

03 February 2017



## INTRODUCTION

The 2017 Budget debate resumed yesterday with Members of Parliament giving their contributions to the Finance Bill.

## BUDGET DEBATE

Hon. Webster Maondera (MDC-T Glen Norah) appealed to Finance Minister Hon. Patrick Chinamasa, to suspend proposed fines where the Minister in his budget statement indicated that he would like to increase fines from level 1 to level 9. Hon Maondera gave an example on fines paid to the police being raised from US\$20 to US\$30. Hon. Maondera cited corruption, liquidity challenges and Zimbabwe's unstable economy as reasons why the proposed fines should be reviewed.

Adding his voice to the budget debate, Hon. Themba Mliswa (Independent Norton) expressed concern over

underfunding of Parliament. He indicated that Members of Parliament did not have resources to get to their constituencies and that they spend most of their time doing useless things because of lack of funding. Hon. Nelson Chamisa also highlighted the need to prioritise funding to the education sector arguing that this would create a strong economy. He proposed that the budget includes free education in Primary education.

After MPs had debated the budget proposals at length these were the outcomes;

- 1) During the Committee of Supply,
  - a) Parliament was allocated an additional US\$ 9 million.
  - b) US\$74 817 000 was deducted from the Ministry of Finance's Vote of Credit and was deployed to other Votes in response to the sentiments made by the Hon. Members.

- c)US\$65 817 000 was added to the Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development Ministry's Vote.
- d)US\$630 000 was deducted from the Youth, Indigenisation and Economic Development Ministry's Vote.
- e) US\$110 000 was added to the Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development Ministry's Vote.

Following the Committee of Supply, the Main Estimates of Expenditure were reported with amendments.

2)The Appropriation (2017) Bill was read for the first time and referred to the PLC.

On another note Hon. Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga (MDC Matebeleland South) stood on a matter of privilege as per Standing Order 69 complaining about the misrepresentation in the Herald of what had transpired during the debate on Wednesday, 1st February, 2017. Hon. Misihairabwi-Mushonga had handed over a bouquet of flowers to Hon. Chinamasa for onward transmission to one Mrs Mhini. However, the Herald reported that Hon. Misihairabwi-Mushonga gave Hon. Chinamasa flowers for his sterling work to try and steer the economy.

Hon. Misihairabwi-Mushonga called for the reporter and the publication to be charged for contempt of Parliament under Section 21 of the Privileges Immunities and Powers of Parliament Act for "wilfully publishing a false or perverted report of any debate or proceedings in Parliament or wilfully misrepresenting any speech made by a member."

The Speaker promised to study the publication and give a ruling next Tuesday on the matter which the Speaker said was serious in terms of impinging upon the integrity of the House.

Parliament sits again next Tuesday on the 7th of February 2017.