

IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official report of the proceedings of the National Assembly

FIRST MEETING – FOURTH SESSION

Wednesday, 28th March, 1984

The Assembly met at 2.30 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT (Dr. A.M. Obote): Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members would have heard of the death of President Ahmed Sekou Toure, the President of the Peoples' Revolutionary Republic of Guinea.

Ahmed Sekou Toure was an illustrious and distinguished Pan-Africanist and a dedicated servant of the people of his country. He was a very strong believer and contributed immensely in the liberation of the continent of Africa. He was a dean of those African Leaders who founded the Organisation of African Unity. In recognition of his services to Africa, the O.A.U decided at the 21st Meeting of its founding to be held in Conakry but due to difficulties within the O.A.U., the 21st Anniversary Meeting could not be held in Guinea last year. The Assembly of Heads of States and Governments however, decided that the 1984 summit be held in Conakry and the late President Ahmed Sekou Toure was to preside.

Mr. Speaker, Africa has lost a dedicated servant, a man who defied colonialism, who believed in the Unity of Africa and who devoted his energy equally between service to the people of Guinea and service to Africa. The death of Ahmed Sekou Toure has robbed Africa of a Statesman of the highest quality who knew that his responsibilities covered the whole of Africa, we mourn him greatly.

DR. OBOTE Cont'd:

I request the House, Mr. Speaker, to stand and observe a two-minute silence in memory of Ahmed Sekou Toure and for the service he rendered to Africa.

(THE HOUSE STOOD FOR A TWO-MINUTE SILENCE).

MR. SPEAKER,

In three previous Communications from the Chair, I addressed the House on The Challenge of Recovery. The Progress to Recovery and Platform for Recovery. The Minister of Finance also addressed the House on The First Step to Recovery, Programme for Recovery and Climbing to Recovery. Today, I want to address the House on Responsibility and Recovery.

Since taking office in December 1980, the broad policy of this Government has been to heal the wounds of the 1970s through reconciliation and to promote and maintain a situation where every individual will be able to enjoy a reasonable standard of living, security in his home and have access to social services. This is the policy of one people, one country, at peace within herself, productive and prosperous.

Mr. Speaker, from the previous Communications from the Chair and Budget Speeches, Hon. Members now know the range of policies and specific measures proposed by Government and adopted by this House to attain that goal.

Mr. Speaker, moderate policies pursued by the Government in all fields, be it political, economic or foreign relations, have contributed to the successes achieved so far.

At the political level, Mr. Speaker, the Government has not deviated from the course it set itself way back in December 1980. As I had occasion to say recently, let it not be forgotten Mr. Speaker, that the horrific loss of lives, the dangerous fall in moral standards and the sharp decline of the economy in the 1970s were due to the weaknesses in man and to the fragility of our national institutions.

With that in mind, the Government set out to take the lead in re-building and strengthening our national institutions. Although much still remains to be done, we should take pride that we have maintained a parliamentary system of government; the judiciary has remained free and independent; our people are increasingly enjoying fundamental human rights and freedom of the individual; there is freedom of conscience and expression and of assembly and association, and of movement; there is freedom of worship; there is academic freedom; there is freedom of the press; and the trade union movement is free and independent.

Mr. Speaker, the Government has also co-operated effectively with spiritual organisations and their leaders in the demanding task to raise moral standards.

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On taking office, Mr. Speaker, the Government identified two major causes of abject poverty and degradation experienced by people in Uganda in the 1970s. The first was the complete absence of direction on all matters affecting the welfare of the people by the then rulers. The second was the consequential extremely low level of economic activities characterised by a virtual halt in exportable and foreign exchange commodities.

Uganda, at Liberation, as Hon. Members know, was a paralysed country and had been so for nine years. The situation called for bold and realistic policies coupled with firm and unwavering leadership in the implementation of those policies. The Government set out to produce such policies and to give that quality of leadership.

The necessary policies for the recovery of the economy were presented to the House, Mr. Speaker, in 1981 and at that time there were many who had doubts others who could not fathom what was being proposed and still others who, without proposing alternative policies, maintained a meaningless opposition to the Government measures.

