

## FRIDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2009

The Deputy Speaker, Hon Clement Kengava took the Chair at 09.50 am.

Prayers:

### ATTENDANCE

At prayers, all were present with the exception of the Prime Minister and the Ministers for Planning & Aid Coordination, Justice & Legal Affairs, Rural Development & Indigenous Affairs, National Unity, Reconciliation & Peace, Environment, Conservation & Meteorology, Communication & Civil Aviation, Lands & Housing; Agriculture & Livestock Development; Provincial Government & Institutional Strengthening, Forestry and Public Service and the Members for West New Georgia/Vona Vona, East Honiara, East Are Are, Temotu Pele, West Are Are, East Makira, North Guadalcanal, North West Guadalcanal, West Honiara Malaita Outer Islands and West Makira.

## **STATEMENT OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

### **MOTIONS**

**Mr Deputy Speaker:** Honourable Members, according to the Order Paper for today there is no motion set down for today's business. However, I have been advised by the honorable Member for Temotu Nende that he wishes to move a motion without notice in accordance with Standing Order 26(1). I am also advised that the members of the House Committee concur with the moving of this motion as private members business. I consider this subject matter of the motion in order and not contentious and thus does not necessarily require much notice. On that basis and in view of the genuine desire behind the motion to express sympathy towards our friends and partners, I have granted permission under Standing Order 26(1)

On a related matter, Honourable Members, I realized from comments made in previous motions of a similar nature that Members may not be clear on the procedural appropriateness of such motions. Let me make it very clear that a Member of Parliament has the right to move any motion he wishes, provided it is not inconsistent with the Standing Orders. A Member is at complete liberty to move any motion on a matter that he wishes the House to make a collective say

on. A member's right to move a motion must always be respected. Further, a motion does not always call for a contentious debate. Most motions that this House deal with are of that nature. However, there are other special motions that simply call for a general discussion or expression of thoughts. In this House we have dealt with at least two such special motions. The first was a motion to congratulate and encourage our national beach soccer squad last year when they made it to the beach soccer world cup in Brazil. Last week we also debated and passed a motion to express appreciation of the services of the project manager of the UNDP Parliamentary Strengthening Project. These are normal procedural tools that any Member may make use of, if so incline. These kinds of motions are used regularly in other parliaments within the Commonwealth. We are perhaps the very last to discover how to use this. I urge Members to embrace and use this special type of motion in the future as these have the capacity to bring a sense of unity within this Honorable House. I therefore call on the Honorable Member for Temotu/Nende to move the motion. Thank you.

**Mr. OTI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you for giving me permission to move this motion under Standing Order 26(1).

Mr. Speaker, the motion that I am going to move this morning reads: *"That this House expresses its sympathy to the Legislative Yuan of the Republic of China on Taiwan at the suffering and destruction caused by Typhoon Morakat on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2009. Secondly, Mr. Speaker that this resolution be communicated to the Speaker of the Taiwan Legislative Yuan by the Speaker of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands"*.

**Mr Speaker:** You may deliver your speech, Honorable Member.

**Mr. Oti:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, as you have made in your ruling in regards to this type of motions, this motion as you have pointed out is a customary motion whereby it is a tool that is available to all Members of Parliament to express what each one might feel and for which it believes that the House must take a resolution on to express in particular, collective stance, collective outlook of our Parliament on a particular issue. And in this instance, Mr. Speaker, I particularly would like to take of, as we realized the position of the Republic of China, our very important development partner that natural calamities do not respect any boundaries whether you are an industrialized nation or you are a developing nation or what, we are all subject to the same brunt of the destruction that can be brought about by natural disasters.

Mr. Speaker, as we have learnt through the television media, through the print media and through the radio, the destruction that has happened over the

weekend as from the 9<sup>th</sup> of August is a big one that has never been experienced in Taiwan for the last 50 years. Mr. Speaker, at this juncture, I call that we, the Parliament of Solomon Islands express our sympathy to the Legislative Yuan, which is the equivalent to their parliament so that we send our sympathy to them on how they are dealing with the present natural disaster.

Mr. Speaker, we have been informed of the degree and the scale of destruction brought about after the aftermath of typhoon Morakat whereby lives are lost, lives still unaccounted for, the loss of physical and economic infrastructure, entire industries and agricultural output of Taiwan is affected, the loss of homes and the mounting relief effort that perhaps is mounted in a scale whereby we in Solomon Islands would find it difficult to assist. On that note, I think the best and the least we can give is our hearts, the hearts of the people of Solomon Islands to express our sympathy with the people of Taiwan through their Legislative Yuan.

Solomon Islands too, as an island nation has gone through natural disasters and sometimes in our recent history we have gone through man made disasters and Taiwan has always been on our side when those difficult times came our way.

Mr. Speaker, I have learned that the Ambassador of Taiwan to Solomon Islands will leave for the Republic China this afternoon, and for which he is the consultation with his government. At this juncture, in particular as we know and with the messages of condolence that the Prime Minister has already sent out as well as the Leader of Opposition, this message is from Parliament so that collectively put our thoughts together through the Speaker's Office to communicate this sympathy to Legislative Yuan and the people it represents in Taiwan.

Mr. Speaker, over the last few days, as you have said, everybody is sad, especially when these things happen to us and Taiwan continues to assist us. The Minister of Education has just farewell some of our students, new students who will be going to Taiwan. In spite of this, the Prime Minister has received further funding for 11 constituencies from the Republic of China and these are moving moments whereby perhaps these moneys could have been more appropriately used by them. But as a commitment of Taiwan to Solomon Islands for that matter, in spite of this, Taiwan will continue to support us. Their medical doctors and trainees and others who have visited us this month, their families too are affected in one way or another.

Sir, the scale of destruction is not restricted only to certain parts of Taiwan. From information we have already had, it almost covered the entire island, particularly the southern part of Taiwan where many of you, Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker and all of us in this Parliament have visited. And at this

juncture, international efforts are mounting coming from all corners of the globe. Mainland China has pledged a big amount of money to assist Taiwan and perhaps is part of a bridging the gap on the Taiwanese Straits between the two Chinas. The United States has pledged a quarter of a million US Dollars and other countries too have come out to help Taiwan address the relief efforts.

Mr. Speaker, at this juncture more than 20 infrastructures, particularly bridges have been destroyed. At this juncture too while relief efforts are mounting, they are using helicopters, military helicopters and other helicopters as all infrastructures are cut off. This scale of operation is so huge that we in Solomon Islands, as I mentioned earlier, cannot match whatever we can pledge as a government perhaps, but individually and communities which all of us have benefited from the big money that Taiwan has given to us, particularly the constituency development funds for our rural people who are the main beneficiaries of Taiwan's assistance. In a way, I could almost tell them to hold back the \$200,000 that was supposed to be given to each Member of Parliament here. But that is not the way things operate; we will still find the means to assist the communities that are within the reach of leaders and people of Solomon Islands.

Mr. Speaker, that is all I want to express this morning regarding the intention of the motion. It is basically to share our sympathy with the Legislative Yuan of the Republic of China and that through your office we communicate this resolution to the Parliament of the Republic of China in this instance.

With those few remarks, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker:** Honorable Members, it is proposed that this House expresses by way of a resolution its sympathy to the Legislative Yuan of the Republic of China, Taiwan in relation to the impact of the Typhoon Morakat. The floor is now open for debate.

