrupted transaction processing.

Despite these challenges, progress was made. The Committee was informed that the 2023 financial statements were approximately 90% complete and were expected to be submitted by 30th November 2025, with the 2024 financial statements scheduled to follow in the first quarter of 2026.

The progress made was a result of the Municipality's implementation of several corrective measures, including restructuring the Finance Department, recruiting additional staff, and engaging consultants (Fit-Young Consultants and Devine Exquisite Solutions) in partnership with GiZ. These interventions focused on resolving ERP system issues, automating manual processes, enhancing reporting in line with IPSAS standards and strengthening staff capacity.

Observation

The Committee observed that Beitbridge Municipality's financial management system was in a state of disarray. Although system upgrades and staffing interventions were introduced, transitional issues such as data migration challenges, incomplete module functionality and limited staff capacity, particularly at junior levels, continue to hinder full operational effectiveness.

Recommendations

The Municipality should prioritise the full stabilisation and optimisation of the upgraded ERP system by completing all outstanding data migration processes, ensuring full activation of all system modules by 31st October 2026.

Beitbridge Municipality should accelerate the digitisation of remaining manual processes such as cashbook maintenance, bank reconciliations and asset management to improve accuracy, efficiency and control by 31st October 2026.

Hwange Local Board Incapacitation of the Finance Directorate

The Council highlighted that three challenges compounded its ability to comply with the requirements of the Public Finance Management Act on the submission of financial statements. Backlogs in submitting financial statements for four years overwhelmed the accounts department's capacity to consolidate all the accounts. The aspect of staff shortage within the accounting department was raised as the prime determinant, which crippled the councils' ability to comply with financial regulations.

The Finance Director explained that the finance directorate was heavily depleted before 2023, which saw the directorate being led by an accounts clerk. This labour shortage culminated in the entity failing to timeously consolidate its financial statements. Expounding on the current set-up of the department, the Finance Director highlighted that the directorate now had 5 clerks (3 with degrees and 2 with diplomas), 2 Bookkeepers with degrees in Finance and Accounting and an

Accountant with a Master's degree in Accounting. All these personnel were under the stewardship of the Finance Director with a Master's in Applied Accounting and CPA qualification.

Enterprise Resource Planning System Challenges

The Committee was informed that the absence of a functional Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system resulted in the Council's failure to submit financial statements to the Auditor General. The council indicated that the procurement process for a new ERP system was currently at the retendering stage, following the inability of the initial service provider to meet the required system specifications. The council had initially embarked on the procurement of SAGE Evolution as its preferred ERP solution, transitioning from the PRONUM system, which did not support consolidated financial reporting. At the time of reporting, the council was awaiting the conclusion of the procurement process for the award of the ERP contract, which was expected to address existing system deficiencies and improve financial reporting and compliance.

It was further submitted that the Ministry's recommendation for the adoption of the LADS system by local authorities had been issued in early 2025 and this was after the Council had already initiated its procurement process for a new ERP system.

High Audit Fees Charged by the OAG

It was submitted before the Committee that the 2023 audit statements for HLB would be signed by 31st December 2025 and efforts will be made to submit all outstanding financial statements in 2026.

However, despite the renewed commitment to address audit issues, the Council bemoaned the high audit fees charged by the office of the Auditor-General. With the financial woes bedevilling local authorities, the audit fees charged by the OAG were highlighted as too cumbersome. However, the Committee noted that the audit fees covered the backlog of 3 years, hence the staggered higher audit fees.

Observations

The Committee observed that staffing challenges severely affected the Council's ability to submit financial statements.

- The Committee further commends the significant efforts made by the local authority to address the staff shortage within the Finance Department by recruiting adequate staff to run the financial affairs of the council.
- The Council’s financial reporting was adversely affected by the absence of a fully functional Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, which resulted in delays in the preparation and submission of financial statements to the Auditor General. The continued absence of a functional ERP placed Hwange Local Board in a precarious position to consolidate its financial accounts.
- Whilst the retendering process has been initiated, it is however long overdue. The Council’s ability to achieve efficient, real-time financial reporting and full compliance with statutory reporting requirements is still severely constrained.