Mr. Speaker, the broad policies to arrest the decline of the 1970s were given to the House in *The Challenge of Recovery* in March, 1981. On 1st May, 1981, specific measures designed to give incentives to growers of export crops were announced. These incentives have been constantly under review, improved upon and will continue to be reviewed and improved. A range of policies and measures were presented to the House in *The First Step to Recovery* in June, 1981. The resolute determination of Government to implement policies and measures approved by this House has reversed the trend of decline. Last year, in *The Platform for Recovery*, I reported to the House some of the achievements recorded by the people in the implementation of Government policies and measures approved by the House.

I now report Mr. Speaker that progress has continued, indicating quite positively that the policies, programmes and projects framed by Government, presented to this House, debated, adopted and implemented or are in the course of implementation, are in the course of implementation, are succeeding in giving Ugandans a better standard of living, security and access to social services. (**Hear, hear.**)

I report that when we came to office the national inflation rate for 1980 was 107.2%. By the end of 1981 the rate had been reduced to 92.8% and at the end of 1982 the inflation rate was down to 44.9%. Mr. Speaker, at the end of 1983 the inflation rate had dropped even further to 30%. This, Mr. Speaker, Sir, is a great achievement. (**Hear, hear.**)

Mr. Speaker, I report that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew on average by 5% per annum during 1981 and 1982, and that this rate was sustained during 1983.

Mr. Speaker, I further report that export volumes rose by an estimated 45% from 1980 to 1983.

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Mr. Speaker, allow me to further report that Government has increased more than nineteen-fold over the past two years, from 0.8% to 6.3% of GDP.

These, Mr. Speaker, are important indicators showing that the decline of the 1970s has not only been arrested but that the trend has been completely reversed and that Uganda is consequently climbing towards recovery. Further movement towards recovery will not, however, happen by itself. Policies, programmes and projects will still be required to be worked out and implemented. It is this House that, by the Constitution, is charged with the authority and responsibility to examine and to monitor their implementation.

Individuals or groups of Hon. Members may have different opinions on government policies, programmes or projects. That indeed, is their democratic right. I only urge that in exercising their democratic rights, they should do so with responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members will recall that in 'The Challenge of Recovery, I urged that "as representatives of the people, our conduct both here in the House and outside it, and the quality of individual and collective contributions in the debates will enable the people to judge whether or not Hon. Members are discharging their responsibilities in the fulfilment of the hopes of the nation."

Sir, in the same Challenge of Recovery, I told you that the majority of Hon. Members had not sat in a House of Parliament. The period of this Parliament, Mr. Speaker, between the election of Hon. Members and until the next general elections projected to be held at the end of 1985, can be termed crucible years. The House as a whole has been put under severe test by the electorate for the last three years and will continue to be so until the next general elections.

In the fulfilment of the hopes and aspirations of the nation for peace and prosperity, the onus is on all Hon. Members to acquit themselves of any charge that they do not share those hopes. One way of doing so is for Hon. Members to show their unmistakable conviction to parliamentary rule and to translate that conviction by getting its message across to the electorate through their performance in this House, and their other activities outside the House. The objective should be an even stronger belief by the Hon. Members and the electorate in the ballot thereby denying a constituency to anyone opposed to the ballot.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this young House of politicians has gained considerable experience and has performed fairly well, and Members are climbing on the ladder of political leadership. I would think that individual Members by now know the truism of the first rule of political leadership, which states that one has to be a good politician in order to get a chance to be a Statesman. The emphasis is on "good politician". Every politician aspires to be a Statesman. The road is not an easy one. Mr. Speaker, a good politician has many attributes:-

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- A good politician is one who knows that power lies with the people.
- A good politician is one who knows that power does not lie in Government or Parliament, but with the people.
- A good politician is one who knows that Government and Parliament exercise powers entrusted to them by the people and that the same power must be exercised solely in the interests of the people.
- A good politician is one who respects the will of the people.
- A good politician is one who knows that at an election the electorate have the power either to confirm the current representative or transfer their trust to another representative.
- A good politician is one who works relentlessly for peace, prosperity and goodwill and, as the distinguished American Statesman, Abraham Lincoln, once said, works on the principle of “.....Malice towards none and charity to all.....”
- A good politician is one who knows that the interest of his country is paramount and all others are secondary.
- A good politician is one who knows that party differences are secondary to national unity and security. (**Hear, hear.**)

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the prayer recited at the commencement of every sitting of this House, all Hon. Members are referred to as servants who have been called upon to perform important trusts in the land. What has been entrusted to Hon. Members is also contained in the same prayer, namely, the welfare of Uganda and just Government. The manner of exercising that trust is also in the same prayer. We are all enjoined to treat and consider all matters that shall come under our deliberations in a just and faithful manner.

