PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

Wednesday, 9th September, 2026

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

PRAYERS

(THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE *in the Chair*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

APPOINTMENT TO THEMATIC COMMITTEES

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: The Committee on Standing Rules and Orders has assigned the following Hon. Senators to serve on the following Thematic Committees: Hon. Sen. Matsikenyere, Gender and Development and HIV and AIDS; Hon. Sen. Mliswa, Gender and Development and HIV and AIDS; Hon. Sen. Masimirembwa, Gender and Development and Human Rights; Hon. Sen. Chitaka, HIV and AIDS and Peace and Security; Hon. Sen. Mutumbwa, HIV and AIDS and Climate Change; Hon. Sen. Hlongwane, Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Change; Hon. Sen. Tagwirei, Sustainable Development Goals and Peace and Security; Hon.

Sen. J. Sibanda, Human Rights and Peace and Security; Hon. Sen. Mashingaidze, Peace and Security and Culture and Heritage and Hon. Sen. B. Dube, Gender and Development and Peace and Security.

HALF-DAY WORKSHOP ON 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

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: I would like to inform the Senate that there will be a half-day sensitisation workshop on Thursday, 10th September, 2026 at 1000 hours in the Multi-Purpose Hall. The workshop is on 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 and on the International Mangrove Centre.

SWITCHING OFF OF CELLPHONES

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: I would like to remind the Hon. Senators to put your gadgets on silent or better still, switch them off so that they do not disturb the business of the House.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF VETERANS OF THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE AFFAIRS (HON. SEN. H. MOYO): I move that Orders of the Day, Numbers 1 to 11 on today's *Order Paper* be stood over until the rest of the Orders of the Day have been disposed of.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

REHABILITATION AND MAINTENANCE OF ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

HON. SEN. S. MOYO: I move the motion standing in my name that this House:

ACKNOWLEDGING that Zimbabwe’s road network comprises trunk roads linking major cities and economic centres, provincial roads, district roads, urban roads and rural feeder roads, all of which are indispensable to national development and social inclusion;

DISTURBED that significant proportions of the country's roads have deteriorated to unacceptable levels of disrepair which contribute to increased transport costs, higher vehicle maintenance expenses and delays in the movement of goods and services;

FURTHER CONCERNED that many rural communities remain isolated as a result from markets, schools, hospitals and other essential public services because of neglected feeder roads;

ALARMED that despite the collection of fuel levies, vehicle licensing fees, toll fees and other road-user charges, the condition of our roads continue to raise serious concerns in terms of planning, prioritisation and maintenance strategies;

NOW, THEREFORE, CALLS upon the Government to:

(a) Declare the rehabilitation and maintenance of our road infrastructure a strategic national economic priority.

(b) Ensure that all revenues collected through fuel levies, tollgate fees and vehicle licensing are transparently accounted for and principally dedicated to road maintenance and rehabilitation.

(c) Introduce performance-based contracts for road construction and maintenance to ensure quality workmanship, value for money and contractor accountability.

(d) Prioritise the rehabilitation of roads serving agricultural production areas, mining districts, tourism destinations, border posts, schools and health facilities.

HON. SEN. ZVIDZAI: I second.

HON. SEN. S. MOYO: I rise to move this motion on the bad state of our roads. I stand here as a voice for the people of Matabeleland South and for every ordinary Zimbabwean who is suffering because our roads are broken. The motion that this House is aware that good roads are the backbone of our economy, roads carry our farm produce, minerals, goods, workers and our tourists. Without good roads, our country cannot grow. Note that Zimbabwe's roads include the big highways that join our cities, the provincial roads, the district roads, the roads in our towns and the small feeder roads in our rural areas. All of these roads matter to our people.

IS DISTURBED that most of our roads have broken down badly. Potholes, broken bridges and dust roads have become normal when they should not be normal.

IS CONCERNED that bad roads are pushing up transport costs, damaging our vehicles and delaying the movement of goods and services across the country.

IS FURTHER CONCERNED that many of our rural communities in Matabeleland South and across Zimbabwe are cut off from clinics, schools and markets because their feeder roads have been abandoned.

IS ALARMED Mr. President Sir, that Government continues to collect money from fuel levies, vehicle licence fees and toll fees yet our roads keep getting worse. This tells us there is a serious problem with planning, with priorities and with how these funds are being used.

The Real Cause: Heavy mining trucks are destroying our roads. There is one cause of road damage that this House cannot continue to ignore: heavy mining trucks. Every day trucks carrying 30 to 40 tonnes of minerals are driving on roads that were never built to carry that kind of weight. These trucks are destroying our roads while the mining companies carry the profits away and leave our people with broken roads. It is not right Mr. President Sir, that mining companies get the wealth that belongs to the people of Zimbabwe and then leave our roads in ruins without paying to fix them. This must stop.

My Call to the Minister of Transport

I urge the Hon. Minister of Transport and Infrastructural Development to engage the Hon. Minister of Mines and Mining Development. The two ministries must sit down together and engage the mining companies operating across our country. No mining company should be allowed to keep moving minerals on our roads while refusing to fix the damage they cause. No mining licence should be renewed unless a mining company has fixed the roads it uses and damages in its area of operation.

Which Mines Must Fix Which Roads

I want to be specific because our people deserve specific answers not empty promises. The following mining companies must be held accountable for the specific roads in their areas of operation:

Mining Company	**Road it must fix**
Blanket Mine	The Gwanda Road
ZimPlats (Implats)	The road from Ngezi to Harare
ZMDC	The Harare-Beitbridge Road
Unki Mine	The Gweru-Shurugwi Road
Sabi Gold Mine	The Zvishavane and Mbalabala Road
Murowa Diamond Mine	The Zvishavane Road
PPC Zimbabwe	The Beitbridge to Gwanda Road
Hwange Colliery	The Victoria Falls Road
Zambezi Gas and Coal	The Bulawayo to Victoria Falls Road
Freda Rebecca Gold Mine	The road to Bindura
SA Mining	The Bulawayo to Victoria Falls Road
Shamva Gold Mine	The Shamva to Bindura Road
Jessie Gold Mine	The Gwanda to Filabusi Road
Sabi Star Mine	The Chivhu to Nyazura Road
Jena Gold Mine	The Silobela to Nkayi Road
Turk Mine	The JN Nkomo Airport Road in Bulawayo and the Matopo- Bulawayo Road
How Mine	The old Gwanda Road and the Matopo – Bulawayo Road
Mimosa Mine	The Shurugwi – Zvishavane Road
Sandawana Mine	The Mberengwa Road
Zimasco Chinese	The Gweru -Shurugwi Highway
Chinese Tsingshan Holding Group	The Mberengwa west feeder road

What this House Must Resolve

I move that this House resolves that:

1. Zimbabwe is facing one of the worst transport disasters in its

modern history. The tragedy on Lake Kariba has now claimed 94 lives while only 77 people were rescued. Families have been destroyed and the whole nation is in mourning. According to the confirmed figures, the boat was carrying at least 171 people yet it was licenced to carry only 90. This means it was carrying at least 81 people more than its legal capacity. It was almost twice over-loaded. The most disturbing issue however, is that this boat was reportedly in a very poor condition. It needed repairs estimated at around USD40 000. The Government which owned the boat had reportedly been warned about its condition, but failed to make the necessary repairs. When a Government-owned vessel is allowed to operate while overloaded and in poor condition despite warnings, then there must be serious questions about negligence, responsibility and leadership. The government cannot simply come to the people with condolences and speeches after 94 lives have been lost. Condolences are important, but they are not enough.

The families of the victims deserve the truth. They deserve justice. Zimbabweans deserve action. This tragedy shows a serious failure in the protection of public safety. Those who were responsible for ignoring warnings and allowing an unsafe and overloaded boat to operate must be identified. This House must demand a full and honest investigation. We must know who knew about the condition of the boat, who ignored the warnings, and why an overloaded vessel was allowed to operate.