Recommendation

- Hwange Local Board should expedite the finalisation of the ERP procurement process by 31st July 2026 to ensure timely implementation of a fully functional system capable of supporting integrated, consolidated and real-time financial reporting.

Pfura RDC

ERP Challenges

The Committee gathered that Pfura RDC experienced significant operational challenges during the period under review, primarily arising from system-related disruptions. During the implementation of a critical accounting system and associated data migration processes, technical failures occurred, resulting in temporary inconsistencies in the trial balances. These discrepancies necessitated extensive manual verification procedures to confirm the accuracy and integrity of the opening balances for the years under audit. In addition, the Committee was informed that a major server failure further disrupted operations and contributed to delays in the preparation of the financial statements. The time required to repair and restore the server affected workflow continuity.

Staffing Challenges

The organisation also faced human resource constraints within the Finance Department. The departure of a key staff member responsible for capturing and preparing income and expenditure records created a temporary skills gap, which delayed financial reporting processes. To mitigate this, management engaged graduate trainees to support ongoing accounting functions while recruitment efforts were indicated to be underway.

Despite these challenges, Pfura RDC successfully progressed with the audit of its 2023 and 2024 financial statements. The Council initiated measures to strengthen its financial management systems including partial migration to virtual platforms through a service provider and the gradual implementation of the LADS Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. While full computerisation had not yet been achieved, significant progress has been made, particularly in revenue management.

Through the implementation of these strategies, Pfura RDC informed the Committee that external auditors were engaged at the beginning of August and fieldwork was completed by mid-September. The 2023 and 2024 audited financial statements were to be submitted to the OAG by the end of November 2025.

Observations

The management of Pfura RDC, following its non-submission of the 2023 and 2024 financial statements, made significant progress in preparing the outstanding statements. The gradual implementation of the LADS system was commendabl,e although the full computerisation was lagging behind.

The commitment to transition to full digitalisation and the finalisation of the 2023 and 2024 financial statements indicate a commitment to fully comply with the provisions of the Public Finance Management Act.

Furthermore, it was observed that additional measures introduced to improve audit timeliness, including increasing staffing levels within the Finance Department, proved to be effective. However, it is important to fill in all the vacancies within the Finance Department with permanent staff instead of relying on temporary graduate traineeship.

Recommendations

Pfura RDC must fill all the posts within its finance department with permanent employees by end of the 3rd quarter of 2026.

Pfura RDC should fully digitalise its finance management system by the end of 2nd quarter of 2026.

Karoi Town Council

ERP System Challenges

The Committee found out that Karoi Town Council's financial management system was in a state of total disarray. Karoi Town Council accumulated a backlog of five outstanding audits dating back to 2019, as no audit exercises had been conducted during that period. In 2025, PAC tabled a report on Karoi Town Council's audited accounts for 2020, which was in the 2023 AG's report for local authorities.

The other accounts for subsequent years were still not finalised by the Council. Responding to the delays in completing audits, the town council largely attributed the delay to operational and systemic challenges notably the PRONUM system challenges.

While certain financial modules such as receipting, income, expenditure, debtors, and reconciliations had been computerised, other critical areas, including the housing and creditors modules, remained outside the system. As a result, the preparation of final accounts continued to rely heavily on manual processes using spreadsheets, limiting overall efficiency and integration.

Currency Conversion Challenges

Another major contributing factor to the delay in submitting financial statements was indicated to be the introduction of the new currency framework at the end of 2022, which exposed limitations in the Council's accounting system.

The Committee was informed that the existing system was not configured to handle multi-currency transactions, resulting in the commingling of United States Dollar and ZiG transactions. While the issue was manageable in 2022 due to low transaction volumes, the Council highlighted that it became significantly more complex in 2023 as transaction volumes increased. To address this, the Council expounded that the system provider was engaged to reconfigure the system and separate the USD and ZiG components.