Mr. Speaker, to treat and consider all matters in a just and faithful manner demands and calls for a very high degree of political conscientiousness and commitment to peace, development and the unity of Uganda. This is why in Parliaments older than our own, Members from different parties often find it a duty to the country to adopt a common front on a range of policies, issues and subjects. In Uganda's case, it should not be all that difficult for Hon. Members to forge a common front on issues of peace, security, development and justice for all. Without peace, security and justice, there can be no parliamentary rule and no development as has been clearly illustrated by the traumatic events when all these were denied to the people of Uganda by the regime of murder and terror.

Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary word “opposition” has no bearing whatsoever on any idea that Members of the Opposition have a duty to oppose everything proposed by the Government. Hon. Members should know that in a House of Parliament, Members of the Government side are called upon to debate and vote upon propositions submitted by the Opposition Members. Opposition Members submit such propositions in the

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belief that members of the Government side will treat the propositions with a high degree of conscientiousness and commitment to the country. If that were not the case, no Member of the Opposition would bring a measure before the House and expect it to pass, unless the propositions were in the first place not meant to be taken seriously.

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Government side bring propositions whether as Ministers or as individuals with the same expectations, namely, that the Opposition Members will treat the propositions with a high degree of conscientiousness and commitment to the country. If all measures brought to the House by either side were to be automatically opposed by one side or the other, deliberations in the House would be reduced to a meeting of antagonistic entities with no common allegiance.

All Members of Parliament irrespective of their parties are commanded by the Constitution to take and subscribe before the Assembly, the Oath of Allegiance and the Oath of Member of Parliament. A Member swearing the Oath of Allegiance undertakes to be faithful and bear true allegiance to the Republic of Uganda and preserve, protect the Constitution. The Oath of Member of Parliament equally commands to give faithful service to Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, the Oaths we took are oaths commanding us all to serve the people of Uganda, irrespective of tribe, religious faith or station. We should never allow anything to lead us to deviate from that course. In serving the people of Uganda with responsibility, Hon. Members achieve two objectives simultaneously. The first is that Hon. Members deliberately and conscientiously put themselves apart from the men of violence who do not believe in the ballot. Secondly, by siding with the aspirations of the people for peace and unity, Hon. Members enrich and strengthen freedom of conscience, association and assembly because the men of violence do not believe in those basic democratic principles.

Mr. Speaker, let it never be forgotten that the freedom we now have was brought about by sacrifices in which many lost their lives. It was because of those sacrifices that political activities emerged, parties were re-established or founded, elections were held and politicians and others allowed a platform to make all kinds of utterances against the Government. This freedom, Mr. Speaker, was highly bought and paid for by the liberators.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of the last Session of this Parliament, you paid tribute to a Member of the House who is no longer with us. I refer to the late Major-General the Hon. David Oyite-Ojok. He was one of those thousands of Ugandans who offered their lives so that Ugandans of today and of tomorrow should know freedom and live in peace and prosperity. On behalf of the Government and Members this side of the House, I join you to record our deep and profound sorrow at the untimely death of the late Chief of Staff, Major General, the Hon. David Oyite-Ojok and other officers and men of the Uganda National Liberation Army who lost their lives in a helicopter accident on 2nd December, 1983.

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We register our total appreciation of his exemplary character, as demonstrated by his humility, kindness, gentleness, unselfishness and great sense of humour.

We express deep appreciation of the indomitable gallantry and professionalism of the late Major General, whose incomparable ability as a soldier and leader inspired and gave hope to many Ugandans, particularly the men who were under his command.

Mr. Speaker, his boundless courage and commitment to freedom spurred the Ugandan liberators to overcome difficulties, make sacrifices and participate fully in the Liberation War.

I record, Mr. Speaker, that the late David Oyite-Ojok's total commitment to democracy and constitutionalism, inspired.

Let it be recorded that throughout his professional career as a soldier, David Oyite-Ojok adhered to the military ethics to the letter, never violated his Oath of Allegiance to the people of Uganda and never pointed his gun at the people. He always defended the legally constituted civil authority.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government and Members of this side of the House, I salute the brilliant and gallant David Oyite-Ojok for the invaluable contribution he made both by example and deed in the liberation struggle and the reconstruction of a new Uganda, and I salute the illustrious Officers and men of the UNLA who died in the same accident.