2. Another terrible road accident has taken the lives of Zimbabweans. This time 27 people were killed on the Harare to South Africa Highway. This is another painful reminder that Zimbabwe's roads have become dangerous places where innocent people continue to lose their lives. At the scene of this tragedy, we heard calls for our ancestors and cultural traditions to solve our problems. Let me be clear, I have great respect for our culture, traditions and customs. However, we cannot expect our ancestors or even God to do work that

human beings and government institutions have failed to do. Prayer and culture have their place in society. They cannot repair a dangerous road or build a new highway. They cannot install safety barriers or stop an overloaded vehicle. They cannot enforce traffic laws. These things require human action. Police reports say that the truck involved in this accident was trying to overtake another vehicle when it crashed head-on into a minibus. This raises serious concerns about dangerous overtaking, road design and the enforcement of traffic laws. Zimbabwe needs properly designed roads including wider highways where necessary and central safety barriers to separate vehicles travelling in opposite directions. These barriers can save lives by stopping vehicles from crossing into oncoming traffic. We also need proper vehicle inspections and stronger enforcement against overloading, speeding and dangerous overtaking. Both drivers, transport operators and Government officials must take responsibility.

The Government cannot continue waiting for people to die before talking about road safety. We cannot continue holding funerals, making speeches and then waiting for the next accident. We cannot expect our ancestors or God to compensate for failures that are clearly the responsibility of Government. No ritual will widen a road. No ceremony will install a safety barrier. No prayer will repair a damaged highway. These things require planning, money, action and honest leadership.

However, there is another painful issue we must address. We cannot build a better Zimbabwe through excuses, blame, slogans, ceremonies or empty speeches. We need safe roads, vehicles that are properly inspected, laws that are enforced and public money to be used responsibly.

3. Declares the fixing and maintenance of our national road network to be a strategic national priority, starting now and not tomorrow.

4. Puts in place a clear and time-bound National Roads Programme covering our highways, provincial roads, district roads, urban roads and rural feeder roads.
5. Makes sure that every dollar collected from fuel levy, toll fees and vehicle licences is accounted for in public and is used only for road maintenance and fixing.
6. Introduces performance-based contracts for road construction so that contractors are paid for quality work and held to account when work is poor.
7. Gives attention to the roads that serve our farmers, mining districts, tourism areas, border posts, schools and our clinics.
8. The Hon. Minister of Transport and Infrastructural Development to formally engage the Minister of Mines so that every mining company named in this motion is compelled, in writing and in law, to rebuild and maintain the specific road linked to its operations.

9. Requires that no mining licence be issued or renewed by the Ministry of Mines until the company has fixed the road in its district.

10. Installs weighbridges on our major mining routes so that trucks that exceed the legal weight limit are stopped and penalised and that all money collected from these penalties is used for road repairs.

11. Promotes public-private partnerships and new ways of financing roads so that road rehabilitation moves faster than it has moved in the past.

In conclusion, the people of Matabeleland South and the people of Zimbabwe are tired of promises. They want to see mining trucks share the cost of the roads they are destroying. They want Government to act, not to talk. This House owes it to every rural family cut off by a broken feeder road and to every worker stuck for hours behind a broken-down truck to act on this motion without delay. I so submit.

HON. SEN. ZVIDZAI: I thank you Mr. President, for giving me this chance to second the motion on the state of road infrastructure in the country which Hon. Sen. Moyo has just moved very eloquently.

Seconding this motion is a very difficult task given that the mover has almost exhausted the critical debate points and that as the seconder, I have been instructed to debate in a specific manner that amplifies those points. He wrote a very long document to support this motion but Mr. President, the important thing is that this motion is very easily justifiable. It is an important and timely motion.

If you look at question time in this House, you will see that 80% of questions fielded to the ministers are related to roads. This is why Hon. Minister Mhona is the post boy for this House. He is always ready to answer and we are always interested in talking to him about road infrastructure in our country. That is the importance. Perhaps this motion seeks to extract from him a more comprehensive response to our questions and worries when he eventually comes down to the House to respond to the issues that are raised. That is the justification, Mr. President.

Whereas my colleague has looked at this as a huge problem and whereas as the House generally we think it is a very big problem, I would like to support this motion by looking at it slightly differently, of whether it is a problem or an opportunity.

I think the state of disrepair of our road infrastructure is a huge opportunity for us as a country and for the economy. Where are the opportunities? Let us do the numbers, Mr. President. Our total road network is about 88 000 km inclusive of urban and rural roads. We have 88 000 km of road network that needs attention. Urban and paved roads, about 3 000 km; rural roads 6 000 km and many more.

So, if you look at it as an opportunity, one would say, why do we not discuss with the Executive that of the 88 000 km, why do we not, in a seven-year window which is now in our term, both presidential and parliamentary, following the success of CAB3, look at that and say we want to chew a 10 000 km chunk every term. It means, as we move forward, we will get an exponential capacity to do more but let us start with 10 000 km and say we are going to focus on these 10 000 km and make sure that at the end of the term, we can proudly say we have dealt with 10 000 km and now people and the economy are moving on a better road.

From the numbers I have done, roughly every one kilometre generates about 20 to 40 jobs. That is the nub of my discussion that since we have that problem, there is a huge opportunity to create jobs through a deliberate effort to chew off a 10 000 km chunks every term of office. That is where the opportunity is and it will cost up to about $3.6 billion. I wonder whether our country cannot fund $3.6 billion in seven years. I feel that there is that capacity and if we attempted to do that, we would also generate nearly a million jobs. So, by doing that, we are now dealing with Minister Garwe's problem of trying to remove people from the streets because we are subtracting those unemployed. A million in seven years is a huge number, Mr. President.

What will be required is about $510 million every year and the immediate question is, do we have the capacity to spend $510 million on roads every year? For me, that is not what the question should be. The question should be, why should we be unable to create so many jobs? Why should we be unable to assist industry to move out of that disadvantage? That is where the debate becomes interesting because road construction is one of the sectors where public expenditure can have a substantial employment effect because it involves engineering, quarrying, cement production, Manhize Steel for reinforcement, earthworks, maintenance work, *et cetera*. This is where Senator Moyo's motion becomes more interesting. It departs from excavating and ventilating the issues of the challenge and focuses on the opportunities that accompany it...

THE HON. DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF SENATE: Those Hon. Senators who do not have Parliament identity cards are being requested to go to Special Committee Room Number 2 now so that their IDs can be processed. The staff handling this task will be leaving today. Those who do not have IDs, please proceed to Committee Room Number 2 on the ground floor.

HON. SEN. ZVIDZAI: Thank you Mr. President. As I was saying, roads can build an industrial value chain and there are huge opportunities in there. Mr. President, when we talk to the Minister, he often mourns about the lack of funds to deal with the challenge. He often says the budget is too small. However, I would not expect the Minister to fully depend on annual budget allocation if he looks disruptively at the challenges of the road network. He must again think big, think outside the box, exchange love letters with the Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion to enable the availing of $510 million a year to deal with our roads. How can that be done? There are big economists in this House. I am not suggesting at all that we simply look for $3.5 billion from the annual budget. It is not possible, Mr. President. I agree it is not possible. That would be unrealistic.

However, we need a blended financing model for this. I think it is possible. To begin with, we should ring-fence road users' revenues as Hon. Sen. Moyo said. The levies on fuel, the collections at the toll gates and all those charges could be used to fund or help to borrow. Alternatively, together with the Minister of Finance, they could look at a national infrastructure or national road infrastructure bond which could run maybe between seven and 10 years to deal with this. They can get that money domestically. They could also perhaps get it from international financiers. Those roads are not just a cost, Mr. President.