Although system updates were implemented, challenges persisted, particularly in relation to transaction dating and classification across the affected periods. Consequently, manual intervention had been required, with accounting staff undertaking detailed segregation and verification of transactions.

Furthermore, in as far as staff capacity was concerned, the town council reported that the recruitment of seven postgraduate trainees in the finance directorate bolstered its resolve towards addressing the ERP system impasses. The Council further committed to submitting the 2023 financial statements by 30 October 2025 and the 2024 financial statements by 30 November 2025.

Observations

The Committee observed that Karoi Town Council was not taking the law seriously in as far as financial reporting was concerned. Despite the Committee (PAC) tabling a report on Karoi Town Council on findings of the 2023 OAG report on Local Authorities, the town council has not reformed nor made any meaningful headway in addressing the observations, findings and recommendations made by PAC. Non-submission of financial statements still remains a recurring problem despite protracted recommendations for adherence to legislation on financial reporting.

The Committee noted with concern that the overreliance on manual processing of transactions and the gaps in its PRONUM system were proving to be major challenges contributing to the recurrence of the problem of non-submission of financial statements. Despite the remedial action done, the seriousness of the town council still remains questionable in as far as adherence to section 49 of the Public Finance Management Act is concerned.

Recommendations

PAC recommends that the Minister of Local Government and Public Works takes a stern position on the accounting officer and management of Karoi Town Council following the continued breach of financial reporting legislation by July 31 2026.

Conclusion

The Committee is aggrieved by the protracted trend of non-submission of audited financial statements by local authorities. These highlighted 5 local authorities extensively captured in this report show the gravity of non-compliance to section 49 of the PFMA. Although some of the local authorities proved commitment for reform and remedial action, the non-submission of audited financial statements is a serious issue which must be taken seriously by all local authorities across the country.

The Committee, however remains optimistic that the issues captured in this report will be addressed through consented efforts of implementing the solid recommendations. In this regard, the Committee implores all the tasked stakeholders to take the recommendations made seriously to ensure financial prudence, sanity, transparency and efficiency in the use and management of public funds by local authorities. I thank you.

***HON. NKANI:** Thank you Madam Speaker. I would like to express my support for the Public Accounts Report that was presented in this esteemed House by Hon. Maposa regarding the issue of local authorities. I will keep my remarks brief Madam Speaker.

Firstly, local authorities are responsible for managing our communities. We have a Devolution Fund which they oversee. Additionally, they are currently collecting revenue from licences. They collect revenue from all the mines. We observe them coming in and issuing invoices for substantial amounts of money. Local authorities are responsible for managing these funds. They also oversee important infrastructure and assets such as vehicles and land, including numerous stands that are under their custody. All of these which we can interpret as public assets belong to the public. Therefore, they represent the interests of the people.

The report presented by Hon. Maposa addresses the issue of non-submission which indicates that local authorities failed to provide information on the quantity and value of their assets for the year. They should have reported how the funds were utilised, such as purchasing vehicles, collecting revenue or accomplishing various projects. This lack of reporting is what we refer to as non-submission. So, this will stress us because this will mean that there is no one who can write, even if they write things that are not understandable.

We have standards that are allowed. This is going to be discussed after something is written and submitted to the Registrar General, that this is what we managed to do. There has been a total non-submission for many years. This stresses me because we hear issues that we do not have experts who are able to write.

Madam Speaker, a local authority is not an organisation or an institution in which nobody can be employed. A local authority advertises for employees who have five ordinary level passes and if you excelled in accounts, you would know what a debit or credit column is.

This stresses me as to how the local authorities manage to employ their employees because they cannot even write using accounting language or transactions if we use the accounting language. This troubles me Madam Speaker. When I am scrutinising this, I see that we, as the Government or the organisation that looks into local authorities, are lagging behind in investigating how local authorities are managing their affairs because we cannot count five years or ten years and there is nothing. What about the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works? From my understanding, they are the ones who look into the business of local authorities. Do they not have a department that every year will go to inspect how the local authorities are doing their business or to see if they have managed to submit their reports.