**Hon. SIKUA:** Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the mover of the motion, the Honorable Member for Temotu Nende for moving this motion this morning as a matter of privilege. I think it is in order that we share our thoughts on the motion before the House. It is especially in order that we spend this time to share our sympathy with the good people and the government of Taiwan in their time of need and time of crisis, as Solomon Islands is one of the staunchest supporters of the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Mr Speaker, as all of you are aware, I have early this week sent a letter of condolence to the President of the Republic of China, Taiwan on behalf of the people and government of Solomon Islands to express our deepest condolence to those who have lost properties, who have lost loved ones and who have lost

livelihoods. And, of course, those have been accompanied by press releases in various forms of media.

I also have conveyed the same message of condolence through a personal telephone call to President Ma on Wednesday this week whilst he was on site visiting the victims of the floods. During our telephone conversation I have conveyed the same messages of sympathy to him personally, and that call was greatly appreciated by the President of Taiwan whilst he was on site to see for himself the devastation caused by the floods following the heavy rains over the weekend.

Mr Speaker, we know very well that Taiwan is a country that stands to help us in our greatest time of need and in our darkest hour, Taiwan has been the one that stood with us to see us through our most difficult and darkest hours in our history. We realize that although we cannot reciprocate Taiwan with assistance in terms of financial and technical assistance that has been given to us through the years, this motion is appropriate as we would like to express our sympathy to the Legislative Yuan at the suffering and destruction caused by the typhoon over the weekend. I am sure that the Speaker of the Legislative Yuan would greatly appreciate such a motion conveyed to him by the Speaker of our National Parliament.

I have had the opportunity to meet the Speaker of the Legislative Yuan on a number of occasions. He is a very nice person and one who has a lot of heart for Solomon Islands, and so are all the good people and the government of Taiwan. Mr. Speaker, I also have a lot of sympathy for the affected areas because in my recent visit I have had the privilege of visiting Southern Taiwan and have actually visited all the places that are now devastated.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform Parliament that although we cannot match the assistance and the help that Taiwan has been giving us through the years, I would like to support the call made by the mover of the motion for the Government and the people of Solomon Islands to show our true spirit of caring, our true spirit of loving and our true spirit of looking out for each other in times of need. In that, I support the call by the mover of the motion for communities, business houses and everyone throughout Solomon Islands to do all they can to do some fundraising, so that we put those together, however big or small we can then forward that to the relevant authorities to help victims of this disaster in Taiwan. On that, the Government Caucus yesterday has agreed for the government to spearhead fundraising activities over the next few weekends, similar to the kind of activities we did for the Australian bush fire victims and the Fiji floods this year so that we can be able to raise some funds, and the Government to support that through our Ministries, through our offices so that we can raise funds to continue help our good people and friends in the

Republic of China or Taiwan. Mr. Speaker, as soon as the Caucus Office is organized with whomever and business people they may want to talk with and arrangements are ready, we will hear announcements to invite people to have fundraising dinners and things like that.

We think this is very, very important because we all know that at this time of global economic crisis, although the Taiwan Government and the people themselves have suffered greatly from the effects of the global economic crisis, they have continued to assist us through the grant assistance they are giving us annually. They have also continued to help us in technical areas they have been helping us with, especially on agriculture and the medical sector. Although they have suffered over the weekend from the effects of this devastating floods, you know that yesterday morning I continue to receive the third tranche of our RCDF, which is the Micro-Project Funds from the Republic of China. So although they have gone through all these problems they have not withdrawn the support that they continue to give to the government and people of Solomon Islands.

I think the fundraising activities that we are going to arrange and spearhead in the next coming weekends are a show and only a small token of our appreciation for the great things that the Republic of China or Taiwan has been giving to us over the years. And so I appeal to all our good people, both in Honiara and in our provinces to do all they can to support the victims of the devastating floods in Taiwan over the next coming weeks. Of course, you know that from the 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> of October this year Solomon Islands is host to the Taiwan Pacific Allies Summit and depending on the effects of the flood, we look forward to hosting the President of the Republic of China on Taiwan and his delegation in Honiara as well as other Pacific leaders who are allies of Taiwan. I would like to ask all of us to help in whatever little way we can to support not only the motion, which is a very good thing but also that we demonstrate our words in action as well. Although we may have a little to give but I am sure whatever little we can give both by way of words and deeds will be greatly appreciated by the good people and the government of Taiwan.

I once again thank the Honorable Member for Temotu Nende for moving this motion, and I support the motion. Thank you very much.

**Hon. SOGAVARE:** Mr. Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity to contribute to this motion moved by the Member for Temotu Nende. First of all, I want to thank your office, Mr. Speaker, for accepting the request to move this motion under Standing Order 26(1) and also the understanding of the House Committee to allow the Member for Temotu Nende to move this as a private member's motion that this Parliament expresses its sympathy to what has happened to the good people of the Republic of China to the Speaker of the

Legislative Yuan in Taiwan through the resolution made in Parliament this morning.

Sir, the motion is in keeping with the tradition that we are starting to see in this House where Parliament as a collective decision making body communicates collectively, like the motion that was moved last week too, the final resolution is taken as a resolution of Parliament collectively. Sir, also in keeping with the normal tradition that we should have, and that is to thank people who are doing good to us and also to take the opportunity as well when they are sad that we also take the opportunity to collectively express our sympathy to them.

Last week we expressed thanks to somebody who has been doing some good work in this Parliament in improving the processes of supporting the work of Parliament, which we have seen clearly. Today is a motion that tells us to express our sympathy to the people who have been of great help to us.

Sir, I think Solomon Islands, in fact, is obliged as a member of the International community. The world is getting smaller as a result of globalization. What the other parts of world are feeling is also felt by us as a member of the international community and as a member of the United Nations. Although the Republic of China is not formally admitted as a member of the United Nations but Solomon Islands has taken a stand long ago when we established this relationship with Taiwan way back in the early 1980's where we believe that we share a common belief and principle, and the relationship that we established with the people and the government of the Republic of China is based on some very fundamental principles that still confuses the minds of a lot of leaders of countries that have ties with the Republic of China. And I think it is 23 of us in this world that recognizes this small country with 23 million people who believe in the principles of democracy, which is something that the world fights for. The big countries in this world are willing to commit billions of dollars to fight for the freedom of democracy, and Solomon Islands is proud to be part of the small group of nations in the world to continue to be committed and genuine. When it comes to saying that we believe in the principles of democracy we do not want to be seen as hypocrites. And this is a country that believes in that principle, human rights and freedom. These are issues that the world is willing to commit billions and trillions of dollars to fight for. I think we can hold our heads high and not be ashamed of the big statements that we made in the United Nations in supporting them on this course. Of course, I appreciate that with the new government coming into place it has taken a softer line on this. There is no longer the issue of pressing for more people to recognize Taiwan to maintain the status quo in the interest of peace in the China Straits, and we have to respect that decision.

And so I think Solomon Islands has the obligation and duty, not just as a member of the international community but also by way of the tradition that we have when, as the Prime Minister said, people stand by us at the time that we really need them the most, it is just appropriate according to our tradition that we reciprocate that and we stand for them too.