I am sure our pension schemes can contribute to the road fund, to finance the bond rather. Currently, our parastatals which are housed in the Mutapa Fund, some of that fund can also be used to deal with the infrastructure bond. Also look at development financing, private-public partnerships. I am sure that will be possible through mining and agricultural corridor contributions, as Senator Moyo aptly debated it. All the corridors leading to critical mines should be able to contribute towards that. It makes their work cheaper anyway. So, 500 million per year, though sounding large is possible.

We must also consider looking at the flip side. If we are saying $510 million is too much, what are we already paying? What are we spending on vehicle repairs and the import of these repairs? What pressure is that putting on the balance of payments? How about tyres? All imported. How about fuel wastage? Those who are negotiating tortuous routes waste more fuel. You are paying an additional tax.

Lost agricultural produce, we encourage farmers to produce but imagine a farmer from Mola who has to travel 400 kilometres to the market. Firstly, the production process becomes very expensive. Those farmers are paying extra tax due to bad roads. Their produce is not competitive. In fact, they will not be encouraged to farm at all because it means nothing. All the money is lost in transport.

Delays in transportation of minerals and the effect on the running capital for the Government and lost tourism opportunities; people will not just visit those tourist places in the numbers they should if the roads dissuade easy passage. There is lost investment if you sum those costs. Unfortunately, we do not have a mechanism to sum those costs but if you added them, they would be more than the $510 million. We are paying that anyway.

What is my proposal to Government, Mr. President? I propose a seven-year, 10 000-kilometre road rehabilitation and employment programme which targets 10 000 kilometres of our road network, both in the urban and the rural areas to generate, in addition for easier trafficability, up to a million jobs every seven years. This is a clever plan to kill unemployment.

Mr. President, the final question is, can Zimbabwe afford to rehabilitate 10 000 kilometres of roads? Can Zimbabwe afford not to rehabilitate 10 000 kilometres of road every seven years? The cost of doing nothing is being paid every day by the farmer, the transporter, the businessperson, the commuter, the student, the patient and the ordinary Zimbabwean. They are already paying every day.

Let us therefore build 10 000 kilometres of road every seven years. We perhaps can do more. Let us make those 10 000 kilometres a national programme for jobs, skills, enterprise development and economic transformation. Let us not merely build roads but build economic units. Let us build roads that build Zimbabwe. Let us also think outside the box. I wish my brother, Senator Mutsvangwa was here. We could be talking about the construction of the railway line, Lion’s Den, Shamva, Tete; that would work wonders and remove a lot of these heavy trucks from the road. It will cut the distance between our exports and their destination in the DRC by 2 000 kilometres. It will bring more money into this country which can then be used to multiply the benefits of road infrastructure.

Mr. President, this is my invitation as I support this motion. As Members of this Senate, we all resoundingly support Senator Solani Moyo's motion on road rehabilitation for it is not only road rehabilitation. It is an economic issue, job creation and safety. It is good for the small farmer out there who can produce to the market more efficiently. I thank you.

HON. SEN. CHAKABUDA: I also rise to support the motion from Hon. Solani Moyo. Mr. President, although there is visible effort to modernise some major highways, the state of most of our country’s roads remains deplorable. Some rural communities have continuously been referred to as marginalised mostly because of their inaccessibility by road. Some areas are failing to realise their full economic potential because they are not accessible by road. For some communities, rains mean there is no school, clinic, shopping, church and other social amenities because rains always mean the washing away of roads and bridges. Roads are vital for the economic and social growth of many on earth and as such, we cannot achieve full growth if we do not have a modern road link. Madam President, let me put what I am saying into perspective:

Economic imperative: Roads are the backbone of the economy. Agriculture, mining, manufacturing and other industry, 90% of Zimbabwe's goods move by road. Bad roads increase transport costs making our goods and services more expensive and therefore, uncompetitive on the global market.

International, regional and local trade and investment: Investors cite poor road infrastructures as top deterrent, declaring the national road rehabilitation a strategic national priority which signals Government's seriousness and boosts investor confidence thereby unlocking funding.

Job creation: Road rehabilitation is labour intensive. It will create thousands of jobs for youth in both urban and rural areas. So, let us dedicate our fees that we pay the tollgates to rehabilitate the roads. Zimbabweans already pay tollgates, carbon tax, fuel levy, ZINARA license fees and we expect to rehabilitate our roads from these fees. Ring-fencing these revenues exclusively for road rehabilitation builds public trust. Mr. President, we also need to marginalise and/or rather prioritise to marginalise communities. Road rehabilitation and modernisation is not just an economic issue but a social justice and equity issue.

Communities in Binga, Chiredzi, Nyanga and resettlement areas are cut off during rains. No roads, clinics, markets and no schools during rainy season. Farming and mining districts like Mutoko, Guruve, Shurugwi and Mutare produce GDP but have the worst roads. Fixing these roads gives the highest return on investment for the nation. This motion, Mr. President, is constitutional as it is in line with Sections 13 and 14 of our Constitution on National Development and Equitable Resource Allocation.

Potholes and poor roads are killing people. The Traffic Safety Council reports that road condition is a significant factor in many of the fatal accidents. Ambulances, police, fire and other emergency services cannot reach people in time leading to the loss of lives which could have been preventable. Zimbabwe is a transit country for SADC. The N1, N2 and N3 corridors are regional trade routes. Their state reflects on us regionally and poor roads increase transit time, leading to the loss of transit revenue. Mr. President, Government has declared disasters for drought and Cyclone Idai. Our roadwork is in a similar state of disaster and deserves national priority. Emergency status allows Treasury to prioritise budget allocation and allows development partners to come in quickly.

As I conclude, Mr. President, roads are not a luxury. They are the veins of our economy and the bridges to our people. By declaring this a strategic national priority and ring-fencing user fees, we are not spending money but investing in growth, safety and dignity for our Zimbabweans from Harare to Binga. I thank you.

HON. SEN. GOTORA: I was a bit hesitant to stand up and say something because my mind is full of the history of the roads of this country and I did not want to stand up here and spend two hours repeating what others would have already said. Let me thank Hon. S. Moyo and the two speakers who spoke before me. They have literally said everything that is supposed to be said about our roads but let me go back into history a bit.

The history of the roads in this country was divided into two. They were divided into what were called State roads and ADF roads, which meant African Development Fund roads which later became DDF. These two including the urban local authorities were the ones with the major role of working on our roads so that they become navigable.

Moving a bit far from that history, in 1997-1998, the World Bank, having been in Zambia and Tanzania moved into Zimbabwe to look at our roads. They declared all our roads as dead roads. By dead, they meant the roads were no longer safely navigable and hence, the birth of ZINARA. It was meant to be an organisation that raised funds to maintain our roads, I repeat <u>to maintain our roads</u> and not to construct our roads.

This was as a result of what was happening in Zambia. In Zambia, they had come up with what they called ZARA, the Zambia Road Authority funded by the World Bank and JICA, the Japanese organisation. The coming up of ZINARA was meant to assist in road maintenance. Who was then designated to be a road authority? The first one was the local authorities, both urban and rural. They were made road authorities. The second one was DDF, now RIDA and the third one was the Department of Roads. Those three were supposed to receive money from ZINARA to maintain both trunk roads, tertiary roads, you name it, any road, even the road to a dip tank. It was meant to be funded from ZINARA funds in terms of maintenance.

Here is the problem. ZINARA was supposed to get money, first and foremost, from transit fees for those large vehicles that pass through our country. The second one was the money from tollgate fees which we do not have in the country. The majority of our roads do not have tollgates but still, ZINARA was supposed to get money from tollgates. The third source of money is what is called axle load, the weight each lorry or each bus had when passing through our roads.

Finally, ZINARA was supposed to get money from vehicle licences. At that time, vehicle licences were being collected by POSB and local authorities. At that time, the local authorities were no longer remitting money to the Department of Roads because they were using it, but that was not their money. They were only supposed to be given commission. Why am I saying this? I am trying to get into the history of why our roads are poorly maintained.