Is there no one who looks into that? I am appealing now to the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works. We do not want this august House to hear that local authorities in Bulawayo, have an issue that they did not have something which was written to show how they had managed their affairs for the past 13 years. I am appealing now to the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works to create a department if it was not there. This department must look into the affairs of the local authorities. I would also like the Minister to come and explain to us how the local authorities are operating. So, I am expecting that these issues must be completed.

There is what is called Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), which means that this is a system that is computerised and it will be able to make financial statements but the ERP is just mentioned and we are confused as to why the financial statements are not produced. We are informed that this ERP is very expensive. So, we are appealing to the local authorities that, for now, their houses must be put in order. Thank you Madam Speaker.

HON. KAMBUZUMA: I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 29th July, 2026.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. KAMBUZUMA: I move that all Orders of the Day be stood over until Orders of the Day, Number 50, 51, 53, 54 and 55 on today's *Order Paper* are disposed of in that order.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE JOINT PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY AND THE THEMATIC COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND HERITAGE ON THE STATE OF CULTURAL AND HERITAGE SITES

Fiftieth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on Report of the Joint Portfolio Committee on Tourism and Hospitality Industry and

Thematic Committee on Culture and Heritage on the State of Cultural and Heritage Sites as it relates to Zimbabwe's tourism sector.

Question again proposed.

HON. MAMOMBE: Thank you Madam Speaker for giving me this opportunity to conclude and wind-up debate on this portfolio committee report.

Madam Speaker, I rise to sincerely thank all the Hon. Members who contributed to this Portfolio Committee report and the Thematic Committee. I wish to say that I am grateful for the insightful submissions, the constructive observations and also the overwhelming support for this debate.

What we have noted is that Zimbabwe is a crucial cog for maintaining the national identity, fostering cultural diversity and also driving tourism growth by promoting economic development at large through making sure that we preserve our heritage and cultural monumental sites. The vital role that is played by the tourism sector is well articulated in the National Development Strategy (NDS1) and hence it is the link to the national heritage and cultural sites dotted across the country. That cannot be emphasised.

Having said that, Madam Speaker, I want to thank all the Hon. Members who debated and I have taken note of the valuable recommendations made during the debate. I trust that this will strengthen the implementation of the resolutions that were contained in our report.

Before I sit down, let me thank the Portfolio Committee members that were led by Hon. Murombezi and also the Chairperson of the Thematic Committee on Culture and Heritage who went around the country and also came up with this report. Madam Speaker, I now move that this House considers and adopts the Report.

Motion that the House considers and adopts the Report of the Joint Portfolio Committee on Tourism and Hospitality Industry and Thematic Committee on Culture and Heritage on the State of Cultural and Heritage Sites as it relates to Zimbabwe's tourism sector, put and agreed to.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE ON THE 2025 FIRST AND SECOND QUARTER BUDGET PERFORMANCE

Fifty-First Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the Report of the Portfolio Committee on Industry and Commerce on the 2025 First and Second Quarter Budget Performance Reports from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

Question again proposed.

HON. CHIDUWA: Thank you Madam Speaker Ma'am for giving me this opportunity to wind up the debate on the First and Second Quarter Report for the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. Madam Speaker, I wish to thank the Hon. Members for the robust debate on the First and Second Quarter Report of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

The submissions by the Hon. Members clearly demonstrated that the Committee's recommendations are urgent, actionable and essential for restoring accountability and accelerating Zimbabwe's industrialisation agenda. The debate unequivocally supports that the

Ministry must immediately implement all 12 recommendations within the stipulated timelines to address critical gaps in human resources, budget absorption, financial controls and audit compliance.

I, therefore, urge the Ministry, in collaboration with the Treasury and stakeholders, to treat these recommendations as non-negotiable directives. Timely implementation will enhance accountability, efficiency and effective delivery of the industrialisation mandate, ensuring Zimbabwe's economic stability and inclusive growth. Zimbabwe's industrialisation agenda demands nothing less than full accountability, decisive action and unwavering commitment to the people we serve.