I take the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to place on record the appreciation of the Government at the commendable conduct of Officers and men of the UNLF, under the leadership of Lt. General Tito Okello, MP, during the trying time of grief. I express confidence that the continued leadership of Lt. General Tito Okello will ensure the proper observance by Officers and men of the UNLA of their Oath of Allegiance, respect for their uniform, commitment to their military ethics and dedication to duty in the defence of Uganda and freedom.

Mr. Speaker, the heroes who lost their lives during the long nine years of struggle, culminating in the Liberation War, did so in order to restore freedom and parliamentary democracy. They did not sacrifice their lives for the sake of gaining power. It should therefore, not be too high a price for Hon. Members irrespective of their political beliefs, to remember in all their political activities the cause for which those heroes struggled. It is incumbent upon all Hon. Members to jealously guard and defend this basic parliamentary democracy which has been re-established, principally through the act of gallant sons of Uganda laying down their lives for the love and freedom of their country.

This is a challenge to all of us, but if we exercise the power given to us by the electorate and the constitution with responsibility, peace will be consolidated and democratic parliamentary rule should in time grow in strength and flourish. Let us, Mr. Speaker, never imagine that as we

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sit here we have the power of God to will that there shall be tomorrow, in Uganda, prosperity, unity and security for all, or that if there are any shortcomings in our parliamentary system, they can be overcome overnight. We have to accept, Mr. Speaker that we have got to work conscientiously for the unity of Uganda, for the security of the people of Uganda, for prosperity, and for strengthening the institutions of governance. There is no short-cut to that hard work.

Mr. Speaker, this the first sitting of the First Meeting of the Fourth Session of the Fourth Parliament is a day of reflection and re-dedication.

We reflect that between 1971 and Liberation in 1979, Uganda had no Parliament. The voice of the people was never heard during those years of misery, sorrow and death. We recall that one of the first actions by the usurper of the peoples' power in 1971 was the disbandment of Parliament and the abolition of all political activities. The military regime deprived Ugandans of democracy in all its forms. It took nine years of determined struggle and sacrifice to dislodge the regime of murder and terror; a noble action which was achieved with the assistance and sacrifices of the people of the United Republic of Tanzania in 1979.

In December, 1980, democratic parliamentary rule was re-established. This was in conformity with the wishes and aspirations of the people of Uganda. It is therefore our bounden duty to uphold and re-dedicate ourselves to these aspirations.

Since parliamentary Government was established in 1980, the people of Uganda have been engaged in a wide field of activities intended to lead to a complete recovery from the traumatic years of the 1970s. One such activity was the 1980 electoral exercise in the reconstitution of democratic institutions which gave birth to this Fourth Parliament. Although there was a nine-year break in parliamentary practice the people of Uganda are proud that parliamentary democracy has been sustained for the last three years and they look forward to the consolidation of democratic parliamentary institutions in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, it will continue to be the policy of the Government during the Session to further strengthen and speed up the re-building of our national institutions, including Parliamentary institutions, as cornerstones for Nation-building.

Government, Mr. Speaker, will exercise the authority entrusted to it by the electorate, with responsibility, Government will look to Hon. Members to exercise their power as parliamentarians with responsibility. Government will expect Hon. Members to discuss Uganda's relations with other countries with responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, this is a young parliament. All Hon. Members have to show at the end of it that they have been responsible both here and outside the House. Hon. Members are free in whatever they say in the House and to the electorate. While that is a democratic right, let it not be concluded by the electorate that what we say amounts to the responsibility of a baby. A famous writer once defined a baby as a loud noise at one end and no sense of responsibility at

DR. OBOTE Cont'd:

the other. When this house is dissolved, the electorate will pronounce upon whether we have been babies and made noises without responsibility.

Government will continue to tackle the task of rehabilitating the economy of this country by implementing The Recovery Programme with responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members are aware that during this period of rehabilitation and reconstruction, Uganda requires considerable assistance from the International Community and particularly from friendly countries and international organisations of which Uganda is a member.