They are poorly maintained because the axle load we are talking about is only at Chirundu. That is where the weigh bridge is. Beitbridge is where another weigh bridge is. Forbes Border Post and Nyamapanda Border Post, four weigh bridges. If we are going to get money through axle load, what about the lorries and the big vehicles that are traversing our roads internally? That is the money that was supposed to go to ZINARA for the purposes of road maintenance. The next thing is the three road authorities that I spoke about, DDF claimed the majority of the rural roads as their roads. The rural authorities remained with the roads to a school, dip tank and to church. The majority of the roads were then classified as DDF roads.

Mr. President, DDF was vibrant at that time. Why was it vibrant? It was being funded internationally. They were getting equipment from international corporate institutions that were giving DDF equipment, motor vehicles, fuel, you name it. The roads at that time were navigable.

The World Bank was then supposed to fund this reform I am talking about but because of the land reform, the World Bank then stopped funding Zimbabwe; you are on your own. No more funds from the World Bank.

These funds were meant to support our budget. The budget, if we said we have USD10 billion, the World Bank, IMF were supposed to come in with another huge chunk to make sure that the difference between our expenditure and our revenue was met by these two organisations; but because of the land reform, they could no longer fund. We remained on our own.

At that time, I am now looking at 2000-2001. Let me give credit to the road authorities at that time, both urban and rural. They did their best from very little. The issues that we are talking about which were properly articulated by Hon. Sen. Moyo, all these were covered on the structures of ZINARA. ZINARA wanted to know how many kilometres are being maintained every year, by which road authority and so on and so forth. ZINARA had inspectors to inspect the road works that were claimed to have been worked on by these road authorities.

Unfortunately, things did not work well. The monies that we anticipated to come into the ZINARA funds did not come. Hence, we desperately require serious weigh bridge construction in the country so that we know what weight is being carried from Hwange rural to the border with Botswana or Namibia. One day I was driving on that road. I met 15, supposed to be 30 tonne lorries carrying lithium to the border. My informant then told me that no, those are not 30 tonners, they are 50 tonners. Therefore, they are cheating on us and we are not able to detect the cheat. We do not have weigh bridges. We urgently require weigh bridges across the country so that we know who is carrying what.

If you go to Mutoko and you see lorries that are carrying black granite, you will not believe it. They claim they are carrying 30 tonnes but they are carrying 50 tonnes. When they go to Nyamapanda, they bribe somebody. I am talking from first-hand information. They bribe so that they do not declare the correct weight of what they are carrying. We desperately require weigh bridges in the country. That is number one.

Number two, we talk about mining vehicles and so on. I have had meetings with them in my old life. They tell you that they are paying money to Government. We are paying taxes to Government. We are paying levies to Government. We cannot double pay and because of that, we desperately require what is called corporate social responsibility in this country so that the people in Vungu or Gwanda or wherever they are, those big lorries the mining lorries, will be paying something to the local authority as corporate social responsibility for road maintenance but that is not there at the moment. I have had discussions with the Minister and Deputy Minister of Mines and Mining Development that in the Mines and Minerals Development Act coming here, because we are lawmakers here, we need to make sure that we put corporate social responsibility as a must-pay in that Act so that we maintain those roads.

Mr. President, like I said earlier on, the majority of the necessary things have been said by the previous speakers. I just wanted to add on where we should get the money from. Instead of getting money from taxpayers, in fact, in Zimbabwe, the majority of our people do not pay taxes anyway. Therefore, the money is not there for road maintenance. Now, the Government was then supposed, in terms of the World Bank Report, to budget for road construction, not road maintenance. It is there in black and white but now what the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion is doing is, it is now budgeting for road maintenance which was supposed to be financed from what I said earlier on. If we do that, our roads will be a marvel to drive on.

People talk of security, the worst security thing that we have in Zimbabwe today is our roads. If you look at the number of people who are dying on our roads every day, in fact every hour, it is a security threat to the nation. We can close that by following what is already in the Zimbabwe National Road Administration (ZINARA) Act which can raise money for the purposes of making sure that we maintain the roads in the country. His Excellency the President, E. D. Mnangagwa came up with something last year which he was calling the *Nhimbe* philosophy. What does that mean?

The urban local authorities were no longer able to maintain their roads. They were saying they do not have the money. The local authorities were also unable to maintain the roads that were allocated to them. Likewise, the Rural Infrastructure Development Agency (RIDA) formerly District Development (DDF) were no longer able to maintain their roads. The President said, we must have what is called the *Nhimbe* philosophy. No road belongs to anybody. If a road is bad, we must all go into maintaining that road.

That is why you find CMED is now running roads in Harare to make sure that the roads in Harare are navigable. That is the *Nhimbe* philosophy but those were meant to be City of Harare roads, not CMED. CMED was not even supposed to be working on the roads.

Mr. President, I can go on and on because of the history that I have. We need to tackle the three things that I said earlier on, to make sure that we raise money for road maintenance. Then, the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion funds the construction of roads and the construction of toll gates in the country, so that we continue raising more money. Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity.

HON. SEN. S. MOYO: I move that the debate be now adjourned.

HON. SEN. DZIDZAI: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 10th September, 2026.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE DELEGATION ON THE OACPS AFRICAN REGION PARLIAMENTARY GROUP AND 1ST AFRICA-EU PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY AT EZULWINI PALAZZO, ESWATHINI

Thirteenth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the Report of the delegation on the OACPS African Region Parliamentary Group and 1st Africa-EU Parliamentary Assembly at Ezulwini Palazzo, Eswatini.

Question again proposed.

HON. SEN. KABONDO: Mr. President, thank you for giving me this opportunity to add my voice to this motion that was brought by Hon. Sen. Mlotshwa. Let me begin by commending the head of the delegation, who happens to be the Deputy President of this House and the Members and officials who accompanied him, for a report that is thorough, honest and unusual for a report of this kind. It is willing to record disagreements as faithfully as it records the agreements. That candour alone is what makes this document worth the time of this House.

I want to make a point before I go into the substance. This House is not being asked simply to note that a delegation travelled and returned. We are being asked to take ownership of a set of commitments made in our name. The delegates at Ezulwini agreed anonymously that reports from the OACPS meetings must be tabled before national parliaments within 90 days. That is an accountability standard we ourselves demand.

It now falls to us to honour it, not only by tabling but by acting. The report records that the meetings marked a shift away from the old donor-recipient model towards a partnership framework built on shared priorities and equal participation. This is the language of the Samoa Agreement and it is a welcome language. I want to caution this House, Mr. President, against mistaking a change of vocabulary for a change of relationship. You do not become an equal partner because a treaty says so. You become an equal partner when you pay your own way, when you process your own resources and when you walk away from a bad clause without fearing the consequences. The report shows all these three tests being applied at Ezulwini. Let me take each in turn.

The first test is money. The delegates agreed, all of them, on the need to establish independent OACPS funding mechanisms in order to reduce over-reliance on the European Union. The proposals were practical. Member State contributions were calculated on a formula that takes account of economic indicators and kept contribution thresholds so that no member is crushed by the formula.

The delegates went further. They agreed in principle that the OACPS headquarters should be relocated from Brussels to one of the member countries and they agreed to engage Heads of State and Governments directly to ensure that outstanding member contributions are actually paid.

Mr. President, the last point is where the honesty of the debate is tested. It is easy for us to demand independence from the European Union in this Chamber, but it is a different matter to pay our subscriptions on time. I, therefore, ask the responsible Minister, if allowed, to advise this House in due course what the current standing of

Zimbabwe's contributions to the OACPS are and what provisions have been made in the coming budget to meet them. We cannot, in the same breath, complain of dependency and be in arrears.

