

## THURSDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2010

The Speaker, Rt Hon. Sir Peter Kenilorea took the Chair at 9.30 a.m.

Prayers.

### ATTENDANCE

At prayers all were present with the exception of the Ministers for National Planning and Aid Coordination; Lands, Housing & Survey; Agriculture and Livestock; Women, Youth & Children Affairs; Works and Infrastructure; Health & Medical Services; Public Service; Home Affairs; Environment and Conservation; Justice & Legal Affairs and the Members for East Are Are; Baegu/Asifola, Temotu Pele, West New Georgia & Vona Vona, Lau/Mbaelelea, Central Makira, East Honiara, East Makira, Noth Guadalcanal, Malaita Outer Islands.

### **SPEAKER'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Mr Speaker:** Honorable Members before we proceed with our business I wish to make a few opening remarks and announcements. Honorable Members, I wish to take this opportunity to welcome you all back to the Eleventh Meeting of this Parliament. Today marks the final meeting of the Eighth Parliament which commenced on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2006. This Parliament continues to live up to its ultimate aim to become more productive and I trust that Members took the opportunity to recuperate over the Christmas break and are here fresh and prepared to deal with the complex and difficult challenges ahead.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of the Special Select Committee into the Political Reform Bills, the Bills and Legislations Committee and the Parliamentary House Committee which, as we know, were busy while Parliament was in recess. I am very pleased to see the Committee, with the support of the Secretariat, carrying out their mandate and enhancing Parliament's scrutiny and oversight role.

On another matter, it is with great pleasure and pride that I again formally draw Members attention to current developments around Parliament precincts. Sight preparations are underway on the western side, as you may have noticed, and so I wish to acknowledge the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament for your support during the historic ground breaking ceremony of the new office complex for Members of Parliament. The complex will ultimately be together with Parliament House with its new security fence a symbol of Parliament's unity and strength.

I now turn to a matter of great importance to this House. As you may all have been aware, the High Court has made a ruling on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 2010 in relation to the Savo/Russells bye election which was held on 29<sup>th</sup> October and declared on 31<sup>st</sup>

October and for which the results were published on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2009. The High Court has ruled that Sir Allan Kemakeza, the winning candidate for Savo/Russells Constituency bye election was disqualified at the time of nomination and election. As such, the High Court declared the Savo/Russell's bye election 2009 void. This was certified to the Governor General on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010. As such the Savo/Russell's seat has been vacant since 26<sup>th</sup> February 2010. Thank you for your attention.

## **PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND OF REPORTS**

- The report of the Bills and Legislation Committee on its examination of the Timber Development and Marketing Authority Bill 2010, National Parliament Paper No. 1 of 2010.

**Mr Speaker:** I understand that the Honorable Minister responsible wishes to withdraw the Timber Development and Marketing Authority Bill 2010. There has been some confusion as to when a bill can be withdrawn and let me now make a ruling on this matter.

The Bills and Legislations Committee held its first hearing on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2010. This was in accordance with powers vested upon the Bills and Legislations Committee by virtue of Standing Order 71(b) which gives the Bills and Legislations Committee the power to review all draft legislations prepared for introduction into Parliament. This Bill has not yet been formally read for the first time. The Bills and Legislations Committee held its second hearing on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2010. During this hearing a minute from the Minister of Forestry stating that Cabinet has decided to withdraw the Bill on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2010 was tabled before the Committee. I take this as a notice of intention of withdrawal of the Timber Development and Marketing Authority Bill 2010. However, this in itself is not sufficient to constitute a withdrawal of any bill for that matter. In this particular instance, the only way and for the government to withdraw the Timber Development and Marketing Authority Bill 2010, while it is being reviewed by the Committee is by way of a motion moved and passed seeking that withdrawal. As Parliament was not sitting on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010, it was not possible for such a resolution. Notice of an intention to withdraw, however, has been given but this will only take effect once the Committee has reported to Parliament. Reporting formally brings an end to a review of a bill. In respect to the fate of the Timber Development and Marketing Authority Bill 2010, the Bills and Legislations Committee has reported back to Parliament today 11<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Therefore, I am satisfied that the Bills and Legislations Committee has discharged its function in accordance with the Standing Orders. As such, withdrawal immediately takes effect and the Bill is thus formally withdrawn from the business of the House. Let us proceed to our next item of business.

## **STATEMENT OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

**Hon Sogavare:** Point of order. We take note of the announcement by the Prime Minister that the North New Georgia Timber Corporation Amendment Bill 2010 is noticed for first reading. We just hope that that Bill has gone through the appropriate processes in Parliament. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker:** The Timber Development and Marketing Authority Bill has been withdrawn. I think it is the Tobacco Bill that is yet to come for the first reading.

Bills – First Reading

The North New Georgia Timber Corporation (Amendment) Bill 2010

**Mr Speaker:** Honorable Members, Parliament is deemed to have ordered the North New Georgia Timber Corporation Amendment Bill 2010 to be set down for second reading.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Hon Sikua:** I move that Parliament do now adjourn.

*The House adjourned at 10.09 a.m.*