Sir, I think some of us who were in government at that time can testify of our experiences of the really tough times that the country had to go through at that time. Tough decisions have to be made and I thank the present Minister of Finance of this government who was also my Minister of Finance at that time when we have to make tough decisions. At the time when the future of this country hanged on the balance of a string, every weak string when anything could have just snapped, tough decisions have to be taken. We were not allowed to borrow because of the financial and credibility of the Solomon Islands Government to commit the nation to anymore borrowing. Sir, when we asked our friends, I think for reasons known only to them they did not come forward. We purposely left Taiwan to the last. My discussion with Ambassador Teng was just very simple, and that is if you do not come to our aid, I advise you to pack your bags, all of our bags, and leave Honiara. I told him that that was our last hope of holding this country together, and they agreed to help and thank you Minister of Finance who took the initiative and sourced assistance from them. We committed the nation to borrow more than \$300million and they were willing to come forward at that time. We broke all the rules that the IMF and the World Bank told us that we cannot borrow. We had to take some tough decisions and they were willing to come forward and give us \$300million. I think the government at that time and the Ministers who were involved at that time were not embarrassed in making that tough decision by committing this nation to \$300million. For Taiwan to come forward and gave that \$300million is something big at the risk of bringing disrepute to its name in the international community but they came forward, and that is to save a nation that is at the brink of disintegration. If that money had not been forthcoming we would have said goodbye to this country that we called Solomon Islands.

Sir, I think this motion is really the right motion to come before this Parliament for every Member of this Parliament to express their sympathy to the people and the government which stood with us in our time of need. They might have lost a few loved ones from this typhoon but in the case of Solomon Islands we were in danger of losing the entire country, we nearly disintegrated but they came and rescued the country so that everyone can now deal with a country called Solomon Islands because it was saved at that time. If it were not for Taiwan there would have been no country called Solomon Islands for the international community to deal with.



Sir, this motion is just right, in fact, is the right motion to have come at this point in time, and I fully support. I apologize for openly expressing my emotions here. But you have to be in government during those days to really appreciate the feelings that are now being expressed. And so I want to take this opportunity to thank the current Minister of finance. I also want to thank the former Member for Savo/Russells who was my deputy at that time who took the lead and negotiated for peace with the different islands. A former police officer as he was, his commitment to duty is something that I admired of the former Member for Savo/Russells and a former Prime Minister. Taking order from a person, I guess, younger than him, when the Cease Fire Agreement was signed in a ship outside here is just admirable. Because when they brought the agreement and I cannot see the signature of a prominent leader of the Guadalcanal faction was not in the agreement, I told the former Member for Savo/Russells that I did not see this person's signature and so I want his signature by 7.00 o'clock tomorrow morning. I told him to go and get his signature tonight, and so he jumped in a boat and got the signature of a very important figure, a person that would make that Ceasefire Agreement meaningful. I want to thank him for that and also thank the Minister of Foreign Affairs now, who was also my Minister of Police and deputy leader of the negotiating team that went to Townsville for the signing of the Peace Agreement. I also thank all the other Ministers at that time because our focus at that time was to get the warring parties to see each other and to start to talk about peace. And all the efforts we have done would not have been possible without that \$300million assistance from the Republic of China. That assistance opened the way for this country to start talk about peace with people who have concerns and did what they did in year 2000. We can go on and talk but I will allow others to speak to express their sympathy.

Sir, I want to join the mover of the motion and join the Prime Minister in support of this motion, for this Parliament to collectively express its sympathy to the people of Taiwan. It is appropriate that the highest decision making body of the land is doing that to support the condolence message the Prime Minister has already sent and also the statements that we are sending now in support of the condolence message the Prime has sent to the people and Government of the Republic of China.

With that, Mr. Speaker I fully support this motion.

**Hon. HAOMAE:** Mr Speaker, I shall be brief. At the outset I would like to join the Prime Minister in thanking the mover of the motion, the MP for Temotu Nende for moving important motion today for purposes of Parliament, the

highest depository of the will of the land to convey our collective condolences and sympathy to the Legislative Yuan in the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister has already indicated, the Government has already conveyed the condolence, bereavement and sympathy of the Government the people of Solomon Islands to the government and people of the Republic of China on Taiwan. As the Prime has already said it is also appropriate, pursuant to the motion moved by my colleague, the Member for Temotu Nende for Parliament to express and record its collective sympathy, and also for the Speaker to convey those sentiments to the Legislative Yuan of the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Mr Speaker, as all of us are aware, the assistance by the Republic of China reaches the four corners of this country, my constituency of Small Malaita inclusive. And so it is, of course, appropriate and proper for Parliament to collectively convey its sentiments of sympathy to the Legislative Yuan.

Sir, as you are aware, Solomon Islands is one of the 23 allies of the Republic of China that supports the ROC for membership to the United Nations, as alluded to by the Honorable Leader of Opposition. Solomon Islands still supports the Republic of China's membership to the United Nations based on the fundamental principles of democracy and freedom. As referred to by the honorable Prime Minister, and in addition to that, the Republic of China was able to stand head and shoulder with Solomon Islands in the darkest hours of this country. I think the Leader of Opposition also made reference to that as well as the mover of the motion. And so Taiwan is an important development partner of Solomon Islands. Now in its time of crisis when the country was by a natural disaster, which is a non-respecter of any country whether big or small, we have to collectively convey our sympathy as a Parliament to its respective Parliament in Taipei.

Sir, Taiwan, as already alluded to in our times of crisis and need in terms of natural disasters or manmade has stood by us all the time. And I think it is only appropriate that as the highest depository of the will of the Land, Parliament collectively should convey the sympathy on behalf of all Members of Parliament representing all constituencies in the country, to convey that collective sympathy to the government and people of Taiwan and also to those people who lost their loved ones and also those who lost their properties and also their livelihood.

On that basis, I support the motion.

**Mr TOSIKA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to contribute briefly on this motion moved by my colleague Member for Temotu Nende. I think this motion is very appropriate on the basis that we all know very

well that Taiwan is one of our true friends. I think many times people have the misconception of Taiwan saying that they have diplomatic ties with a cheque book. That is not true because as we can see when we go through natural disasters and manmade disaster, Taiwan always stood with us like a brother and so it is our true friend indeed by giving us a helping hand rescuing us most of the time. Because of this, I think we should reciprocate in whatever means, whether big or small does not matter because the fact remains that we must also show our heart for them at this time.

People of Solomon Islands, I think we have benefited a lot from this country, Taiwan through aid assistance it has been giving and is continuing to give us. I cannot think of any other country who is willing to give us money like Taiwan from the time we were colonized until we have a joint partnership with Taiwan in 1983 when we started to see the helping hand of Taiwan, which continues to rescue the people of Solomon Islands through the RCDF, the Millennium Fund and Micro Funds. These are very great assistances from Taiwan to us. Also during the tsunami, they were the very first people to come and assisted us.

On that basis and that note, I think Parliament as a collective body, it is very appropriate to pass a resolution so that we give our sympathy on behalf of our people and the entire Solomon Islands to the Republic of China on Taiwan. With these few remarks, I fully support this motion.

**Hon. TORA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for allowing me to contribute to this very important motion which is timely and fitting.

At the outset, I would like to thank my good colleague, Member for Temotu Nende for bringing this important motion to this House for us to express as Members of Parliament our sympathy to our good friends who have been affected by the typhoon that happened to them this week which resulted in a lot of people losing their lives, their properties and their livelihoods. I believe that countries that are allies of Taiwan will also express their sympathy like we are doing now. Many things have already been expressed by other speakers and so I would like to share the sympathy on behalf of my good people through their Member of Parliament, which the motion is asking us to express our sympathy through our Speaker of Parliament who will send it on our behalf.

Sir, I think so much has been said. I treat Taiwan as a good mother of this nation, Solomon Islands. A mother always takes care of her children and so I see no difference here in regards to Taiwan because in good times and bad times it is always on our side spreading out its arms and surrounds us during our most difficult times.