The second test is production and here I am pleased to note that our delegation led from the front. The report records that the Zimbabwe delegates strongly called for promotion of local value addition and beneficiation of Africa's raw materials so that trade becomes mutually beneficial rather than a continued dependency on exporting unprocessed resources. This call was echoed at the Peru meeting where Prince Lindani of Eswatini repeated the urgent need of African countries to speak with one voice on industrialisation, local value addition and youth employment and where the Chairperson listed beneficiation and industrialisation among the common continental priorities.

Mr. President, critical mineral partnerships were on the agenda in Eswatini. Zimbabwe sits on lithium, chrome, platinum and coal. The question this House must keep asking is a simple one. At what point in the chain does the value stay here? A partnership in which we supply the earth and import the finished product is not a partnership of equals, whatever the trick is called. I therefore urge that when the recommendations of this report are transmitted to the Executive, the beneficiation commitment is not left as a sentiment. It should be tied to specific legislative and policy instruments and this august House should be given a schedule against which to measure progress.

The report records the briefing given by Mr. D. Rosa of the Strategic Partnership Unit on the Global Gateway flagship projects, covering climate and energy, education and research, health, humanitarian assistance, digital technology and foreign direct investment. Of the eight billion Euros allocated to the OACPS, Africa was reported to receive the largest share, with 132 of the 256 flagship projects. Those are substantial figures. The report also records that delegates, led by Botswana, expressed concern that development assistance was deepening dependent on the European Union rather than driving industrialisation in rural Africa and slowing rural-to-urban migration. Delegates called for these projects to reach ordinary citizens, especially women at community level for fair distribution among member states and critically for us in this Chamber for parliamentary oversight of these projects to strengthen African ownership.

I want to underline that last demand because it is a demand upon ourselves. Parliamentary oversight of Global Gateway projects will not happen because a communiqué asks for it. It will happen when this House asks which projects are running in Zimbabwe, in which districts, at what value and to whose benefit. I would submit that the relevant Portfolio Committee should be seized with this matter and should report back to this House.

Let me add to the rural point since it was made at Ezulwini and it is made in our constituencies every day, a flagship project that lands only in the capital city has not reduced rural-to-urban migration. It has accelerated it.

On peace and security, the report gives a sobering picture. The Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament, Hon. Memounatou Ibrahima, spoke of early warning systems and preventive diplomacy and stressed that peace is only achievable when youths, women and minority groups are fully included. Delegates from Kenya and Sierra Leone identified the root causes of conflict as foreign aggression, the scramble for resources and unemployment, particularly youth unemployment which leaves young people vulnerable to radicalisation.

Rwanda spoke of the lesson of 1994 and of the cost of regional inaction. Eswatini reminded delegates that instability in one country does not respect the borders of its neighbours, a truth this region learned again in Cabo Delgado in Mozambique.

Our own delegation made what I consider the most useful intervention in that session. They reminded the meeting that regional organisations face limited resources, poor coordination and an unresolved tension between national sovereignty and collective responsibility. They set out the formula plainly: governments provide structure, parliaments give legitimacy and together they deliver lasting solutions. That is a Zimbabwean contribution this House can be proud of.

The European delegates, for their part, acknowledged that peace can no longer be taken for granted in Europe either, and importantly recognised the colonial legacy as a contributor to conflict in Africa. They agreed that Africa's territorial integrity and sovereignty must be respected and that Africa-led conflict prevention deserves greater financial support. Those are not small concessions and we should hold our partners to them.

The youth section of this report is to my mind, the most important section in it. The arithmetic is stated plainly. More than seventy percent of the population of sub-Saharan Africa is under the age of thirty. Europe's population is ageing. The report records IOM data showing roughly 300 million migrants globally as at 2022, with three in every ten under the age of thirty driven by unemployment and the search for opportunity.

Delegates therefore agreed that youth inclusion is not charity but it is a political necessity and the success of the Samoa Agreement depends on it. I note with satisfaction that our delegation was able to point to the Zimbabwe Open University's participation in the Erasmus+ programme, offering skills training in green technology. That is a good example. The report is equally clear about the barriers: costly visas, limited legal migration routes and education and mobility opportunities that remain out of reach for young people in remote rural communities thereby pushing them towards unsafe and irregular routes.

The recommendation in this report is that programmes such as Erasmus+ must be decentralised so that they do not remain the preserve of urban and elite groups. I want that recommendation read into the record twice. A young person in a rural district of this country has the same right to that opportunity as one in Harare and at present they do not have the same access to information about it, let alone the same access to the visa.

The European delegates raised their own concern that mobility should be regulated to prevent irregular migration and abuse of student pathways and that exchanges should produce "brain circulation" rather than brain drain. This is a fair concern and we should engage with it honestly. However, brain circulation requires that there be something to circulate back to. This returns us to beneficiation, industrialisation and to jobs at home.

The Women’s Forum produced figures this House should not forget. Women make up 76 percent of the agricultural labour force in Africa against 21 percent in Europe and 40 percent globally and yet, as the Food and Agriculture Organisation’s, Mrs. L. Philips told the Forum, their contribution within the value chain remains heavily undervalued. Hon. Minister Mutsvangwa, addressing the forum made the point that women smallholder farmers are excluded from regional and international markets and that middlemen in the value chains continue to exploit women producers. Delegates of Eswatini described programmes to move women producers to commercial farming through joint title deed registration and concessionary loans. Rwanda reported women's land ownership at 94%.

Mr. President, I put it to this House that those last two examples are the ones we should be studying. A joint title deed registration as a legislative Act, a concessionary lending framework as a legislative and diplomacy and policy Act because neither requires a donor. Both fall squarely within the competence of this House.

I want to talk about where the report stated that there were some disagreements. I said at the outset that I value this report for recording disagreements. Let me address them because they are the true measure of whether this is a partnership of equals or not. Firstly, the recital of non-discrimination. The European side pressed for language, extending the non-discriminatory principle expressly to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and intersex (LGBTQI) persons. Most African delegations, ours among them, opposed the inclusion of that provision on grounds of cultural and religious norms and national sovereignty. The matter was resolved by African countries securing the right to waive the provision, a safeguard that already exists within the Samoa Agreement itself.

Mr. President, whatever any Member's view of the substance, the procedural point is significant. The outcome was reached by negotiation and by an existing treaty mechanism and both sides were able to move forward without either surrendering a position.

Secondly, the Democratic Republic of Congo. The European Union and the DRC sought to have the M23 group named expressly in the text. Rwanda opposed singling out one group among many. The report does not discuss the rift between the two neighbouring countries and this House should note it soberly. It is a reminder that African solidarity is a thing we build, not a thing we inherit. Thank you Mr. President.

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

HON. SEN. NDEBELE: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 10th September, 2026.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE THEMATIC COMMITTEE ON PEACE AND SECURITY ON ENERGY SECURITY IN ZIMBABWE

Fourteenth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the report of the Thematic Committee on Peace and Security on energy security in Zimbabwe.

Question again proposed.

HON. SEN. L. SIBANDA: Thank you Mr. President, for giving me this opportunity to air my submissions. I rise to support the report presented by Hon. Sen. Zindi and the Thematic Committee on Peace and Security on the state of energy security in Zimbabwe.

This report comes at a critical time. Our economy, our hospitals, our schools and our industries cannot function without reliable, affordable and sustainable energy. The Committee's enquiry has confirmed what we all know. Our energy challenges are threatening national security, economic growth and the wellbeing of our people.

I commend the Committee for the thorough work done. The verification visits from 31st May to 9th June, 2026 across eight provinces show that the Government is making progress. We have endorsed Mission 300 to connect 300 million Africans to electricity by 2030.

The National Integrated Energy Resource Plan gives us a clear roadmap to reduce coal from over 60% to below 20% by 2025 and scale renewables to 45 to 50%. This is the direction we must all follow.