Unlike the happy foreign exchange situation of the 1960s, our foreign earnings today are small and we have therefore, to seek much of the capital support for the Recovery Programme from external or off-shore sources. I want to record, Mr. Speaker, our grateful thanks for moral, material, manpower and capital aid assistance received so far from the international community for the resuscitation of our national economy.

Let me once more, Mr. Speaker, reiterate that external assistance, much as it is welcome, can never be enough for our requirements and is therefore, not a substitute for our being able to galvanise our own resources for our needs. Hon. Members and the country at large must recognise and accept that external assistance is given only as a supplement to our efforts. The contribution by the international community to the recovery of our economy must, therefore, be seen in that light.

Mr. Speaker, on coming to office in December 1980, Government remained true to its electoral pledge that the Pearl of Africa shall rise and shine again, and Government took its responsibility to lead the country to recovery most seriously. At that time, Mr. Speaker, even knowledgeable observers who watched the magnitude of the problems and challenges we had to surmount found no grounds for offering optimistic forecasts.

- Our foreign exchange earnings then, as the house knows, came only from coffee, averaging eight million dollars a month. This was woefully inadequate even for normal Government administration.
- The fuel bill alone was four million dollars.
- The official exchange rate was eight shillings to the US Dollars. The UNLF administration had, in 1979, given solemn promises that adjustments would be undertaken to make the exchange rate more realistic, but the promises were not fulfilled. The result was no meaningful rehabilitation was undertaken and donors were unwilling to extend assistance to Uganda in the circumstances where our exchange rate was grossly unrealistic.

- In addition, the Balance of Payments' position before and soon after Liberation was such that Uganda was unable to honour her international obligations. This situation virtually closed all credit doors to Uganda.

Mr. Speaker, the problems which faced the economy were myriad. The most important ones together with their solutions were presented to this House in the First Step to Recovery and The Climbing to Recovery. The turning point from the position of decline to one of movement towards recovery was the reforms announced in the Budget Speech of June 1981. These reforms, as the House will be aware, covered all areas of economic management.

The priority objective of Government set out way back in 1981 reforms was to arrest and correct the serious underlying causes of decline, some of which I have already mentioned. This called for sound, bold and realistic policies and measures that were designed to serve as positive remedy to revive and stabilise the economy. The reforms we are pursuing are an integrated package of monetary and fiscal measures which had the following important elements:-

- Adjustment of the interest rate.
- Increase producer prices and regular review of prices for the main export crops;
- Removal of price controls;
- Rationalisation of tax structure;
- Introduction of a more remunerative and flexible structure of interest rates; and
- Setting of ceilings on budgetary deficits, external borrowings and domestic credit expansion.

Mr. Speaker, the economic and monetary measures first introduced in 1981 triggered off commercial activities, domestic production and also opened doors for meaningful negotiations for external assistance and aid.

Mr. Speaker, the Government, on taking office, took an early decision to prepare priority projects, the implementation of which were designed to increase the rate of recovery. The policies, programmes and projects were published in April 1982, with the title of Recovery Programme 1982/84.

Government decided at the publication of the 1982/84 Programme that it be reviewed from time to time, taking into consideration the successes and limitations encountered in the mobilisation of resources.

I report, Mr. Speaker, that Government has been extremely successful in the mobilisation of resources and opportunity was, therefore, taken to expand the programme to include new projects and to extend the programme period to 1985.

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The new Programme was published in October 1983 in two volumes and it is entitled the Revised Recovery Programme 1982/84. It is forecast that some of the projects included in the Revised Recovery Programme will not be fully completed until 1988.

Mr. Speaker, the Revised Recovery Programme retains the essential features of the original Recovery Programme in terms of policies, strategies and priorities. In addition to the bigger number of projects, the Revised Recovery Programme has the merit of being more precise and aiming at a longer perspective. It also tries to tackle directly some of the implementation constraints that have become apparent.

Mr. Speaker, priority is given in the Revised Recovery Programme to raising production in the various sectors of the economy to their full potential and ensures increase in income per capita. There are four elements in the general strategy, namely:-

1. Simultaneous rehabilitation and restructuring of the economy, with emphasis on food production and the export sector.
2. Careful selection and vigorous implementation of projects in the Programme.
3. Macro-economic policies that will give the selected projects the best chance of success while at the same time creating an environment conducive to the economic growth and;
4. Measures designed to overcome basic development constraints. The project selection criteria remain the same as previously given to this House in The Progress to Recovery.