If we can look back and tell our people, Taiwan is a country that is similar to our country in terms of its culture. It is a country I see that has a similar culture with Solomon Islands who are Melanesians. I said it is similar to us because Taiwan assisted us in a lot of things. It assisted us in terms of education, as someone had mentioned, in health, in technical expertise in the form of doctors, and more so the continuation of financial assistance to rural projects in our constituencies, which is indeed a very big thing. And for us Members of Parliament, we can see too that Taiwan has offered scholarship to our children in terms of education. Some of us Members have children studying there too. We can see how Taiwan has a heart for Solomon Islands.

When the Honorable Leader of Opposition talked, I can see his heart in the way he expressed his sympathy earlier on. I am almost in tears too when I saw him that way. It is something that truly comes from the heart of a person when expressing his sympathy.

This motion is not here by accident. God has spoken to the honorable mover because he has a heart to move this motion unnoticed. I also would like to thank the Honorable Prime Minister and the Government Caucus that they will be spearheading fundraisings. I would like to see that when these fundraisings are held, if you really have a heart, it is an appeal from the Government Caucus that all of us in here as Members of Parliament, if have nothing to do, I think it is important that you give from your heart and so you come and attend. To assist is very important to us leaders. It is not good coming here to talk about it and organizing it but when it comes to the time that we are supposed to go and no one turns up. I have seen this happened in the past. Taiwan is a friend of Solomon Islands and so we must participate in things like this when they are organized.

With those few remarks, once again I would like to thank the Member for Temotu Nende and yourself, Mr. Speaker, for allowing the MP to move this very important motion this morning in this chamber. Thank you.

**MR. WAIPORA:** Mr. Speaker, I too would like to take a few minutes to talk in support of the motion moved by my Hon. Colleague for Temotu Nende.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to beat around the bush, but would like to say this. I did not know about Taiwan 34 years ago but when I was the clerk to the Eastern Islands Councils, a fishing boat called Formosa arrived there at Graciosa Bay. It floated outside the bay and so I asked where the ship was from and I was told that it is a boat from Formosa. I asked where Formosa is and I was told that it is a small island near Mainland China. That was the very first time I knew about Taiwan but it was not called Taiwan at that time. And then several years later when my predecessor, the late Solomon Mamaloni took over government

from the Rt. Hon. Sir Peter Kenilorea and became prime minister, I was sitting at a bench like that listening to my Hon. Member who was Prime Minister then. He said today Solomon Islands will turn its eyes to the north and will look for friends from the north. I was not very clear about that statement and so I went to his house and asked him what he meant by the statement 'we will turn our eyes to the north'. He said we will have a friend from the north and he will be looking for that friend. Not many years later he went to the Asian countries and found Taiwan. I am talking today as the present Member of Parliament for West Makira because we are proud that it was our member who received the highest honor from this very small country, Taiwan. I must thank this country for recognizing him, and I do not think we can reciprocate anything enough to this great nation and its great people.

Sir, my boss here shed tears when he contributed to this motion. When I say this I am very sad because Solomon Islands is very small to be able to give back anything fitting for us to give back to this great nation. Taiwan is a powerful country and our people in Solomon Islands, even if others do not want Taiwan to enter the United Nations. As far as Solomon Islands is concerned, Taiwan is a powerful economic country that can help us a lot.

Mr. Speaker, I think Taiwan is keeping what the Bible says, "it is blessed to give than to receive." That is what Taiwan is doing. Taiwan gave all like God has given His only son to die for us. It did not hold back anything and that is why whenever I talk in here I always say that if it had not been for Taiwan our people would not have money to buy outboard motors or rural water supplies, and some of us went as far as purchasing ships from Taiwan's money. I do not have enough words in my vocabulary to thank Taiwan for what it has been doing for us.

Sir, some of our friends maybe because of their policies have helped us this way and that way, and they have to come and look at how their money was used, especially in terms of money. But that is not the case with Taiwan. Whenever it gives it gives it all, it does not hold anything back, and it is also up to us how we use the funds.

Sir, I remember reading a book by Derek Prince last week which talks about self, the subject of self. The book says that even if you are not a gambler, you do not consume alcohol, you do not smoke tobacco and even if you do not cause any trouble because you are a Christian but if you think about yourself then you are not a Christian. So it is self that must be crucified. When I think about Taiwan I said to myself that Taiwan really shows this biblical principle to us because when it gives us something, it gives it all and it is not boomerang. I really thank Taiwan, and as I have said I do not have enough words to express how it has helped us.

Taiwan also built our hospital and it is still continuing to build it, and many other things that Taiwan is doing for us. And so what we are discussing today is the best thing to say to our friend, our friend in need and our friend indeed. That is what Taiwan is.

Mr. Speaker, my heart is very happy today that my honorable colleague here has moved this motion so that we express to the government of the Republic of China and their Legislative Yuan like what we have here, and their great people, our full sympathy and our hearts to them. We are sad indeed that some of their people died. We are sad that many of them have lost their properties, but it is my trust that because Taiwan is one of the strongest economic countries in the world, an industrial country, I hope they will recover very soon. And because they have carried out the principle that God has put in the Bible, God will help them to recover very soon. And we also must try to play a small part, although small, but with heart to help them. And I hope that we are going to do it, as the Prime Minister has said that they will take the lead for this country to do something that might not be big but we can do something to show to our people that we are with them as they had been with us during our darkest time, as the Honorable Prime Minister and the Leader of Opposition have stated.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to say anymore and so with those few remarks I fully support the motion.

**Hon SOFU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to also join my colleague Members of Parliament who have already spoken in contributing to this important motion.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to join them in thanking the Honorable Member of Parliament for Temotu Nende for seeing it fit in bringing this motion without notice to the floor of Parliament. Sir, this motion is a motion that joins the message the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands has conveyed on behalf of the Government and the people of Solomon Islands to the President and the people of Taiwan for the situation they have gone through on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> of this month. It is also in support to the statement made by the official Leader of the Opposition. This motion is simply asking Parliament to make a collective statement. Therefore, as a Member of Parliament, I too wish to join those who have already contributed to this important motion.

The motion says that the House expresses its sympathy to the Legislative Yuan of the Republic of China, Taiwan at the suffering and destruction caused by Typhoon Morakat on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2009, and that this is resolution be conveyed by the Speaker to the Legislative Yuan of Taiwan, and that is what we are doing now.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that all the things we express shows our heart, shows the hearts of leaders of Solomon Islands and its people to the President and the people of Taiwan for all the good things they have been doing for Solomon Islands. One instance echoed by the Leader of Opposition echoed today, also made me very feel emotional because at that time if Taiwan had not responded there would have been no Solomon Islands and no Honiara that we are now enjoying today. Those are the things which made the Member for Temotu Nende have the insight of bringing this motion on the floor of Parliament. This motion is timely so that we, Members of Parliament who do not have the opportunity to express ourselves, can do so, on the floor of Parliament. And so I am happy as the Member for East Kwaio to join the Prime Minister and the Leader of Opposition to also convey words of sympathy to the President and the people of Taiwan, and I know this is not easy.

At this very time, there are countries, as stated by the mover today, like the United States and others are giving very big amounts of money to Taiwan. China too has stepped in but Solomon Islands, a very small country, and we know our situation very well, but we are part of the alliance and so although small we must assist in whatever way we can. We cannot give money and we cannot give anything that is big to express the good things that Taiwan has done for us. The only thing a very humble country like Solomon Islands can do is to express our hearts for the situation Taiwan is going through now. Please accept our words of sympathy.

I know it is not easy, this is a very difficult time but we join the government and the people of Taiwan at this very moment of difficulty you are going through. Solomon Islands, as a country also joins you. We stand with you with our hearts together because whatever assistance Taiwan offers to Solomon Islands no one would deny. Taiwan's assistance is recognized throughout the four corners of this country because those assistances meet our small needs and meet whatever situations constituents of this country are going through. Although Taiwan and its people might not know how their assistance impacted this country, Taiwan stood with our grassroots people and our constituents in whatever situations they have gone through.