The benefits are also visible. At Bulawayo United Hospitals, the new 350kilowatt solar plant is saving lives and cutting diesel costs. At Blanket Mine and Turk Mine, solar is powering operations and supporting surrounding schools and clinics. In Soti Source and Hwakata Green Village, mini-grids are lighting homes, schools and health centres while creating jobs for our youth. This proves that renewable energy is not a luxury. It is a necessity for rural development and energy resilience.

However, Madam President, the report also exposes serious risks. Kariba and Hwange are still carrying the bulk of our load, yet both are ageing and operating below the international benchmarks. ZESA's legacy debt of USD616.6 million is crippling the utility. Installed solar systems at Nyika and Maphisa Hospitals are lying idle. Vandalism, theft and cross-border smuggling are destroying our infrastructure. Tariffs are high and currencies are scaring our investors.

We cannot build Vision 2030 on an unstable grid. That is why I fully support the Committee's recommendations. We must fast track the USD385 million battery energy storage system at Dema, Warren and

Tokwe by December 2026. We must rehabilitate Kariba, South and Hwange Units 1 to 6 by June 2027 to restore plant availability.

The Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion must urgently restructure ZESA and HESCO debt and ensure cost-reflective tariffs and bankable PPAs with guaranteed foreign currency.

We must also activate all idle solar systems in hospitals by year-end, finalise the mini-grid regulatory framework and protect our hydro catchments at Kariba, Mutirikwi and Nyanga. Madam President, the Minister of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage and ZRP must intensify the fight against vandalism and electricity theft because attacking the energy infrastructure is attacking national security.

Madam President, energy security is peace and security. When clinics have power, mothers survive childbirth. When mines have power, jobs are created. When communities have power, children can study at night. I, therefore, urge this House to adopt this report and ensure the Government implements the recommendations within the set timelines.

Let us move from policy to action, from plants to power. I so submit Madam President.

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

HON. SEN. GOTORA: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 10th September, 2026.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE JOINT PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE, LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE THEMATIC COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND HERITAGE ON THE PETITION RECEIVED FROM DANDE CONVERSATION HERITAGE ON THE RECOGNITION OF THE KOREKORE LANGUAGE AS AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Fifteenth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the Report of the joint Portfolio Committee on Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs and the Thematic Committee on Culture and Heritage on the petition received from Dande Conversation Heritage on the recognition of the Korekore language as an official language in the Constitution of Zimbabwe.

Question again proposed.

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

HON. SEN. ZVIDZAI: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 10th September, 2026.

MOTION

REPORT ON THE 70TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW) HELD IN UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK

Sixteenth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the Report on the 70th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 70) held from 9th to 19th March, 2026 at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, United States of America.

Question again proposed.

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

HON. SEN. GOTORA: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 10th September, 2026.

MOTION

LEGISLATION TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM ABUSE

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

Question again proposed.

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

HON. SEN. M. NCUBE: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 10th September, 2026.

MOTION

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

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

Question again proposed.

HON. SEN. MLOTSHWA: Thank you very much Madam President for affording me this opportunity to contribute to the debate on the Report of the 152nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Related Meetings held in Istanbul, Türkiye. I rise in support of this report.

I want from the outset to congratulate our delegation led by the Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Advocate Jacob Francis Nzwidamilimo Mudenda together with the President of the Senate, Hon. Mabel Memory Chinomona and all Members who represented Zimbabwe. International parliamentary engagements must never be regarded simply as foreign trips or ceremonial gatherings. They are an extension of our constitutional responsibility as legislators. When Zimbabwe participates at the IPU, we are participating in a global conversation about peace, democracy, human rights, sustainable development, gender equality, technology and the future of our people.

The theme itself speaks directly to the responsibility that we carry as legislators: “Nurturing Hope, Securing Peace and Ensuring Justice for Future Generations.” Madam President, I want to concentrate on those words: future generations. The people who will live with the consequences of the laws we pass today are not necessarily sitting in this Chamber. Some are children. Some are young people who have never voted. Some have not yet been born yet the decisions we make today concerning climate change, artificial intelligence, public debt, mineral resources, water, land, education and energy will determine what kind of Zimbabwe they inherit. Therefore, Parliament cannot legislate only for today.

PEACE, JUSTICE AND THE ZIMBABWEAN EXPERIENCE:

Madam President, I support the strong emphasis placed by the Assembly on peace. The report tells us that millions of people around the world have been forcibly displaced and that billions live in fragile or conflict-affected environments. Behind those figures are women who have lost homes, children whose education has been interrupted, families separated by conflict and generations carrying trauma that they did not create. The adoption of the Emergency Resolution on parliamentary efforts to preserve ceasefires and support peacebuilding is therefore important. Parliamentarians cannot command armies but we can create laws. We approve budgets and ratify agreements. We exercise oversight over the Executive. Most importantly, we can create political spaces where disagreement does not have to become violence. That is parliamentary diplomacy.

I particularly support the position that peace must be based on international law, justice and multilateralism. However, Madam President, peace is not simply the absence of guns. Peace without justice can be temporary. Peace without truth can be fragile. Peace without inclusion can simply postpone another conflict. Therefore, when this report refers to Zimbabwe's experience of reconciliation, including the Unity Accord of 1987, we should recognise the progress that was made while also recognising that reconciliation must remain an ongoing national responsibility.

Our Constitution created the National Peace and Reconciliation architecture precisely because nations must continuously confront historical grievances, promote healing and ensure that communities feel heard. For those of us coming from Matabeleland, this is not an abstract academic subject. National unity becomes stronger not weaker when people are able to speak about their history, their pain and their aspirations within a peaceful constitutional framework. If Zimbabwe is going to speak internationally about peace building, we should continuously strengthen peacebuilding at home.

WOMEN MUST NOT SIMPLY BENEFIT FROM PEACE — THEY MUST BUILD IT

Madam President, I particularly welcome the contribution made by the President of the Senate during the Forum of Women Parliamentarians. The report correctly states that women and girls should not simply be beneficiaries of peace but must be architects of peace. I strongly support that principle. Women experience conflict differently. Women experience poverty differently. Women experience climate change differently. However, Madam President, I want us to go further. When international organisations speak about "women", we must continuously ask, which women because women are not a homogeneous group. There is an enormous difference between the opportunities available to an educated urban professional woman and those available to a woman living in a remote ward in Matabeleland South, Binga, Muzarabani, Chiredzi or another rural community.

WHERE THE REPORT SUPPORTS RURAL WOMEN

There are several areas where I believe the resolutions contained in this report can substantially benefit rural women. Firstly, the Assembly's commitment to sustainable development is important. Climate change is not an academic debate for rural women. When a borehole dries up, somebody walks further to collect water and frequently that person is a woman or a girl. When crops fail, rural women carry a disproportionate burden of household food security. When firewood becomes scarce, somebody travels further looking for energy. When health facilities are far away, pregnant women face the consequences. Therefore, climate action is also women's empowerment.

Secondly, the emphasis on peace and security benefits rural women because women and children are frequently among the most vulnerable during displacement, conflict and humanitarian emergencies.

Thirdly, I welcome the emphasis on gender-based violence, survivor support and implementation of the Zimbabwe National Gender Policy.

Fourthly, strengthening women's participation in decision-making is fundamental. A woman cannot continuously be described as vulnerable while simultaneously being excluded from the table where decisions about her vulnerability are being made.

WHERE I BELIEVE THE REPORT DOES NOT GO FAR ENOUGH FOR RURAL WOMEN

Madam President, this is where I believe we must add our own Zimbabwean perspective. The report speaks strongly about women, gender equality and inclusion but I would have wanted to see a much stronger and more explicit focus on rural women. The rural woman must not disappear inside the broad terminology of "women's empowerment". What does global gender equality mean to the woman who does not have title to the land she has cultivated for thirty years? What does artificial intelligence mean to the girl who cannot access reliable electricity or the internet? What does economic empowerment mean to a woman who produces vegetables, livestock, crafts or grain but cannot reach a viable market? What does climate resilience mean to a woman whose nearest reliable water source is kilometres away? What does parliamentary democracy mean if that woman has never had an opportunity to participate meaningfully in the formulation of laws affecting her land, water and livelihood? These are questions Parliament must answer.