There are, Mr. Speaker, one hundred and five projects in the Revised Recovery Programme as compared to seventy-six in the original Programme published in 1982.

Mr. Speaker, these one hundred and five projects require substantial funds in foreign exchange. Due to our still low earning capacity of foreign exchange, Government will continue to seek much of the funds required from external sources for the implementation of these projects. I must, however, emphasise once more, that every effort will be made by Government to mobilise internal resources for the same purpose.

On projects, Mr. Speaker, the basic priority in the Revised Recovery programme is the same as in the original Programme, namely, the rehabilitation of existing productive capacities within various sectors, notably agriculture, including animal industry, manufacturing industry, tourism, transport, communication and social infrastructure.

It is planned, Mr. Speaker, that the rehabilitation exercise will revive the production capacity of the economy through stimulation of the export sector. Manufacturing industry will be regenerated on a selective basis in recognition of the import needs of the economy.

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The rehabilitation of the transport sector is designed to stabilise costs, increase returns to agriculture, manufacturing industry and check the rise in consumer prices.

Mr. Speaker, the Revised Recovery Programme was presented to Uganda's major donors, known as the Consultative Group, at a meeting in Paris in January of this year. I would like to report Mr. Speaker, that the Revised Recovery Programme was favourably received.

The communiqué issued at the end of the Consultative Group Meeting "noted with satisfaction the significant improvement in Uganda's economic performance since the introduction of a series of policy measures in June 1981, supported by increased levels of external assistance including three Standby Arrangements with the International Monetary Fund."

Mr. Speaker, the communiqué went on to state that "The Government's Revised Recovery Programme, covering the period mid-1983 to mid-1985, was welcomed by the Meeting as a sound document which continued to reflect the same priorities but had a more realistic view of resource constraints than the Recovery Programme 1982 – 1984, and took into account limitations in implementation capacity."

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Planning and Economic Development will lay on the Table the Revised Recovery Programme and Hon. Members will be able to read and discuss it with their constituents. Hon. Members will see that for the total Programme, it is estimated at 17 billion dollars. Much of this money has been mobilised or is in the process of being negotiated.

One matter which tended to inhibit the mobilisation and disbursement of funds has been the ownership of the expropriated properties. I report, Mr. Speaker, that the Verification and the Negotiating Committees are now working and that a number of certificates have been issued under the provision of the Expropriated Properties Act. In view of the large number of properties expropriated, Government has decided to process applications from former owners either for re-possession, joint venture or compensation, on the basis of Government priorities set out in the Revised Recovery Programme. Accordingly applications are being processed in the following order:-

1. Agricultural estates and enterprises and industrial units.
2. Commercial buildings and businesses.
3. Institutional buildings.
4. Residential buildings.

Mr. Speaker, Government has been disappointed that despite the long period taken since the Bill was published and enacted to the time when the Verification Committee was appointed, only a few applicants interested in these properties other than former owners have lodged with the appropriate Government department claims of interest in such properties.

DR. OBOTE Cont'd:

The Act, Mr. Speaker, provides that any person who or institution which wanted to acquire a particular property or had been occupying such property, or had invested money and improved such property, was equally entitled to lodge a claim of interest in any such property. Hon. Members should study the Act carefully and explain its provisions to their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, the House knows of the issue regarding the former assets and liabilities of the East African Community. We have today the Uganda Railways, the Uganda Posts and Telecommunications and a number of institutions which used to be owned by the East African Community. Government has had difficulties in mobilising external funds some of these institutions had on account of the hitherto unresolved issue of Uganda's sole ownership of such institutions.

I am happy to report to the House that the former Partner States, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, have now agreed on a formula for the division of the assets and liabilities of the former East African Community.

In a meeting held in Arusha in November 1983, the Heads of State of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda agreed that assets and liabilities be divided on the basis of 42% for Kenya, 32% for Tanzania and 26% for Uganda. It was also agreed at the same meeting that five former East African Community institutions should remain jointly owned by the three countries. These are the East African Development Bank, the Flying School at Soroti, the Inter-University Council, the Eastern and Southern African Management Institute and the East African Library Services.

Mr. Speaker, since the November 1983 Arusha Meeting, Ministers from the three former Partner States have been working to reduce the Arusha Agreement into a legal form and it is anticipated that the final understanding will be reached at the end of this month or soon thereafter.