Sir, people of Solomon Islands are people of custom and so these things are not to be taken very lightly, but they are big things in our lives. And so when they are affected by this disaster, when this thing happen to people which usually help us in our time of need by standing on our side, cannot be easily forgotten. And so this is the only opportunity for us to express our hearts' sympathy to the good people and the government of Taiwan.

Mr Speaker, once again I would like to thank the Member of Parliament for Temotu Nende for seeing it fit in bringing this motion to Parliament so that

we can express our sympathy to the people of the Republic of China. Once again, thank you and I support this motion.

**Mr AGOVAKA:** Mr Speaker, thank you for allowing me to express my heartfelt sympathy to the people of Taiwan. Mr Speaker, Taiwan is an island nation that has its own customs, cultures and ways of doing things, and likewise Solomon Islands is an island nation with its own customs, cultures and ways of doing things.

Sir, when somebody died in Solomon Islands there would be gathering together of relatives, enemies and friends sharing their grief with the people and family of those losing their love ones. Today on the floor of this Parliament, we too are gathered here today to share our grief to the people who have been killed, those who have suffered and those who have lost properties in Taiwan due to the natural disaster that struck last week.

Mr Speaker, before I go on I would like to thank the Member for Temotu Nende for this motion and also the Prime Minister for sending our message of condolence to President Ma in Taiwan at this time of suffering. Mr Speaker, we all benefited; all the 50 constituency of Solomon Islands benefited from the RCDF, the Micro funds and the Millennium funds which all came from Taiwan. Central Guadalcanal Constituency is no difference to all the other 50 constituencies. We have enjoyed economic development all because Taiwan supported us through the RCDF, the Millennium and Micro Fund through rice farms to the schools and piggery projects and in social development, our youths and our churches have also benefited from the funds that were given to us by our friend, the Republic of China.

Mr. Speaker, last weekend my daughter came to me and said that a group of university students from Taiwan will be visiting Tenaru School for friendship sharing with the students there. I said to her that is very good because the students will enjoy the benefit of sharing experiences and knowledge from those university students visiting you and they too will enjoy the benefit of experience and sharing knowledge with you. I would like to thank Taiwan for that educational visit, as it is very helpful and beneficial to my school at Tenaru. Mr. Speaker, at this juncture, I would also like to thank Taiwan for the stretch of road from the main road at Tenaru school right up to the school. Taiwan has helped a lot of departments like the hospital, the water supplies and we assist our people through the RCDF, the Micro Funds and the Millennium Funds. As the Leader of Opposition has said, Taiwan stood by us through thick and thin; they have assisted us. If there is a country that we can call true friend, Taiwan stood head and should above the rest.



Mr. Speaker, when I came out of prison I lost my seat, but who came out to help me. My people did and some of friends did but none other than the Ambassador himself invited me and my wife to a dinner. That is the personal level they can go to, not only as a country supporting us, but they also helped us. This is the value of true friendship that they can come down not only from a diplomatic level but right down to a personal level. I wish all the diplomatic missions in this country would do likewise rather than talking about what they have assisted us with, but very little down at the personal level.

Mr. Speaker, like I alluded to earlier when somebody loses his property and is suffering, we gather to share his grief with him. Today, Mr. Speaker, I on behalf of my people of Central Guadalcanal, the youths, the women, the chiefs and the people of Central Guadalcanal in general share with Taiwan our heartfelt sympathy to the families, individuals and people who are affected by the natural disaster, the typhoon that hit them on Sunday.

Mr. Speaker, with these few remarks, I support the motion.

**Hon. GUKUNA:** Mr. Speaker, let me first of all thank the mover of this motion for moving a motion that is just so appropriate this morning. I also would like to thank you for allowing this Parliament to express its sympathy to the Parliament of Taiwan for the tragedy that people of South Taiwan are going through. Mr. Speaker, this time of the year in Taiwan is the typhoon season. The typhoon formed outside the sea of Philippines in the Pacific and it headed towards Taiwan and most of the time by time it arrives there is weakened down or has taken some other roots, but in a very few occasions, very few times it will develop to something that is a bit threatening. But obviously this time this particular typhoon has caused so much damage to Taiwan. It hit an area of Taiwan that is rural just like most of our rural areas and therefore the people that may be in some way compared to the urban centers of Taiwan, most susceptible and are probably less prepared than the Taiwanese cities.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at the pictures at the TV, it is so disheartening and sad to see so much lives being threatened. Just like any other people in this world that are facing such disaster and tragedy, they do not deserve this. But somehow human nature has inflicted so much damage.

Mr. Speaker, I stand to join this motion to express my sympathy to the people of Taiwan, in particular through the Parliament of Taiwan, not because I have been receiving aid funds from them, it is not because of the amount of funds we get from them, but I simply rise to express my sympathy out of humanity and out of the sadness that we have seen that the people who do not deserve this happened to go through earlier on this week. I want to join my colleagues in expressing my sympathy and that of my people to the people of

Taiwan for the tragedy that the people of Shaolin in South Taiwan have gone through.

Mr. Speaker, I must say that I recognize some of the roads that are damaged because I drove through there myself. They are big roads, they are big parts of land but obviously what can be seen in the TV there is a big washout of those lands by the typhoon. And so I just can imagine the damage to be quite substantial, very big, but I have no doubt that the people of Taiwan will overcome this. No one will doubt the resilience of the people of Taiwan. But for now it is very sad to see what has happened to those people on the TV. It is for this reason that I stood up to give my support to this motion.

As I have said my sympathy towards them has nothing to do with the money I got from them, but it is out from my humanity and sadness that I have. In some way it is a small token of us standing up with them expressing our hearts and sorrow to them. Therefore, on behalf of my people I want to support this motion and thank the mover for moving it, because it gives me the opportunity to express sympathy as the motion is asking for. I also support him that the Speaker will appropriately pass on our sympathy to the Legislative Yuan of Taiwan and express that we as a Parliament are sorry for what has happened to the people of South Taiwan last week.

With these few words, Mr. Speaker, I totally support the motion.

**Mr. TANEKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to contribute very briefly to this very important motion moved by the Member for Temotu Nende for Parliament to express its sympathy and condolence through you Mr Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I see it fitting and customary to express our sympathy at this time of sorrow when we hear of our friend, Taiwan. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my people of Shortlands Constituency, I would also like to express my sympathy and condolences to the people of Taiwan for the Typhoon that hit their country on the 9<sup>th</sup> of this month. Mr. Speaker, at this time of mourning in Taiwan, I pray that the peace of God, the Almighty will reign throughout their country at this time of pain and suffering, especially the families who have lost their loved ones and their properties. Mr. Speaker, the Taiwan Government through its Embassy here in the country has done a lot for this nation of Solomon Islands. Therefore, I would like to give my message of condolence to the people of Taiwan at this of pain and suffering in their country.

Sir, Taiwan has shown great support in all areas of development in this country in our hardest and darkest time that we went through, especially during the ethnic tension in bringing back peace to this country. Not only that but during the tsunami and the floods in West Guadalcanal. Sir, this is one of the countries that always stand behind us giving assistance in our time of great need.

Sir, if Taiwan had not come forward at that time this nation would not have been what it is today.