The report correctly addresses peace, gender, youth, artificial intelligence, trade and sustainable development but the connections between these issues and rural poverty, unpaid care work, access to land, water, markets, digital connectivity and energy need to be much stronger.

Madam President, I would therefore recommend that whenever Parliament participates in these international platforms, we consciously mainstream the rural dimension. Gender must have a rural lens. Climate policy must have a rural lens. Technology policy must have a rural lens. Economic policy must have a rural lens.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE FUTURE

Madam President, I am particularly interested in paragraph 7.6 of this report. The Assembly recognised that artificial intelligence presents enormous opportunities while simultaneously creating risks requiring informed and sustained parliamentary engagement. This is extremely important. The future is no longer something distant. Artificial intelligence is already changing education, healthcare, banking, agriculture, security, communication and employment. As Deputy Chairperson of our Committee of the Future, I believe this particular IPU resolution should find an institutional home within our Parliament.

Zimbabwe has taken an important step by establishing and launching the Committee of the Future. The question now is, what are we going to do with it? It cannot become another committee that simply receives reports. It must help Parliament anticipate change. Instead of asking only what happened yesterday, Parliament must begin asking what is likely to happen in ten, twenty or thirty years. What jobs will disappear because of automation? What new jobs will emerge? What skills will Zimbabwean children require? What will climate change do to agriculture in Matabeleland South by 2040 or 2050? What will happen to communities whose economies currently depend on minerals when those minerals are exhausted?

How will AI affect elections and misinformation? How do we protect citizens' personal information? How will artificial intelligence affect the dignity and employment rights of workers? How do we ensure that Zimbabwe is not merely a consumer of technologies designed elsewhere but develops its own technological capabilities? These questions belong in Parliament before they become calamities. That, Madam President, is what I understand by legislating for future generations.

THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

However, Madam President, there is another side to artificial intelligence. We must avoid creating two Zimbabwe. One Zimbabwe cannot be discussing artificial intelligence, robotics and digital economies while another Zimbabwe is still searching for network connectivity and electricity. A rural child must have the same claim to the future as a child in Harare or Bulawayo. Before we celebrate the digital revolution, we must ask whether rural schools have electricity, computers, internet connectivity and trained teachers. Otherwise, artificial intelligence will not reduce inequality. It will accelerate it. This is why I would recommend that the Committee of the Future, together with the relevant Portfolio and Thematic Committees, undertake an assessment of Zimbabwe's readiness for AI and the future economy, with specific attention to rural communities, women, persons with disabilities and young people.

FUTURE GENERATIONS AND OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

Madam President, the theme of future generations also raises an uncomfortable question about our natural resources. Zimbabwe is richly endowed with minerals but minerals are finite. When we extract gold, lithium, platinum, coal and other resources today, what are we leaving behind for tomorrow? Future generations cannot inherit holes in the ground while the value created from those resources has disappeared.

Every major mining investment should therefore answer a future-generations question: What remains in that community when the mine eventually closes? There must be roads, schools, hospitals, water infrastructure, skills, industries, environmental rehabilitation and an economy capable of surviving beyond the life of the mine. That is intergenerational justice.

CLIMATE JUSTICE

The same applies to climate change. Section 73 of our Constitution recognises environmental rights and specifically requires environmental protection for the benefit of present and future generations. That language is extremely important. Our Constitution was already thinking about the future. Therefore, protecting rivers, wetlands, forests, grazing land and water sources is not environmental activism detached from development. It is constitutional responsibility. For rural communities, particularly in drought-prone provinces such as Matabeleland South, climate resilience must translate into investment in water harvesting, dams, irrigation, drought-resistant agriculture, renewable energy and climate-smart livestock production.

FAIR GLOBAL ECONOMY

I also welcome the resolution on building a fair and sustainable global economy and combating protectionism, excessive tariffs and corporate tax avoidance. Developing countries cannot continuously export raw materials cheaply and import finished products at significantly higher prices. Neither should multinational corporations extract wealth from African countries and then shift profits elsewhere to avoid paying their fair share of tax. Parliament must scrutinise these arrangements.

For Zimbabwe, beneficiation and value addition must cease being slogans. If lithium leaves Zimbabwe, Zimbabweans should participate in the industries that lithium creates. If our agricultural commodities enter international markets, our farmers including rural women must receive a fair return. A fair global economy must ultimately be measured by whether the producer at the bottom of the value chain experiences improvement.

MY RECOMMENDATIONS

Madam President, in addition to the recommendations contained in the report, I propose the following;

- Firstly, Parliament should develop a mechanism for tracking IPU resolutions after delegations return. Every major resolution should be allocated to the relevant Committee, with progress reported back to Parliament.
- Secondly, the Committee of the Future should be specifically tasked with examining the IPU recommendations concerning artificial intelligence, disruptive technologies and intergenerational justice and recommending an appropriate Zimbabwean legislative framework.
- Thirdly, Parliament should undertake a national future-generations assessment, looking at climate change, water security, energy, food security, employment, AI, demographic change and natural-resource depletion over the next twenty to thirty years.

- Fourthly, every major Bill and national development policy should increasingly be subjected to an intergenerational impact question: What consequences will this decision have for Zimbabweans ten, twenty or thirty years from now?
- Fifth, rural women must be explicitly mainstreamed into the implementation of the IPU resolutions. This should include access to land, water, clean energy, finance, markets, digital connectivity and agricultural technology.
- Sixth, Zimbabwe should strengthen implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, including UNSCR 1325, while ensuring that rural women, women with disabilities and young women participate in peacebuilding structures rather than merely being described as beneficiaries.
- Seventh, Parliament should investigate the digital and AI readiness of rural schools and communities. We cannot prepare Zimbabwe for an AI-driven world without addressing electricity, connectivity, devices and digital literacy.

- Eighth, Parliament should strengthen oversight of mining and natural-resource exploitation from the perspective of future generations. Communities hosting extractive industries must inherit permanent economic and social infrastructure rather than environmental liabilities.
- Ninth, our international parliamentary diplomacy must be connected to domestic implementation. When Zimbabwe advocates peace internationally, we must strengthen dialogue, tolerance, reconciliation and constitutionalism domestically.
- Tenth, young Zimbabweans should have a structured voice in the work of the Committee of the Future. It would be contradictory to discuss future generations without allowing those who will inhabit that future to participate.

CONCLUSION

Madam President, I support this report because it asks Parliament to look beyond our borders, but more importantly, it challenges us to look beyond our own political generation. We are temporary custodians of permanent national interests. One day, none of us sitting in this Chamber will be here. The question future generations will ask will not be how many conferences we attended or how many resolutions we adopted. They will ask: What did you leave us? Did we leave them functioning institutions, peace, clean water, productive land, an educated population, opportunities, a country capable of adapting to technology, natural resources or at least enduring value created from those resources?

For the girl growing up in rural Matabeleland South, will the future we are discussing at international conferences actually reach her? Will she have electricity, internet connectivity, access to quality education, own land, participate in the economy, be safe, have a voice and will she have a realistic opportunity of one day sitting where we sit today? For me, Madam President, that is the true test of the theme "Nurturing Hope, Securing Peace and Ensuring Justice for Future Generations."

Hope cannot simply be declared. It must be built. Peace cannot simply be celebrated. It must be protected by justice and the future cannot simply be discussed; it must be prepared for. I, therefore, support the adoption of this report and urge Parliament to ensure that its resolutions do not remain within the pages of an international conference report but are translated into legislation, oversight, budgets and measurable improvements in the lives of our people, particularly those furthest from the centres of power and opportunity. I thank you Madam President.