I now move for the adoption of the motion on the First and Second Quarter Report of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. I so submit, Madam Speaker.

Motion that this House considers and adopts the Report of the Portfolio Committee on Industry and Commerce on the 2025 First and Second Quarter Budget Performance Reports from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, put and agreed to.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE ON THE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (ARDA) FOR THE YEAR 2023

Fifty-Third Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Audited Financial Statements for the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) in the Auditor General's Report on State-owned Enterprises for the Year Ended 31 December 2023.

Question again proposed.

HON. MAPOSA: Thank you so much Madam Speaker Ma'am. Good afternoon again. I stand to wind up debate on the Public Accounts Committee Report on ARDA. I rise to wind up the debate on the Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Audited General Findings relating to the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority, ARDA. At the outset. I wish to thank all Hon. Members who participated in this debate. The valuable contributions made from both sides of the House demonstrate our collective commitment to promote accountability, transparency and prudent management of public resources.

The issues raised during the debate reaffirmed the Committee's findings that ARDA must strengthen its financial management system, improve internal controls, ensure compliance with the Public Finance Management Act and other relevant statutes and fully implement the recommendations of the Auditor General.

As an institution entrusted with advanced agricultural production and supporting national food security, ARDA must uphold the highest standards of governance and accountability in our country. The Committee recommends that we indeed assist ARDA in improving its operational efficiency and financial sustainability.

Public resources are scarce and every dollar allocated to the public institution must be utilised economically, efficiently and effectively. It is therefore imperative that management takes corrective action to address the shortcomings identified in the report and ensure similar audit findings in future.

I also wish to emphasise that effective oversight does not end with the adoption of this report, Madam Speaker Ma'am. The Committee expects the responsible ministry, other boards, management and all relevant authorities to implement the recommendations and strengthen oversight mechanisms. This House will continue to monitor progress to ensure that tangible improvements are achieved in the management of public resources.

Finally, I once again thank all Hon. Members for their contribution to the debate, as well as Members of the Public Accounts Committee and the Committee Secretaries who helped the Public Accounts Committee to write all these notes. Over and above that, this House adopts the report of the Public Accounts Committee on Audited General Findings to the Agriculture and Rural Development Authority. So I submit.

Motion, that this House considers and adopts the Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the audited Financial Statements for the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) in the Auditor

General's Report on State-owned Enterprises for the Year Ended 31 December 2023, put and agreed to.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND CHILD CARE ON THE PETITION FROM CHRISTIAN LEGAL SOCIETY OF ZIMBABWE ON COMMUNITY CARE GIVERS

Fifty-Fifth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on Report of the Portfolio Committee on Health and Child Care on the Petition from Christian Legal Society of Zimbabwe on Community Care Givers.

Question again proposed.

HON. BAJILA: I rise to move for the adoption of the report. Let me start by thanking members of the Christian Legal Society and thank members of the Portfolio Committee on Health and Child Care for producing the report. I would also extend thanks to Members of this House for the debate that they put. Essentially, the debate centred around ensuring that community health workers get support from Government included in the Salary Services Bureau so that they get properly remunerated such that the care of people who are under domestic care but are patients is part of Government responsibilities to that extent.

We as a Committee had hoped that the Ministry of Health and Child Care would come to this House and respond to issues that members raised during the debate. Unfortunately, that did not happen. We hope that in the future, when we have got these debates that have got questions aimed at the Ministry, ministries are compelled to come and respond to questions. Having said that, I would like to take this opportunity to move that this House considers and adopts the Report.

Motion that this House considers and adopts the Report of the Portfolio Committee on Health and Child Care on the Petition from the Christian Legal Society of Zimbabwe on Community Care Givers, put and agreed to.

On the motion of **HON. KAMBUZUMA**, *seconded by* **HON. C. MOYO**, *the House adjourned at a Minute past Six o'clock p. m.*