Mr Speaker, this motion is for us to express our sympathy to our friends, but we will not be able to match what Taiwan has done in supporting our country, Solomon Islands for peace. Sir, I myself have great experiences at the time our nation went through its darkest hour, and therefore, I would like to thank Taiwan for its great support. It has indeed shown its true friendship and neighborhood in the region.

Sir, in conclusion, on behalf of my people of Shortlands Constituency thank you for your great support through financial assistances such as the RCDF, the Micro, the Millennium and for the ship money planted by the Taiwanese Government. Without that generous support, Shortlands would not have been able to have Bikoi I & Bikoi II. I would like to say at this very time and hour of pain and suffering by our people in Taiwan to convey our sympathy to what has happened to them as a result of this typhoon.

Sir, my people are now enjoying the blessings from Taiwan. Our men, women and children can now travel from one province to another and can also to travel to Honiara and other parts of the country. I want to thank you for making that possible.

With this contribution and expression, I thank the mover of this motion for seeing it fit in expressing our sympathy and condolences to our people of Taiwan. The Almighty Grace of God gives you peace at this time of pain and suffering in your country. Sir, I support the motion.

**Mr. BOSETO:** Mr Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to be able to rise and express my feelings and gratitude. First, I thank the mover of the motion and the spirit going with it. It is very difficult to express the feeling even in my own mother tongue. All I can say is that I support the spirit of the motion and our heart goes towards the Republic of China, Taiwan.

On behalf of my families, my wife and myself who have been watching the television and see what has happened, all of us. We used to have our prayers in the evening and so we must remember them in our prayers. On behalf of my people in South Choiseul, I express the same feeling. Whether we have the chance to speak or not but all of us have the same feeling. Our words of sympathy go towards the families who have lost their properties and their loved ones in Taiwan.

I can see that one of the ways these people support the government in social development, their old people with them, even working very hard caring for their own families and people, and at the same time reaching out with open

hearts. They see the joy of giving. It is true what Jesus says that Paul repeatedly says that it is more joy to give than to receive. They see the faithfulness in giving, the expectation for human development, and I believe they look beyond the dollar for development of people. They want to develop the potentials of people, the wharf, the valley and the quality of this nation. Although there are questions raised by the public on the way the RCDF, the Millennium Funds, all those moneys have been used and may be not spent in the way expected but yet they continue to give. This is faithfulness in giving. I see that they want to develop the trust relationship in their grant system. They want us to trust them and they trust us and therefore with gratitude I thank them for that. There is nothing I would say more to express my feeling, but with those simple words, may God continue to be with them, to comfort them and continue to strengthen their faith so that they are able to see more the need from each other in order to help each other. With that unconditional love they will make sure their reaching out to us would continue. With these few words, I support the motion. Thank you.

**Hon. SOALAOI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for allowing me to briefly contribute to the motion. I must also thank my colleague Member for Temotu Nende for the motion, which allows us to express our sympathy to our friends during these hard times.

Firstly, I must say that this motion is very appropriate and also fitting for us Solomon Islands, as a special friend of Taiwan to do this in Parliament. I must express our heartfelt sympathy on behalf of my chiefs and people of Temotu Vattu Constituency to the people of South Taiwan who have lost their loved ones and properties from this typhoon.

Sir, my people know about Taiwan more than any other country in this world. I know you would also agree with me that Taiwan is popular in this country because of how much they have contributed to the development of Solomon Islands. Mr Speaker, this special relationship we have with Taiwan is no secret, and we have defended this during tough times. All of us Members of Parliament know what Taiwan means to us. They stood with us during good and bad times. They shared laughter with us and they also shared sorrow with us. And so I believe this is the appropriate moment we share the pain and difficulties they are experiencing at the moment.

Mr Speaker, our hearts go out to the people of Southern Taiwan who are suffering at the moment. I know that the death toll has crossed the 100 mark as of last night. To lose a loved one is more than losing anything. We can lose properties but losing our loved ones is more than anything to anybody, including you and me.

As you know very well Taiwan was the first country that came to support us during the tsunami with cash. On the first day of the tsunami they came forward with their cash donation to help the tsunami victims. And so I think it is only appropriate that we assist them, not necessarily with financial assistance but we share with them the sorrow they are going through at the moment. I know that the least they need from us is to be with them in what they are experiencing right now through our prayers.

Mr Speaker, in terms of the Ministry of Health, Taiwan is a major development partner that assists the Ministry, not only here in Honiara but also the other parts of the country. Our National Referral Hospital has come through different phases of rehabilitation and is now in Phase 3 and we are also working on Phase 4 of the National Referral Hospital. Taiwan has spent millions and millions of dollars in the development of our National Referral Hospital.

Sir, as all of you are aware, we have just closed a workshop on diabetes, hypertension and gout yesterday and I know that these three diseases are threatening the lives of people living in the urban areas because of our dependence on food from the shops, especially the working population, and Taiwan has spent its own money by coming over to Solomon Islands to run these workshops for our health workers. Sir, the confidence that our people can have now is that our nurses are now able to manage and also help treat these life threatening diseases. I must thank them for this.

Also in the case of Taiwan and Solomon Islands during the ethnic tension, I call Taiwan the Good Samaritan. As we have heard what the Leader of Opposition has expressed, we approached many people and Taiwan came to our rescue just like the Good Samaritan. I do not need to say anything further on this. We can now enjoy the Honiara City because of the assistance given to us by Taiwan during the ethnic tension.

In terms of rural development, I think Taiwan has assisted us to come this far in our rural areas. Our rural people are beginning to see development because of the unconditional assistance given to us by the government of Taiwan.

I would like to wish them fast recovery from this natural disaster. I must also say here this morning that Taiwan does not need anything material from us except our hearts, I guess. The only thing that a grieving person needs is support and comfort. I would like to assure the people of Southern Taiwan that our prayers and our hearts are with them at this time of sorrow and grief.

To conclude, may I once again, on behalf of the people we represent convey our heartfelt sympathy and also wish them quick recovery from what they are experiencing from the typhoon.

With these few words, I support the motion.

**Hon. MANETOALI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for recognizing and allowing me the floor to speak briefly on this important motion. I would also like to thank the mover of this motion, the Member for Temotu Nende as it is timely as others have already stated.

Mr Speaker, on behalf of my people of Gao/Bugotu Constituency, I join the others in supporting this motion. I extend my heartfelt sympathy to the victims of the typhoon in Taiwan. Sir, a lot have been said already by previous speakers and hence I will only briefly touch on a few areas.

Mr Speaker, we in Solomon Islands have already experienced natural disasters in our country. We have gone through tsunamis, cyclones, floods and earthquakes, and now our friend Taiwan is also experiencing the effects of the typhoon at this time.

Mr Speaker, Taiwan is a special friend to Solomon Islands. Special friend in a sense that others have already explained to us in what they have said earlier on today. I would like to say again, especially in the areas of education, health, social, spiritual, Taiwan covered the four corners of Solomon Islands through the 50 constituencies. We see church buildings in our constituencies, which is assistance from Taiwan, and that is why I said spiritual. Church activities and other activities within the bounds of the church, Taiwan has helped in it. Education, school fees, school buildings, staff houses and even sponsoring of students to study in Taiwan.

On the area of health, the Minister of Health has already stated earlier on today that our biggest hospital where our people are lying down when they are sick was also funded by Taiwan. The clinics too, which other Members of Parliament may have built in their constituencies, is also through the assistance of Taiwan.

In regards to social activities, sports activities and other social activities that Members of Parliament are funding in each of their constituencies, Taiwan too assisted in that. My friend from Rendova/Tetepare is nodding his head because he supports what I am saying.