Mr. Speaker, it is the intention of the three East African States that despite the collapse of the East African Community, new forms of cooperation should be forged. Uganda will play a very active role in the pursuit of that goal.

Mr. Speaker, the Government is confident that now that the Verification and Negotiating Committees are working and now that the matters of the East African Community assets and liabilities have been resolved, it will be less difficult to mobilise the external resources for the rehabilitation of external resources for the rehabilitation of enterprises and institutions hitherto affected by doubts of ownership.

Mr. Speaker, I report that there has been all-round progress on all fronts. I urge Hon. Members and indeed the country at large to recognise that the men of violence have no respect for lives or property and that they have to be fought together by all who believe in parliamentary rule and sanctity of life.

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Government, Mr. Speaker, is about to launch a programme to contain violence and cattle rustling in the north-east.

The situation in West Nile has greatly improved and large numbers of persons who fled to neighbouring states, particularly into Zaire, are returning.

There has been tremendous improvement in security in Luwero, Mpigi and Mubende and although incidents are still being reported, measures are at hand to contain the situation.

Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity to place on record the gratitude of the Government to the Commonwealth Military Training Team and to the countries which provided the Team and the facilities, for the commendable job which is now ending after a two year assignment.

I am happy, Mr. Speaker, to report that apart from incidents in Luwero and cattle rustling in the north-east the entire country has returned to normalcy.

It is because much of the country has returned to normalcy that the rate of recovery I reported today has been possible.

Mr. Speaker, during the Session a number of Bills will be presented to the House. The majority of them will be on strengthening our efforts in the recovery process.

- There will be a short bill to remove anomalies in the Expropriated Properties Act.
- The Minister of Labour will present to the House the National Social Security Fund Corporation Bill.
- The Minister of Lands, Mineral and Water Resources will propose the Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Bill.
- The Minister of Finance will submit to the House Bills to strengthen the management and administration of finances of this country.
- The Minister of Power, Posts and Telecommunications will present a Bill on radio communication.
- The Minister of Planning and Economic Development will propose a Bill on the National Research Council.
- The Minister of Health will present two Bills dealing with Medical Practitioners and Dentists and Nurses, Midwives and Nursing Assistants.
- The Weights and Measures Bill will be presented by the Minister of Commerce.

DR. OBOTE Cont'd:

Mr. Speaker, on the recent International Women's Day strong representations were made to Government to take the lead in uplifting the status of the women of Uganda. Government has decided that the best approach would be to remove the limitations and constraints imposed by traditions on women. **(Applause)**. The Minister of Culture and Community Development will during this Session propose a Bill for an Act of Parliament on a Women's Charter.

Government has also decided to declare 8th March of every year as International Women's Day, the women of Uganda spoke with one voice and spoke with responsibility. They asked for a united effort by men and women for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of a new Uganda. Mr. Speaker, the Government accepts this message.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the country has come a long way since Liberation. All the component parts of the Nation; women, men, the youth, workers, farmers and peasants, persons in different walks of life, members of various political parties – have all travelled together, during these past years since Liberation, along steep and difficult terrain towards the summit of recovery. I have given you today a summary of the record of that epic journey.

We are within sight of the top, Mr. Speaker, but as with most mountain climbs, the final cliffs are the steepest and most baffling of all.

It is now that it is doubly necessary for all components of the Nation to test each hand-hold and foot-hold so that the whole Nation, roped together, does not fall back into the doldrums of the 1970s. This is not the moment which prudent mountaineers would choose to un-rope, dismiss their guides or, after the mildest disputes should take separate routes towards different peaks. Mr. Speaker, we must shoulder the responsibility to go to the summit together.

Mr. Speaker, the national responsibility commands that there is no time, at this present stage of our recovery, to call a halt or turn back with honour or safety. We must keep in mind the splendour of the view that lies before us when the summit is reached

Mr. Speaker, the summit which is now within our reach is a united Uganda at peace within herself, stable, productive and prosperous.

That, Sir, is the vision which the Government has which I have, and believe is possible. I call on all Hon. Members and the country at large to work with patience and goodwill and responsibility for its realisation.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the words of the National Motto, I say all this FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY. **(Applause.)**

ADJOURNMENT

(The House rose at 4.05 P.M. and adjourned until
Tuesday, 3rd April, 1984 at 2.30 P.M.)