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

HON. SEN. GOTORA: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 10th September, 2026.

MOTION

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

Nineteenth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the Report of the Joint Portfolio Committee on Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare and Thematic Committee on Human Rights on the petition by the Power of Touch Institution on the review of laws and regulations that have a bearing on the senior citizens.

Question again proposed.

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

HON. SEN. TONGOGARA: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 10th September, 2026.

MOTION

REHABILITATION PROGRAMMES FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE ON THE STREETS

Twentieth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the Rehabilitation programmes for homeless people on the streets

Question again proposed.

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

HON. SEN. NDEBELE: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 10th September, 2026.

MOTION

RESUSCITATION OF THE COTTON INDUSTRY

Twenty-first Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the resuscitation of the cotton industry.

Question again proposed.

HON. SEN. BIMHA: I agree with a number of the previous contributors to this motion. The Zimbabwe cotton-to-clothing industry once stood as a pillar of the country's industrialisation as well as rural development and most importantly, employment creation. Its decline was primarily driven initially by trade liberalisation and followed by macroeconomic instability as well as declining cotton production and of course, technological deficiencies and lastly, by market distortions.

Now, reviving the industry necessitates a strategic coordinated effort to modernise production, diversify product offerings, reform trade policies and strengthen supply chains. With these targeted interventions, Zimbabwe can rebuild a resilient competitive cotton to clothing value chain that unlocks economic opportunities, promote local employment and of course, enhances export prospects. I thank you Madam President.

HON. SEN. S. MOYO: Thank you Madam President for giving me this opportunity to rise to speak on this motion. The first reason is that I will ask the question - why did we fail as a country that was once the second-largest cotton grower in Africa? What I am saying is simple. We used to be strong in cotton. We are now weak and it did not happen by accident. It happened because of choices made in this country year after year. I will now explain those choices one by one so nobody can say we did not know why. The first reason we failed is the policy confusion mixed with the side-marketing Government brought into inputs and loans through the Cotton Company of Zimbabwe (COTTCO) which was both the lender and the buyer. The private buyers arrived with the cash in hand. Farmers took the loans and inputs, then sold their cotton to whoever paid the cash best. The loans were never repaid. The banks pulled out. Today, no bank, no buyer and no farmer trusts the system.

The second reason is the poor price and the high cost of farming. A farmer in Insiza works for six months tilling, spraying and picking by hand. At the end of it, he is paid a little 30 cents per kilogramme while it costs him hundreds of dollars per hectare just to buy the chemicals and seeds. Meanwhile, our own neighbour Zambia pays its cotton farmers better and pays them faster.

The third reason is the collapse of our ginneries and the total absence of value addition. This country used to export cotton lint, cotton yarn and finished cloth. Today, we export raw and processed cotton or nothing at all. The cotton ginning mills in Kadoma, Gokwe and Mutare stand as empty shells. There is no spinning, there is no weaving and there is no textile industry left to speak of. We now import cloth made from our own cotton and sell it back to our own people at a profit for somebody else. This is not development but that is a national embarrassment.

In Matabeleland South, is a victim twice over? We have good land in Mangwe, Bulilima and Matopo, land that can grow cotton, especially under irrigation. We have no ginnery, no contract scheme and have no Government support. Our people turned instead to gold panning and cross-border trading to survive. We have lost jobs. We have lost foreign currency. We have lost a crop that our grandparents proudly called white gold.

I now bring to this House the demand of the people of Matabeleland South and indeed the cotton farmers across the country. First, a guaranteed price and payment within 14 days of delivery, not six months late. Our farmers are not a bank for buyers to borrow for free.

Secondly, the decentralisation of ginneries' so that at least one functioning ginnery is returned to Matabeleland South, bringing jobs back to our own home.

Thirdly, a value addition mandate so that raw material is not exported until our own local spinners and weavers are fed first so that Zimbabwe can once again produce clothing stamped made in Zimbabwe, not made in China.

Fourthly, drought tolerance, climate smart seeds varieties suited to our dry province because cotton can still grow in Matabeleland South if Government chooses to support it properly.

Madam President, before I move to my demand, I must bring two more red flags to this House. Chiredzi and the cotton private companies are working and the Government is watching from the sidelines. Madam President, Chiredzi is one of Zimbabwe's oldest cotton ginning centres, together with Chinhoyi, Gokwe, Kadoma, Muzarabani and Sanyati. A long list of private companies is active in the cotton business across our provinces, including operators such as Tarafen, Farmers World, FSI Agricom, Dynamic Cotton, IDAI Modzone, Bartco, Comtex, Insing Investments, Parrogate, Olam Zimbabwe, Cargill and Synthesis, among others. Those companies are the ones funding inputs, contracting farmers and buying the crop.

What is the Government's role in all this? The Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development told this very Parliament in this one way that the Government does not set price. Does it set condition and does not enter into contracts with farmers, leaving that entirely to private contractors? Government, by its own ambition, keeps only an observer role. Our national output has fallen from over 305 000 tonnes in the 2010-11 season to below 29 000 tonnes last year. A decline of 96% and even this year's projected recovery to about 38 000 tonnes remains far below what this industry needs.

When the State steps back and calls itself an observer while private companies run the whole show in Chiredzi and beyond, our farmers are left to negotiate alone against companies with far more power than they have. That is not a free market, that is the upturn market. In conclusion, let this House resolve, restore cotton and restoring cotton, restore dignity for the farmer. Thank you.

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

HON. SEN. NDEBELE: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Thursday, 10th September, 2026.

MOTION

PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH: DEBATE ON ADDRESS

Twenty-Second Order read: Adjourned debate on motion in reply to the Presidential Speech.

Question again proposed.

***HON. SEN. TONGOGARA**: Thank you Madam President of Senate for allowing me to round up this very important debate. I say so because when we put our motions on the *Order Paper,* they lapse after 21 days and are then removed from the *Order Paper*. I now round up this motion concerning the Presidential Speech because it has been on the *Order Paper* for 57 days. This is how important this motion is.

Secondly, I would like to thank all Hon. Members who debated this motion. We all saw for ourselves that the debate was not partisan. It was of national interest and this SONA was delivered by our President, the President for all of us. So, we know and appreciate that we have a President who together with the Cabinet is presiding over Zimbabwe in a good manner and we are quite happy with it. That is why all of us contributed meaningfully to the motion.

I would like to thank the Executive specifically, because in the State of the Nation Address, the President, Dr. E. Mnangagwa, mentioned that he was not happy with the number of Bills that were being tabled in this House for legislation into law. However, we have observed that there has been a change in the number of Bills presented before this House. We are quite happy with what the President said which has been acceded to by the Executive and they brought Bills to this august House but here is my concern. We would envisage a situation where Hon. Members would have debated these motions and responsible Ministers come to this august House so that they could reply in terms of what the Government policy is all about.

If they came, it would help when we have the question-and-answer session like tomorrow; we will not be in a position to ask questions because they will have already responded during their reports to the Presidential speech. I would like to say to the recently appointed Hon. Senators, you are most welcome in this august House. We thank the President for what he did to give us an additional 10 Hon. Senators. This will enhance our debate since we now have more brains…

THE TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (HON. SEN. DUBE): Order! Hon. Sen. S. Moyo, can you please be honourable. Can you continue, Hon. Sen. Tongogara?

HON. SEN. TONGOGARA: Thank you Madam President. Those that interject will confuse us. Be that as it may, I had mentioned that we look forward to our new Members of the Senate whom I have warmly welcomed to give their input. May I now move that the motion be adopted.

Motion that a respectful address be presented to the President of Zimbabwe as follows: -

May it please you, Your Excellency, the President: We, the Members of Parliament of Zimbabwe desire to express our loyalty to Zimbabwe and beg leave to offer our respectful thanks for the speech which you have been pleased to address to Parliament, put and agreed to.

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