Mr Speaker, the mover of the motion mentioned today that China has pledged millions of dollars in assistance to Taiwan; the United States has also pledged millions of dollars, but, Solomon Islands, as others have said is a very small country and therefore have no resources to help our friends in Taiwan. But I would like to remind us of a very small story in the Bible. On one Sabbath day some rich men went to the temple to pray and along came a very poor woman who also went to pray in the temple. The rich men said to God that they are giving a big portion of their money. But the poor woman only gave 20 cents as

her offering to God. Jesus Himself then said that the woman who gave the 20 cents gave more than those who gave the biggest.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to support the call by the other speakers today that we should at least contribute to this disaster in whatever ways we can and we have. What I would like to say is that our sympathy message must go at the same time our small assistance goes like the woman who only gave her last 20 cents in the offering plate.

Mr Speaker, as I have been alluded to today, my contribution will be very brief and once again on behalf of my people of Gao/Bugotu Constituency I extend our heartfelt sympathy to the victims of this disaster in South Taiwan.

Once again, Mr Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the hardworking Member of Parliament for Temotu Nende for this motion. With those few remarks, I support this motion. Thank you.

**Mr NUIASI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for allowing me to register my voice to this very important motion moved by the Member for Temotu Nende and supported by previous speakers who spoke before me.

Mr Speaker, the motion put before Parliament today for us to express our sympathy and condolence on behalf of people in our constituencies is very important and is a right motion to debate at this point in time. Mr Speaker, as we all know and have expressed, the Republic of China on Taiwan is a friend, and is not only a friend indeed but is like our brother too because of its actions and behaviors towards us. Mr Speaker, Solomon Islands must have realized that Taiwan is a real friend because the financial assistances it is giving us are not given conditionally but are unconditional and therefore we are enjoying the assistances that Taiwan is giving us and that no one will deny the majority of our population throughout Solomon Islands have either spent or used the financial assistance that comes from Taiwan.

Mr Speaker, the disaster that happened in Taiwan is regrettable but as expressed it is a natural disaster that nobody foresees so that it will stop it. Therefore, the ability of the Republic of China on Taiwan to recover from this disaster, I do not think they will have much difficulty in rebuilding themselves. But for a country like Solomon Islands to give from our hearts in sending our sympathy message and even the small contributions that we are talking about, that would in itself signal the relationship that we are enjoying throughout. Therefore, I too would like to stand up here and express the sympathy of the people of West Are Are constituency that we too are sorry to hear about the disaster that hit Taiwan. However, even if we do anything for Taiwan that would be seen or physically felt, we are with the people of Taiwan in our prayers. Because as a Christian country we believe that by praying for them they

will quickly recover and by praying for them they can be able to sustain themselves and overcome this difficulty that happened to them.

As alluded to by most of our speakers, if it had not been for Taiwan we would have collapsed during the ethnic tension where as an implementer, I was implementing activities at that time. I realized that if Taiwan had not stepped in, we would not have been in this place anymore. I thank Taiwan for being a humble country and a simple country and a country that gives another friend its assistance without conditions. I think this is what we want so that we can plan according to our cultural behaviors, our cultural understanding and our cultural expectations. Taiwan itself realizes this and so I would like to say that we sympathize with you today because of the disaster and we also appreciate the assistance they have given us and will be giving us in future.

With those few comments I would like to thank the Prime Minister too who has seen it fit in sending our condolence message to them in advance. And therefore on behalf of my people of West Are Are constituency, we too sympathize with other Members who have already expressed themselves for this natural disaster that has hit a brother, a friend indeed for which they are now struggling to get themselves in place.

With those few words, I support the motion and thank you.

**Mr ZAMA:** Mr Speaker, in the book of Ecclesiastes, the writer King Solomon says there is time for everything. There is time to be happy and there is time to be sad. There is time to make babies and there is time for death. There is time to work in the garden and there is time to harvest. There is time to be happy and there is time to be sad. There is time to play and there is time to fight, and so there is time for everything. In the spirit of the same time, God sent this typhoon to Taiwan last week and there was destruction. In the same spirit God spoke to the Member of Parliament for Temotu Nende to move this motion on the floor of Parliament so that Parliament conveys its sympathy to the Legislature in Taipei. Mr Speaker, it is also according to the same timing that I stand and express my gratitude and sympathy through the Ambassador of the Republic of China. And I thank the Honorable MP for Temotu Nende for moving this motion.

Mr Speaker, I do not have the official channels to convey my condolences and my sympathy to the President and to the Legislative Yuan in Taipei. But if this sitting is telecasted then I believe the Ambassador of Republic of China must have been watching. Mr Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity through the Ambassador to convey the heartfelt sympathy and condolences of my constituency and the people of South New Georgia, Rendova and Tetepare for what has happened to the people in Taiwan. Mr Speaker, everybody have



expressed all the good things that this great country and great people have done to Solomon Islands, and so there is no need for me to repeat what they have said.

Sir, when Solomon Islands was hungry Taiwan fed her. When Solomon Islands was thirsty Taiwan gave her water to drink. When Solomon Islands was naked Taiwan gave her clothing. When Solomon Islands was fighting Taiwan pulled her together to make peace and be friends again, and the list goes on. There are a lot of things we can say to express our condolences through the Ambassador to the people and the government of Taiwan. And so it is only appropriate that Parliament do so.

There were also two other motions moved on the floor of Parliament, which you have made mention of those motions. Mr. Speaker, this motion in my view should take precedence and high priority over the other two motions. The other motion was in support of our Beach Soccer Team, which in my view, must be supported and moved on the floor of Parliament. The other motion which was moved last week and moved by yourself did not get my support, for reasons well known to only myself and which I have openly expressed to other Members of Parliament outside of the chambers of Parliament. But this motion carries the full support of our people. Now that His Excellency, the Ambassador and the people of the Republic of China are here, I wish to thank him for his presence here to be part of this discussion this morning. It is fitting that Solomon Islands and this Parliament supports this motion and through your chamber to convey through the Ambassador to the President, the people and the government of the Republic of Taiwan our heartfelt sympathy and our support on what is going on there.

With these very few remarks, on behalf of my family and children and on behalf of the people of South New Georgia/Rendova/Tetepare, we support this motion. In a worse case scenario, if relocation is needed we have a bigger island in our constituency that is still empty. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Tetepare we offer that island as that is the best we can do. With those remarks, I support this motion.

**Hon. LENI:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to also contribute to this motion on behalf of the people of my constituency, the East Central Guadalcanal and also may be on behalf of the constituencies of those who may not speak in this chamber.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of experience, Taiwan and Solomon Islands know very well what a natural disaster is and the effects that natural disasters are causing to our two countries and we all know the degree of sadness and loss. Right now we are also feeling the pain that the people of Taiwan and the government are feeling similar to several incidences that have happened in our country. In that regard, Mr. Speaker, I on behalf of Solomon Islands and we as

Members too convey our sympathy to the Legislative Yuan of Taiwan. I know that we do not have that level of support that we can give like the other bigger countries. But I think the Speaker will also appreciate and accept the fact that we are expressing this thinking at this level to convey our message of sympathy to the people of Taiwan. But specifically I want to convey my thinking and sympathy to the chairman of the Fishing Associations that we have bilateral agreements with, especially Kaohsiung is a fishing industry that really boosts the economy of Taiwan. I have personal friends in Taiwan who are members of the associations and boat owners associations of the bilateral relationship in fisheries between us and Taiwan. So this sympathy message also goes to their families and for the loss they have at this time. Some of you may not have seen what Kaohsiung City is like, but it is a very big place where major fishing activities are taking place in Southern Taiwan. When you look at the pictures that were destroyed in this area, I can recognize some of the areas just like my colleague Minister of Tourism has said. I recognize the betel nut plantations that were destroyed. If you had the opportunity of driving through that particular part you would note there are also aquaculture activities there of fish ponds and underneath those betel nut plantations are also mangoes. So a lot of agricultural activities have been devastated, but I do not doubt the expertise of Taiwan to recover from that because of the technology it has. But for now it is a very sad thing to see and also find that the disaster has chosen to reach Taiwan at this point in time. We can only share our pain and grief over what has happened but we also share our prayers with them at this time.

Without saying much, I want to say that we will remember them in our prayers and hope that God will help them a speedy recovery in their economy and also for the comfort that will go to those who have lost their loved ones. With these, Mr. Speaker, I support the motion.

**Hon. TOM:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me this floor to share with other speakers my sympathy. Before I make my brief contribution to the motion, at the outset I would like to thank the honorable Member for Temotu Nende for moving this motion. Other speakers have expressed what Taiwan has been doing for our country. Some have even expressed that Taiwan is like a friend to us. The Bible too speaks about friend, it emphasizes friend as somebody having a strong relationship with each other. Friendship is the emphasis of relationship and some speakers who have already spoken said that Taiwan and also the Ambassador of Taiwan here wanted to build a strong relationship between us and them. Sometimes he even came down and spent time with us.

On behalf of my constituency of West Kwaio, I would also like to express and emphasize the sympathy of our country to Taiwan for being very good to us

during times when we also face disasters and they stood with us. At times when we feel we are alone, Taiwan is there standing beside us. When we are in need Taiwan is also there to support us. Here I would like to identify myself with the sorrow and agony that Taiwan is going through at this. Today, as a friend of Taiwan we want to be identified with what has happened to Taiwan. Some have lost their homes, some have lost their loved ones and so when we think about this disaster that has happened to them, it is one thing that is painful in our lives. It is not an easy thing.

Some Members who have spoken today have a real heart for Taiwan and have shed tears, which is very true because when a friend died or is injured or sick, when you approach him and before you go and sit down beside his bed, you will be struck by what has happened to your friend because of the good things he has done for you. I believe inside this Chamber, all of us feel the atmosphere of sympathy of one of our friends, and in this case the people of Taiwan are broken hearted at this time as they are still struggling and are finding things hard.

Sir, I cannot express more the help and support that Taiwan has been giving to 50 of our constituencies. None of us can deny this. All of us know this. Even our people in the rural area know this, feel this and are touched by it. Some have emphasized their help towards us as not like a boomerang where after giving it to us they would follow up. No, they just give freely to us, and so we thank God for their help and support as they are giving from their heart to help us.

Before I sit down, I would like to give words of encouragement to us. Disaster is something that is unexpected and no one controls it; nature is something that nobody controls but God Himself the Creator controls it. Solomon Islands too must be prepared for such a thing to happen. This world we are living inside is a disastrous world. Even though knowledge might increase in trying to save the world but it will not be possible. This world is already in disaster. But the encouragement I would like to leave with us is that the other world that we Christian believers always look forward to and Jesus when He was ready to go up, that world, that place if anyone is ready to go to people will always cry, people will always be in tears and going towards that home has many ways to it. It can be through people not waking up at all, it can be through disasters, it can be through sickness or what, but the Bible always assures us that there is another place, a planet where disaster strike and anyone who acknowledges God, that is the only place where there is no disaster. I just encourage our friends in Taiwan that although we do not have enough but as the Prime Minister has already mentioned, whatever ways we might want to raise funds to support our friends, I think it is good that we support it by coming

together, holding our hands together and share what we can share with them. Taiwan is here and knows our strengths and knows what we can earn. Taiwan knows this, but our part is to show to them that Taiwan is our true friend.

Sir, I once again would like to thank the honorable Member for Temotu Nende for moving this motion so that each of us can feel a part of this disaster and feel the pain that our people in Taiwan are going through now. I know this motion is moved so that we too can take part to share our sorrow with them at this time. Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I support the motion.

**Mr Oti:** Mr Speaker, at this juncture I must also pay tribute to the contributions to this motion from all Members of Parliament, from the Prime Minister to the Leader of Opposition, to the Foreign Minister and of course, to the Minister of Tourism, the Minister of Fisheries, two particular Ministers and members of Parliament who are very close to Taiwan on official matters of the state, in particular the Minister for Tourism who is our former ambassador to the Republic of China and so he was speaking from actual experiences recognizing those issues. Most importantly too, I think the intention of the motion is basically to take the message to the Legislative Yuan or the Parliament of Taiwan from a body that is also similar in status to that, which is the Parliament of Solomon Islands so that it is fitting we are dealing with issues of national interest of these two countries at all levels, as some mentioned from the personal, government to government and now from one legislature to the other. That is the intention and the motive of this motion.

Mr. Speaker, a lot has been said, particularly in acknowledging the contribution that the Republic of China on Taiwan has accorded to this country since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states in the early 80s. Since then the relationship between the two countries has not wavered, particularly at the United Nations because we all believe in the principles of democracy, the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter where all free countries subscribe to, and as the Leader of Opposition has said, sometimes it is very difficult when you have to stand by these principles, tooth and nail, while we watch the world saying one thing on one hand but on the other we cannot see whether the principle applies across the board or as it suits the situation of each country. We hope that Solomon Islands and Taiwan relations maybe perceived by countries as others have mentioned. I think cheque book diplomacy is a cheap description of describing the relations between states, if not a cheap one then frustrating for those who promote and behold that kind of relationship, and we have no time for it in Solomon Islands for that matter.

Mr. Speaker, at all levels in Solomon Islands in terms of development, which all of you have touched on already as very meaningful at that level in our

relationship with Taiwan. But more importantly at this instance to go with this thought and our message is to relay to Taiwan the culture and the custom that we have because these two countries have the Austronesian cultures and heritage whereby we have similarities in certain practices and therefore the customs are there too. As others have said when times of bereavement and the loss of a closed one happens, we all congregate together and we give our hearts in particular during that occasion to comfort those who are in suffering.

As also being alluded to, no amount of money will return the lives that have been lost. We can rebuild infrastructures, with their resilience they can rebuild their infrastructures and bring back the economy but no amount of investment, physical or financial will bring back the lives that have been lost. And this is where our hearts go because no amount of money, great or small given will make any difference to the families that are concerned. I think at this juncture we must go head-on with our message in terms of the cultural custom underpinnings that we are feeling inside our hearts to the people who are bereaved at times of disaster.

As I alluded to right from the beginning, while this message and the resolution will be communicated as called for in the motion, at the same time the efforts that are going to be put in motion are something that is personal to the people of Solomon Islands, coming from the hearts of leaders, communities and other stakeholders in Solomon Islands. Of course, the state has its own mechanisms to invoke to give what it can, but I think it must also come from all of us. Although the message has gone out loud and clear in terms of the call by respective Members to their constituents, most times were not appreciated, but in times like this, we leaders must take the lead and show a cause for a cause that justifies our having to assist where we can.

Mr. Speaker, once again at this juncture I want to thank your office for allowing this motion to be moved without notice. Also finally I want to thank all of us, all Members of Parliament, the Prime Minister, the Leader of Opposition and those that have spoken, your contributions will be valued greatly by the Legislature and Speaker of the Legislative Yuan, the President, the government and the public in Taiwan.

With those concluding remarks, I beg to move. Thank you.

*The motion is passed*

**Hon. Sikua:** Mr Speaker, I move that Parliament be now adjourned

*The House adjourned at 12.17 pm*